

Add zest to summer reading



VICTORIA DIAZ

Here comes summer and with it a slew of bright and shiny books, newly published just for you. Here are a half-dozen of the best bets to top off your finest summer days:

- "Loves Music, Loves to Dance," by Mary Higgins Clark (\$5.99). (304 pp., Pocket Books, \$5.99). Clark may not be the finest writer in the world, but she's a crack storyteller, as evidenced in this zippy whodunit about some attractive people who get themselves into some very ugly trouble when they respond to Personal ads. Clark's ninth work of fiction was atop The New York Times bestseller list for many weeks after its release last year in hardcover. (pb)
- "Marilyn and Me," by Susan Stranberg (282 pp., Warner Books, \$21.95). A fast-moving, highly readable account of the friendship and rivalry between Marilyn Monroe and actress Stranberg, daughter of Actors Studio director Lee Stranberg. During the '50s, Monroe came

to live with the Stranberg family in New York City, sharing a room with the young actress at night and studying with and "leaning on" Lee Stranberg much of the rest of the time. The author paints a picture of Monroe that's a bit different from previous portraits we've seen. Not surprisingly, in these memoirs, Stranberg reveals quite a bit about herself as well.

- "Private Lies," by Warren Adler (336 pp., Avon, \$4.99). If you can overlook lines like, "He felt a blast of heat from that old furnace, firing up the passion and possessiveness that had inflamed his youthful soul," reading this sizzling novel about deception and recaptured love among two affluent, middle-aged couples could make for an interesting summer afternoon. Set partially in East Africa, "Private Lies" may remind readers a bit of Hemingway's "The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber," although Adler is no Hemingway. (pb)
- "Standstill, 7-Eleven, Route 57, A & W, and So Forth," by Patricia Lear (161 pp., Knopf, \$19). Though the title is long, the stories are short. In this collection by first-time author Lear, but though short, their impressions are longlasting. Told in

a kind of down-home, conversational style, most are set among the cottonwood trees, Dairy Queens and faux antebellum architecture of the new South, where the characters delight in barbecue sandwiches and Bearback ice cream and the dogs have wonderful names like Sturdust, 7-Eleven, Route 57, A & W and so forth. The final story in the collection, "Powwow," received the O. Henry Award for short fiction in 1991.

- "Turtle Moon," by Alice Hoffman (255 pp., Putnam, \$21.95). Movie rights to this enchanting novel have been sold to Universal and I, for one, can't wait to get in line. This story about a man, a woman, a boy, a dog and an angel may get a little syrupy toward its conclusion, but I don't care. Anybody who can perform the magic that Hoffman performs here with words, anybody who can so often express the inexpressible, is a master. If you believe that we live among miracles, this book is something you absolutely must not miss.

LAST WORDS: A number of Michigan authors will make appearances at Borders-Now during June.

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