



Title

Addition
A dog's purpose
A god in ruins
All the light we cannot see
Amsterdam
An angel at my table
And the mountains echoed
Annabel
Any human heart
A spool of blue thread
Atlas of unknowns
The Auschwitz violin
Bel Canto
Belly dancing for beginners
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Big little lies
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Blind assassin
Bolter
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Bring up the bodies
Burial rites
Cast iron
The cat's table
The chocolate tin
Cleaskin cowgirls
Company of liars
Crimson dawn
Curious incident of the dog in the night-time
Cutting for stone
Dark emu
The daughters of Mars
Dewey
Dog boy
Dovekeepers
The drowning girl
The dry
The elegance of a hedgehog
The elephant keeper
Enduring love
Eyrie
Falling leaves
Farm City
Fatal impact
The fault in our stars
The fifth letter
Foal's bread
For today I am a boy
Gone girl

Author

Toni Jordan
W. Bruce Cameron
Kate Atkinson
Anthony Doerr
Ian McEwan
Janet Frame
Khaled Hosseini
Kathleen Winter
William Boyd
Anne Tyler
Tania James
Maria Angels Anglada
Ann Prachett
Liz Byrski
Lionel Shriver
Liane Moriarty
Sebastian Faulkes
David Mitchell
Margaret Atwood
Frances Osborne
Markus Zusak
Rebecca Makkai
Lisa Forrest
John Boyne
Tim Winton
Hilary Mantel
Hannah Kent
Peter May
Michael Ondaatje
Fiona McIntosh
Rachel Treasure
Karen Maitland
Fleur McDonald
Mark Haddon
Abraham Verghese
Bruce Pascoe
Tomas Keneally
Vicki Myron
Eva Hornung
Alice Hoffman
Margaret Leroy
Jane Harper
Muriel Barbery
Christopher Nicholson
Ian McEwan
Tim Winton
Adeline Yen Mah
Novella Carpenter
Kathryn Fox
John Green
Nicola Moriarty
Gillian Mears
Kim Fu
Gillian Flynn



Title

The gourmet
The great Gatsby
The Guernsey literary and potato peel pie society
Hand me down world
The happiest refugee
Harmless
The help
The heretic's daughter
Hidden figures
The hidden hours
Hopetoun wives
Hotel on the corner of bitter and sweet
I'm not scared
Inheritance
The ink bridge
In one person
In the shadow of the banyan
Iran awakening
Jasper Jones
Jeeves and the wedding bells
Kabul beauty school
The language of flowers
The last runaway
The last sky
Levels of life
Life after life
Life of Pi
The light between oceans
Lion (*formally published as A long way home*)
The list of My Desires
The little stranger
Love in the time of cholera
Lovesong
Major Pettigrew's last stand
The man in the grey flannel skirt
Maralinga
Middlesex
The midnight dress
Midwives
Mornings in Jenin
A most immoral woman
Mr Penumbra's 24-hour bookstore
Never coming back
Never let me go
New boy
Next of Kin
Norwegian wood
Nourishment
The ocean at the end of the lane
Once upon a time in Beirut
The orchard of lost souls
The other
The other side of the world
Our sunshine

Author

Muriel Barbery
Scott F Fitzgerald
Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows
Lloyd Jones
Anh Do
Julienne Van Loon
Kathryn Stockett
Kathleen Kent
Margot Lee Setterly
Sara Foster
Fran Cusworth
Jamie Ford
Niccolo Ammaniti
Nicholas Shakespeare
Neil Grant
John Irving
Vaddey Ratner
Shirin Ibadi
Craig Silvey
Sebastian Faulkes
Deborah Rodriguez
Vanessa Diffenbaugh
Tracey Chevalier
Alice Nelson
Julian Barnes
Kate Atkinson
Yann Martel
M. L. Stedman
Saroo Brierley
Gregoire Delacourt
Sarah Waters
Gabriel Garcia Marquez
Alex Miller
Helen Simonson
Jon-Jon Goulian
Judy Nunn
Jeffrey Eugenides
Karen Foxlee
Chris Bohjalian
Susan Abulhawa
Linda Jaivin
Robin Sloan
Tim Weaver
Kazuo Ishiguro
Tracy Chevalier
Joanna Trollope
Haruki Murakami
Gerard Woodward
Neil Gaiman
Catherine Taylor
Nadifa Mohamed
David Guterson
Stephanie Bishop
Robert Drewe



Title

The painted veil
The pajama girls of Lambert Square
The perfume collector
Perks of being a wallflower
The photograph
Pomegranate soup
The prime of Miss Jean Brodie
Pure gold baby
Reading in bed
Reality
Relativity
The road
Room
Rosewater and soda bread
Salvation creek
The sea
Sea hearts
Second suns
The secret river
The secrets she keeps
Silent house
Silkworm
Skin and bone
Smokey Joe's cafe
The snow child
South of the border, west of the sun
The spare room
Speak
Still Alice
Suite francaise
The Sunday philosophy club
Sweet tooth
Teatime for the firefly
The tenderness of wolves
Theft : a love story
The thirteenth tale
Three cups of tea
Time machines repaired while-u-wait
Trip of a lifetime
The true story of butterfish
The Tsar of love and techno
Turn of mind
Underground railroad
The vanishing act of Esme Lennox
The voluptuous delights of peanut butter and jam
Water for elephants
The well
While we were watching Downton abbey
White tiger
Wildflower
Wimmera
Wishes for starlight
Wolf hall
The woman in black

Author

William Somerset Maugham
Rosina Lippi
Kathleen Tessaro
Stephen Chbosky
Penelope Lively
Marsha Mehran
Muriel Spark
Margaret Drabble
Sue Gee
Ray Glickman
Antonia Hayes
Emma Donoghue
Cormac McCarthy
Marsha Mehran
Susan Duncan
John Banville
Margo Lanagan
David Relin
Kate Grenville
Michael Robotham
Orhan Pamuk
Robert Galbraith
Kathryn Fox
Bryce Courtenay
Eowyn Ivey
Haruki Murakami
Helen Garner
Laurie Halse Anderson
Lisa Genova
Irene Nemirovsky
Alexander McCall Smith
Ian McEwan
Shona Patel
Stef Penney
Peter Carey
Diane Setterfield
Greg Mortenson
K.A. Bedford
Liz Byrski
Nick Earls
Anthony Marra
Alice LaPlante
Colson Whitehead
Maggie O'Farrell
Lauren Liebenberg
Sara Gruen
Elizabeth Jolley
Wendy Wax
Aravind Adgia
Mark Seal
Mark Brandi
Linda J Bettenay
Hilary Mantel
Madeline St John



Title

The world without us
The zookeeper's wife
Zoo time

Author

Mireille Juchau
Steven Conte
Howard Jacobson



About the book: Addition

Grace Lisa Vandenburg: she's just like the girl next door, the best friend you hope to find, except for one thing --- Grace counts. The letters in her name (19); the steps she takes every morning to the local café (920); the daily slice of orange cake and the number of poppy seeds on top dictate the number of bites she'll take to finish it. Numbers hold Grace's world together but that world threatens to come apart when she finds Seamus Joseph O'Reilly (also a 19) sitting at the table where she always sits, and on top of that the café is out of orange cake. When Grace accepts Seamus's invitation to join him and then orders pancakes, it's the beginning of something either dreadful...or wonderful, and it's up to Grace to figure it out.

About the book: A dog's purpose

Heart-warming, insightful, and often laugh-out-loud funny, *A Dog's Purpose* is not only the emotional and hilarious story of a dog's many lives, but also a dog's-eye commentary on human relationships and the unbreakable bonds between man and man's best friend.

This moving and beautifully crafted story teaches us that love never dies, that our true friends are always with us, and that every creature on earth is born with a purpose.

Bailey's story continues in *A Dog's Journey*, the charming New York Times and USA Today bestselling direct sequel to *A Dog's Purpose*.

About the book: A god in ruins

Kate Atkinson's *Life After Life* explored the possibility of infinite chances, as Ursula Todd lived through the turbulent events of the last century again and again. In *A God in Ruins*, Atkinson turns her focus on Ursula's beloved younger brother Teddy - would-be poet, RAF bomber pilot, husband and father - as he navigates the perils and progress of the 20th century. For all that Teddy endures in battle, his greatest challenge will be to face living in a future he never expected to have.

An ingenious and moving exploration of one ordinary man's path through extraordinary times.

About the book: All the light we cannot see

From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, a stunningly ambitious and beautiful novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Natural History Museum, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighbourhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home.

When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.

Ten years in the writing, *All the Light We Cannot See* is a magnificent, deeply moving novel from a writer, says the *Los Angeles Times*, "whose sentences never fail to thrill." (*From the publisher*)



About the book: Amsterdam

On a chilly February day, two old friends meet in the throng outside a crematorium to pay their last respects to Molly Lane. Both Clive Linley and Vernon Halliday had been Molly's lovers in the days before they reached their current eminence. Clive is Britain's most successful modern composer; Vernon is editor of the quality broadsheet *The Judge*. Gorgeous, feisty Molly had had other lovers, too, notably Julian Garmony, foreign secretary, a notorious right-winger tipped to be the next prime minister.

In the days that follow Molly's funeral, Clive and Vernon will make a pact with consequences neither has foreseen. Each will make a disastrous moral decision, their friendship will be tested to its limits, and Julian Garmony will be fighting for his political life.

In *Amsterdam*, a contemporary morality tale that is as profound as it is witty, we have Ian McEwan at his wisest and most wickedly disarming. And why *Amsterdam*? What happens there to Clive and Vernon is the most delicious climax of a novel brimming with surprises.

About the book: An Angel at my table

Gathered here in a single edition are the three parts of Janet Frame's autobiography. From a childhood and adolescence spent in a materially poor but intellectually intense railway family, through life as a student and years of incarceration in mental hospitals (essentially for wanting to pursue a career as a poet), followed eventually by her entry into the saving world of writers and the 'Mirror City' that sustains them. This is not just the records of a life but also the flourishing of a writer's career. Janet Frame accomplishes 'the transformation of ordinary facts and ideas into a shining palace of mirrors'.

All three volumes of this autobiography - *To The Is-Land* (1983), *An Angel At My Table* (1984) and *The Envoy From The Mirror City* (1985) have won major literary prizes. Internationally lauded director Jane Campion made a film of *An Angel At My Table* that won international jury prizes at Venice, Toronto and other film festivals. Janet Frame died in January 2004.

About the book: And the Mountains Echoed

Khaled Hosseini, the #1 *New York Times* –bestselling author of *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, has written a new novel about how we love, how we take care of one another, and how the choices we make resonate through generations.

In this tale revolving around not just parents and children but brothers and sisters, cousins and caretakers, Hosseini explores the many ways in which families nurture, wound, betray, honour, and sacrifice for one another; and how often we are surprised by the actions of those closest to us, at the times that matter most.

Following its characters and the ramifications of their lives and choices and loves around the globe—from Kabul to Paris to San Francisco to the Greek island of Tinos—the story expands gradually outward, becoming more emotionally complex and powerful with each turning page.

About the book: Annabel

Kathleen Winter's luminous debut novel is a deeply affecting portrait of life in an enchanting seaside town and the trials of growing up unique in a restrictive environment.

In 1968, into the devastating, spare atmosphere of the remote coastal town of Labrador, Canada, a child is born: a baby who appears to be neither fully boy nor fully girl, but both at once. Only three people are privy to the secret--the baby's parents, Jacinta and Treadway, and a trusted neighbour and midwife, Thomasina. Though Treadway makes the difficult decision to raise the child as a boy named Wayne, the women continue to quietly nurture the boy's female side. And as Wayne grows into adulthood within the hyper-masculine hunting society of his father, his shadow-self, a girl he thinks of as "Annabel," is never entirely extinguished.

Kathleen Winter has crafted a literary gem about the urge to unveil mysterious truth in a culture that shuns contradiction, and the body's insistence on coming home. A daringly unusual debut full of unforgettable beauty, *Annabel* introduces a remarkable new voice to American readers.



About the book: Any Human Heart

Here is the "riotous and disorganized reality" of Mountstuart's eighty-five years in all their extraordinary, tragic, and humorous aspects. In his journals he recounts his boyhood in Montevideo, Uruguay; his college years during the 1920s at Oxford, where he published his first book; his time in Paris with famous expatriates like Joyce, Picasso, Hemingway, among others; and his coverage of the Spanish Civil War. During World War II, as an agent for Naval Intelligence, he becomes embroiled in a murder scandal that involves the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. After the war, he relocates to New York where he works as an art dealer during the wave of abstract expressionism; until he moves on to West Africa; then London, where he has a run-in with the Baader-Meinhof Gang; finally in France, in his old age, acquiring a measure of hard-won serenity.

Any Human Heart is a moving, ambitious and richly conceived novel that embodies the heroics and follies of twentieth-century life.

About the book: A Spool of Blue Thread

It was a beautiful, breezy, yellow-and-green afternoon. . .

This is how Abby Whitshank always begins the story of how she fell in love with Red that day in July 1959. The Whitshanks are one of those families that radiate togetherness: an indefinable, enviable kind of specialness. But they are also like all families, in that the stories they tell themselves reveal only part of the picture.

Abby and Red and their four grown children have accumulated not only tender moments, laughter, and celebrations, but also jealousies, disappointments, and carefully guarded secrets. From Red's father and mother, newly arrived in Baltimore in the 1920s, to Abby and Red's grandchildren carrying the family legacy boisterously into the twenty-first century, here are four generations of Whitshanks, their lives unfolding in and around the sprawling, lovingly worn Baltimore house that has always been their anchor.

About the book: Atlas of Unknowns

A poignant, funny, blazingly original debut novel about sisterhood, the tantalizing dream of America, and the secret histories and hilarious eccentricities of families everywhere.

In the wake of their mother's mysterious death, Linno and Anju are raised in Kerala by their father, Melvin, a reluctant Christian prone to bouts of dyspepsia, and their grandmother, the superstitious and strong-willed Ammachi. When Anju wins a scholarship to a prestigious school in America, she seizes the opportunity, even though it means betraying her sister. In New York, Anju is plunged into the elite world of her Hindu American host family, led by a well-known television personality and her fiendishly ambitious son, a Princeton drop out determined to make a documentary about Anju's life. But when Anju finds herself ensnared by her own lies, she runs away, helped by a kindly stranger with connections to Anju's past.

Meanwhile, back in Kerala, Linno is undergoing a transformation of her own, rejecting the wealthy blind suitor with whom her father had sought to arrange her marriage and using her artistic gifts as a springboard to entrepreneurial success. When Anju goes missing, Linno strikes out farther still, with a scheme to procure a visa so that she can travel to America to search for her vanished sister.

The convergence of their journeys—toward each other, toward America, toward a new understanding of self and country, and toward a heartbreaking mystery long buried in their shared past—brings to life a predicament that is at once modern and timeless: the hunger for independence and the longing for home; the need to preserve the past and the yearning to break away from it.

About the book: The Auschwitz Violin

An international sensation now available in English for the first time, *The Violin of Auschwitz* is the unforgettable story of one man's refusal to surrender his dignity in the face of history's greatest atrocity.

In the winter of 1991, at a concert in Krakow, an older woman with a marvellously pitched violin meets a fellow musician who is instantly captivated by her instrument. When he asks her how she obtained it, she reveals the remarkable story behind its origin... Imprisoned at Auschwitz, the notorious concentration camp, Daniel feels his humanity slipping away. Treasured memories of the young woman he loved and the prayers that once lingered on



his lips become hazier with each passing day. Then a visit from a mysterious stranger changes everything, as Daniel's former identity as a crafter of fine violins is revealed to all.

The camp's two most dangerous men use this information to make a cruel wager: If Daniel can build a successful violin within a certain number of days; the Kommandant wins a case of the finest burgundy. If not, the camp doctor, a torturer, gets hold of Daniel. And so, battling exhaustion, Daniel tries to recapture his lost art, knowing all too well the likely cost of failure.

Written with lyrical simplicity and haunting beauty—and interspersed with chilling, actual Nazi documentation—*The Violin of Auschwitz* is more than just a novel: It is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the power of beauty, art, and hope to triumph over the darkest adversity.

About the book: [Bel Canto](#)

Somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held in honour of Mr Hosokawa, a powerful Japanese businessman. Roxanne Coss, opera's most revered soprano, has mesmerized the international guests with her singing. It is a perfect evening—until a band of gun-wielding terrorists breaks in through the air-conditioning vents and takes the entire party hostage. But what begins as a panicked, life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different, as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds and people from different countries and continents become compatriots.

Without the demands of the world to shape their days, life on the inside becomes more beautiful than anything they had ever known before. At once riveting and impassioned, the narrative becomes a moving exploration of how people communicate when music is the only common language. Friendship, compassion, and the chance for great love lead the characters to forget the real danger that has been set in motion and cannot be stopped.

About the book: [Belly Dancing for Beginners](#)

Gayle and Sonya are complete opposites; one reserved and cautious, the other confident and outspoken. But their lives will be turned upside down when they impulsively join a belly dancing class. Marissa, their teacher, is sixty, sexy and very much her own person, and as Gayle and Sonya learn about the origins and meaning of the dance, much more than their muscle tone begins to change.

And then there are the men in their lives: Oliver, confused over why his feminist upbringing hasn't led him to success with women; Brian, sailing blindly towards the rocks, and Frank who is battling his own demons.

Belly Dancing for Beginners is a warm-hearted, moving and often outright funny story of what can happen when women, and the men in their lives, are brave enough to reveal who they really are.

About the book: [Big Brother](#)

From the acclaimed author of the National Book Award finalist *So Much for That* and the international bestseller *We Need to Talk About Kevin* comes a striking new novel about siblings, marriage, and obesity.

When Pandora picks up her older brother Edison at her local Iowa airport, she literally doesn't recognize him. In the four years since the siblings last saw each other, the once slim, hip New York jazz pianist has gained hundreds of pounds. What happened?

And it's not just the weight. Imposing himself on Pandora's world, Edison breaks her husband Fletcher's handcrafted furniture, makes overkill breakfasts for the family, and entices her stepson not only to forgo college but to drop out of high school.

After the brother-in-law has more than overstayed his welcome, Fletcher delivers his wife an ultimatum: It's him or me. Putting her marriage and adopted family on the line, Pandora chooses her brother—who, without her support in losing weight, will surely eat himself into an early grave.

Rich with Shriver's distinctive wit and ferocious energy, *Big Brother* is about fat—an issue both social and excruciatingly personal. It asks just how much we'll sacrifice to rescue single members of our families, and whether it's ever possible to save loved ones from themselves.



About the book: Big Little Lies

Sometimes it's the little lies that turn out to be the most lethal. . . A murder... . . a tragic accident... . . or just parents behaving badly? What's indisputable is that someone is dead. But who did what?

Big Little Lies follows three women, each at a crossroads:

Madeline is a force to be reckoned with. She's funny and biting, passionate, she remembers everything and forgives no one. Her ex-husband and his yogi new wife have moved into her beloved beachside community, and their daughter is in the same kindergarten class as Madeline's youngest (how is this possible?). And to top it all off, Madeline's teenage daughter seems to be choosing Madeline's ex-husband over her. (How. Is. This. Possible?).

Celeste is the kind of beautiful woman who makes the world stop and stare. While she may seem a bit flustered at times, who wouldn't be, with those rambunctious twin boys? Now that the boys are starting school, Celeste and her husband look set to become the king and queen of the school parent body. But royalty often comes at a price, and Celeste is grappling with how much more she is willing to pay.

New to town, single mom Jane is so young that another mother mistakes her for the nanny. Jane is sad beyond her years and harbors secret doubts about her son. But why? While Madeline and Celeste soon take Jane under their wing, none of them realizes how the arrival of Jane and her inscrutable little boy will affect them all.

Big Little Lies is a brilliant take on ex-husbands and second wives, mothers and daughters, schoolyard scandal, and the dangerous little lies we tell ourselves just to survive.

About the book: Birdsong

In 1910 a young Englishman, Stephen Wraysford, goes to Picardy, France, to learn the textile business. While there he plunges into a love affair with the young wife of his host, a passion so imperative and consuming that it changes him forever. Several years later, with the outbreak of World War I, he finds himself again in the fields of Picardy, this time as a soldier on the Western Front. A strange, occasionally bitter man, Stephen is possessed of an inexplicable will to survive. He struggles through the hideously bloody battles of the Marne, Verdun, and the Somme (in the last named, thirty thousand British soldiers were killed in the first half hour alone), camps for weeks at a time in the verminous trenches, and hunkers in underground tunnels as he watches many of the companions he has grown to love peris perish. In spite of everything, Stephen manages to find hope and meaning in the blasted world he inhabits. Sixty years after war's end, his granddaughter discovers, and keeps, Stephen's promise to a dying man. Sebastian Faulks brings the anguish of love and war to vivid life, and leaves the reader's mind pulsating with images that are graphic and unforgettable.

About the book: Black Swan Green

January 1982. Thirteen-year-old Jason Taylor – covert stammerer and reluctant poet – anticipates a stultifying year in his backwater English village. But he hasn't reckoned with bullies, simmering family discord, the Falklands War, a threatened gypsy invasion and those mysterious entities known as girls. Charting thirteen months in the black hole between childhood and adolescence, this is a captivating novel, wry, painful and vibrant with the stuff of life.

About the book: The Blind Assassin

Winner, 2000 Booker Prize

Margaret Atwood takes the art of storytelling to new heights in a dazzling new novel that unfolds layer by astonishing layer and concludes in a brilliant and wonderfully satisfying twist.

For the past twenty-five years, Margaret Atwood has written works of striking originality and imagination. In *The Blind Assassin*, she stretches the limits of her accomplishments as never before, creating a novel that is entertaining and profoundly serious.

The novel opens with these simple, resonant words: "Ten days after the war ended, my sister drove a car off the bridge." They are spoken by Iris, whose terse account of her sister Laura's death in 1945 is followed by an inquest report proclaiming the death accidental. But just as the reader expects to settle into Laura's story, Atwood introduces a novel-within-a-novel. Entitled *The Blind Assassin*, it is a science fiction story told by two unnamed lovers



who meet in dingy backstreet rooms. When we return to Iris, it is through a 1947 newspaper article announcing the discovery of a sailboat carrying the dead body of her husband, a distinguished industrialist.

Told in a style that magnificently captures the colloquialisms and clichés of the 1930s and 1940s, *The Blind Assassin* is a richly layered and uniquely rewarding experience. The novel has many threads and a series of events that follow one another at a breath taking pace. As everything comes together, readers will discover that the story Atwood is telling is not only what it seems to be—but, in fact, much more.

The Blind Assassin proves once again that Atwood is one of the most talented, daring, and exciting writers of our time. Like *The Handmaid's Tale*, it is destined to become a classic.

About the book: The Bolter

Idina Sackville – the woman who scandalised 1920's society and became White Mischief's infamous seductress. On Friday 25th May, 1934, a forty-one-year-old woman walked into the lobby of Claridge's Hotel in London's Mayfair to meet the nineteen-year-old son whose face she did not know. Just over fifteen years earlier, as the First World War ended, Idina Sackville had shocked high society by leaving his multimillionaire father at Victoria Station to run off to Africa with a near penniless man. Now, three more husbands later, she was back to help the son whom she had been banned from seeing . . .

Inspiration for Nancy Mitford's character The Bolter, painted by William Orpen, a muse for the fashion designer Molyneux and photographed by Cecil Beaton, Sackville went on to divorce a total of five times, yet died with a photograph of her first love by her bed. Her struggle to reinvent her life with each new marriage left one husband murdered and branded her the 'high priestesses of White Mischief's bed-hopping Happy Valley in Kenya. She became renowned for her powers as a seductress and was rumoured to have had 'lovers without number'. And at the age of thirteen, I opened the newspaper one morning to discover that Idina was my mother's grandmother. Since then I have been fascinated by what drove her to leave a man and children she still loved, how her life then spiralled into marital mayhem, and what happened when she returned to the children she had left behind. Four years ago I opened a tin chest containing the diaries of that first husband, my great grandfather, the single surviving diary of the nineteen year-old son that Idina came back to see, who was my grandfather, and two bulging battered briefcases of family letters, legal documents and photographs.

About the book: The Book Thief

It's just a small story really, about among other things: a girl, some words, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist-fighter, and quite a lot of thievery.

Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's ground breaking new novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meagre existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbours during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau.

About the book: The Borrower

In this delightful, funny and moving first novel, a librarian and a young boy obsessed with reading take to the road. Lucy Hull, a young children's librarian in Hannibal, Missouri, finds herself both kidnapper and kidnapped when her favourite patron, ten-year-old Ian Drake, runs away from home. The precocious Ian is addicted to reading, but needs Lucy's help to smuggle books past his overbearing Evangelical mother, who has enrolled Ian in weekly anti-gay classes with celebrity Pastor Bob. Lucy stumbles into a moral dilemma when she finds Ian camped out in the library after hours with a knapsack of provisions and an escape plan. Desperate to save him from Pastor Bob and the Drakes, Lucy allows herself to be hijacked by Ian. The odd pair embarks on a crazy road trip from Missouri to Vermont, with ferrets, an inconvenient boyfriend and upsetting family history thrown in their path. But is it just Ian who is running away? Who is the man who seems to be on their tail? And should Lucy be trying to save a boy from his own parents?



About the book: Boycott

Swimming star Lisa Forrest was only sixteen years old when she found herself at the centre of one of Australia's most significant sporting and political moments, the controversial boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow at the height of the Cold War. In this meticulously researched and compellingly written book, Lisa tells her story for the first time, taking us from her early strokes in the local pool of a Sydney beachside suburb, to death threats and public denunciation by both politicians and the media. Through interviews with everyone from the Prime Minister of the day, Malcolm Fraser, to members of the AOC, sports administrators, journalists and the athletes themselves, she also takes us behind the scenes of an extraordinary and far-reaching chapter in Australian sporting history, as our amateur athletes struggled to compete in an increasingly professionalised international arena. But, most movingly, *Boycott* is the story of those athletes who defied the inducements and pressure coming from the highest levels, maintaining that the Olympics was about peace, not politics and chose to follow their dream.

About the book: The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Berlin 1942. When Bruno returns home from school one day; he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has received a promotion and the family must move from their home to a new house far far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence running alongside stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people he can see in the distance.

But Bruno longs to be an explorer and decides that there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different to his own, and their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences.

About the book: Breath

Tim Winton is Australia's best-loved novelist. His new work, *Breath*, is an extraordinary evocation of an adolescence spent resisting complacency, testing one's limits against nature, finding like-minded souls, and discovering just how far one breath will take you. It's a story of extremes—extreme sports and extreme emotions.

On the wild, lonely coast of Western Australia, two thrill seeking and barely adolescent boys fall into the enigmatic thrall of veteran big-wave surfer Sando. Together they form an odd but elite trio. The grown man initiates the boys into a kind of Spartan ethos, a regimen of risk and challenge, where they test themselves in storm swells on remote and shark-infested reefs, pushing each other to the edges of endurance, courage, and sanity. But where is all this heading? Why is their mentor's past such forbidden territory? And what can explain his American wife's peculiar behaviour? Venturing beyond all limits—in relationships, in physical challenge, and in sexual behaviour—there is a point where oblivion is the only outcome. Full of Winton's lyrical genius for conveying physical sensation, *Breath* is a rich and atmospheric coming-of-age tale from one of world literature's finest storytellers.

About the book: Bring up the Bodies

The sequel to Hilary Mantel's 2009 Man Booker Prize winner and New York Times bestseller, *Wolf Hall* delves into the heart of Tudor history with the downfall of Anne Boleyn.

Though he battled for seven years to marry her, Henry is disenchanted with Anne Boleyn. She has failed to give him a son and her sharp intelligence and audacious will alienate his old friends and the noble families of England. When the discarded Katherine dies in exile from the court, Anne stands starkly exposed, the focus of gossip and malice.

At a word from Henry, Thomas Cromwell is ready to bring her down. Over three terrifying weeks, Anne is ensnared in a web of conspiracy, while the demure Jane Seymour stands waiting her turn for the poisoned wedding ring. But Anne and her powerful family will not yield without a ferocious struggle.

Hilary Mantel's *Bring Up the Bodies* follows the dramatic trial of the queen and her suitors for adultery and treason. To defeat the Boleyns, Cromwell must ally with his natural enemies, the papist aristocracy. What price will he pay for Anne's head?

Wolf Hall, the first book of the planned trilogy, was published in 2009 and received both the Man Booker Prize and (US) National Book Critics Circle Award.



About the book: Burial Rites

A brilliant literary debut, inspired by a true story: the final days of a young woman accused of murder in Iceland in 1829.

Set against Iceland's stark landscape, Hannah Kent brings to vivid life the story of Agnes, who, charged with the brutal murder of her former master, is sent to an isolated farm to await execution.

Horrified at the prospect of housing a convicted murderer, the family at first avoids Agnes. Only Toti, a priest Agnes has mysteriously chosen to be her spiritual guardian, seeks to understand her. But as Agnes's death looms, the farmer's wife and their daughters learn there is another side to the sensational story they've heard.

Riveting and rich with lyricism, *Burial Rites* evokes a dramatic existence in a distant time and place, and asks the question, how can one woman hope to endure when her life depends upon the stories told by others?

About the book: Cast Iron

West of France, 1989.

A weeping killer deposits the unconscious body of nineteen year old Lucie Martin, her head wrapped in a blue plastic bag, into the water of a picturesque lake.

Lot-et-Garonne, 2003.

Fourteen years later a summer heatwave parches the earth, killing trees and bushes and drying out streams. In the scorched mud and desiccated slime of the lake a fisherman finds a skeleton wearing a bag over its skull.

Paris, October 2011.

In an elegant apartment in Paris, forensic expert Enzo Macleod pores over the scant evidence of this, the sixth cold case he has been challenged to solve. In taking on this old and seemingly impossible task he will put everything and everyone he holds dear in a peril he could never have imagined.

About the book: The Cat's Table

In the early 1950s, an eleven-year-old boy boards a ship bound for England, and at mealtimes is seated at the 'cat's table' with a ragtag group of 'insignificant' adults and two other boys. As the ship makes its way across the Indian Ocean, through the Suez Canal, into the Mediterranean, the boys tumble from one adventure to another, 'bursting all over the place like freed mercury.' But there are other diversions: one man talks to them about jazz and women, another about literature. And at night, the boys spy on a shackled prisoner - his crime and fate a galvanizing mystery that will haunt them forever.

As the narrative moves between the decks and holds of the ship and the boy's adult years, it tells a spellbinding story about the differences between the tender innocence of childhood and the burdens of earned understanding, and about a lifelong journey that began unexpectedly with a spectacular sea voyage.

About the book: The Chocolate Tin

Alexandra Frobisher is a modern-thinking woman with hopes of a career in England's famous chocolate-making town of York. She has received several proposals of marriage, although none of them promises that elusive extra – love.

Matthew Britten-Jones is a man of charm and strong social standing. He impresses Alex and her parents with his wit and intelligence, but would an amicable union be enough for a fulfilling life together?

At the end of the war, Captain Harry Blakeney discovers a dead soldier in a trench in France. In the man's possession is a secret love note, tucked inside a tin of chocolate that had been sent to the soldiers as a gift from the people back home.

In pursuit of the author of this mysterious message, Harry travels to Rowntree's chocolate factory in England's north, where his life becomes inextricably bound with Alexandra and Matthew's. Only together will they be able to unlock secrets of the past and offer each other the greatest gift for the future.

From the battlefields of northern France to the medieval city of York, this is a heartbreaking tale about a triangle of love in all its forms and a story about the bittersweet taste of life . . . and of chocolate.



About the book: Cleanskin Cowgirls

Childhood friends, Elsie and Tara are from opposite sides of the class divide in the dead end town of Culvert. As soon as possible, they make an empowered dash to escape leaving their boyfriends behind. They find freedom mustering cattle on a remote outback station but scandal and a terrible betrayal send them on separate paths.

Elsie becomes an internationally successful country music singer but nearly dies from an overdose. It is only back in humble Culvert with the help of her old friend, Tara that she can find the meaning she's been seeking.

Cleanskin Cowgirls is the ultimate story about transformation and finding the meaning and purpose in today's bewildering world.

About the book: Company of Liars

Midsummer's Day, 1348

On this day of ill omen, plague makes its entrance. In a world ruled by faith and fear, nine desperate strangers, brought together by chance, attempt to outrun the certain death that is spreading inexorably toward them.

Each member of this motley company has a story to tell. From Camelot, the relic-seller who will become the group's leader, to Cygnus, the one-armed storyteller... from the strange, silent child called Narigorm to a painter and his pregnant wife, each has a secret. None is what they seem. And one among them conceals the darkest secret of all, propelling these liars to a destiny they never saw coming.

Macavity nomination

Company of Liars was shortlisted in the US for a Sue Feder Memorial Award for best history.

About the book: Crimson Dawn

Laura Murphy will need to call on all her grit and determination to retain her beloved farm... But will her fierce self-reliance close her off to the possibility of love?

Since inheriting Nambina, the property that's been in her family for generations, Laura Murphy has worked wonders. Rather than just focus on farming she has set up a successful school, teaching women the basics of managing a property – from fencing and mustering to handling the financial side of the business.

But the notoriously self-reliant Laura is lonely and still scarred by a tragedy from her past. She's also grappling with the hostility of her nearest neighbour and former best friend, Meghan Hunter. The fact that Laura's ex-boyfriend Josh is Meghan's brother only makes things worse.

When a solicitor contacts Laura saying his clients may have a claim over Nambina, her entire world is turned upside down, and she has to call on all her determination to hold on to the property she's worked so hard to build. In the process she realises she must reach out to friends and loved ones or risk losing everything.

By the bestselling author of Red Dust, this inspirational novel celebrates strength in the face of adversity as well as the enriching power of love.

About the book: Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbour's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.

About the book: Cutting for stone

A sweeping, emotionally riveting first novel—an enthralling family saga of Africa and America, doctors and patients, exile and home. Marion and Shiva Stone are twin brothers born of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon at a mission hospital in Addis Ababa. Orphaned by their mother's death in childbirth and their father's disappearance, bound together by a preternatural connection and a shared fascination with medicine, the twins come of age as Ethiopia hovers on the brink of revolution. Yet it will be love, not politics—their passion for the same woman—that will tear them apart and force Marion, fresh out of medical school, to flee his homeland. He makes his way to America, finding refuge in his work as an intern at an underfunded, overcrowded New York City



hospital. When the past catches up to him—nearly destroying him—Marion must entrust his life to the two men he thought he trusted least in the world: the surgeon father who abandoned him and the brother who betrayed him.

An unforgettable journey into one man's remarkable life, and an epic story about the power, intimacy, and curious beauty of the work of healing others. (From the publisher.)

About the book: Dark emu

Dark Emu. Black seeds : agriculture or accident? Puts forward an argument for reconsideration of the hunter-gatherer tag for pre-colonial Aboriginal Australians. The evidence insists that Aboriginal people right across the continent were using domesticated plants, sowing, harvesting, irrigating, and storing - behaviours inconsistent with the hunter-gatherer tag. Rupert Gerritsen and Bill Gammage in their latest books support this premise but Pascoe takes this a step further and challenges the hunter-gatherer tag as a convenient lie.

About the book: The Daughters of Mars

From the acclaimed author of Schindler's List comes the epic, unforgettable story of two sisters whose lives are transformed by the cataclysm of the First World War.

IN 1915, Naomi and Sally Durance, two spirited Australian sisters, join the war effort as nurses, escaping the confines of their father's farm and carrying a guilty secret with them. Though they are used to tending the sick, nothing could have prepared them for what they confront, first on a hospital ship near Gallipoli, then on the Western Front.

Yet amid the carnage, the sisters become the friends they never were at home and find themselves courageous in the face of extreme danger and also the hostility from some on their own side. There is great bravery, humour, and compassion, too, and the inspiring example of the remarkable women they serve alongside. In France, where Naomi nurses in a hospital set up by the eccentric Lady Tarlton while Sally works in a casualty clearing station, each meets an exceptional man: the kind of men for whom they might give up some of their newfound independence—if only they all survive.

At once vast in scope and extraordinarily intimate, *The Daughters of Mars* brings World War I vividly to life from an uncommon perspective. Thomas Keneally has written a remarkable novel about suffering and transcendence, despair and triumph, and the simple acts of decency that make us human even in a world gone mad.

About the book: Dewey

Is the heart warming, true story of an abandoned kitten who went on to live an extraordinary life, inspiring a struggling single mother, transforming a sleepy library and the inhabitants of its depressed Iowa farm town, and ultimately capturing the hearts of animal lovers around the world?

Vicki Myron was a single mom who, after surviving the loss of her family farm and an abusive husband, went back to school and became a librarian (and her family's first college graduate!). As the director of the Spencer (Iowa) Public Library, her biggest challenge was to raise the spirits of her beloved library's patrons, the residents of an out-of-the-way town deeply mired in the farm crisis of the 1980s. Her solution came in the unlikeliest of places when Vicki found a tiny, bedraggled kitten almost frozen to death in the library's night drop box. Recognizing the extraordinary strength and uniqueness of this kitten, Vicki received approval from the library board to adopt him as Spencer's resident library cat. From that moment on, her life – and the town of Spencer – would change forever.

Dewey, as the townspeople named the kitten, grew into a strutting, affable library cat whose antics kept patrons in stitches and whose sixth sense about those in need created hundreds of deep and loving friendships. As his fame grew, people drove hundreds of miles to meet Dewey, and he even ended up the subject of a hit documentary in Japan! Through it all, Dewey remained a loyal companion, a beacon of hope not just for Vicki Myron, but for the entire town of Spencer as it slowly pulled itself up from the worst financial crisis in its long history.

When Dewey died in 2006 at the age of 19, his obituary appeared in over 250 newspapers, including the New York Times, USA Today and the Des Moines Register, and was announced on the national television evening news.



About the book: *Dog Boy*

Abandoned in a big city at the onset of winter, a hungry four-year-old boy follows a stray dog to her lair. There in the rich smelly darkness, in the rub of hair, claws and teeth, he joins four puppies suckling at their mother's teats. And so begins Romochka's life as a dog.

Weak and hairless, with his useless nose and blunt little teeth, Romochka is ashamed of what a poor dog he makes. But learning how to be something else...that's a skill a human can master.

Fortunately - because one day Romochka will have to learn to be a boy.

The story of the child raised by beasts is timeless. But in *Dog Boy* Eva Hornung has created such a vivid and original telling, so viscerally convincing, that it becomes not just new but definitive: Yes, this is how it would be.

Taking us with Romochka into the world of his dog-family, she shows through his clear, alien eyes the disintegration—and obdurate persistence—of community, of family; the uncertain embrace of society, the consequences of social breakdown and exclusion. And in doing this she shows us our brutal, tender, frightened selves; exploring what our animal nature brings to our humanity.

About the book: *The Dovekeepers*

The lives of four sensuous, bold and remarkable women intersect in the year 70AD, in the desperate days of the siege of Masada, when supplies are dwindling and the Romans are drawing near. All are dovekeepers, and all are keepers of secrets - about who they are, where they come from, who fathered them, and whom they love. There is Yael, the assassin's daughter whose heartbreak leads to her true path in the ruins of the desert; Revka, the baker's wife who loses her dearest treasure on earth and yet finds the strength to protect her family; Aziza, the warrior's beloved who leads a secret life not even those closest to her could imagine; and Marit, beautiful witch of Moab, a woman as loyal as she is dangerous.

About the book: *The Drowning Girl*

Such a pretty girl. Four years old; well-loved by her young mother, Grace. But there's something ... off about the child. Her deathly fear of water; her night terrors; most of all, her fixation with a photo of an Irish seaside town called Coldharbour.

"Sylvie, tell me about your picture. Why's it so special, sweetheart?" My heart is racing, but I try to make my voice quite calm.

"That's my seaside, Grace." Very matter-of-fact, as though this should be obvious. "I lived there, Grace. Before." I sit very still for a long slow moment. Cold moves over my skin.

"I don't know about it," I say.

"Don't you, Grace?" She seems surprised.

Every once in a blue moon, a masterful writer dives into Gothic waters and emerges with a novel that—like Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, or, more recently, Patrick McGrath's *Asylum*—simultaneously celebrates and transcends the genre. Welcome Margaret Leroy to the clan.

Haunted and haunting, *The Drowning Girl* is a wonderfully original, deliciously suspenseful mystery. Impossible though it may seem Grace has to face the fact that her daughter may be remembering a past life. And not only that: the danger haunting Sylvie from her past life is still very much a threat to her in this one.

Published as *Yes, My Darling Daughter* in the US in May 2009.

About the book: *The Dry*

A small town hides big secrets in The Dry, an atmospheric, page-turning debut mystery by award-winning author Jane Harper.

After getting a note demanding his presence, Federal Agent Aaron Falk arrives in his hometown for the first time in decades to attend the funeral of his best friend, Luke. Twenty years ago when Falk was accused of murder, Luke was his alibi.

Falk and his father fled under a cloud of suspicion, saved from prosecution only because of Luke's steadfast claim that the boys had been together at the time of the crime. But now more than one person knows they didn't tell the



truth back then, and Luke is dead.

Amid the worst drought in a century, Falk and the local detective question what really happened to Luke. As Falk reluctantly investigates to see if there's more to Luke's death than there seems to be, long-buried mysteries resurface and so do the lies that have haunted them. Falk will find that small towns have always hidden big secrets. *(From the publisher.)*

About the book: The Elegance of a Hedgehog

Renée is the concierge of a grand Parisian apartment building, home to members of the great and the good. Over the years she has maintained her carefully constructed persona as someone reliable but totally uncultivated, in keeping, she feels, with society's expectations of what a concierge should be. But beneath this façade lies the real Renée: passionate about culture and the arts, and more knowledgeable in many ways than her employers with their outwardly successful but emotionally void lives.

Down in her lodge, apart from weekly visits by her one friend Manuela, Renée lives resigned to her lonely lot with only her cat for company. Meanwhile, several floors up, twelve-year-old Paloma Josse is determined to avoid the pampered and vacuous future laid out for her, and decides to end her life on her thirteenth birthday. But unknown to them both, the sudden death of one of their privileged neighbours will dramatically alter their lives forever.

By turn moving and hilarious, this unusual novel became the French publishing phenomenon of 2007 – from an initial print run of 3,000 to sales of 1.2 million in hardback. It took 35 weeks to reach the number one bestseller spot but has now spent longer in the French bestseller lists than Dan Brown. The translation rights have been sold to 31 countries. The Elegance of the Hedgehog featured in Paris Match magazine in 'highlights of 2007' along with the i-phone and facebook. In Italy, the novel has sold 400,000 copies to date and has been among the top five bestsellers since September, 2007.

About the book: The Elephant Keeper

England, 1766: After a long voyage from the East Indies, a ship docks in Bristol, England, and rumour quickly spreads about its unusual cargo. In the final two crates is a pair of young elephants, in poor health but alive.

Seeing a unique opportunity, a wealthy sugar merchant purchases the elephants for his country estate and turns their care over to a young stable boy, Tom Page. It takes time for Tom and the elephants to understand each other, but to the surprise of everyone on the estate, a remarkable bond is formed.

The Elephant Keeper is a captivating tale of love and loyalty between one man and the two exotic animals that change the lives of everyone who encounters them.

About the book: Enduring Love

Considered by many critics to be the novel that should have won Ian McEwan the Booker Prize, Enduring Love is an extraordinary exploration of love, faith, and obsession, the story of two delicately ordered lives thrown out of balance by a desperate, deranged passion.

Joe Rose is a scientist by training and a science writer by trade. Though he has a secure, loving relationship with his wife, Clarissa, the stillborn spectre of the scientific career he might have had still haunts him. Clarissa also has her ghosts—those of the children a medical mishap has left her unable to bear.

Despite these disappointments, they have established a careful emotional equilibrium between themselves and their professional lives. But while hiking through the Chiltern Hills one windy spring afternoon, Joe and Clarissa become unscripted players in a hot-air balloon tragedy that leaves one would-be rescuer dead and saddles Joe with the ardent and unwanted attentions of a disturbed young man.

About the book: Eyrie

Eyrie tells the story of Tom Keely, a man who's lost his bearings in middle age and is now holed up in a flat at the top of a grim high rise, looking down on the world he's fallen out of love with. He's cut himself off, until one day he runs into some neighbours: a woman he used to know when they were kids, and her introverted young boy. The encounter shakes him up in a way he doesn't understand. Despite himself, Keely lets them in.



What follows is a heart-stopping, ground breaking novel for our times – funny, confronting, exhilarating and haunting – populated by unforgettable characters. It asks how, in an impossibly compromised world, we can ever hope to do the right thing..

About the book: Falling leaves

Adeline Yen Mah's years of mental and physical abuse began when her mother died shortly after giving birth to her, leaving Adeline to suffer under a cold and manipulative stepmother, Niang, whose sadistic acts were never questioned by her husband.

Adeline's only refuge was her beloved Aunt Baba, the older sister of Adeline's father, who was also despised because she was a spinster and financially dependent on her brother. Eventually Adeline traveled to London to study medicine, then made a new life for herself in the United States.

But her horrific childhood continued to haunt her. Her father, who was a multi-millionaire, died in 1988, but Niang prevented his children from reading his will by telling them that he had died penniless. Niang herself passed away two years later, and the drama surrounding her death played itself out like a scene from Adeline's childhood re-enacted 40 years later.

It was only through writing her memoir that Adeline could accept her roots and exorcise the demons from her past. Written with a powerful voice that illuminates the complexities of Chinese society and family relationships throughout all cultures, *Falling Leaves* is a work of startling, heartfelt intimacy.

About the book: Farm City

Urban and rural collide in this wry, inspiring memoir of a woman who turned a vacant lot in downtown Oakland into a thriving farm.

Novella Carpenter loves cities-the culture, the crowds, and the energy. At the same time, she can't shake the fact that she is the daughter of two back-to-the-land hippies who taught her to love nature and eat vegetables.

Ambivalent about repeating her parents' disastrous mistakes, yet drawn to the idea of backyard self-sufficiency, Carpenter decided that it might be possible to have it both ways: a home grown vegetable plot as well as museums, bars, concerts, and a twenty-four-hour convenience mart mere minutes away. Especially when she moved to a ramshackle house in inner city Oakland and discovered a weed-choked, garbage-strewn, abandoned lot next door. She closed her eyes and pictured heirloom tomatoes, a beehive, and a chicken coop.

What started out as a few egg-laying chickens led to turkeys, geese, and ducks. Soon, some rabbits joined the fun, then two three-hundred-pound pigs. And no, these charming and eccentric animals weren't pets; she was a farmer, not a zookeeper. Novella was raising these animals for dinner. Novella Carpenter's corner of downtown Oakland is populated by unforgettable characters. Lana (anal spelled backward, she reminds us) runs a speakeasy across the street and refuses to hurt even a fly, let alone condone raising turkeys for Thanksgiving. Bobby, the homeless man who collects cars and car parts just outside the farm, is an invaluable neighbourhood concierge. The turkeys, Harold and Maude, tend to escape on a daily basis to cavort with the prostitutes hanging around just off the highway nearby. Every day on this strange and beautiful farm, urban meets rural in the most surprising ways.

For anyone who has ever grown herbs on their windowsill, tomatoes on their fire escape, or obsessed over the offerings at the local farmers' market, Carpenter's story will capture your heart. And if you've ever considered leaving it all behind to become a farmer outside the city limits, or looked at the abandoned lot next door with a gleam in your eye, consider this both a cautionary tale and a full-throated call to action. *Farm City* is an unforgettably charming memoir, full of hilarious moments, fascinating farmers' tips, and a great deal of heart. It is also a moving meditation on urban life versus the natural world and what we have given up to live the way we do.



About the book: Fatal Impact

When a girl's dead body is found in a toy box, forensic physician and pathologist Anya Crichton joins the police hunt in her home state of Tasmania for the child's missing mother and sister.

Staying with her increasingly erratic mother, Dr Jocelyn Reynolds, Anya fears the long shadow of her sister Miriam's disappearance has finally driven her mother past the brink of sanity. But Anya soon discovers that Jocelyn is keeping a deadly secret.

When tests conclude a virulent strain of food poisoning was responsible for the child's death, the outbreak begins to spread. Anya pairs up with Internal Affairs detective Oliver Parke to unravel the sinister connections between the fatal epidemic, a covered-up study, the shady deals of a multinational corporation and the alleged murder of a local scientist. Anya has strayed into a high-stakes game so dangerous the players will kill to keep it quiet. With time running short, Anya must uncover the truth before she is silenced - permanently.

About the book: The Fault in our stars

Despite the tumour-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten. Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love. (From the publisher)

About the book: The Fifth Letter

Four friends...

Joni, Deb, Eden, and Trina have been best friends since high school, sharing a bond that has seen them through their teenage years and into adulthood. But now, time and circumstance is starting to pull them apart as careers, husbands, and babies get in the way. As their yearly vacation becomes less of a priority—at least for three of the women—how can Joni find a way to draw the four of them back together?

Four secrets...

During a laughter and wine-filled night, the women dare one another to write anonymous letters, spilling their deepest, darkest secrets. But the fun game turns devastating, exposing cracks in their lives and the friendship they share. Each letter is a dark confession revealing shocking information. A troubled marriage? A substance abuse problem? A secret pregnancy? A heartbreaking diagnosis?

Five letters...

Late on one of their last nights together, after the other three have gone to bed, Joni notices something in the fireplace—a burnt, crumpled, nearly destroyed, sheet of paper that holds the most shattering revelation of all. It is a fifth letter—a hate-filled rant that exposes a vicious, deeply hidden grudge that has festered for decades. But who wrote it? Which one of them has seethed with resentment all these years? What should Joni do?

Best friends are supposed to keep your darkest secrets. But the revelations Joni, Deb, Eden and Trina have shared will ripple through their lives with unforeseen consequences... and things will never be the same.

About the book: Foal's Bread

The sound of horses' hooves turns hollow on the farms west of Wirri. If a man can still ride, if he hasn't totally lost the use of his legs, if he hasn't died to the part of his heart that understands such things, then he should go for a gallop. At the very least he should stand at the road by the river imagining that he's pushing a horse up the steep hill that leads to the house on the farm once known as One Tree.



About the book: *For Today I am a Boy*

Peter Huang and his sisters --- elegant Adele, shrewd Helen, and Bonnie the bon vivant --- grow up in a house of many secrets, then escape the confines of small-town Ontario and spread from Montreal to California to Berlin. Peter's own journey is obstructed by playground bullies, masochistic lovers, Christian ex-gays, and the ever-present shadow of his Chinese father.

At birth, Peter had been given the Chinese name Juan Chaun, powerful king. The exalted only son in the middle of three daughters, Peter was the one who would finally embody his immigrant father's ideal of power and masculinity. But Peter has different dreams: he is certain he is a girl.

Sensitive, witty, and stunningly assured, Kim Fu's debut novel lays bare the costs of forsaking one's own path in deference to one laid out by others. FOR TODAY I AM A BOY is a coming-of-age tale like no other, and marks the emergence of an astonishing new literary voice.

About the book: *Gone Girl*

Marriage can be a real killer.

One of the most critically acclaimed suspense writers of our time, New York Times bestseller Gillian Flynn takes that statement to its darkest place in this unputdownable masterpiece about a marriage gone terribly, terribly wrong. The Chicago Tribune proclaimed that her work "draws you in and keeps you reading with the force of a pure but nasty addiction." *Gone Girl's* toxic mix of sharp-edged wit and deliciously chilling prose creates a nerve-fraying thriller that confounds you at every turn.

On a warm summer morning in North Carthage, Missouri, it is Nick and Amy Dunne's fifth wedding anniversary. Presents are being wrapped and reservations are being made when Nick's clever and beautiful wife disappears from their rented McMansion on the Mississippi River. Husband-of-the-Year Nick isn't doing himself any favours with cringe-worthy daydreams about the slope and shape of his wife's head, but passages from Amy's diary reveal the alpha-girl perfectionist could have put anyone dangerously on edge. Under mounting pressure from the police and the media—as well as Amy's fiercely doting parents—the town golden boy parades an endless series of lies, deceptions, and inappropriate behaviour. Nick is oddly evasive, and he's definitely bitter—but is he really a killer?

As the cops close in, every couple in town is soon wondering how well they know the one that they love. With his twin sister, Margo, at his side, Nick stands by his innocence. Trouble is, if Nick didn't do it, where is that beautiful wife? And what was in that silvery gift box hidden in the back of her bedroom closet?

With her razor-sharp writing and trademark psychological insight, Gillian Flynn delivers a fast-paced, devilishly dark, and ingeniously plotted thriller that confirms her status as one of the hottest writers around.

About the book: *The Gourmet*

Or Gourmet Rhapsody was French novelist Muriel Barbery's first novel. It has only been translated and released in English after the phenomenal success of her second novel, *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*.

Gourmet Rhapsody is a special and very interesting debut novel. It encompasses a series of witty reflections on the life and career of the famous but oh so unlovable French food critic Pierre Arthens, as he lies on his death bed in the same posh building that was made famous in *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, desperate to recapture a forgotten flavour.

Monsieur Arthens, revered by some and reviled by many, has been lording it over the world's most esteemed chefs for years. He is a loathsome man who has passed judgment on their gastronomic creations year after year, and who has decided their fates with a stroke of his pen, destroying and building reputations on a whim.

Now, this self-absorbed dying man has one wish, one desire before he dies: he wants one last taste of the Flavor par excellence. His physician has told him he has 48 hours to live, so time is short. Lapsing through chapters into nostalgic memories of early, formative tastes, women and pets, Arthens reveals himself as a man driven by gastronomic ecstasies, from his childhood impressions of eating grilled meat in Tangiers to summers gorging on fresh fish in Brittany. Alternating with these splendid remembrances is decidedly more salty commentary by his resentful children.



We are told the strange tale of this venerable man's life, partly with his own voice, and partly told by acquaintances and other people (and even a cat). There are many who want to voice their views on M. Arthens – he has been a man without any middle ground, a man either loved or hated.

Muriel Barbery's debut novel may at times be a little rough-edged, but the prose is rich and very satisfying. *Gourmet Rhapsody* is an interesting book which is very well worth reading.

About the book: The Great Gatsby

Is a novel by the American author F. Scott Fitzgerald. First published on April 10, 1925, it is set on Long Island's North Shore and in New York City during the summer of 1922 and is a critique of the American Dream.

The novel chronicles the chaos of World War I, American society enjoyed unprecedented levels of prosperity during the "roaring" 1920s as the economy soared. At the same time, Prohibition, the ban on the sale and manufacture of alcohol as mandated by the Eighteenth Amendment, made millionaires out of bootleggers and led to an increase in organized crime. Although Fitzgerald, like Nick Carraway in his novel, idolized the riches and glamor of the age, he was uncomfortable with the unrestrained materialism and the lack of morality that went with it, a kind of decadence.

Although it was adapted into both a Broadway play and a Hollywood film within a year of publication, it was not popular upon initial printing, selling fewer than 25,000 copies during the remaining fifteen years of Fitzgerald's life. It was largely forgotten during the Great Depression and World War II. After its republishing in 1945 and 1953, it quickly found a wide readership and is today widely regarded as a paragon of the Great American Novel, and a literary classic. *The Great Gatsby* has become a standard text in high school and university courses on American literature in countries around the world, and is ranked second in the Modern Library's lists of the 100 Best Novels of the 20th Century.

About the book: The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

"I wonder how the book got to Guernsey? Perhaps there is some sort of secret homing instinct in books that brings them to their perfect readers."

January 1946: London is emerging from the shadow of the Second World War, and writer Juliet Ashton is looking for her next book subject. Who could imagine that she would find it in a letter from a man she's never met, a native of the island of Guernsey, who has come across her name written inside a book by Charles Lamb....

As Juliet and her new correspondent exchange letters, Juliet is drawn into the world of this man and his friends --- and what a wonderfully eccentric world it is. The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society --- born as a spur-of-the-moment alibi when its members were discovered breaking curfew by the Germans occupying their island --- boasts a charming, funny, deeply human cast of characters, from pig farmers to phrenologists, literature lovers all. Juliet begins a remarkable correspondence with the society's members, learning about their island, their taste in books, and the impact the recent German occupation has had on their lives. Captivated by their stories, she sets sail for Guernsey, and what she finds will change her forever.

Written with warmth and humour as a series of letters, this novel is a celebration of the written word in all its guises, and of finding connection in the most surprising ways.

About the book: Hand Me Down World

A woman washes ashore in Sicily. She has come from north Africa to find her son, taken from her when he was just days old by his father and stolen away to Berlin. With nothing but her maid's uniform and a knife stashed in a plastic bag, she relies on strangers—some generous, some exploiting—to guide her passage north.

These strangers tell of their encounters with a quiet, mysterious woman in a blue coat—each account a different view of the truth, a different truth. And slowly these fragments of a life piece together to create a spellbinding story of the courage of a mother and the versions of truth we create to accommodate our lives.

Haunting and beautiful, *Hand Me Down World* is simply unforgettable.



About the book: The Happiest Refugee

Anh Do nearly didn't make it to Australia. His entire family came close to losing their lives on the sea as they escaped from war-torn Vietnam in an overcrowded boat. But nothing - not murderous pirates, nor the imminent threat of death by hunger, disease or dehydration as they drifted for days - could quench their desire to make a better life in the country they had dreamed about.

Life in Australia was hard, an endless succession of back-breaking work, crowded rooms, ruthless landlords and make-do everything. But there was a loving extended family, and always friends and play and something to laugh about for Anh, his brother Khoa and their sister Tram. Things got harder when their father left home when Anh was thirteen - they felt his loss very deeply and their mother struggled to support the family on her own. His mother's sacrifice was an inspiration to Anh and he worked hard during his teenage years to help her make ends meet, also managing to graduate high school and then university.

Another inspiration was the comedian Anh met when he was about to sign on for a 60-hour a week corporate job. Anh asked how many hours he worked. 'Four,' the answer came back, and that was it. He was going to be a comedian!

The Happiest Refugee tells the incredible, uplifting and inspiring life story of one of our favourite personalities. Tragedy, humour, heartache and unswerving determination - a big life with big dreams. Anh's story will move and amuse all who read it.

About the book: Harmless

Full of suspense, Harmless, is the tightly woven story of eight year old Amanda, whose father is in prison, and Rattuwat, a Thai man burying his daughter in a strange land.

Abandoning their broken-down car on the way to the prison's visiting hour, Amanda and Rattuwat venture into the trackless scrub of Australia's outer suburbs. As the day heats up, the sense of menace intensifies and each of them enters the no-man's-land between safety and peril.

About the book: The Help

Three ordinary women are about to take one extraordinary step.

Twenty-two-year-old Skeeter has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone.

Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken.

Minnie, Aibileen's best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody's business, but she can't mind her tongue, so she's lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own.

Seemingly as different from one another as can be, these women will nonetheless come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk. And why? Because they are suffocating within the lines that define their town and their times. And sometimes lines are made to be crossed.

In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women--mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends--view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humour, and hope, The Help is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't.



About the book: The Heretic's Daughter

Martha Carrier was one of the first women to be accused, tried and hanged as a witch in Salem, Massachusetts. Like her mother, young Sarah Carrier is bright and wilful, openly challenging the small, brutal world in which they live. Often at odds with one another, mother and daughter are forced to stand together against the escalating hysteria of the trials and the superstitious tyranny that led to the torture and imprisonment of more than 200 people accused of witchcraft. This is the story of Martha's courageous defiance and ultimate death, as told by the daughter who survived.

Kathleen Kent is a tenth generation descendant of Martha Carrier. She paints a haunting portrait, not just of Puritan New England, but also of one family's deep and abiding love in the face of fear and persecution.

About the book: Hidden figures

The phenomenal true story of the black female mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space.

Before John Glenn orbited the earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space.

Among these problem-solvers were a group of exceptionally talented African American women, some of the brightest minds of their generation. Originally relegated to teaching math in the South's segregated public schools, they were called into service during the labour shortages of World War II, when America's aeronautics industry was in dire need of anyone who had the right stuff.

Suddenly, these overlooked math whizzes had a shot at jobs worthy of their skills, and they answered Uncle Sam's call, moving to Hampton, Virginia and the fascinating, high-energy world of the Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory.

Even as Virginia's Jim Crow laws required them to be segregated from their white counterparts, the women of Langley's all-black "West Computing" group helped America achieve one of the things it desired most: a decisive victory over the Soviet Union in the Cold War, and complete domination of the heavens.

Starting in World War II and moving through to the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement and the Space Race, Hidden Figures follows the interwoven accounts of Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Christine Darden, four African American women who participated in some of NASA's greatest successes.

It chronicles their careers over nearly three decades they faced challenges, forged alliances and used their intellect to change their own lives, and their country's future.

About the book: The Hidden hours

Arabella Lane, senior executive at a children's publisher, is found dead in the Thames on a frosty winter's morning after the office Christmas party. No one is sure whether she jumped or was pushed. The one person who may know the truth is the newest employee at Parker & Lane – the office temp, Eleanor.

Eleanor has travelled to London to escape the repercussions of her traumatic childhood in outback Australia. To her horror, she has no memory of the crucial hours leading up to Arabella's death – memory that will either incriminate or absolve her.

As Eleanor desperately tries to remember the events of that fateful night, her own extended family is dragged further into the dark, terrifying terrain of blame, suspicion and guilt.

Caught in a crossfire of accusations and lies, Eleanor isn't sure she can trust anyone – not even herself. As she races to uncover the truth, she realises that someone is intent on stopping her. Someone who, like Eleanor, knows just how deadly the darkest secrets can be.



About the book: Hopetoun Wives

At the giddy height of resources boom, a mine opens in tiny outback Hopetoun, Western Australia. This remote and beautiful place will change forever, uniting three very different women with its promise of new beginnings.

City slicker Jasmine has moved west reluctantly, to save her marriage. Miranda, the mine-manager's wife, is fighting to be her own woman – ever if it means adopting a course that could ruin the mine. And Brigid is struggling to keep her family together despite her husband's crippling debts.

In a town full of strangers, the three women join forces to open the Boomtown Café, sharing tears and laughter, frustrations and dreams. Amid the chaos and greed of a modern-day gold rush, they discover that true friendship may be the only thing that lasts.

About the book: Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet

In the opening pages of Jamie Ford's stunning debut novel, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, Henry Lee comes upon a crowd gathered outside the Panama Hotel, once the gateway to Seattle's Japan town. It has been boarded up for decades, but now the new owner has made an incredible discovery: the belongings of Japanese families, left when they were rounded up and sent to internment camps during World War II. As Henry looks on, the owner opens a Japanese parasol.

This simple act takes old Henry Lee back to the 1940s, at the height of the war, when young Henry's world is a jumble of confusion and excitement, and to his father, who is obsessed with the war in China and having Henry grow up American. While "scholar shipping" at the exclusive Rainier Elementary, where the white kids ignore him, Henry meets Keiko Okabe, a young Japanese American student. Amid the chaos of blackouts, curfews, and FBI raids, Henry and Keiko forge a bond of friendship—and innocent love—that transcends the long-standing prejudices of their Old World ancestors. And after Keiko and her family are swept up in the evacuations to the internment camps, she and Henry are left only with the hope that the war will end, and that their promise to each other will be kept.

Forty years later, Henry Lee is certain that the parasol belonged to Keiko. In the hotel's dark dusty basement he begins looking for signs of the Okabe family's belongings and for a long-lost object whose value he cannot begin to measure. Now a widower, Henry is still trying to find his voice—words that might explain the actions of his father; words that might bridge the gap between him and his modern, Chinese American son; words that might help him confront the choices he made many years ago.

Set during one of the most conflicted and volatile times in American history, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* is an extraordinary story of commitment and enduring hope. In Henry and Keiko, Jamie Ford has created an unforgettable duo whose story teaches us of the power of forgiveness and the human heart.

About the book: I'm Not Scared

It's the hottest summer of the twentieth century. A tiny community of five houses in the middle of wheat fields. While the adults shelter indoors, six children venture out on their bikes across the scorched, deserted countryside.

In the midst of that sea of golden wheat, nine-year-old Michele Amitrano discovers a secret so momentous, so terrible, that he dare not tell anyone about it. To come to terms with what he finds, he will have to draw strength from his own imagination and sense of humanity.

The reader witnesses a dual story: the one that is seen through Michele's eyes, and the tragedy involving the adults of this isolated hamlet. The result is an immensely powerful, lyrical and skilfully narrated novel, reminiscent of Stephen King's *Stand By Me*.

About the book: Inheritance

Andy Larkham is late. He is due at the funeral of his favourite school teacher, who once told him: 'It's hard work being anyone.' It's especially hard for Andy – stuck in a dead-end job, terminally short of cash and with a fiancée who is about to ditch him. When the funeral leads to unexpected consequences, Andy has to ask himself: how far will he go to change his life?

From early-twentieth-century Turkey to modern day London, Nicholas Shakespeare takes us on an extraordinary journey that explores the temptations of unexpected wealth, the secrets of damaged families and the price of being



true to oneself. At once a love story spanning many decades and a tragedy of betrayal and missed opportunities, it is a romance for our times.

About the book: The Ink Bridge

Each step becomes a heartbeat and I feel the distance between Omed and me closing. I remember when I first met him - when he had showed me what bravery meant. How he had stood up for what he believed. In the end that had been his undoing. The Ink Bridge is the compelling story of two young men: Omed, an Afghani refugee who flees the Taliban and undertakes a perilous journey to seek asylum in Australia; and Hector, an Australian boy afflicted by grief, who has given up on school and retreated into silence. Their paths meet at a candle factory where they both find work. But secrets fester behind the monotonous routine: secrets with terrible consequences. Powerful and compelling, Omed's and Hector's story will grip hold of your heart and not let go. 'A moving story that gives an insight into a well-publicised yet unknown issue.'

About the book: In One Person

A New York Times bestselling novel of desire, secrecy, and sexual identity, In One Person is a story of unfulfilled love; tormented, funny, and affecting; and an impassioned embrace of our sexual differences. Billy, the bisexual narrator and main character of In One Person, tells the tragicomic story (lasting more than half a century) of his life as a "sexual suspect," a phrase first used by John Irving in 1978 in his landmark novel of "terminal cases," The World According to Garp.

In One Person is a poignant tribute to Billy's friends and lovers; a theatrical cast of characters who defy category and convention. Not least, In One Person is an intimate and unforgettable portrait of the solitariness of a bisexual man who is dedicated to making himself "worthwhile

About the book: In the Shadow of the Banyan

You are about to read an extraordinary story. It will take you to the very depths of despair and show you unspeakable horrors.

It will reveal a gorgeously rich culture struggling to survive through a furtive bow, a hidden ankle bracelet, fragments of remembered poetry. It will ensure that the world never forgets the atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979, when an estimated two million people lost their lives. It will give you hope, and it will confirm the power of storytelling to lift us up and help us not only survive but transcend suffering, cruelty, and loss.

For seven-year-old Raami, the shattering end of childhood begins with the footsteps of her father returning home in the early dawn hours, bringing details of the civil war that has overwhelmed the streets of Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital. Soon the family's world of carefully guarded royal privilege is swept up in the chaos of revolution and forced exodus. Over the next four years, as the Khmer Rouge attempts to strip the population of every shred of individual identity, Raami clings to the only remaining vestige of her childhood— the mythical legends and poems told to her by her father.

In a climate of systematic violence where memory is sickness and justification for execution, Raami fights for her improbable survival. Displaying the author's extraordinary gift for language, In the Shadow of the Banyan is a brilliantly wrought tale of human resilience.

About the book: Iran Awakening

Author was winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize. As stated 'Written with modesty, passion, and humanity, "Iran Awakening" is a unique memoir that blends equal parts sorrow and joy, nostalgia and hope. This is the inspiring story of a remarkable woman and her battle for the soul of a nation that uneasily poised at the centre of Middle Eastern and global events.'



About the book: Jasper Jones

Late on a hot summer night in the tail end of 1965, Charlie Bucktin, a precocious and bookish boy of thirteen, is startled by an urgent knock on the window of his sleep-out. His visitor is Jasper Jones, an outcast in the regional mining town of Corrigan. Rebellious, mixed-race and solitary, Jasper is a distant figure of danger and intrigue for Charlie. So when Jasper begs for his help, Charlie eagerly steals into the night by his side, terribly afraid but desperate to impress.

Jasper takes him through town and to his secret glade in the bush, and it's here that Charlie bears witness to Jasper's horrible discovery. With his secret like a brick in his belly, Charlie is pushed and pulled by a town closing in on itself in fear and suspicion as he locks horns with his tempestuous mother; falls nervously in love and battles to keep a lid on his zealous best friend, Jeffrey Lu.

And in vainly attempting to restore the parts that have been shaken loose, Charlie learns to discern the truth from the myth, and why white lies creep like a curse. In the simmering summer where everything changes, Charlie learns why the truth of things is so hard to know, and even harder to hold in his heart.

About the book: Jeeves and the Wedding Bells

Bertie Wooster (a young man about town) and his butler Jeeves (the very model of the modern manservant)—return in their first new novel in nearly forty years: *Jeeves and the Wedding Bells* by Sebastian Faulks.

P.G. Wodehouse documented the lives of the inimitable Jeeves and Wooster for nearly sixty years, from their first appearance in 1915 (“Extricating Young Gussie”) to his final completed novel (*Aunts Aren’t Gentlemen*) in 1974. These two were the finest creations of a novelist widely proclaimed to be the finest comic English writer by critics and fans alike.

Now, forty years later, Bertie and Jeeves return in a hilarious affair of mix-ups and mishaps. With the approval of the Wodehouse estate, acclaimed novelist Sebastian Faulks brings these two back to life for their legion of fans. Bertie, nursing a bit of heartbreak over the recent engagement of one Georgina Meadowes to someone not named Wooster, agrees to “help” his old friend Peregrine “Woody” Beeching, whose own romance is foundering. That this means an outing to Dorset, away from an impending visit from Aunt Agatha, is merely an extra benefit. Almost immediately, things go awry and the simple plan quickly becomes complicated. Jeeves ends up impersonating one Lord Etringham, while Bertie pretends to be Jeeves’ manservant “Wilberforce,”—and this all happens under the same roof as the now affianced Ms. Meadowes. From there the plot becomes even more hilarious and convoluted, in a brilliantly conceived, seamlessly written comic work worthy of the master himself.

About the book: Kabul Beauty School

Soon after the fall of the Taliban, in 2001, Deborah Rodriguez went to Afghanistan as part of a group offering humanitarian aid to this war-torn nation. Surrounded by men and women whose skills—as doctors, nurses, and therapists—seemed eminently more practical than her own, Rodriguez, a hairdresser and mother of two from Michigan, despaired of being of any real use. Yet she soon found she had a gift for befriending Afghans, and once her profession became known she was eagerly sought out by Westerners desperate for a good haircut and by Afghan women, who have a long and proud tradition of running their own beauty salons. Thus an idea was born.

With the help of corporate and international sponsors, the Kabul Beauty School welcomed its first class in 2003. Well-meaning but sometimes brazen, Rodriguez stumbled through language barriers, overstepped cultural customs, and constantly juggled the challenges of a post-war nation even as she learned how to empower her students to become their families’ breadwinners by learning the fundamentals of colouring techniques, haircutting, and makeup. Yet within the small haven of the beauty school, the line between teacher and student quickly blurred as these vibrant women shared with Rodriguez their stories and their hearts: the newlywed who faked her virginity on her wedding night, the twelve-year-old bride sold into marriage to pay her family’s debts, the Taliban member’s wife who pursued her training despite her husband’s constant beatings. Through these and other stories, Rodriguez found the strength to leave her own unhealthy marriage and allow herself to love again, Afghan style.

With warmth and humour, Rodriguez details the lushness of a seemingly desolate region and reveals the magnificence behind the burqa. *Kabul Beauty School* is a remarkable tale of an extraordinary community of women who come together and learn the arts of perms, friendship, and freedom.



About the book: The Language of flowers

A mesmerizing, moving, and elegantly written debut novel, *The Language of Flowers* beautifully weaves past and present, creating a vivid portrait of an unforgettable woman whose gift for flowers helps her change the lives of others even as she struggles to overcome her own troubled past.

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating grief, mistrust, and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings.

Now eighteen and emancipated from the system, Victoria has nowhere to go and sleeps in a public park, where she plants a small garden of her own. Soon a local florist discovers her talents, and Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But a mysterious vendor at the flower market has her questioning what's been missing in her life, and when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness. (From the publisher.)

About the book: The Last Runaway

In New York Times bestselling author Tracy Chevalier's newest historical saga, she introduces Honor Bright, a modest English Quaker who moves to Ohio in 1850, only to find herself alienated and alone in a strange land. Sick from the moment she leaves England, and fleeing personal disappointment, she is forced by family tragedy to rely on strangers in a harsh, unfamiliar landscape. Nineteenth-century America is practical, precarious, and unsentimental, and scarred by the continuing injustice of slavery. In her new home Honor discovers that principles count for little, even within a religious community meant to be committed to human equality. However, drawn into the clandestine activities of the Underground Railroad, a network helping runaway slaves escape to freedom, Honor befriends two surprising women who embody the remarkable power of defiance. Eventually she must decide if she too can act on what she believes in, whatever the personal costs. A powerful journey brimming with colour and drama, *The Last Runaway* is Tracy Chevalier's vivid engagement with an iconic part of American history. (From the publisher.)

About the book: The Last Sky

In *The Last Sky*, Alice Nelson delivers a powerful meditation on the nuances attachment, the workings of memory, storytelling and history on nations and individuals, and the strange legacies of colonialism, love and betrayal. Set against a backdrop of uncertainty and changing political temper, the novel is set in the months leading up to the return of the colony of Hong Kong to China after ninety-nine years of British rule. Loyalties are divided, the privileged world of the British expatriates is under threat and the Chinese population is strained and uneasy.

Into this maelstrom steps a young woman, Maya Wise, an Australian art historian adrift in a failing marriage and alone in a strange world far from home. Maya drifts through Hong Kong, exploring the surreal world of the expatriates and the equally intricate worlds of the Chinese characters she encounters. She begins to uncover the secret past of an old Chinese bookseller and the wartime love affair he had with a young Jewish woman seeking refuge in China. As Maya pastes together the fragments of a life destroyed by desperation and love, she begins to imaginatively reconstruct the story of the forgotten histories of Hong Kong and Shanghai and to make sense of her own life.

The narrative is interspersed by an imagined series of stories about the Jewish refugees in Shanghai and the strange, transient world they created in the ghettos of the Chinese city: the jazz clubs and the makeshift kosher bakeries, the bars where you could dance with a Russian countess for 10 cents.

A eulogy for the end of love, this acutely observed novel is also a moving meditation on exile, memory and the ways in which we reconcile ourselves with loss. *The Last Sky* marks Alice Nelson as one of Australia's most promising new talents.



About the book: Levels of Life

Julian Barnes, author of the Man Booker Prize–winning novel *The Sense of an Ending*, gives us his most powerfully moving book yet, beginning in the nineteenth century and leading seamlessly into an entirely personal account of loss—making *Levels of Life* an immediate classic on the subject of grief.

Levels of Life is a book about ballooning, photography, love and loss; about putting two things, and two people, together, and about tearing them apart. One of the judges who awarded Barnes the 2011 Booker Prize described him as “an unparalleled magus of the heart.” This book confirms that opinion. (From the publisher.)

About the book: Life after Life

On a cold and snowy night in 1910, Ursula Todd is born, the third child of a wealthy English banker and his wife. Sadly, she dies before she can draw her first breath.

On that same cold and snowy night, Ursula Todd is born, lets out a lusty wail, and embarks upon a life that will be, to say the least, unusual. For as she grows, she also dies, repeatedly, in any number of ways. Clearly history (and Kate Atkinson) have plans for her: In Ursula rests nothing less than the fate of civilization.

Wildly inventive, darkly comic, startlingly poignant—this is Kate Atkinson at her absolute best, playing with time and history, telling a story that is breathtaking for both its audacity and its endless satisfactions.

About the book: Life of Pi

Winner of the 2002 Man Booker Award

Life of Pi is a masterful and utterly original novel that is at once the story of a young castaway who faces immeasurable hardships on the high seas, and a meditation on religion, faith, art and life that is as witty as it is profound. Using the threads of all of our best stories, Yann Martel has woven a glorious spiritual adventure that makes us question what it means to be alive, and to believe.

Growing up in Pondicherry, India, Piscine Molitor Patel—known as Pi—has a rich life. Bookish by nature, young Pi acquires a broad knowledge of not only the great religious texts but of all literature, and has a great curiosity about how the world works. His family runs the local zoo, and he spends many of his days among goats, hippos, swans, and bears, developing his own theories about the nature of animals and how human nature conforms to it. Pi’s family life is quite happy, even though his brother picks on him and his parents aren’t quite sure how to accept his decision to simultaneously embrace and practise three religions—Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam.

But despite the lush and nurturing variety of Pi’s world, there are broad political changes afoot in India, and when Pi is sixteen his parents decide that the family needs to escape to a better life. Choosing to move to Canada, they close the zoo, pack their belongings, and board a Japanese cargo ship called the *Tsimtsum*. Travelling with them are many of their animals, bound for zoos in North America. However, they have only just begun their journey when the ship sinks, taking the dreams of the Patel family down with it. Only Pi survives, cast adrift in a lifeboat with the unlikely of travelling companions: a zebra, an orang-utan, a hyena, and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.

Thus begins Pi Patel’s epic, 227-day voyage across the Pacific, and the powerful story of faith and survival at the heart of *Life of Pi*. Worn and scared, oscillating between hope and despair, Pi is witness to the playing out of the food chain, quite aware of his new position within it. When only the tiger is left of the seafaring menagerie, Pi realizes that his survival depends on his ability to assert his own will, and sets upon a grand and ordered scheme to keep from being Richard Parker’s next meal.

As the days pass, Pi fights both boredom and terror by throwing himself into the practical details of surviving on the open sea—catching fish, collecting rain water, protecting himself from the sun—all the while ensuring that the tiger is also kept alive, and knows that Pi is the key to his survival. The castaways face gruelling pain in their brushes with starvation, illness, and the storms that lash the small boat, but there is also the solace of beauty: the rainbow hues of a dorado’s death-throes, the peaceful eye of a looming whale, the shimmering blues of the ocean’s swells. Hope is fleeting, however, and despite adapting his religious practices to his daily routine, Pi feels the constant, pressing weight of despair. It is during the most hopeless and gruelling days of his voyage that Pi whittles to the core of his beliefs, casts off his own assumptions, and faces his underlying terrors head-on.



About the book: The Light Between Oceans

The debut of a stunning new voice in fiction—a novel both heartbreaking and transcendent

After four harrowing years on the Western Front, Tom Sherbourne returns to Australia and takes a job as the lighthouse keeper on Janus Rock, nearly half a day's journey from the coast.

To this isolated island, where the supply boat comes once a season and shore leaves are granted every other year at best, Tom brings a young, bold, and loving wife, Isabel.

Years later, after two miscarriages and one stillbirth, the grieving Isabel hears a baby's cries on the wind. A boat has washed up onshore carrying a dead man and a living baby.

Tom, whose records as a lighthouse keeper are meticulous and whose moral principles have withstood a horrific war, wants to report the man and infant immediately. But Isabel has taken the tiny baby to her breast. Against Tom's judgment, they claim her as their own and name her Lucy. When she is two, Tom and Isabel return to the mainland and are reminded that there are other people in the world. Their choice has devastated one of them.

M. L. Stedman's mesmerizing, beautifully written novel seduces us into accommodating Isabel's decision to keep this "gift from God." And we are swept into a story about extraordinarily compelling characters seeking to find their North Star in a world where there is no right answer, where justice for one person is another's tragic loss.

The Light Between Oceans is exquisite and unforgettable, a deeply moving novel. (From the publisher.)

About the book: Lion (A long way home)

The miraculous and triumphant story of Saroo Brierley, a young man who used Google Earth to rediscover his childhood life and home in an incredible journey from India to Australia and back again

At only five years old, Saroo Brierley got lost on a train in India. Unable to read or write or recall the name of his hometown or even his own last name, he survived alone for weeks on the rough streets of Calcutta before ultimately being transferred to an agency and adopted by a couple in Australia.

Despite his gratitude, Brierley always wondered about his origins. Eventually, with the advent of Google Earth, he had the opportunity to look for the needle in a haystack he once called home, and pore over satellite images for landmarks he might recognize or mathematical equations that might further narrow down the labyrinthine map of India. One day, after years of searching, he miraculously found what he was looking for and set off to find his family. A Long Way Home is a moving, poignant, and inspirational true story of survival and triumph against incredible odds. It celebrates the importance of never letting go of what drives the human spirit: hope.

About the book: The List of My Desires

Money can buy you freedom. But what about happiness?

When Jocelyne looks at herself in the mirror, she sees a middle-aged, married woman who runs a dressmaking shop in a small provincial French town and lives a very ordinary existence. But what happened to all those dreams she had when she was seventeen?

Then she wins millions on the lottery and has the chance to change her life for ever. So why does she find herself reluctant to accept the money? To help her decide what to do, she begins to compile a list of her heart's desires, never suspecting for one moment that the decision might be taken out of her hands ...

About the book: The Little Stranger

In this chilling and vividly rendered ghost story set in post-war Britain...Sarah Waters revisits the fertile setting of Britain in the 1940s—and gives us a sinister tale of a haunted house, brimming with the rich atmosphere and psychological complexity that have become hallmarks of Waters' work.

The Little Stranger follows the strange adventures of Dr Faraday, the son of a maid who has built a life of quiet respectability as a country doctor. One dusty post-war summer in his home of rural Warwickshire, he is called to a patient at Hundreds Hall. Home to the Ayres family for more than two centuries, the Georgian house, once grand and handsome, is now in decline—its masonry crumbling, its gardens choked with weeds, the clock in its stable yard permanently fixed at twenty to nine.



But are the Ayreses haunted by something more ominous than a dying way of life? Little does Dr Faraday know how closely, and how terrifyingly, their story is about to become entwined with his. Abundantly atmospheric and elegantly told, *The Little Stranger* is Sarah Waters' most thrilling and ambitious novel yet.

About the book: *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Florentino Ariza has never forgotten his first love. He has waited nearly a lifetime in silence since his beloved Fermina married another man. No woman can replace her in his heart. But now her husband is dead. Finally after fifty one years, nine months and four days Florentino has another chance to declare his eternal passion and win her back. Will love that has survived half a century remain unrequited?

About the book: Lovesong

Seeking shelter in a Parisian cafe from a sudden rainstorm, John Patterner meets the exotic Sabiha and his carefully mapped life changes forever. Resonant of the bestselling *Conditions of Faith*, Alex Miller's keenly awaited new novel tells the deeply moving story of their lives together, and of how each came undone by desire. Strangers did not, as a rule, find their way to Chez Dom, a small, rundown Tunisian cafe on Paris' distant fringes. Run by the widow Houria and her young niece, Sabiha, the cafe offers a home away from home for the North African immigrant workers working at the great abattoirs of Vaugiraud, who, like them, had grown used to the smell of blood in the air. But when one day a lost Australian tourist, John Patterner, seeks shelter in the cafe from a sudden Parisian rainstorm, a tragic love story begins to unfold. Years later, while living a quiet life in suburban Melbourne, John is haunted by what happened to him and Sabiha at Vaugiraud. He confides his story to Ken, an ageing writer, who sees in John's account the possibility for one last simple love story. When Ken tells his daughter this she reminds him 'Love is never simple, Dad. You should know that.'

He does know it. But being the writer he is, he cannot resist the lure of the story. Told with all Miller's distinctive clarity, intelligence and compassion, *Lovesong* is a pitch-perfect novel, a tender and enthralling story about the intimate lives of ordinary people. Like the truly great novelist he is, Miller locates the heart of his story in the moral frailties and secret passions of his all-too-human characters.

About the book: Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

You are about to travel to Edgcombe St. Mary, a small village in the English countryside filled with rolling hills, thatched cottages, and a cast of characters both hilariously original and as familiar as the members of your own family. Among them is Major Ernest Pettigrew (retired), the unlikely hero of Helen Simonson's wondrous debut. Wry, courtly, opinionated, and completely endearing, Major Pettigrew is one of the most indelible characters in contemporary fiction, and from the very first page of this remarkable novel he will steal your heart.

The Major leads a quiet life valuing the proper things that Englishmen have lived by for generations: honour, duty, decorum, and a properly brewed cup of tea. But then his brother's death sparks an unexpected friendship with Mrs Jasmina Ali, the Pakistani shopkeeper from the village. Drawn together by their shared love of literature and the loss of their respective spouses, the Major and Mrs Ali soon find their friendship blossoming into something more. But village society insists on embracing him as the quintessential local and her as the permanent foreigner. Can their relationship survive the risks one takes when pursuing happiness in the face of culture and tradition?

About the book: The Man in the Gray Flannel Skirt

The grandson of political philosopher Sidney Hook and ivy-league educated former clerk for a federal judge recounts his decision to leave the professional world to experiment with the norms and conventions of society, an effort that prompted him to don women's skirts and espadrilles as part of an effort to define himself.

If you have ever felt like a misfit in school or been paralysed by your family's imposing expectations, if you have ever obsessed about your appearance or panicked about choosing a career path, if you have ever wondered if every single thing to which your body is exposed, from egg yolks to X-rays, might harm you, then you may be surprised to find a kindred spirit in *The Man in the Gray Flannel Skirt*.



About the book: Maralinga

During the darkest days of the Cold War, in the remote wilderness of a South Australian desert, the future of an infant nation is being decided . . . without its people's knowledge.

A British airbase in the middle of nowhere; an atomic weapons testing ground; an army of raw youth led by powerful, ambitious men - a cocktail for disaster. Such is Maralinga in the spring of 1956.

MARALINGA is a story of British Lieutenant Daniel Gardiner, who accepts a twelve-month posting to the wilds of South Australia on a promise of rapid promotion; Harold Dartleigh, Deputy Director of MI-6 and his undercover operative Gideon Melbray; Australian Army Colonel Nick Stratton and the enigmatic Petraeus Mitchell, bushman and anthropologist. They all find themselves in a violent and unforgiving landscape; infected with the unique madness and excitement that only nuclear testing creates.

MARALINGA is also a story of love; a love so strong that it draws the adventurous young English journalist Elizabeth Hoffmann halfway around the world in search of the truth. And MARALINGA is a story of heartbreak; heartbreak brought to the innocent First Australians who had walked their land unhindered for 40,000 years.

Maralinga . . . a desolate place where history demands an emerging nation choose between hell and reason.

About the book: Middlesex

A dazzling triumph from the bestselling author of *The Virgin Suicides*, *Middlesex* is the astonishing tale of a gene that passes down through three generations of a Greek American family and flowers in the body of Calliope Stephanides. "I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day in January of 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974."

So begins Jeffrey Eugenides' second novel, *Middlesex*, the story of Calliope Stephanides, who discovers at the age of fourteen that she is really a he. Cal traces the story of his transformation and the genetic condition that caused it back to his paternal grandparents, who happen also to be brother and sister, and the Greek village of Bithynios in Asia Minor.

In 1922, Desdemona Stephanides and her brother, Lefty, whose parents were killed in the recent war with the Turks, are living alone in their nearly abandoned village. Pulled together by isolation, sympathy, and, perhaps, fate, Lefty and Desdemona become husband and wife, and a recessive genetic condition begins its journey toward eventual expression in their grandchild Calliope.

Middlesex is a story about what it means to occupy the complex and unnamed middle ground between male and female, Greek and American, past and present. For Cal, caught between these identities, the journey to adulthood is particularly fraught. Jeffrey Eugenides' epic portrayal of Cal's struggle is classical in its structure and scope and contemporary in its content; a tender and honest examination of a battle that is increasingly relevant to us all.

About the book: The Midnight Dress

Quiet misfit Rose doesn't expect to fall in love with the sleepy beach town of Leonora. Nor does she expect to become fast friends with beautiful, vivacious Pearl Kelly, organizer of the high school float at the annual Harvest Festival parade. It's better not to get too attached when Rose and her father live on the road, driving their caravan from one place to the next whenever her dad gets itchy feet. But Rose can't resist the mysterious charms of the town or the popular girl, try as she might.

Pearl convinces Rose to visit Edie Baker, once a renowned dressmaker, now a rumoured witch. Together Rose and Edie hand-stitch an unforgettable dress of midnight blue for Rose to wear at the Harvest Festival—a dress that will have long-lasting consequences on life in Leonora, a dress that will seal the fate of one of the girls. Karen Foxlee's breathtaking novel weaves friendship, magic, and a murder mystery into something moving, real, and distinctly original.



About the book: Midwives

In the pastoral community of Reddington, Vermont, during the harsh winter of 1981, Sibyl Danforth makes a life-or-death decision based on fifteen years of experience as a respected midwife—a decision intended to save a child, a decision that will change her life forever.

In the midst of a brutally cold night, cut off from the area hospital and even from the rescue squad by an ice storm that has downed phone lines and made roads impassable, Sibyl Danforth feels she has no alternative except to attempt to save the baby of a woman in her care who she fears has died of a stroke during a long and difficult labour. Later that day, however, the midwife's assistant tells the police that she believes the mother was still very much alive when the caesarean section was performed in the cold and isolated farmhouse. The story of this tragedy and its aftermath is narrated by Sibyl's daughter, Connie, now an obstetrician, who is remembering the events that occurred the year she turned fourteen, when her mother's freedom and her family's fate rested in the hands of twelve men and women.

About the book: Mornings in Jenin

Palestine 1941. In the small village of Ein Hod a father leads a procession of his family and workers through the olive groves. As they move through the trees the green fruits drop onto the orchard floor; the ancient cycle of the seasons providing another bountiful harvest. Palestine 1948. The Abulheja family are forcibly removed from their ancestral home in Ein Hod and sent to live in a refugee camp in Jenin. Through Amal, the bright granddaughter of the patriarch, we witness the stories of her brothers: one, a stolen boy who becomes an Israeli soldier; the other who in sacrificing everything for the Palestinian cause will become his enemy. Amal's own dramatic story threads its way through six decades of Palestinian-Israeli tension, eventually taking her into exile in Pennsylvania in America. Amal's is a story of love and loss, of childhood, marriage, parenthood, and finally the need to share her history with her daughter, to preserve the greatest love she has. Richly told and full of humanity, *Mornings in Jenin* forces us to take a fresh look at one of the defining political conflicts of our time. It is extraordinary debut.

About the book: A Most Immoral Woman

It is 1904. At the age of forty-two, the handsome and influential Australian George Ernest Morrison, Peking correspondent for *The Times* of London, is considered the most eligible Western bachelor in China. But Morrison has yet to meet his match -- until one night, where the Great Wall meets the sea, he encounters Mae Perkins, the ravishing and free-spirited daughter of a California millionaire, and a turbulent affair begins.

War, meanwhile, has broken out between Russia and Japan for domination over northeast China. Morrison's colleague Lionel James has an idea that will revolutionize war correspondence. But the Russians, the Japanese, and even *The Times'* own editor, it seems, would rather see James hung from the nearest yardarm. James believes that only Morrison can help. Just as Mae seems to be slipping away from him, James's quest propels Morrison into her magnetic orbit once more.

Inspired by a true story, *A Most Immoral Woman* is a surprising, witty and erotic tale of sexual and other obsessions set in the 'floating world' of Westerners in China and Japan at the turn of the twentieth century. At its heart stands an original and devastatingly honest woman, as seen from the perspective of the extraordinary man who was drawn to love her.



About the book: Mr Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore

A gleeful and exhilarating tale of global conspiracy, complex code-breaking, high-tech data visualization, young love, rollicking adventure, and the secret to eternal life—mostly set in a hole-in-the-wall San Francisco bookstore. The Great Recession has shuffled Clay Jannon out of his life as a San Francisco Web-design drone—and serendipity, sheer curiosity, and the ability to climb a ladder like a monkey has landed him a new gig working the night shift at Mr Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore. But after just a few days on the job, Clay begins to realize that this store is even more curious than the name suggests. There are only a few customers, but they come in repeatedly and never seem to actually buy anything, instead “checking out” impossibly obscure volumes from strange corners of the store, all according to some elaborate, long-standing arrangement with the gnomish Mr Penumbra. The store must be a front for something larger, Clay concludes, and soon he's embarked on a complex analysis of the customers' behaviour and roped his friends into helping to figure out just what's going on. But once they bring their findings to Mr Penumbra, it turns out the secrets extend far outside the walls of the bookstore.

With irresistible brio and dazzling intelligence, Robin Sloan has crafted a literary adventure story for the twenty-first century, evoking both the fairy-tale charm of Haruki Murakami and the enthusiastic novel-of-ideas wizardry of Neal Stephenson or a young Umberto Eco, but with a unique and feisty sensibility that's rare to the world of literary fiction. Mr Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore is exactly what it sounds like: an establishment you have to enter and will never want to leave, a modern-day cabinet of wonders ready to give a jolt of energy to every curious reader, no matter the time of day.

About the book: Never Coming Back

Emily Kane arrives at her sister Carrie's house to find the front door unlocked, dinner on the table, and the family nowhere to be found—Carrie, her husband, and two daughters have disappeared. When the police turn up no leads, Emily turns to her former boyfriend David Raker, a missing persons investigator, to track the family down. As Raker pursues the case, he discovers evidence of a sinister cover-up, decades in the making and with a long trail of bodies behind it.

Tim Weaver's thrillers have been hugely popular in the UK, and now Never Coming Back will introduce his beloved character David Raker to American audiences. Set in Las Vegas and a small fishing village in England, the novel is a smart, fast-paced thriller sure to keep readers guessing until the very end.

About the book: Never Let Me Go

Kathy, Ruth and Tommy were pupils at Hailsham - an idyllic establishment situated deep in the English countryside. The children there were tenderly sheltered from the outside world, brought up to believe they were special, and that their personal welfare was crucial. But for what reason were they really there? It is only years later that Kathy, now aged 31, finally allows herself to yield to the pull of memory. What unfolds is the haunting story of how Kathy, Ruth and Tommy, slowly come to face the truth about their seemingly happy childhoods - and about their futures. Never Let Me Go is a uniquely moving novel, charged throughout with a sense of the fragility of our lives.

About the book: New boy

Tracy Chevalier brings Shakespeare's harrowing drama of jealousy and revenge to a 1970s era elementary school playground. Arriving at his fifth school in as many years, diplomat's son Osei Kokote knows he needs an ally if he is to survive his first day - so he's lucky to hit it off with Dee, the most popular girl in school. But one student can't stand to witness this budding relationship: Ian decides to destroy the friendship between the black boy and the golden girl. By the end of the day, the school and its key players - teachers and pupils alike - will never be the same again. The tragedy of Othello is transposed to a 1970s suburban Washington schoolyard, where kids fall in and out of love with each other before lunchtime, and practice a casual racism picked up from their parents and teachers. Peeking over the shoulders of four 11 year olds - Osei, Dee, Ian, and his reluctant 'girlfriend' Mimi - Tracy Chevalier's powerful drama of friends torn apart by jealousy, bullying and betrayal will leave you reeling.



About the book: Next of Kin

Two generations of Merediths farm the land running down to the River Dean. Robin Meredith bought his dairy farm just before he married Caro, his enigmatic Californian wife, while his father Harry is an arable farmer on the adjoining farm, working the land, with the help of his other son Joe, just as his father and grandfather had before him. But now Caro has died, as much of a mystery to the Meredith family as she was when she arrived twenty years ago, leaving Robin and the rest of the family to cope with the loss.

With Caro gone, her adopted daughter Judy feels cut adrift, while for Joe the despair at her death is far deeper than the family suspects. And into the midst of this unhappy family comes Zoe, Judy's London friend, an outsider with her strange townie appearance, independent spirit and disturbing directness. Everyone underestimates Zoe's power as a catalyst for change as the realities behind the seeming idyll of a rural community become ever clearer.

About the book: Norwegian Wood

Toru Watanabe is looking back on the love and passions of his life and trying to make sense of it all. As his first love Naoko sinks deeper into mental despair, he is inexorably pushed to find a new meaning and a new love in order to survive.

Toru, a quiet and preternaturally serious young college student in Tokyo, is devoted to Naoko, a beautiful and introspective young woman, but their mutual obsession is marked by the tragic death of their best friend years before.

About the book: Nourishment

With her children evacuated and her husband at the front, Tory Pace is grudgingly sharing the family home with her irascible mother; working at the local gelatine factory – to help the war effort. Her life is thrown into turmoil, however, when her prisoner-of-war husband, Donald, makes an outrageous demand for sexual gratification. He wants a dirty letter, by return of post! Horrified, at first, that Donald is being turned into some sort of monster by the Nazis, Tory's disgust gradually gives way to a sense of marital duty, and taking in the libraries, bookshops, public conveniences and barbers shops of South-East London, she begins a quest to master the language of carnal desire: a quest that takes a sudden and unexpected turn into far more dangerous territory. When Donald returns home, damaged and deranged, at the end of the war, Tory has a few things to explain. But Donald has his own secret plans for their future, and the ensuing tangle of lies, misplaced loyalties and uneasy alliances has repercussions that extend deep into the austerity years that followed the Second World War.

About the book: Ocean at the end of the Lane

Sussex, England. A middle-aged man returns to his childhood home to attend a funeral. He is drawn to the farm at the end of the road, where, when he was seven, he encountered a most remarkable girl, Lettie Hempstock. He hasn't thought of Lettie in decades, and yet sitting by the pond (a pond that she'd claimed was an ocean), the unremembered past comes flooding back.

Forty years earlier, a man committed suicide in a stolen car at this farm at the end of the road. Like a fuse on a firework, his death lit a touchpaper and resonated in unimaginable ways. The darkness was unleashed, something scary and thoroughly incomprehensible to a little boy. And Lettie—magical, comforting, wise beyond her years—promised to protect him, no matter what.

A groundbreaking work from a master, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* is told with a rare understanding of all that makes us human, and shows the power of stories to reveal and shelter us from the darkness inside and out. A stirring, terrifying, and elegiac fable as delicate as a butterfly's wing and as menacing as a knife in the dark. (From the publisher.)



About the book: Once Upon a Time in Beirut

"My first memories of Beirut are of a dynamic tangle of contradictions: ancient and contemporary, pre and post war, Muslim, Christian, East and West, secular and devout, eye popping wealth that rubbed against desperate poverty. In the middle of it all, the city drew its energy. Once upon a time, in Beirut, I found an unlikely place to call home".

Catherine Taylor and her husband (award-winning ABC Four Corners reporter Matthew Carney) moved to Beirut in early 2001 to work as foreign correspondents. It was the start of an era that would see some of the Middle East's most tumultuous events for a generation.

As Catherine journeyed through the region on assignment, Beirut emerged as unlikely haven. Everything about this formerly war-torn city enchanted her - from exploring its famous nightlife to her new home in an elegant Oriental apartment - and its reputation as a war zone faded to the sidelines.

Catherine soon fell in love with the Paris of the Middle East and became fascinated by the complexity of its people: their exuberant and loving nature seemed to belie the many dark years of bloodshed and conflict they'd endured.

About the book: The Orchard of Lost Souls

The eagerly awaited new novel from the author of the acclaimed Orange-longlisted *Black Mamba Boy*. It is 1988 and Hargeisa waits. Whispers of revolution travel on the dry winds but still the dictatorship remains secure. Soon, and through the eyes of three women, we will see Somalia fall.

Nine-year-old Deqo has left the vast refugee camp she was born in, lured to the city by the promise of her first pair of shoes.

Kawsar, a solitary widow, is trapped in her little house with its garden clawed from the desert, confined to her bed after a savage beating in the local police station.

Filsan, a young female soldier, has moved from Mogadishu to suppress the rebellion growing in the north.

And as the country is unravelled by a civil war that will shock the world, the fates of the three women are twisted irrevocably together.

Intimate, frank, brimming with beauty and fierce love, *The Orchard of Lost Souls* is an unforgettable account of ordinary lives lived in extraordinary times.

About the book: The Other

Is about youth and idealism, adulthood and its compromises, and two powerfully different visions of what it means to live a good life.

John William Barry has inherited the pedigree—and wealth—of two of Seattle's elite families; Neil Countryman is blue-collar Irish. Nevertheless, when the two boys meet in 1972 at age sixteen, they're brought together by what they have in common: a fierce intensity and a love of the outdoors that takes them, together and often, into Washington's remote backcountry, where they must rely on their wits—and each other—to survive.

Soon after graduating from college, Neil sets out on a path that will lead him toward a life as a devoted schoolteacher and family man. But John William makes a radically different choice, dropping out of college and moving deep into the woods, convinced that it is the only way to live without hypocrisy. When John William enlists Neil to help him disappear completely, Neil finds himself drawn into a web of secrets and often agonizing responsibility, deceit, and tragedy—one that will finally break open with a wholly unexpected, life-altering revelation.

About the book: The Other Side of the World

Cambridge, 1963. Charlotte struggles to reconnect with the woman she was before children, and to find the time and energy to paint. Her husband, Henry, cannot face the thought of another English winter. A brochure slipped through the letterbox gives him the answer: 'Australia brings out the best in you'.

Charlotte is too worn out to resist, and before she knows it is travelling to the other side of the world. But on their arrival in Perth, the southern sun shines a harsh light on both Henry and Charlotte and slowly reveals that their new life is not the answer either was hoping for.

Charlotte is left wondering if there is anywhere she belongs, and how far she'll go to find her way home...



About the book: *Our Sunshine*

Our Sunshine is the tale of a man whose story outgrew his life. Robert Drewe's strikingly imaginative re-creation of the inner life of Ned Kelly, the National Hero and Devil Incarnate of the Antipodes, is written with a brilliant clarity and impressionistic economy. It carries the reader into a dreamworld of astonishing and violent revelation, an entrancing and frightening landscape of murder, sexuality, persecution, robbery, vanity, politics, and corruption.

About the book: *The Painted Veil*

Shallow and lost, Kitty marries the intellectual and passionate Walter Fane, a bacteriologist on leave from the Far East, who is madly in love with her. She does this purely so that she can be married before her younger sister, Doris, and to get away from her mother. They move to Hong Kong where, bored by the stifling climate and social mores, Kitty quickly starts an affair with the "perfect" Charles Townsend, the handsome assistant colonial secretary. When Walter finds out about their affair, he gives Kitty an ultimatum. She must either accompany him to the Chinese interior to deal with a cholera epidemic, risking death, or he will divorce her, causing a scandal, unless Townsend will agree to marry her. Kitty goes to see Townsend who betrays her badly, after previous declarations of love, by refusing to divorce his wife to marry her.

Their conversation, when she realizes he doesn't really love her, takes up several chapters as Townsend's true nature is slowly revealed to Kitty. She is surprised to find when she returns home that Walter has already had her clothes packed - he knew Townsend would let her down. Heartbroken and disillusioned, Kitty decides she has no option but to accompany Walter to the cholera-infested mainland of China. At first resentful and bitter, Kitty softens as she meets Waddington, a cynical British man living locally with a Chinese mistress and some French nuns who are nursing the sick in the cholera epidemic. Seeing the respect with which Walter is held she also begins to understand what a good man he is. She begins to help the nuns with their nursing and is humbled by the experience and their unshakeable faith. Kitty discovers she is pregnant but does not know whether her husband or Charles Townsend is the father. She cannot bring herself to deceive her husband about the paternity despite knowing it might let him forgive her.

Soon after this Walter dies in the epidemic and Kitty returns to Hong Kong where she is met by Mrs Townsend, Charles' wife who convinces Kitty to come to stay with them - as Kitty is now mistakenly regarded as a heroine who voluntarily and faithfully followed her husband into great danger. At the Townsend house, much against her intentions, she is seduced by Charles and makes love with him one more time despite realising he is vain and shallow, much as she once was. She is disgusted with herself and tells him what she thinks of him. She returns to the UK, en route finding her rather domineering mother has died. Her father, an only moderately successful barrister, is appointed Chief Justice of a minor British colony in the Caribbean and she persuades her father to allow her to accompany him there where she intends to dedicate her life to her father and to ensuring her child is brought up to avoid the mistakes she had made.

About the book: *The Pajama Girls of Lambert Square*

From the author of TIED TO THE TRACKS comes a charming new novel set in Lambert's Corner, South Carolina-a beautiful town where no one's secrets remain secret for very long.

For John Dodge, moving to new places and reviving ailing businesses is a way of life. So when he sees an ad for Scriveners, a stationery shop in a small town in South Carolina, he decides to take the plunge.

As soon as he arrives in Lambert's Corner, Dodge falls happily into the whirl of gossip, gifts and quintessential Southern hospitality. Link Kay, one of his employees, warms up to him after Dodge admires his expertise on pens. Bean Hurt-a feisty and outspoken ten-year-old-becomes a fast friend. And Maude Golden, the mayor, supplies him with indispensable information. But the one person who really catches Dodge's eye is Julia Darrow-the beautiful but aloof pyjama wearing-owner of the Cocoon, a popular store specializing in luxury linens. Dodge tries to befriend her, but she remains elusive and mysterious. Everyone knows that she is a widow, but no one seems to know why she came to town or why she never leaves Lambert Square-or does she?

Like Dodge, Chicago-born Julia is fleeing a tumultuous past. But with the help of a hilarious and endearing cast of characters, Julia and Dodge learn that, sometimes, you don't need to go far to find home.



About the book: The Perfume Collector

An inheritance from a mysterious stranger . . . an abandoned perfume shop on the Left Bank of Paris . . . three exquisite perfumes that hold a memory . . . and a secret.

London, 1955: Grace Monroe is a fortunate young woman. Despite her sheltered upbringing in Oxford, her recent marriage has thrust her into the heart of London's most refined and ambitious social circles. However, playing the role of the sophisticated socialite her husband would like her to be doesn't come easily to her—and perhaps never will.

Then one evening a letter arrives from France that will change everything. Grace has received an inheritance. There's only one problem: she has never heard of her benefactor, the mysterious Eva d'Orsey.

So begins a journey that takes Grace to Paris in search of Eva. There, in a long-abandoned perfume shop on the Left Bank, she discovers the seductive world of perfumers and their muses, and a surprising, complex love story. Told by invoking the three distinctive perfumes she inspired, Eva d'Orsey's story weaves through the decades, from 1920s New York to Monte Carlo, Paris, and London.

But these three perfumes hold secrets. And as Eva's past and Grace's future intersect, Grace realizes she must choose between the life she thinks she should live and the person she is truly meant to be.

Illuminating the lives and challenging times of two fascinating women, *The Perfume Collector* weaves a haunting, imaginative, and beautifully written tale filled with passion and possibility, heartbreak and hope.

About the book: The Perks of being a Wallflower

Since its publication, Stephen Chbosky's haunting debut novel has received critical acclaim, provoked discussion and debate, grown into a cult phenomenon with over a million copies in print, and inspired a major motion picture.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower is a story about what it's like to travel (and run away from) that strange course through the uncharted territory of high school, the world of first dates, family dramas, new friends, and the loss of a good friend and a favourite aunt. It's a world of sex, drugs, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*....of those wild and poignant roller-coaster days known as growing up.

About the book: The Photograph

Is an unflinching and unforgettable story of the many ways the past intrudes upon the present and the present alters the past.

When Glyn, a landscape historian, stumbles upon a photograph of his deceased wife, Kath, holding hands with another man, his understanding of the past is "savagely undermined." Reading the past, uncovering and deciphering its strata, is his stock in trade, but now it is his own personal landscape, and the history of his marriage, that he must reinterpret. He veers from emotional vertigo to an obsessive need to know what kind of woman his wife really was. Why did she have an affair? Did she have other lovers? Was their whole life together a lie? His search takes him back into his life with Kath, and her absence becomes the most powerful presence in his life, rising up before him, speaking to him, leading him to discoveries that reveal much more—and much more disturbing truths—about himself than about his wife. Though dead, she is the novel's most eloquent character, the still centre around which the lives of all the other characters begin to swirl. Who was she, this beautiful woman who seemed to draw and hold the gaze of everyone who saw her, who seemed carefree and clearly happy, a burst of colour and uncontainable energy?

And why did she have to die so young?



About the book: Pomegranate Soup

Beneath the holy mountain Croagh Patrick, in damp and lovely County Mayo, sits the small, sheltered village of Ballinacroagh. To the exotic Aminpour sisters, Ireland looks like a much-needed safe haven. It has been seven years since Marjan Aminpour fled Iran with her younger sisters, Bahar and Layla, and she hopes that in Ballinacroagh, a land of "crazed sheep and dizzying roads," they might finally find a home.

From the kitchen of an old pastry shop on Main Mall, the sisters set about creating a Persian oasis. Soon sensuous wafts of cardamom, cinnamon, and saffron float through the streets—an exotic aroma that announces the opening of the Babylon Café, and a shock to a town that generally subsists on boiled cabbage and Guinness served at the local tavern. And it is an affront to the senses of Ballinacroagh's uncrowned king, Thomas McGuire. After trying to buy the old pastry shop for years and failing, Thomas is enraged to find it occupied—and by foreigners, no less.

But the mysterious, spicy fragrances work their magic on the townsfolk, and soon, business is booming. Marjan is thrilled with the demand for her red lentil soup, abgusht stew, and rosewater baklava—and with the transformation in her sisters. Young Layla finds first love, and even tense, haunted Bahar seems to be less nervous.

And in the stand-up-comedian-turned-priest Father Fergal Mahoney, the gentle, lonely widow Estelle Delmonico, and the headstrong hairdresser Fiona Athey, the sisters find a merry band of supporters against the close-minded opposition of less welcoming villagers stuck in their ways. But the idyll is soon broken when the past rushes back to threaten the Aminpours once more, and the lives they left behind in revolution-era Iran bleed into the present. Infused with the textures and scents, trials and triumphs of two distinct cultures, *Pomegranate Soup* is an infectious novel of magical realism. This richly detailed story, highlighted with delicious recipes, is a delectable journey into the heart of Persian cooking and Irish living.

About the book: The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

At the staid Marcia Blaine School for Girls, in Edinburgh, Scotland, teacher extraordinaire Miss Jean Brodie is unmistakably, and outspokenly, in her prime. She is passionate in the application of her unorthodox teaching methods, in her attraction to the married art master, Teddy Lloyd, in her affair with the bachelor music master, Gordon Lowther, and—most important—in her dedication to "her girls," the students she selects to be her *crème de la crème*.

Fanatically devoted, each member of the Brodie set—Eunice, Jenny, Mary, Monica, Rose, and Sandy—is "famous for something," and Miss Brodie strives to bring out the best in each one. Determined to instil in them independence, passion, and ambition, Miss Brodie advises her girls, "Safety does not come first. Goodness, Truth, and Beauty come first. Follow me."

And they do. But one of them will betray her.

About the book: Pure Gold Baby

Jessica Speight, a young anthropology student in 1960s London, is at the beginning of a promising academic career when an affair with her married professor turns her into a single mother. Anna is a pure gold baby with a delightful sunny nature. But as it becomes clear that Anna will not be a normal child, the book circles questions of responsibility, potential, even age, with Margaret Drabble's characteristic intelligence, sympathy, and wit.

Drabble once wrote, "Family life itself, that safest, most traditional, most approved of female choices, is not a sanctuary; it is, perpetually, a dangerous place." Told from the point of view of the group of mothers who surround Jess, *The Pure Gold Baby* is a brilliant, prismatic novel that takes us into that place with satiric verve, trenchant commentary, and a movingly intimate story of the unexpected transformations at the heart of motherhood.



About the book: Reading in Bed

Opening at the Hay Festival, and ending with the prospect of a spring wedding, Sue Gee's new novel is a lively story of tangled relationships and the sustaining powers of good books, loyal friends and conversation.

Friends since university, with busy working lives behind them, Dido and Georgia have long been looking forward to carefree days of books and conversation, when each finds herself caught up in unexpected domestic drama. Dido, for the first time, has cause to question her marriage; widowed Georgia feels certain her husband will return to her. Meanwhile, an eccentric country cousin goes wildly off the rails, children are unhappy in love, and perfect health is all at once in question.

Turning to one another should be as natural as breathing, but with so much at stake even this old friendship comes under strain. As hatches are battened down, and silence falls, it takes all their loyalty and humour to recover the easy, confiding intimacy of the past. This novel will bring a writer who 'transforms the stuff of ordinary life into art' (Philippa Gregory, *The Sunday Times*) to her widest audience yet

About the book: Reality

My story took a year to unfold. A year ago these were ordinary people. Not special in any way. Not suspecting I had something planned for them. This is the ultimate game of manipulation. Bored with his too-easy successes elsewhere, the unnamed narrator selects six people at random and makes their lives collide.

But the choices they make within the relationships he has constructed are theirs, not his. In the end, who is to blame for their actions: for their deceit, infidelity and crime?

Reality uses our culture's fascination with reality TV and its insatiable exposé of the private lives of the famous, the infamous, and even the plain ordinary, to provoke hard questions about ourselves.

At the heart of this novel are questions of fate and self-determination: to what extent are we responsible for our actions, even when the situation created is beyond our control?

The reader becomes as implicated as the six subjects in this dark, fast paced and thought provoking read.

About the book: Relativity

A "beautifully written, heartbreaking" (S. J. Watson) debut novel about a gifted boy who discovers the truth about his past, his overprotective single mother who tries desperately to shield him from it, and the father he has never met who has unexpectedly returned.

Twelve-year-old Ethan Forsythe, an exceptionally talented boy obsessed with physics and astronomy, has been raised alone by his mother in Sydney, Australia. Claire, a former professional ballerina, has been a wonderful parent to Ethan, but he's becoming increasingly curious about his father's absence in his life. Claire is fiercely protective of her talented, vulnerable son - and of her own feelings. But when Ethan falls ill, tied to a tragic event that occurred during his infancy, her tightly-held world is split open.

Thousands of miles away on the western coast of Australia, Mark is trying to forget about the events that tore his family apart, but an unexpected call forces him to confront his past and return home. When Ethan secretly intercepts a letter from Mark to Claire, he unleashes long-suppressed forces that - like gravity - pull the three together again, testing the limits of love and forgiveness.

Told from the alternating points of view of Ethan and each of his parents, Relativity is a poetic and soul-searing exploration of unbreakable bonds, irreversible acts, the limits of science, and the magnitude of love.



About the book: The Road

A searing, post-apocalyptic novel destined to become Cormac McCarthy’s masterpiece.

A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is gray. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don’t know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food—and each other.

The Road is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, “each the other’s world entire,” are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation.

About the book: Room

ROOM is narrated by a five-year-old called Jack, who lives in a single room with his Ma and has never been outside. An international bestseller as soon as it was published in August 2010, ROOM has been shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and won the Hughes & Hughes Irish Novel of the Year and the Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize (for best Canadian novel). It has also been a finalist for International Author of the Year (Galaxy National Book Awards) and the Governor General’s Award. The American Library Association have given it an Alex Award (for an adult book with special appeal to readers 12-18). ROOM was Amazon.ca and Indigo’s Best Book of 2010, the listeners’ choice on Liveline (Ireland), and fiction winner of the Goodreads Choice Awards.

Jack and Ma live in a locked room that measures eleven foot by eleven. When he turns five, he starts to ask questions, and his mother reveals to him that there is a world outside. Told entirely in Jack’s voice, ROOM is no horror story or tearjerker, but a celebration of resilience and the love between parent and child.

About the book: Rosewater and Soda Bread

More than a year has passed since Marjan, Bahar, and Layla, the beautiful Iranian Aminpour sisters, sought refuge in the quaint Irish town of Ballinacraugh. Opening the beguiling Babylon Café, they charmed the locals with their warm hearts and delectable Persian cuisine, bringing a saffron-scented spice to the once-sleepy village.

But when a young woman with a dark secret literally washes up on Clew Bay Beach, the sisters’ world is once again turned upside down. With pale skin and webbed hands, the girl is otherworldly, but her wounds tell a more earthly (and graver) story—one that sends the strict Catholic town into an uproar. The Aminpours rally around the newcomer, but each sister must also contend with her own transformation—Marjan tests her feelings for love with a dashing writer, Bahar takes on a new spiritual commitment with the help of Father Mahoney, and Layla matures into a young woman when she and her boyfriend, Malachy, step up their hot and heavy relationship.

Filled with mouth-watering recipes and enchanting details of life in Ireland, Rosewater and Soda Bread is infused with a lyrical warmth that radiates from the Aminpour family and their big-hearted Italian landlady, Estelle, to the whole of Ballinacraugh—and the world beyond.



About the book: Salvation Creek

'As I bumped across the water in a leaky tin dinghy I didn't know that the journey had begun. That the pale yellow house with a corridor of columns and long verandah on the high, rough hill would hold the key to it all'...

At 44 Susan Duncan appeared to have it all. Editor of two of Australia's top selling women's magazines, a happy marriage, a jet setting lifestyle covering stories from New York to Greenland, rubbing shoulders with Hollywood royalty, the world was her oyster.

But when her beloved husband and brother die within three days of each other, her glittering life shatters. In shock, she zips on her work face and soldiers on - until one morning eighteen months later when she simply can't get out of bed.

Heartbreaking, funny and searingly honest, SALVATION CREEK is the story of a woman who found the courage not only to walk away from a successful career and begin again, but to beat the odds in her own battle for survival and find a new life - and love - in a tiny waterside idyll cut off from the outside world. From the terrifying first step of quitting the job that had always anchored her to abandoning herself to a passionate affair that she knows will break her heart; Duncan never flinches from the truth or loses her wicked sense of humour. Even when she finds a paradise on earth only to discover that it may be too late. It's been said that the greatest risk in life is not to take a risk.

Sometimes you have to risk everything to find the only thing you need.

About the book: The Sea

Incandescent prose. Beautifully textured characterisation. Transparent narratives. The adjectives to describe the writing of John Banville are all affirmative, and *The Sea* is a ringing affirmation of all his best qualities. His publishers are claiming that this novel by the Booker-shortlisted author is his finest yet, and while that claim may have an element of hyperbole, there is no denying that this perfectly balanced book is among the writer's most accomplished work.

Max Morden has reached a crossroads in his life, and is trying hard to deal with several disturbing things. A recent loss is still taking its toll on him, and a trauma in his past is similarly proving hard to deal with. He decides that he will return to a town on the coast at which he spent a memorable holiday when a boy. His memory of that time devolves on the charismatic Grace family, particularly the seductive twins Myles and Chloe. In a very short time, Max found himself drawn into a strange relationship with them, and pursuant events left their mark on him for the rest of his life. But will he be able to exorcise those memories of the past?

About the book: Sea Hearts

'Why would I? People are uneasy enough with me - if I start bringing up sea-wives, they'll take against me good and proper.'

'It could be secret.'

'Could it?'

On remote Rollrock Island, the sea-witch Misaskaella discovers she can draw a girl from the heart of a seal. So, for a price, any man might buy himself a bride; an irresistibly enchanting sea-wife. But what cost will be borne by the people of Rollrock - the men, the women, the children - once Misaskaella sets her heart on doing such a thing?

Margo Lanagan weaves an extraordinary tale of desire and revenge, of loyalty, heartache and human weakness, and of the unforeseen consequences of all-consuming love.



About the book: Second Suns

From the co-author of *Three Cups of Tea* comes the inspiring story of two very different doctors—one from the United States, the other from Nepal—united in a common mission: to rid the world of preventable blindness. In this transporting book, David Oliver Relin shines a light on the work of Geoffrey Tabin and Sanduk Ruit, gifted ophthalmologists who have dedicated their lives to restoring sight to some of the world's most isolated, impoverished people through the Himalayan Cataract Project, an organization they founded in 1995. Tabin was the high-achieving bad boy of Harvard Medical School, an accomplished mountain climber and adrenaline junkie as brilliant as he was unconventional. Ruit grew up in a remote Nepalese village, where he became intimately acquainted with the human costs of inadequate access to health care. Together they found their life's calling: tending to the afflicted people of the Himalayas, a vast mountainous region with an alarmingly high incidence of cataract blindness.

About the book: The Secret River

The Orange Prize–winning author Kate Grenville recalls her family's history in an astounding novel about the pioneers of New South Wales. Already a best seller in Australia (where it was published in 2005), *The Secret River* is the story of Grenville's ancestors, who wrested a new life from the alien terrain of Australia and its native people. William Thornhill, a Thames bargeman, is deported to the New South Wales colony in what would become Australia in 1806. In this new world of convicts and charlatans, Thornhill tries to pull his family into a position of power and comfort. When he rounds a bend in the Hawkesbury River and sees a gentle slope of land, he becomes determined to make the place his own. But, as uninhabited as the island appears, Australia is full of native people, and they do not take kindly to Thornhill's theft of their home.

The Secret River is the tale of Thornhill's deep love for his small corner of the new world, and his slow realization that if he wants to settle there, he must ally himself with the most despicable of the white settlers, and to keep his family safe, he must permit terrifying cruelty to come to innocent people.

About the book: The Secrets She Keeps

Agatha is pregnant and works part-time stocking shelves at a grocery store in a ritzy London suburb, counting down the days until her baby is due. As the hours of her shifts creep by in increasing discomfort, the one thing she looks forward to at work is catching a glimpse of Meghan, the effortlessly chic customer whose elegant lifestyle dazzles her. Meghan has it all: two perfect children, a handsome husband, a happy marriage, a stylish group of friends, and she writes perfectly droll confessional posts on her popular parenting blog—posts that Agatha reads with devotion each night as she waits for her absent boyfriend, the father of her baby, to maybe return her calls.

When Agatha learns that Meghan is pregnant again, and that their due dates fall within the same month, she finally musters up the courage to speak to her, thrilled that they now have the ordeal of childbearing in common. Little does Meghan know that the mundane exchange she has with a grocery store employee during a hurried afternoon shopping trip is about to change the course of her not-so-perfect life forever...

With its brilliant rendering of the secrets some women hold close and a shocking act that cannot be undone, *The Secrets She Keeps* delivers a dark and twisted page-turner that is absolutely impossible to put down.

About the book: Silent House

In an old mansion in Cennethisar (formerly a fishing village, now a posh resort near Istanbul) the old widow Fatma awaits the annual summer visit of her grandchildren: Faruk, a dissipated failed historian; his sensitive leftist sister, Nilgun; and the younger grandson, Metin, a high school student drawn to the fast life of the nouveaux riches, who dreams of going to America. The widow has lived in the village for decades, ever since her husband, an idealistic young doctor, first arrived to serve the poor fishermen. Now mostly bedridden, she is attended by her faithful servant Recep, a dwarf—and the doctor's illegitimate son. Mistress and servant share memories, and grievances, of those early years. But it is Recep's cousin Hassan, a high school dropout, and fervent right-wing nationalist, who will



draw the visiting family into the growing political cataclysm, in this spell-binding novel depicting Turkey's tumultuous century-long struggle for modernity.

Translated by Robert Finn

About the book: Silkworm

A compulsively readable crime novel with twists at every turn, *The Silkworm* is the second in the highly acclaimed series featuring Cormoran Strike and his determined young assistant Robin Ellacott.

When novelist Owen Quine goes missing, his wife calls in private detective Cormoran Strike. At first, she just thinks he has gone off by himself for a few days – as he has done before – and she wants Strike to find him and bring him home.

But as Strike investigates, it becomes clear that there is more to Quine's disappearance than his wife realises. The novelist has just completed a manuscript featuring poisonous pen-portraits of almost everyone he knows. If the novel were published it would ruin lives – so there are a lot of people who might want to silence him.

And when Quine is found brutally murdered in bizarre circumstances, it becomes a race against time to understand the motivation of a ruthless killer, a killer unlike any he has encountered before...

About the book: Skin and Bone

Detective Kate Farrer returns to duty after three months of leave following her traumatic abduction. Fearing that she has lost her edge, she reluctantly partners homicide newcomer Oliver Parke, and they are thrown into the investigation of a woman burnt beyond recognition in a house-fire. The post-mortem reveals she had recently given birth, but there is no sign of the baby.

With homicide short-staffed, Kate and Oliver are also ordered to look into the disappearance of a teenage girl.

Suspicion falls on Mark Dobbie, a steroid user who is obsessed with the missing girl's sister. When the detectives find explicit photos of unconscious women in his home, they wonder if they have found their prime suspect.

While the pressure to identify the charred body and find the teenage girl escalates, a quadriplegic is burnt to death in his bed. Shocking links to all three crimes emerge and Kate Farrer's past demons come back to haunt her. But she must fight them – her partner's life depends on it.

About the book: Smokey Joe's Café

Thommo returns from Vietnam to an Australia that regards him as a mercenary guilty of war crimes. He begins to develop all kinds of physical and mental problems, and thinks it must only be him until he finds he is not alone. Ten mates, all who remain of his platoon who fought and died in the Battle of Long Tan, are affected the same way. Now Thommo and his mates are eleven angry men out for revenge. They rope in an ex-Viet Cong with 'special skills' and his own secret agenda. They're the 'Dirty Dozen', just like the movie. Only it's real life, and they're so screwed up they couldn't fight their way out of a wet paper bag. That is, until a woman of character steps in.

About the book: The Snow Child

Alaska, 1920: a brutal place to homestead, and especially tough for recent arrivals Jack and Mabel. Childless, they are drifting apart--him breaking under the weight of the work of the farm; her crumbling from loneliness and despair. In a moment of levity during the season's first snowfall, they build a child out of snow. The next morning the snow child is gone--but they glimpse a young, blonde-haired girl running through the trees.

This little girl, who calls herself Faina, seems to be a child of the woods. She hunts with a red fox at her side, skims lightly across the snow, and somehow survives alone in the Alaskan wilderness. As Jack and Mabel struggle to understand this child who could have stepped from the pages of a fairy tale, they come to love her as their own daughter. But in this beautiful, violent place things are rarely as they appear, and what they eventually learn about Faina will transform all of them.



About the book: South of the Border, West of the Sun

Growing up in the suburbs in post-war Japan, it seemed to Hajime that everyone but him had brothers and sisters. His sole companion was Shimamoto, also an only child. Together they spent long afternoons listening to her father's record collection. But when his family moved away, the two lost touch. Now Hajime is in his thirties. After a decade of drifting he has found happiness with his loving wife and two daughters, and success running a jazz bar. Then Shimamoto reappears. She is beautiful intense enveloped in mystery Hajime is catapulted into the past, putting at risk all he has in the present.

About the book: The Spare Room

Told from the first person perspective of a woman, Helen, who lives in Melbourne near her family. A friend Nicola, who is ill with bowel cancer, comes to stay with Helen in order to pursue alternative therapy for her disease, which is considered terminal by her doctors. Helen is suspicious of the treatment and becomes more so as she sees it in action and its deleterious health effects. As the three weeks of the novel progress Helen becomes increasingly angry with Nicola for denying the seriousness of her illness, forcing those around her to do emotional work on her behalf in confronting her death, and in making light of them for doing so. At the end of the novel, Nicola returns to mainstream oncology treatment, and the doctors find that some of her symptoms are due to cancer having destroyed part of her vertebrae. The novel flashes forward to the months ahead, where Nicola returns to Sydney and eventually dies. A number of friends and family, including Helen, take turns as her caretaker. Nicola only truly embraces her death when a Buddhist friend tells her that in dying, she has something to teach them.

The novel draws heavily on both events and details from Garner's life. The narrator Helen lives next door to her daughter Eva and Eva's children, as Garner does with her daughter Alice Garner and her children, and plays the ukulele as Garner does.

The events in the novel are based on Garner's spending a period caring for her friend Jenya Osborne when Osborne was dying. Garner chose to use her own first name for the narrator character as she wanted to admit to the least attractive or acceptable emotions that she felt as her friend died.

About the book: Speak

Melinda Sordino begins her freshman year at Merryweather High School in Syracuse, New York, with a heavy secret weighing on her. Over the summer, she and her friends went to a party and Melinda ended up calling the police, causing her friends and everyone at the party to socially reject her. In the school hallways, she occasionally sees IT, a name she has given to senior Andy Evans, and she slowly begins to face what he did to her. Whenever he sees her, he antagonizes her in ways that make her relive her initial experience with him. She grows more despondent and even ditches whole days of school. Her parents and guidance counselor try to get her to open up about her poor academic performance, but Melinda refuses to speak to them. However, over many months of painful silence and self-harm in the form of lip- and nail-biting, Melinda finally admits to herself that Andy Evans raped her at the party last summer. After facing the fact that she was raped, Melinda begins to recover from the trauma of the event. She is worried about Andy Evans' intentions for her former best friend, Rachel, and finally tells Rachel what happened to her. As the school year comes to an end, Melinda is forced to confront Andy once again when he corners her in her janitor's closet. She defends herself and gains the respect of the school as many other girls have also suffered Andy's attacks silently. She ends the year by finishing her tree and sharing what has happened to her with her art teacher, Mr. Freeman.

About the book: Still Alice

She didn't want to become someone people avoided and feared. She wanted to live to hold Anna's baby and know it was her grandchild. She wanted to see Lydia act in something she was proud of. She wanted to see Tom fall in love. She wanted to read every book she could before she could no longer read.

Alice Howland is proud of the life she has worked so hard to build. A Harvard professor, she has a successful husband and three grown children. When Alice begins to grow forgetful at first she just dismisses it, but when she gets lost in



her own neighbourhood she realises that something is terribly wrong. Alice finds herself in the rapid downward spiral of Alzheimer's disease. She is only 50 years old.

While Alice once placed her worth and identity in her celebrated and respected academic life, now she must re-evaluate her relationship with her husband, her expectations of her children and her ideas about herself and her place in the world.

Losing her yesterdays, her short-term memory hanging on by a couple of frayed threads, she is living in the moment, living for each day. But she is still Alice.

Still Alice is as compelling as *A Beautiful Mind* and as powerful as *Ordinary People*. You will gain an understanding of those affected by early-onset Alzheimer's and remain moved and inspired long after you have put it down..

About the book: Suite Française

The first English publication of *Suite Française* will be a major event. *Suite Française* is an extraordinary novel of life under Nazi occupation—recently discovered and published 64 years after the author's death in Auschwitz.

In the early 1940s, Irène Némirovsky was a successful writer living in Paris. But she was also Jewish, and in 1942 she was arrested and deported to Auschwitz. Her two small daughters, aged 5 and 13, escaped, carrying with them, in a small suitcase, the manuscript—one of the great first-hand novelistic accounts of a way of life unravelling.

Part One, "A Storm in June," is set in the chaos of the tumultuous exodus from Paris on the eve of the Nazi invasion. As the German army approaches, Parisians seize what belongings they can and flee the city, the wealthy and the poor alike searching for means to escape. Thrown together under circumstances beyond their control, a group of families and individuals with nothing in common but the harsh demands of survival find themselves facing the annihilation of their world, and human nature is revealed for what it is—sometimes tender, sometimes terrifying.

Part Two, "Dolce," is set in a German-occupied village near Paris, where, riven by jealousy and resentment, resistance and collaboration, the lives of the townspeople reveal nothing less than the essence of the French identity. The delicate, secret love affair between a German soldier and the French woman in whose house he has been billeted plays out dangerously against the background of Occupation.

Suite Française is both a piercing record of its time, and a humane, profoundly moving work of art. Riveting, impossible to put down, it makes us witnesses to life as it was in wartime France, and leaves us wondering how we too might behave in such a perilous situation.

An immediate #1 bestseller in France, *Suite Française* has captured readers' imaginations not only for the tragic story of its author, and the circumstances of its rediscovery, but for its brilliantly subtle and compelling portrait of France under Occupation.

About the book: The Sunday philosophy club

Isabel Dalhousie, a quiet woman of independent means and a certain age, seems an unlikely gumshoe. As the editor of *The Review of Applied Ethics*, Isabel would seem more at home in a university philosophy department than dealing with the sordid details of murder most foul. But we, as Isabel would certainly agree, do not always choose our circumstances; at times they choose us.

In Isabel's case, circumstances cause her to witness an unfortunate death, a young man's fall from a symphony hall balcony. Isabel decides she has a moral duty to investigate the circumstances of the young man's death, being as she would have been the last person he saw before his death.

The trail winds her through the worlds of Scottish art and high finance before she reaches a conclusion. Along the way Isabel is confounded by a bushel of moral dilemmas. Does she have a duty to speak truthfully to a reporter who is bent on exploiting the grief of the victim's family? Should she expose an unfaithful boyfriend to a family member? And ultimately, once she discovers the truth of the situation, what should she do with that knowledge?

About the book: Sweet Tooth

In this stunning new novel, Ian McEwan's first female protagonist since *Atonement* is about to learn that espionage is the ultimate seduction.

Cambridge student Serena Frome's beauty and intelligence make her the ideal recruit for MI5. The year is 1972. The Cold War is far from over. England's legendary intelligence agency is determined to manipulate the cultural



conversation by funding writers whose politics align with those of the government. The operation is code named "Sweet Tooth."

Serena, a compulsive reader of novels, is the perfect candidate to infiltrate the literary circle of a promising young writer named Tom Haley. At first, she loves his stories. Then she begins to love the man. How long can she conceal her undercover life? To answer that question, Serena must abandon the first rule of espionage: trust no one. Once again, Ian McEwan's mastery dazzles us in this superbly deft and witty story of betrayal and intrigue, love and the invented self.

About the book: Teatime for the Firefly

'My name is Layla and I was born under an unlucky star.'

Layla Roy has defied the fates. Despite being born under an inauspicious horoscope, she is raised to be educated and independent by her eccentric grandfather. And, by cleverly manipulating the hand fortune has dealt her, she has even found love with Manik Deb — a man betrothed to another. All were minor miracles in India during the spring of 1943, when young women's lives were predetermined — if not by the stars, then by centuries of family tradition and social order.

Layla's life as a newly married woman takes her away from home and into the jungles of Assam, where the world's finest tea thrives on plantations run by native labour and British efficiency. Fascinated by this culture of whiskey-soaked expats who seem fazed by neither earthquakes nor man-eating leopards, she struggles to find her place among the prickly English wives with whom she is expected to socialise, and the peculiar servants she now finds under her charge.

But navigating the tea-garden set will hardly be her biggest challenge. Layla's remote home is not safe from the powerful changes sweeping India on the heels of the Second World War. Their colonial society is at tipping point, and Layla and Manik find themselves caught in a perilous racial divide that threatens their very lives.

About the book: The Tenderness of Wolves

The year is 1867. Winter has just tightened its grip on Dove River, a tiny isolated settlement in the Northern Territory, when a man is brutally murdered. Laurent Jammett had been a voyageur for the Hudson Bay Company before an accident lamed him four years earlier. The same accident afforded him the little parcel of land in Dove River, land that the locals called unlucky due to the untimely death of the previous owner.

A local woman, Mrs Ross, stumbles upon the crime scene and sees the tracks leading from the dead man's cabin north toward the forest and the tundra beyond. It is Mrs Ross's knock on the door of the largest house in Caulfield that launches the investigation. Within hours she will regret that knock with a mother's love -- for soon she makes another discovery: her seventeen-year-old son Francis has disappeared and is now considered a prime suspect. In the wake of such violence, people are drawn to the crime and to the township -- Andrew Knox, Dove River's elder statesman; Thomas Sturrock, a wily American itinerant trader; Donald Moody, the clumsy young Company representative; William Parker, a half-breed Native American and trapper who was briefly detained for Jammett's murder before becoming Mrs Ross's guide. But the question remains: do these men want to solve the crime or exploit it?

One by one, the searchers set out from Dove River following the tracks across a desolate landscape -- home to only wild animals, madmen, and fugitives -- variously seeking a murderer, a son, two sisters missing for seventeen years, and a forgotten Native American culture before the snows settle and cover the tracks of the past for good.

In an astonishingly assured debut, Stef Penney deftly weaves adventure, suspense, revelation, and humour into an exhilarating thriller; a panoramic historical romance; a gripping murder mystery; and, ultimately, with the sheer scope and quality of her storytelling, an epic for the ages.



About the book: Theft: a love story

Michael "Butcher" Boone is an ex-"really famous" painter, now reduced to living in a remote country house and acting as caretaker for his younger brother, Hugh. Alone together they've forged a delicate equilibrium, a balance instantly destroyed when a mysterious young woman named Marlene walks out of a rainstorm and into their lives. Beautiful, smart, and ambitious, she's also the daughter-in-law of the late great painter Jacques Liebovitz. Soon Marlene sets in motion a chain of events that could be the making--or the ruin--of them all.

About the book: The Thirteenth Tale

Margaret Lea works in her father's antiquarian bookshop where her fascination for the biographies of the long-dead has led her to write them herself. She gets a letter from one of the most famous authors of the day, the mysterious Vida Winter, whose popularity as a writer has been in no way diminished by her reclusiveness. Until now, Vida has toyed with journalists who interview her, creating outlandish life histories for herself --- all of them invention. Now she is old and ailing, and at last she wants to tell the truth about her extraordinary life. Her letter to Margaret is a summons.

Somewhat anxiously, the equally reclusive Margaret travels to Yorkshire to meet her subject. Vida's strange, gothic tale features the Angelfield family; dark-hearted Charlie and his unbrotherly obsession with his sister, the fascinating, devious, and wilful Isabelle, and Isabelle's daughters, the feral twins Adeline and Emmeline. Margaret is captivated by the power of Vida's storytelling, but she doesn't entirely trust Vida's account. She goes to check up on the family, visiting their old home and piecing together their story in her own way. What she discovers on her journey to the truth is for Margaret a chilling and transforming experience.

About the book: Three Cups of Tea

One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time, Greg Mortenson, and journalist David Oliver Relin, recount the journey that led Mortenson from a failed 1993 attempt to climb Pakistan's K2, the world's second highest mountain, to successfully establish schools in some of the most remote regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. By replacing guns with pencils, rhetoric with reading, Mortenson combines his unique background with his intimate knowledge of the third-world to promote peace with books, not bombs, and successfully bring education and hope to remote communities in central Asia. Three Cups of Tea is at once an unforgettable adventure and the inspiring true story of how one man really is changing the world—one school at a time.

In 1993 Mortenson was descending from his failed attempt to reach the peak of K2. Exhausted and disoriented, he wandered away from his group into the most desolate reaches of northern Pakistan. Alone, without food, water, or shelter he stumbled into an impoverished Pakistani village where he was nursed back to health.

In an early effort to raise money he wrote letters to 580 celebrities, businessmen, and other prominent Americans. His only reply was a \$100 check from NBC's Tom Brokaw. Selling everything he owned, he still only raised \$2,400. But his efforts changed when a group of elementary school children in River Falls, Wisconsin, donated \$623.40 in pennies, who inspired adults to begin to take action. Since then, he's established 78 schools. In pursuit of his goal, Mortenson has survived an armed kidnapping, fat was issued by enraged mullahs, repeated death threats, and wrenching separations from his wife and children. Yet his success speaks for itself.

About the book: Time Machines Repaired While-U-Wait

For "Time Machines Repaired While-U-Wait" specialist, Aloysius "Spider" Webb, time travel has lost its luster. Working as a senior time machine repair technician, Spider has seen it all - past, present and future. Wanting more out of life, Spider hates time travel and everything that goes with it...after all, time travel cost him his job as a top investigating police officer.

Fixing time machines is a waste of Spider's talent. But he's resigned to do it until he discovers, inside a broken second-hand time machine, the corpse of a woman; brutally murdered, wrapped in plastic and duct tape. Before Spider can act on his old police instincts, the shadowy Department of Time and Space steps in and seizes the machine, the remains, and all of the evidence, and closes the investigation.



Spider wants answers, but his questions only lead to more questions; unsettling evidence, brewing trouble, and the knowledge that Spider, himself, might be involved in an epic battle at the End of Time. Who can Spider trust? And what will they tell him: the truth or what he wants to hear?

About the book: Trip of a Lifetime

Trip of a Lifetime is about the things that are too hard to talk about, the secrets we keep from those we love, to protect them and to protect ourselves. It's about how those secrets can create fault lines in our relationships. I wanted to explore the impact of a violent crime dropping like a stone into the placid pool of everyday life; how far the ripples would spread, the pressure they would put on the fault lines. I wanted to see how people my change when they simply had to confront things that had failed to face, about themselves, about each other, about their relationships.

Because I enjoy writing about people, particularly women, in their fifties and beyond the focus is on them; people who have kept their secrets for a very long time, people who have left bits of themselves stuck in the past. But younger people and children have a significant part in the story because we are all part of families and circles of friends and colleagues whose lives intertwine with our own often in quite surprising ways.

About the book: The True Story of Butterfish

When Annaliese Winter walks down Curtis Holland's front path, he's ill-prepared for a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl who's a confounding mixture of adult and child. After years travelling the world with his band, Butterfish, he's not used to having a neighbour at all.

So when Curtis receives an invitation to dinner from Annaliese's mother, Kate, he is surprised when he not only accepts but finds himself being drawn to this remarkably unremarkable family. Even to fifteen-year-old Mark who is at war with his own surging adolescence.

Curtis soon realises that with Kate divorced, Annaliese and Mark need a male role model in their lives, but it's hard for him to help when he's just starting to grow up himself and harder still when Annaliese begins to show an interest in him that is less than filial.

Filled with acute observation, humour and tenderness, Butterfish is Nick Earls at his very best

About the book: The Tsar of Love and Techno

This stunning, exquisitely written collection introduces a cast of remarkable characters whose lives intersect in ways both life-affirming and heartbreaking. A 1930s Soviet censor painstakingly corrects offending photographs, deep underneath Leningrad, bewitched by the image of a disgraced prima ballerina. A chorus of women recount their stories and those of their grandmothers, former gulag prisoners who settled their Siberian mining town. Two pairs of brothers share a fierce, protective love. Young men across the former USSR face violence at home and in the military. And great sacrifices are made in the name of an oil landscape unremarkable except for the almost incomprehensibly peaceful past it depicts. In stunning prose, with rich character portraits and a sense of history reverberating into the present, The Tsar of Love and Techno is a captivating work from one of our greatest new talents.

About the book: Turn of Mind

Is the perfect murder the one you can't forget or the one you can't remember?

Dr Jennifer White, a brilliant former surgeon in the early grips of Alzheimer's, is suspected of murdering her best friend, Amanda. Amanda's body was found brutally disfigured - with four of her fingers cut off in a precise, surgical manner. As the police pursue their investigation and Jennifer searches her own mind for fractured clues to Amanda's death, a portrait emerges of a complex relationship between two uncompromising, unsentimental women, lifelong friends who were at times each other's most formidable adversaries.



About the book: Underground Railroad

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood --- where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned --- Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor --- engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

Like the protagonist of Gulliver's Travels, Cora encounters different worlds at each stage of her journey --- hers is an odyssey through time as well as space. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the unique terrors for black people in the pre-Civil War era, his narrative seamlessly weaves the saga of America from the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share.

About the book: The Vanishing Acts of Esme Lennox

In the middle of tending to the everyday business at her vintage-clothing shop and sidestepping her married boyfriend's attempts at commitment, Iris Lockhart receives a stunning phone call: Her great-aunt Esme, whom she never knew existed, is being released from Cauldstone Hospital--where she has been locked away for more than sixty-one years.

Iris's grandmother Kitty always claimed to be an only child. But Esme's papers prove she is Kitty's sister, and Iris can see the shadow of her dead father in Esme's face.

Esme has been labelled harmless--sane enough to coexist with the rest of the world. But she's still basically a stranger, a family member never mentioned by the family, and one who is sure to bring life-altering secrets with her when she leaves the ward. If Iris takes her in, what dangerous truths might she inherit?

A gothic, intricate tale of family secrets, lost lives, and the freedom brought by truth, "The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox" will haunt you long past its final page.

About the book: The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam

Nyree and Cia live on a remote farm in the east of what was Rhodesia in the late 1970s. Beneath the dripping vines of the Vumba rainforest, and under the tutelage of their heretical grandfather, theirs is a seductive childhood, laced with African paganism, mangled Catholicism and the lore of the Brothers Grimm. Their world extends as far as the big fence, erected to keep out the 'Terrs' whom their father is off fighting. The two girls know little beyond that until the arrival from the outside world of 'the bastard', their orphaned cousin Ronin, who is to poison their idyll forever. Set against the convulsive backdrop of civil war and a country's death throes, this delightful and dark novel explores themes of loss, guilt and redemption in an Africa that is at once grotesque, poignant and beautiful.

About the book: Water for Elephants

Though he may not speak of them, the memories still dwell inside Jacob Jankowski's ninety-something-year-old mind. Memories of himself as a young man, tossed by fate onto a rickety train that was home to the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth. Memories of a world filled with freaks and clowns, with wonder and pain and anger and passion; a world with its own narrow, irrational rules, its own way of life, and its own way of death. The world of the circus: to Jacob it was both salvation and a living hell.

Jacob was there because his luck had run out --- orphaned and penniless, he had no direction until he landed on this locomotive "ship of fools." It was the early part of the Great Depression, and everyone in this third-rate circus was lucky to have any job at all. Marlina, the star of the equestrian act, was there because she fell in love with the wrong



man, a handsome circus boss with a wide mean streak. And Rosie the elephant was there because she was the great gray hope, the new act that was going to be the salvation of the circus; the only problem was, Rosie didn't have an act --- in fact, she couldn't even follow instructions. The bond that grew among this unlikely trio was one of love and trust, and ultimately, it was their only hope for survival.

Surprising, poignant, and funny, *Water for Elephants* is that rare novel with a story so engrossing, one is reluctant to put it down; with characters so engaging, they continue to live long after the last page has been turned; with a world built of wonder, a world so real, one starts to breathe its air.

About the book: The Well

Miss Hester Harper, middle-aged and eccentric, brings Katherine into her emotionally impoverished life. Together they sew, cook gourmet dishes for two, run the farm, make music and throw dirty dishes down the well. One night, driving along the deserted track that leads to the farm, they run into a mysterious creature. They heave the body from the roo bar and dump it into the farm's deep well. But the voice of the injured intruder will not be stilled and, most disturbing of all, the closer Katherine is drawn to the edge of the well, the farther away she gets from Hester. A twentieth-century Australian classic, *The Well* is a haunting and wryly humorous tale of memory, desire and loneliness.

About the book: While We Were Watching Downton Abbey

When the concierge of The Alexander, a historic Atlanta apartment building, invites his fellow residents to join him for weekly screenings of *Downton Abbey*, four very different people find themselves connecting with the addictive drama, and—even more unexpectedly—with each other...

Samantha Davis married young and for the wrong reason: the security of old Atlanta money—for herself and for her orphaned brother and sister. She never expected her marriage to be complicated by love and compromised by a shattering family betrayal.

Claire Walker is now an empty nester and struggling author who left her home in the suburbs for the old world charm of The Alexander, and for a new and productive life. But she soon wonders if clinging to old dreams can be more destructive than having no dreams at all.

And then there's Brooke MacKenzie, a woman in constant battle with her faithless ex-husband. She's just starting to realize that it's time to take a deep breath and come to terms with the fact that her life is not the fairy tale she thought it would be.

For Samantha, Claire, Brooke—and Edward, who arranges the weekly gatherings—it will be a season of surprises as they forge a bond that will sustain them through some of life's hardest moments—all of it reflected in the unfolding drama, comedy, and convergent lives of *Downton Abbey*.

About the book: The White Tiger

Balram Halwai is a complicated man. Servant. Philosopher. Entrepreneur. Murderer. Over the course of seven nights, by the scattered light of a preposterous chandelier, Balram tells us the terrible and transfixing story of how he came to be a success in life -- having nothing but his own wits to help him along.

Born in the dark heart of India, Balram gets a break when he is hired as a driver for his village's wealthiest man, two house Pomeranians (Puddles and Cuddles), and the rich man's (very unlucky) son. From behind the wheel of their Honda City car, Balram's new world is a revelation. While his peers flip through the pages of *Murder Weekly* ("Love -- Rape -- Revenge!"), barter for girls, drink liquor (Thunderbolt), and perpetuate the Great Rooster Coop of Indian society, Balram watches his employers bribe foreign ministers for tax breaks, barter for girls, drink liquor (single-malt whiskey), and play their own role in the Rooster Coop. Balram learns how to siphon gas, deal with corrupt mechanics, and refill and resell Johnnie Walker Black Label bottles (all but one). He also finds a way out of the Coop that no one else inside it can perceive.

Balram's eyes penetrate India as few outsiders can: the cockroaches and the call centres; the prostitutes and the worshippers; the ancient and Internet cultures; the water buffalo and, trapped in so many kinds of cages that escape is (almost) impossible, the white tiger. And with a charisma as undeniable as it is unexpected, Balram teaches us that



religion doesn't create virtue, and money doesn't solve every problem -- but decency can still be found in a corrupt world, and you can get what you want out of life if you eavesdrop on the right conversations.

About the book: Wildflower

Wildflower is naturalist, filmmaker and lifelong conservationist Joan Root's gripping life story, a stunning and moving tale of a remarkable modern-day heroine. After twenty years of spectacular, unparalleled wildlife filmmaking together, Joan and Alan Root divorced and a fascinating woman found her own voice. Journalist Mark Seal offers this breathtaking, culturally relevant portrait of a strong woman discovering herself and fighting for her beliefs before her mysterious and brutal murder. With a cast of characters as wild, wondrous and unpredictable as Africa itself, Wildflower is a real-life adventure tale set in the world's fast-disappearing wilderness. Full of personal revelation, intrigue, corruption and murder, readers will remember Joan Root's extraordinary journey long after they turn the last page.

About the book: Wimmera

In the long, hot summer of 1989, Ben and Fab are best friends.

Growing up in a small country town, they spend their days playing cricket, yabbing in local dams, wanting a pair of Nike Air Maxes and not talking about how Fab's dad hits him or how the sudden death of Ben's next-door neighbour unsettled him. Almost teenagers, they already know some things are better left unsaid.

Then a newcomer arrived in the Wimmera. Fab reckoned he was a secret agent and he and Ben staked him out. Up close, the man's shoulders were wide and the veins in his arms stuck out, blue and green. His hands were enormous, red and knotty. He looked strong. Maybe even stronger than Fab's dad. Neither realised the shadow this man would cast over both their lives.

Twenty years later, Fab is still stuck in town, going nowhere but hoping for somewhere better. Then a body is found in the river, and Fab can't ignore the past any more.

About the book: Wishes for Starlight

The central character in 'Wishes for Starlight' is Starlight; a mixed blood, deaf mute Aboriginal who lived over the period 1889 - 1930s. The plight of the Aboriginal is shown through the prism of the discrimination and racism of the time; the imposition of the 1905 Aborigines Act, the establishment of Aboriginal reserves and the gradual removal of rights from Aboriginal people.

Linda J Bettenay entwines Starlight's life with the three white children who discover him; abandoned and living in a chook pen fighting the dogs for food scraps. These children give him friendship, love, trust and truth and most of all protection from the barbs of the white man's world.

About the book: Wolf Hall

Winner, 2009 Man Booker Prize

Winner, 2009 National Book Critics Circle Award

England in the 1520s is a heartbeat from disaster. If the king dies without a male heir, the country could be destroyed by civil war. Henry VIII wants to annul his marriage of twenty years, and marry Anne Boleyn. The pope and most of Europe opposes him. The quest for the king's freedom destroys his adviser, the brilliant Cardinal Wolsey, and leaves a power vacuum.

Into this impasse steps Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell is a wholly original man, a charmer and a bully, both idealist and opportunist, astute in reading people and a demon of energy: he is also a consummate politician, hardened by his personal losses, implacable in his ambition. But Henry is volatile: one day tender, one day murderous. Cromwell helps him break the opposition, but what will be the price of his triumph?

In inimitable style, Hilary Mantel presents a picture of a half-made society on the cusp of change, where individuals fight or embrace their fate with passion and courage. With a vast array of characters, overflowing with incident, the novel re-creates an era when the personal and political are separated by a hairbreadth, where success brings unlimited power but a single failure means death.



Mantel published the sequel to *Wolf Hall*, *Bring Up the Bodies*, in 2012.

About the book: The Women in Black

Written by a superb novelist of contemporary manners, *The Women in Black* is a fairy tale which illuminates the extraordinariness of ordinary lives. The women in black are run off their feet, what with the Christmas rush and the summer sales that follow. But it's Sydney in the 1950s, and there's still just enough time left on a hot and frantic day to dream and scheme...

By the time the last marked-down frock has been sold, most of the staff of the Ladies' Cocktail section at F. G. Goode's have been launched into slightly different careers. With the lightest touch and the most tender of comic instincts, Madeleine St John conjures a vanished summer of innocence. *The Women in Black* is a great novel and a lost Australian classic.

About the book: The World Without Us

It has been six months since Tess Müller stopped speaking. Her silence is baffling to her parents, her teachers and her younger sister Meg, but the more urgent mystery for both girls is where their mother, Evangeline, goes each day, pushing an empty pram and returning home wet, muddy and dishevelled.

Their father, Stefan, struggling with his own losses, tends to his apiary and tries to understand why his bees are disappearing. But after he discovers a car wreck and human remains on their farm, old secrets emerge to threaten the fragile family. One day Tess's teacher Jim encounters Evangeline by the wild Repentance River. Jim is in flight from his own troubles in Sydney, and Evangeline, raised in a mountain commune and bearing the scars of the fire that destroyed it, is a puzzle he longs to solve.

As the rainforest trees are felled and the lakes fill with run-off from the expanding mines, Tess watches the landscape of her family undergo shifts of its own. A storm is coming and the Müllers are in its path.

Sometimes we must confront what has been lost so that we can know the solace of being found.

The World Without Us is a beautifully told story of secrets and survival, family and community, loss and renewal.

About the book: Zoo Time

Novelist Guy Ableman is in thrall to his vivacious wife Vanessa, a strikingly beautiful red-head, contrary, highly strung and blazingly angry. The trouble is, he is no less in thrall to her alluring mother, Poppy. More like sisters than mother and daughter, they come as a pair, a blistering presence that destroys Guy's peace of mind, suggesting the wildest stories but making it impossible for him to concentrate long enough to write any of them. Not that anyone reads anymore, anyway. Reading, Guy fears, is finished. His publisher, fearing the same, has committed suicide. His agent, like all agents, is in hiding. Vanessa, in the meantime, is writing a novel of her own. Guy doesn't expect her to finish it, or even start it, but he dreads the consequences if she does. In flight from personal disappointment and universal despair, Guy wonders if it's time to take his love for Poppy to another level. Fiction might be dead, but desire isn't. And out of that desire he imagines squeezing one more great book.

About the book: The Zookeeper's War

In Berlin, who can you trust? A story of passion and sacrifice in a city battered by war ...

It is 1943 and each night in a bomb shelter beneath the Berlin Zoo an Australian woman, Vera, shelters with her German husband, Axel, the zoo's director.

Together, they struggle to look after the animals through the air raids and food shortages. When the zoo's staff is drafted into the army, forced labourers are sent in as replacements. At first, Vera finds the idea abhorrent, but gradually she realises that the new workers are the zoo's only hope, and forms an unlikely bond with one of them.

This is a city where a foreign accent is a constant source of suspicion, where busybodies report the names of neighbours' dinner guests to the Gestapo. As tensions mount in the closing days of the war, nothing, and no one, it seems, can be trusted.

The Zookeeper's War is a powerful novel of a marriage, and of a city collapsing. It confronts not only the brutality of war but the possibility of heroism - and delivers an ending that is both shocking and deeply moving.

