Francis Bacon mused, “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” What books will you sample while waiting for winter’s end?

**Still Alice** by Lisa Genova (2009)

*Still Alice* is a fictional story about a young 50 year old woman with early-onset Alzheimer’s disease. Alice Howland is the fictional character in the book and is a cognitive psychology professor at the Harvard University and she is a world-renowned linguistics expert. She is married and has three grown children. Her life seems perfect when all of a sudden she begins doing strange things, becomes increasingly disoriented and forgetful. The book walks the reader through the rigorous neurodiagnostic testing, the diagnosis and her life afterwards. It is a heartwrenching depiction of what it is like to live with this diagnosis for the patient as well as her family. ~ Lisa Ruth-Sahd

**One Square Inch of Silence** by Gordon Hempton (2009)

This past summer my wife and I spent a week hiking through the majestic redwood forests of northern California. The solemnity of place and the removal from the cacophony of the “civilized world” were mentally invigorating and inspirational. In *One Square Inch of Silence*, author Gordon Hempton cautions that natural silence may be our nation’s fastest-disappearing resource. In this beautifully constructed narrative, he takes the reader on a meandering sojourn across America searching for places of solitude and aural peace. His discoveries highlight the natural voices of the American landscape as well as the human need for consistent quietude. ~ Tony Fredericks

**The Book of Speculation: A Novel** by Erika Swyler (2015)

This book has all the elements of intrigue one could ask for—circus side shows, mysterious books, tarot cards, library archives, and mermaidesque characters. It immerses the reader into two connected, yet separate storylines; one on a tantalizing race against facts, fate and time, and the other through joys and pains felt long ago in another era. Although the book is good, it offers little surprise in its culmination as the direction of the story becomes apparent quite quickly. With that said though, it is worth a read. ~ CaseyAnn Salanova
All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr (2014)

Blind girl Marie-Laure and German boy Werner are destined to meet. Marie-Laure grows up with her father in Paris; Werner grows up in a German orphanage. The author leads us through a series of vignettes surrounding the main characters, whose lives gradually intersect during World War II partly due to the myth of a rare blue diamond. The characters are well-developed, the scenes vivid, and the story memorable. This is the best book I’ve read since The Nightingale. Don’t miss reading this one. ~ Beth Jacoby

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing by Marie Kondo (2014)

This easy-to-read little book offers practical ways to de-clutter and organize your space. Marie Kondo’s suggestions are extremely realistic. She explains the order in which you should de-clutter items, beginning with clothes and ending with photos, discussing lots of categories in between. You soon realize how easy it is to “discard anything that does not spark joy.” She also says “I believe that tidying is a celebration, a special send-off for those things that will be departing from the house....” Her inspirational book taught me to liberate items that previously I would have kept. ~ Raeann Waltersdorf