

A letter from the Editor:

Dear Reader,

Happy New Year's Eve, and welcome to the December issue of *Hanna's Happenings*! This issue is a recap of what I read in 2025.

I was an avid reader throughout my childhood. I'd often stay up far too late devouring books (to my mother's mild dismay, though she's always supported my enthusiasm for reading). During college and graduate school, I stepped away from recreational reading to focus on coursework and academic texts. At the same time, I was learning data science methods, a skill set that would later make me curious about tracking my habits more systematically.

Since finishing graduate school, I've returned to reading for pleasure, and started keeping track of what I read, noticing patterns and trends I hadn't paid attention to before. This year, I tracked more closely than ever. Looking back on those patterns has been an entertaining and rewarding exercise, one I enjoyed enough to turn into this issue.

Inside, you'll find a breakdown of what I read, a handful of standouts, and a small section dedicated to the audiobooks I enjoyed most this year.

Although it doesn't appear in this year's Reading Recap, I can't resist mentioning my current read: Julia Rose's translation of *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo, a gift from a dear family member. I've wanted to read it for years but always felt intimidated by its length and reputation. Ending the year with a strong reading streak and my family member's encouragement finally gave me the courage to dive in.

Thank you for following along. I hope you enjoy this issue, and maybe even find inspiration for your next great read.

Please feel free to forward, reply, or share what you loved reading this year.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hanna Clements". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DECEMBER 2025

Reading Recap | Hanna's Happenings

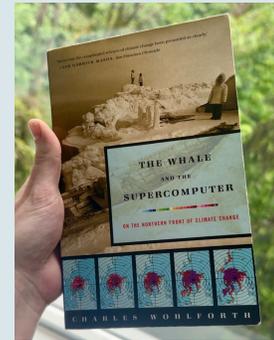
Chapter 30

Earlier this month I celebrated my 30th birthday! The festivities included a surprise party with a wonderfully bookish theme: *Chapter 30*.

Endless thanks to my mom for planning the most lovely tea party a reader could imagine, and for a lifetime of encouraging my love of books.

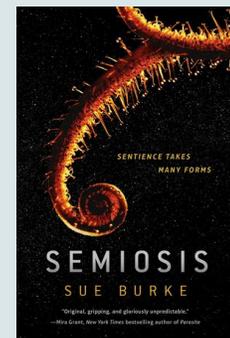


Five-Star Reads



The Whale and The Supercomputer

Although this book was published over two decades ago, the climate science and culture analysis is surprisingly relevant today. A contrasting examination of scientific ways of knowing and indigenous cultural adaptation in the wake of climate change.



Semiosis:

Sentience Takes Many Forms

I was absolutely captivated by the world Sue Burke created in the first book of her *Semiosis* series. Space exploration, talking bamboo, human folly...this story has it all!

2025 By the Numbers

I love setting goals, but I'm also a fan of reasonable expectations. So at the start of the year, I set the modest reading goal: finish 15 physical books by the end of 2025.

I ended up reaching this goal twice over! My final tally includes 30 physical books, plus an additional 7 audiobooks. Reading never felt like a chore (which might be the point), so I'm carrying the same goal into 2026, hoping the trend continues.

Keeping Track of My Reading

If you didn't already know, I'm a data nerd. I love keeping track of the "stats of my life," including my reading habits. In previous years, I used a simple digital note to track the books I read, but this year I wanted to try something new.

I dedicated a shelf of my bookcase to organizing finished, in-progress, and next-up books. That system began to falter when shelf space filled up, borrowed books had to be returned, and favorites were loaned out, leaving gaps in my record.

Luckily, a fellow bookish data lover suggested I try The StoryGraph app. While I usually keep my analog hobbies analog, I was won over by features like page counts, reading

streaks, and the ability to follow what friends are reading. After a year of use, it's easily my favorite app.



With all this new data, I added another goal: read 10,000 pages. I came close with 9,376, but didn't quite make it. I'll chalk that up as unfinished business for next year!

Diversity is the Spice of Life

One of the main themes in my reading this year was diversity. I read (and listened to) books from 29 different genres, with Science, Nature, and History among the most common. Some of the genres I dipped my toes into were Magical Realism, Sports, and Feminism. Despite the variety, the overall mood stayed consistent: reflective, informative, and adventurous.

I'm streaky when it comes to hobbies, and reading is no different. My pace varied widely month to month: June was my most prolific (1,493 pages and 5 books), while February was my slowest (223 pages). I've learned that I enjoy my hobbies most when I don't expect consistency.

My Only Re-Read This Year

In my younger days, I was a chronic re-reader, but these days I rarely revisit books as my to-read pile keeps growing. Of the 30 I read this year, only one was a re-read: *It Lasts Forever and Then It's Over* by Anne de Marcken. Both times, I rated it five stars for its haunting prose and refreshingly tender take on the undead.



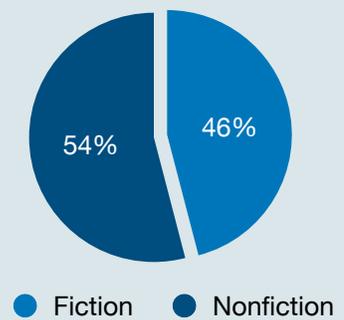
I'm always looking to expand my reading community! You can find my profile on The StoryGraph at [@hanna_clements](#).

Show me the Data!

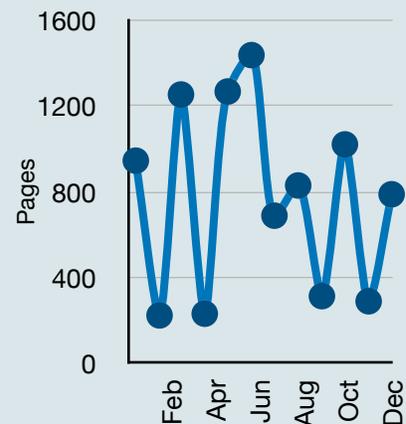
Average Rating: 4.21 ★



Books by Category



Pages Read Each Month



A Little Help from My Friends

I often fall into a funk after finishing a book and have a hard time starting a new one. I've found one of the best ways to combat the slump is by moving on to a book recommended or recently read by a friend (thanks to The StoryGraph for making it easier to spy on their reads). Here are some of their suggestions that I particularly enjoyed.

- *Free Food for Millionaires* by Min Jin Lee (4.5/5)
- *The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life* by David Quammen (4.25/5)
- *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel (4.5/5)
- *A Short Stay in Hell* by Steven L. Peck (4/5)
- *Let My People Go Surfing* by Yvon Chouinard (4.5/5)

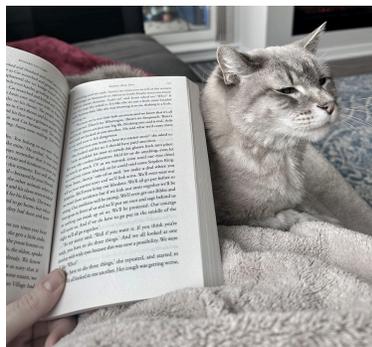


Reading at the beach: *Free Food for Millionaires*, a novel about complicated characters and the spirals of life.

My Favorite (Fluffy) Bookstand

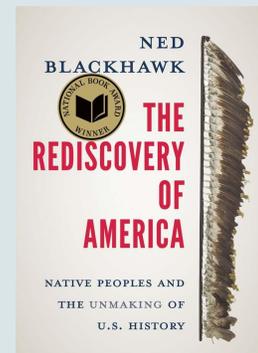
Of all my hobbies, my cat Purple likes reading the best. Probably because it keeps me in one place for a long time and leaves one hand free for petting.

That being said, I'm not exactly sure how much he enjoys being used as a bookstand...but he didn't get up and leave!



Important Reading

The most influential book I read this year—and a departure from my usual genre—was Ned Blackhawk's *The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of US History*.



I tend to avoid historical writing, but I was long overdue for a more honest account of American history. Blackhawk centers Native nations and demonstrates how their power fundamentally shaped and shapes the nation we know today.

Audiobooks I Loved

Controversial opinion: I count reading and listening to audiobooks as separate hobbies. But I'm still dedicating a small section of the issue to my favorite listens of the year.

