

BOOK CLUB TITLES 2026

Titles in bold are the titles new to the list for 2026

ALLENDE, Isabel. *Violeta*

Violeta comes into the world on a stormy day in 1920, the first girl in a family with five boisterous sons. From the start, her life is marked by extraordinary events, for the ripples of the Great War are still being felt, even as the Spanish flu arrives on the shores of her South American homeland almost at the moment of her birth.

Through her father's prescience, the family will come through that crisis unscathed, only to face a new one as the Great Depression transforms the genteel city life she has known. Her family loses everything and is forced to retreat to a wild and beautiful but remote part of the country. There, she will come of age, and her first suitor will come calling.

She tells her story in the form of a letter to someone she loves above all others, recounting times of devastating heartbreak and passionate affairs, poverty and wealth, terrible loss and immense joy. Her life is shaped by some of the most important events of history: the fight for women's rights, the rise and fall of tyrants, and ultimately not one, but two pandemics.

Through the eyes of a woman whose unforgettable passion, determination, and sense of humor carry her through a lifetime of upheaval, Isabel Allende once more brings us an epic that is both fiercely inspiring and deeply emotional.

317 pages Historical fiction

ALLENDE, Isabel. *In the Midst of Winter: a novel*

(Translated by Nick Caistor and Amanda Hopkinson).

New York Times bestselling author Isabel Allende returns with a sweeping novel about three very different people who are brought together in a mesmerizing story that journeys from present day Brooklyn to Guatemala in the recent past to 1970s Chile and Brazil.

Amid the biggest snowstorm in living memory, Richard Bowmaster, a lonely university professor in his sixties, hits the car of Evelyn Orrega, a young undocumented immigrant from Guatemala, and what at first seems an inconvenience takes a more serious turn when Evelyn comes to his house, seeking help. At a loss, the professor asks his tenant, Lucia Maraz, a fellow academic from Chile, for her advice.

As these three lives intertwine. Each will discover truths about how they have been shaped by the tragedies they witnessed, and Richard and Lucia will find an unexpected, long overdue love.

Allende, who has been called "one of the greatest writers of our times" (*Washington Post*), returns here to themes that have propelled some of her finest work: political injustice, the art of survival, and the essential nature of – and need for – love.

342 pages Romantic fiction

ALLENDE, Isabel. *My Name is Emilia Del Valle*

A powerful tale of love and war, discovery and redemption, told by a valiant young woman who confronts monumental challenges, survives and reinvents herself along the way.

Emilia del Valle was always destined for great things.

Abandoned at birth by her Chilean aristocrat father, Emilia comes of age in nineteenth-century San Francisco as an independent and fiercely ambitious young woman, decades ahead of her time. She will do whatever it takes to pursue her life's passion for writing, even if it means publishing under a man's name.

Landing a position as a journalist for the *Daily Examiner*, Emilia soon sets sail for Chile, where she's tasked with covering a brewing civil war. But the assignment offers Emilia more than a chance to prove herself as a writer, and before long she embarks on a treacherous, life-changing journey through a homeland she never knew, to uncover the truth about her father – and herself.

287 pages Historical fiction

ALLENDE, Isabel. *Soul of a Woman*

"When I say I was a feminist in Kindergarten, I am not exaggerating"

As a child, Isabel Allende watched her mother, abandoned by her husband, provide for her three small children. As a young woman coming of age in the late 1960s, she rode in the first wave of feminism. She has seen what has been

accomplished by the movement in her lifetime. And over the course of three marriages, she has learned how to grow as a woman while having a partner, when to step away, and the rewards of embracing one's sexuality.

So what do women want? To be safe, to be valued, to live in peace, to have their own resources, to be connected, to have control over their bodies and lives, and, above all, to be loved. On all these fronts, there is much work to be done, and this book, Allende hopes, will inspire others to see that work through. 169 pages Non fiction

ANDERSON, Lainie *The Death of Dora Black*

Summer, Adelaide, 1917. The impeccably dressed Miss Kate Cocks might look more like a schoolmistress than a policewoman, but don't let that fool you. She's a household name, wrangling wayward husbands into repentance, seeing through deceptive clairvoyants, and rescuing young women (whether they like it or not) with the help of a five-foot cane and her sassy junior constable, Ethel Bromley.

When shop assistant Dora Black is found dead on a city beach, Miss Cocks and Ethel are ordered to stay out of the investigation and leave it to the men. But when Dora's workmate goes missing soon after, the women suspect something sinister, and determine to take matters into their own hands. After all, who knows Adelaide better than the indomitable Miss Cocks?

Clever, cosy and full of charm, *The Death of Dora Black* is a thrilling murder mystery inspired by the true story of Australia's pioneering policewoman, Kate Cocks. 312 pages Mystery fiction

ARMSTRONG, Diane. *Dancing with the Enemy*

June 1940. 'It was a perfect June evening that began with hope and ended in despair.' So begins the journal of Hugh Jackson, a Jersey doctor, whose idyllic world is shattered when Britain abandons the Channel Islands which are invaded by the Germans. Forced to choose between conflicting loyalties, he sends his pregnant wife to England, believing their separation will be brief. It's a fateful decision that will affect every aspect of his life.

May 1942. Young Tom Gaskell fumes whenever he sees the hated swastika flying from Fort Regent. Humiliated by Jersey's surrender and ashamed of his mother's fraternisation with the occupiers, Tom forms an audacious plan, not suspecting that it will result in guilt and tragedy.

April 2019. Sydney doctor Xanthe Maxwell, traumatised by the suicide of her colleague and burnt out by the relentless pressure of her hospital work, travels to St Helier so she can figure out what to do with her life. But when she finds Hugh Jackson's World War II journal, she is plunged into a violent world of oppression and collusion, but also of passion and resistance. As she reads, she is mystified by her growing sense of connection to the past. Her deepening relationship with academic Daniel Miller helps her understand Jersey's wartime past and determine her own future. By the time this novel reaches its moving climax, the connection between Tom, Xanthe and Hugh Jackson has been revealed in a way none of them could possibly have imagined.

469 pages Historical fiction

ARNOTT, Robbie. *Limberlost*

In the heat of a long summer Ned hunts rabbits in a river valley, hoping the pelts will earn him enough money to buy a small boat.

His two brothers are away at war, their whereabouts unknown. His father and older sister struggle to hold things together on the family orchard, Limberlost.

Desperate to ignore it all—to avoid the future rushing towards him—Ned dreams of open water.

As his story unfolds over the following decades, we see how Ned's choices that summer come to shape the course of his life, the fate of his family and the future of the valley, with its seasons of death and rebirth.

The third novel by the award-winning author of *Flames* and *The Rain Heron*, *Limberlost* is an extraordinary chronicle of life and land: of carnage and kindness, blood ties and love.

- ❑ *Winner, Fiction, Age Book of the Year, 2023*
- ❑ *Winner, Adult Fiction Book of the Year, BookPeople Book of the Year Awards, 2023*
- ❑ *Shortlisted, Miles Franklin Literary Award, 2023*
- ❑ *Shortlisted, Literary Fiction Book of the Year, Australian Book Industry Awards, 2023*
- ❑ *Shortlisted, Fiction, Indie Book Awards, 2023*
- ❑ *Shortlisted, Dylan Thomas Prize, United Kingdom, 2023*

ASHLEY, Melissa. *The Naturalist of Amsterdam*

Amsterdam, at the turn of the 18th century. For as long as she can remember, Dorothea Graff has lived in service to her mother, Maria Sibylla Merian, one of the greatest naturalists in Europe. But as she collects insects and colours illustrations for Maria's world-famous publications, Dorothea longs for a life that is truly her own.

When Maria becomes entranced by the plant and insect life of Suriname, she is determined to record it for herself, taking Dorothea with her. All the family's savings are ploughed into the dangerous exhibition, but greatness is never achieved without sacrifice. *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname* will be Maria's masterpiece, but ensuring its legacy – and her own survival – will become her daughter's burden. When offered a chance of happiness, will Dorothea have the courage to take it, and risk everything her mother built?

From the jungles of South America to the bustling artist's studios of Amsterdam, *The Naturalist of Amsterdam* gives voice to the long-ignored women who shaped our understanding of the natural world – both the artists and those who made their work possible. 383 pages Historical fiction

BENEDICT, Marie. *The Only Woman in the Room*

She possessed a stunning beauty. She also possessed a stunning mind. Could the world handle both?

Her beauty almost certainly saved her from the rising Nazi party and led to marriage with an Austrian arms dealer. Underestimated in everything else, she overheard the Third Reich's plans while at her husband's side, understanding more than anyone would guess. She devised a plan to flee in disguise from their castle, and the whirlwind escape landed her in Hollywood. She became Hedy Lamarr, screen star.

But she kept a secret more shocking than her heritage or her marriage: she was a scientist. And she knew a few secrets about the enemy. She had an idea that might help the country fight the Nazis...if anyone would listen to her.

A powerful novel based on the incredible true story of the glamour icon and scientist whose groundbreaking invention revolutionised modern communication 247 pages Historical fiction

BENEDICT, Marie. *The Other Einstein: a novel*

The story of a relationship as fascinating as it is troubling.

What secrets may have lurked in the shadows of Albert Einstein's fame? In 1896, the extraordinary, gifted Mileva "Mitza" Maric is the only woman studying physics at an elite school in Zurich. For her, science seems like an easier path than marriage, until she falls in love with fellow student Albert Einstein. Charismatic and brilliant, Albert promises to treat her as an equal in both love and science. But as Albert's fame grows, is there room for more than one genius in a marriage?

The Other Einstein reveals the forgotten woman whose light was lost in Einstein's enormous shadow. Discussion questions in back of book 319 pages Historical fiction

BIGNELL, Meg Ashton. *Welcome to Nowhere River*

Long past its heyday and deep in drought, the riverside hamlet of Nowhere River is slowly fading into a ghost town. It's a place populated by those who are beholden to it, those who were born to it and those who took a wrong turn while trying to go somewhere else.

City-born Carra married into Nowhere River, Lucie was brought to it by tragedy, Josie is root-bound and Florence knows nowhere else. All of them, though familiar with every inch of their tiny hometown, are as lost as the place itself. The town's social cornerstone — St Margery's Ladies' Club — launches a rescue plan that turns everything around and upside down, then shakes it until all sorts of things come floating to the surface. And none of its inhabitants will ever be the same again.

This is the highly original and heartfelt story of a place where everybody knows everything, but no one really knows anyone at all. Brimming with heart and humour, this is a delightful novel that celebrates the country people and towns of Australia. 383 pages Australian fiction

BIRCH, Tony. *Women & Children*

It's 1965 and Joe Cluny is living in a working-class suburb with his mum, Marion, and sister, Ruby, spending his days trying to avoid trouble with the nuns at the local Catholic primary school. One evening his Auntie Oona appears on the doorstep, distressed and needing somewhere to stay. As his mum and aunty work out what to do, Joe comes to understand the secrets that the women in his family carry, including on their bodies. Yet their pleas for assistance are met with silence and complicity from all sides. Who will help Joe's family at their time of need?

Women & Children is a novel about the love and courage between two sisters, and a sudden loss of childhood innocence. 317 pages Domestic fiction

BLAINE, Lech. *Australian Gospel: a Family Saga*

Michael and Mary Shelley are Christian fanatics who loathe their fellow Australians - especially their 'reckless indulgence of alcohol and obsession with idiotic ball sports'. Lenore and Tom Blaine are working-class Queensland publicans raising a large family in a raucous, loving, sports-obsessed home.

There's just one problem. Lenore and Tom are foster parents to three of Michael and Mary's children, who were removed from the Shelleys as infants. And the Shelleys are prepared to do anything to get them back. Anything. *Australian Gospel* is the true story of Lech Blaine's family, a stranger-than-fiction tale that is heartbreaking, hilarious and altogether astonishing. 363 pages Biographical Fiction

BLAINEY, Geoffrey. *Before I Forget: an Early Memoir*

"At home, encircled by books, I assumed that my writing career, so precarious, would flourish..."

For close to seventy years Professor Geoffrey Blainey has uncovered and chronicled our history and the world's. Now in his ninth decade and listed by the National Trust as a 'Living Treasure', Blainey turns to his own story, reflecting on the first forty years of his life, from his humble beginnings as the son of a Methodist minister and a country school teacher, to creating his career as historian and writer. 339 pages Biography

BLANCHARD, Tania. *Suitcase of Dreams*

After enduring the horror of Nazi Germany and the chaos of postwar occupation, Lotte Drescher and her family arrive in Australia in 1956 full of hope for a new life. It's a land of opportunity, where Lotte and her husband Erich dream of giving their children the future they have always wanted.

After years of struggling to find their feet as New Australians, Erich turns his skill as a wood carver into a successful business and Lotte makes a career out of her lifelong passion, photography. The sacrifices they have made finally seem worth it until Erich's role in the trade union movement threatens to have him branded a communist and endanger their family. Then darker shadows reach out to them from Germany, a world and a lifetime away.

As the Vietnam War looms, an unexpected visitor forces Lotte to a turning point. Her decision will change her life forever... and will finally show her the true meaning of home. 420 pages Australian fiction
Discussion questions in the back of book.

BRINGLEY, Patrick. *All the Beauty in the World*

When Patrick's older brother dies at the tender age of twenty-six, all he wants is to retreat. So, he does. He quits his job and seeks refuge in the most beautiful place he knows: New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

All the Beauty in the World recounts Patrick's time as a museum guard, keeping quiet vigil over some of the world's greatest treasures and uncovering the Met's innermost secrets. As his connection to the art and the life that swirls around it grows, so does Patrick – and gradually he emerges transformed by heartbreak, community and the power of art to illuminate life in all its pain, pleasure and hope.

Sunday Times Art Book of the Year 2023

226 pages Biography

BRINDEN, Anne. *Wearing Paper Dresses*

You can talk about living in the Mallee. And you can talk about a Mallee tree. And you can talk about the Mallee itself; a land and a place full of red sand and short stubby trees. Silent skies. The undulating scorch of summer plains. Quiet, on the surface of things.

But Elise wasn't from the Mallee, and she knew nothing of its ways.

Discover the world of a small homestead perched on the sunburnt farmland of northern Victoria. Meet Elise, whose urban 1950s glamour is rudely transplanted to the pragmatic red soil of the Mallee when her husband returns to work the family farm. But you cannot uproot a plant and expect it to thrive. And so it is with Elise. Her meringues don't impress the shearers, the locals scoff at her Paris fashions, her husband works all day in the back paddock, and the drought kills everything but the geraniums she despises.

As their mother withdraws into herself, her spirited, tearaway daughters, Marjorie and Ruby, wild as weeds, are left to raise themselves as best they can. Until tragedy strikes, and Marjorie flees to the city determined to leave her family behind. And there she stays, leading a very different life, until the boy she loves draws her back to the land she can't forget...

378 pages Historical fiction

BROOKS, Geraldine. *Horse*

A discarded painting in a junk pile, a skeleton in an attic, and the greatest racehorse in American history: from these strands, a Pulitzer Prize winner braids a sweeping story of art and science, love and obsession, the human-animal bond, the legacy of enslavement and the ongoing quest for racial justice.

Horse is set in three time periods. The historical spine of the book is based on the true story of the remarkable racehorse, Lexington, whose blistering speed drew crowds of more than twenty thousand to the track and riveted the attention of the nation, even as the country was sliding towards Civil War. Like most of the great horses of the period, Lexington's success relied on the skills of Black horsemen, many of whom were enslaved. Brooks vividly captures the growing risks faced by these men and the horses they cared for as war sweeps through the South.

Lexington was painted many times during his long career. One portrait wound up in a 1980s bequest to the Smithsonian from a radical art dealer named Martha Jackson, a champion of edgy contemporary painters such as Jackson Pollock. That painting and its mysterious provenance brings the novel to bohemian New York in the 1950s and an art world roiled by exciting new means of expression.

Meanwhile, in contemporary Washington DC, a scientist at the Smithsonian rediscovers the significance of a skeleton specimen simply labelled "Horse," while an art historian tries to learn more about the Black horsemen so vividly portrayed with their charges in nineteenth century American equestrian art. Even as they puzzle over these past mysteries, their legacy unexpectedly ensnares them.

390 pages Historical fiction

BROOKS, Geraldine. *Memorial Days: a Memoir*

It was Memorial Day, 2019, when Geraldine Brooks received news that her husband Tony Horwitz had collapsed and died, far from home, in the middle of his own book tour. The complex tasks required in the face of such a sudden death left her no time to properly grieve for him.

Three years later, still feeling broken and bereft, she booked a flight to Flinders Island off the coast of Tasmania. There, she pondered the ways of other cultures deal with mourning and finally seized the time and space she needed for her own grief. Alone on a rugged stretch of coast, she revisited a 35 year marriage filled with risk, adventure, humour and love.

A spare and moving memoir that joins the classics of the genre, *Memorial Days* is a portrait of a larger-than-life love affair and a reckoning with of the inevitability of loss.

207 pages Biography

BROOKS, Karen. *The Whisky Widow*

When Greer MacAlister's despised husband dies, she and her young daughter Fen find themselves in a remote whisky smuggling community in the heart of the Highlands. Here, illicit whisky making is a means of survival in a Scotland under occupation by the English, decades after the disastrous Battle of Culloden. The villagers are suspicious of Greer, but when she tricks excise officers away from their illegal stills with a courageous and daring act, they warm to her.

But the excise men are out for revenge, smuggling is a dangerous business, and whisky - a drink that has long ignited passions, songs, stories and danger - is at the rebellious heart of it all. Greer and Fen have no choice but to fight for the life they want.

This rollicking story of bravery, adventure, love and murder brings alive the Scottish Highlands of long ago. It is a poem to the art of whisky distilling and a world now lost to us, as well as a eulogy for those who were forced to leave the lands they loved.

459 pages Historical fiction

BURDICK, Serena. *The Stolen Book of Evelyn Aubrey*

What if you could write a new ending for yourself?

England, 1898: When Evelyn first married the famous novelist William Aubrey, she was dazzled by his brilliance. But their newlywed bliss is brief when William is gripped by writer's block, and he becomes jealous of Evelyn's writing talent. When he commits the ultimate betrayal — stealing a draft of her novel and passing it off as his own — Evelyn decides to write her way out of their unhappy marriage.

California, 2006: Abigail always wondered about her father, his identity forever lost when her mother unexpectedly died. Or so Abigail thought, until she stumbled upon his photo and a message that her great-great grandmother was the author, Evelyn Aubrey, leading Abigail on a journey to England in search for answers. There, she learns of Evelyn's shocking disappearance and how London society believed she was murdered. But from what she uncovers about Evelyn, Abigail believes her brilliant great-great grandmother had another plot up her sleeve.

Rich in atmosphere and emotion, *The Stolen Book of Evelyn Aubrey* tells the story of literary secrets, a family curse, and the lengths women will go to take charge of their future.

334 pages Historical fiction

BURKE, Peter. *The Silk Merchant's Son*

In 1845, carrying a quantity of silkworms and a huge donation from a wealthy benefactress, Fabrice Cleriquot is hastily dispatched to the Swan River Colony, an English Protestant outpost on the verge of financial collapse.

Joining Fabrice are twenty-eight mismatched Catholic missionaries. Bishop John Brady has a diocese half the size of Europe and not a penny left to run it; Dom Salvado wants a Spanish Benedictine monastery in the middle of nowhere; and the Irish Sisters of Mercy hope to 'rescue' little girls from the bush to raise as good Christians.

As Europe descends into turmoil and the new world stubbornly resists the missionary dream, the silk merchant's son is left wondering what remains for an atheist to believe in.

398 pages Historical fiction

BYRSKI, Liz *At the End of the Day*

When Mim Squires and Mathias Vander are stranded together on a disrupted flight home to Perth, they are surprised to find that they have much in common. Mim owns a bookshop, Mathias is a writer, and both are at turning points in their lives. Mim's childhood polio is taking a toll on her life. Mathias is contemplating a cross-continent move to be nearer his daughter.

But life back in Perth is not smooth sailing, with their respective family members going through their own upheavals. As Mim and Mathias both struggle to adjust to the challenges of being in their late seventies, secrets from the past that neither wishes to face rise to the surface, challenging their long-held beliefs in their independence and singularity.

At the end of the day can they muster the wisdom and the courage they need to change? 328 pages Domestic fiction

CARO, Jane. *The Mother*

Recently widowed, Miriam Duffy is a respectable North Shore real estate agent and devoted mother and grandmother. She was thrilled when her younger daughter Ally married her true love, but as time goes by Miriam wonders whether all is well with Ally, as she moves to the country and gradually withdraws, finding excuses every time Miriam offers to visit. Their relationship has always had its ups and downs, and Miriam tries to give her daughter the distance she so

clearly wants. But is all as it seems?

When the truth of her daughter's situation is revealed, Miriam watches in disbelief as Ally and her children find themselves increasingly vulnerable and cut off from the world. As the situation escalates and the law proves incapable of protecting them, Miriam is faced with an unthinkable decision. But she will do anything for the people she loves most in the world. Wouldn't you?

A stunning, gripping novel that goes to the heart of a mother's love and asks what any of us might do when faced with a threat to the people we hold most dear. 357 pages Thriller fiction

CARO, Jane. *Lyrebird*

A sound froze her blood. A woman. A woman screaming in pure terror. Screaming and sobbing—begging—out here, in this desolate place.

Twenty years ago, ornithology student Jessica Weston panicked when she heard a woman screaming for her life in the remote Barrington Tops. Her relief, when she discovers that it is a lyrebird making the sounds, is profound. She is thrilled to have caught his display on video. Then she remembers—lyrebirds are mimics. Whatever the wild creature has heard must have really happened, and happened nearby.

Jessica takes her video to the police. Despite support from newly minted detective, Megan Blaxland, with no missing person reported and no body, her evidence is ridiculed and dismissed.

Twenty years later, a body is unearthed, just where Jessica said it would be. Horrified they let the case go cold, Jessica, now an associate professor, and Megan, recently retired but brought back to head up the investigation, reunite and join forces. They are determined to find the killer, whatever it takes. What they don't realise is that they are not just putting their lives in danger, but also the lives of those close to them ... 360 pages Mystery fiction

CARR, Garrett. *The Boy from the Sea*

1973. In a close-knit community on Ireland's west coast, a baby is found abandoned on the beach. Named Brendan by Ambrose Bonnar, the fisherman who adopts him, the baby captivates the town and the boy he grows to be will captivate them still – no one can quite fathom Brendan Bonnar.

For Christine, Ambrose's wife, Brendan brings both love and worry. For Declan, their son, his new brother's arrival is the start of a life-long rivalry. An although Ambrose brings Brendan into his home out of love, it is a decision that will fracture his family and force this man – more comfortable at sea than on land – to try to understand himself and those he cares for.

Told over two decades, *The boy from the sea* is a novel about a restless boy trying to find his place in the world and a family fighting to hold itself together. It is a story of ordinary lives made extraordinary, a drama about a community who can't help but look to the boy from the sea for answers as they face the storm of a rapidly changing world. Told with wry humour, this is a ruefully funny portrait of a dysfunctional family in a struggling town. 325 pages Families fiction

CHALLINOR, Deborah. *Black Silk and Sympathy.*

"Men have been undertakers for hundreds of years. Not women, men. You don't belong."

Sydney, 1865. Seventeen-year-old Tatiana Caldwell travels from London to make a new life. Her path leads her to Crowe Funeral Services, where she apprentices under the tutelage of Titus Crowe, the enigmatic owner.

Tatty finds herself drawn to the fascinating conventions of the funeral trade - plumed horses and processions, mutes and mortuary trains, flowers and finery - as well as the more visceral new practice of embalming. Soon she marries, and after the sudden death of her husband, Titus, she becomes Sydney's first female undertaker.

Her hard-won stability is shattered when Elias Nuttall, a ruthless rival in the funeral trade, accuses Tatty of murdering her husband. Facing public scorn and legal peril, Tatty gathers an unlikely band of allies in a battle to clear her name.

Black Silk and Sympathy is a riveting and realistic journey through the front parlours and dark alleys of 1860s Sydney, from the Botanic Gardens in the morning to the cemetery at midnight. 375 pages Historical fiction

CHANDRAN, Shankari.

Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens

Welcome to Cinnamon Gardens, a home for those who are lost and the stories they treasure.

Cinnamon Gardens Nursing Home is nestled in the quiet suburb of Westgrove, Sydney- populated with residents with colourful histories, each with their own secrets, triumphs and failings. This is their safe place, an oasis of familiar delights – a beautiful garden, a busy kitchen and a bountiful recreation schedule.

But this ordinary neighbourhood is not without its prejudices. The serenity of Cinnamon Gardens is threatened by malignant forces more interested in what makes this refuge different rather than embracing the calm companionship that makes this place home for so many. As those who challenge the residents' existence make their stand against the nursing home with devastating consequences, our characters are forced to reckon with a country divided.

Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens is about family and memory, community and race, but is ultimately a love letter to storytelling and how our stories shape who we are.

Winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award 2023

360 pages. Domestic fiction

CHANDRAN, Shankari.

Song of the Sun God

Nala and Rajan, a young couple, begin their married life in 1946, on the eve of Ceylon's independence from Britain. Arranged in marriage, they learn to love each other and protect their growing family, against the backdrop of increasing ethnic tension.

As the country descends into a bloody civil war, Nala and Rajan must decide which path is best for their family; and live with the consequences of their mistakes.

Over time, Nala and Rajan teach their family why some parts of their history and heritage are worth holding on to; and why some parts and people have to be left behind.

Song of the Sun God spans three continents and three generations of a family that remains dedicated to its homeland, whilst learning to embrace its new home. Funny, warm and tender, we see Nala and Rajan's family navigate war, migration, old loyalties and new beginnings, relying on the philosophy of their religion, their ancestors and each other.

Song of the Sun God is about the wisdom, mistakes and sacrifices of our past that enable us to live more freely in the future.

385 pages Families fiction

CHATER, Lauren.

The Beauties

When Emilia Lennox loses everything after her husband's lands and title are confiscated, her beauty is her best bargaining chip with the only man who can restore their fortunes: King Charles II himself.

But the king's favour comes at a price. He will pardon Emilia's husband only if she agrees to be his mistress. Torn, Emilia comes up with a condition of her own: she will consent, but not until her portrait hangs among the famed Windsor Beauties, a series commissioned by the Duchess of York to showcase the fairest women in the royal retinue.

For Henry Greenhill, ambitious assistant to the court painter, the opportunity to paint Emilia's portrait is a chance to step out of his master's shadow. But his sitter proves as evasive as she is beautiful, and with barely a sketch to show for his efforts, Henry's career is on the line.

As the king's patience wears thin, it's clear that more than creative talent will be needed to capture this incomparable beauty on canvas ...

372 pages Historical fiction

CHATER, Lauren.

The Winter Dress

Two women separated by centuries but connected by one beautiful silk dress. A captivating novel based on a real-life shipwreck discovered off Texel Island by the bestselling author of *Gulliver's Wife*, Lauren Chater.

Jo Baaker, a textiles historian and Dutch ex-pat is drawn back to the island where she was born to investigate the provenance of a 17th century silk dress. Retrieved by local divers from a sunken shipwreck, the dress offers tantalising clues about the way people lived and died during Holland's famous Golden Age.

Jo's research leads her to Anna Tesseltje, a poor Amsterdam laundress turned ladies' companion who served the enigmatic artist Catharina van Shurman. The two women were said to share a powerful bond, so why did Anna

abandon Catharina at the height of her misfortune?

Jo is convinced the truth lies hidden between the folds of this extraordinary dress. But as she delves deeper into Anna's history, troubling details about her own past begin to emerge.

On the small Dutch island of Texel where fortunes are lost and secrets lie buried for centuries, Jo will finally discover the truth about herself and the woman who wore the Winter Dress.

Discussion questions in back of book.

344 pages Historical fiction

CHENG, Melanie. *Room for a Stranger*

Meg had hoped for somebody quiet, somebody who kept to himself. But now she wondered if perhaps she wanted more than that – some company, a snippet of conversation, some remedy for the loneliness she'd felt since Helen had passed away. And while she'd slept more soundly these past few nights knowing Andy was in the next room, now she found herself scrutinizing their interactions. Why didn't he make eye contact? What did he do for all those hours, locked away in his room?

At seventy-five, Meg Hughes finds herself living alone, with only her African grey parrot, Atticus, for company. Andy Chan is in his second year of university and buckling under the pressure. Through circumstances largely outside their control, they find themselves living together in Meg's family home.

Room for a Stranger is the story of an unlikely friendship – a unique and powerful bond between two very different people that will ultimately prove lifesaving.

271 pages Australian Fiction

CHENG, Melanie. *The Burrow*

Amy, Jin and Lucie are leading isolated lives in their partially renovated, inner-city home. When they buy a pet rabbit for Lucie, and then Amy's mother, Pauline, comes to stay, the family is forced to confront long-buried secrets.

The Burrow tells an unforgettable story about grief and hope. With her characteristic compassion and eye for detail, Melanie Cheng reveals the lives of others—even of a small rabbit.

'This is a novel that deals with the crucial elements of our lives – love and family and grief and guilt and responsibility – and does so without a whiff of sentimentality and does so fearlessly. As in real life, the characters keep surprising us. The power of *The Burrow* is in the unflinching yet empathetic command of the novelist, in the candid beauty of the language. It's a remarkable work, nuanced and human and adult.' Christos Tsiolkas 185 pages Domestic fiction

CHEVALIER, Tracy. *The Glass Maker*

Venice, 1486. Across the lagoon lies Murano. Time flows differently here- like the glass the island's maestros spend their lives learning to handle.

Women are not meant to work with glass, but Orsola Rosso flouts convention to save her family from ruin. She works in secret, knowing her creations must be perfect to be accepted by men. But perfection may take a lifetime.

Skipping like a stone through the centuries, we follow Orsola as she hones her craft through war and plague, tragedy and triumph, love and loss.

The beads she creates adorn the necks of empresses and courtesans from Paris to Vienna – but will she ever earn the respect of those closest to her?

392 pages Historical fiction

CLUTTON, Sarah. *The Remarkable Truths of Alfie Bains*

Alfie's mum, Emilia, has been lying to him forever.

It's only been the two of them in Ireland, but when Emilia's appendix explodes, she drops a bombshell: they have a family back in Australia, and she and Alfie are going to meet them.

When Penny Bains opens the door of her Tasmanian farmhouse to a boy with an Irish accent claiming to be the son of her missing daughter, Emilia, her life is turned upside down.

Alfie needs to know who his father is, but the residents of the tiny town of Beggars Rock and his newly found

grandmother and great-aunts are all staying silent. As Alfie starts to uncover secrets that his family would prefer to keep buried, the one thing he does discover is that no one is willing to tell him the truth. Unforgettable, funny, life affirming and deeply moving, *The Remarkable Truths of Alfie Bains* is an absolute joy. 408 pages Domestic fiction

CURRY, Lisa(with *WHINNETT, Ellen*). *Lisa*

The long-awaited memoir of one of Australia's most enduring and inspiring sporting icons.

Triple Olympian and wellness entrepreneur Lisa Curry has lived her life in the public eye for four decades.

In this very personal memoir, she shares the untold story of being Lisa.

A swimming protegee who became one of Australia's first fitness entrepreneurs, Lisa Curry swam to Olympic fame in the '80s and '90s. With celerity and celebrity, she became in equal parts the darling of women's magazines and tabloid fodder, until, at 58, a family tragedy nearly consumed her. From the golden girl of Australian swimming to a 'super mum' and now a proud grannie, Lisa Curry has a powerful story to tell of endurance and enduring.

In 1972, ten-year-old Lisa escaped the heat of a hot and muggy Brisbane day in the local pool when she was spotted by Dawn Fraser's legendary swim coach, Harry Gallagher. Within two years of joining his swim squad, Lisa would be one of the fastest swimmers of her age in the world. Over the next 23 years, Lisa honed her natural talent with a legendary work ethic and a punishing training ritual of 5am starts. Countless hours of long, unbroken swimming of up to 60km a week in solitary union with the black lines of the pool would take Lisa to three Olympic Games: Moscow 1980, Los Angeles 1984, and Barcelona 1992; three Commonwealth Games; and two World Championships. By the time Lisa called time on her sporting career, she had become the only Australian to hold Commonwealth and Australian records in every stroke except backstroke, and from 50 to 400 metres, a feat that has not been repeated to this day.

In this funny, heartbreaking but always life-affirming memoir, Lisa Curry reflects on a life well lived and the experiences that shaped her: swimming, family, marriage, divorce, and love found again. It is a powerful story of resilience, of highs and lows, and of starting out and starting again.

341 pages Biography

DALTON, Trent. *All Our Shimmering Skies*

Darwin, 1942. As Japanese bombs rain down, motherless Molly Hook, the gravedigger's daughter, is looking to the skies and running for her life. Inside a duffel bag she carries a stone heart, alongside a map to lead her to Longcoat Bob, the deep-country sorcerer who she believes put a curse on her family. By her side are the most unlikely travelling companions: Greta, a razor-tongued actress, and Yukio, a fallen Japanese fighter pilot. The treasure lies before them, but close behind them trails the dark. And above them, always, are the shimmering skies.

A story about gifts that fall from the sky, curses we dig from the earth and the secrets we bury inside ourselves, *All Our Shimmering Skies* is an odyssey of true love and grave danger, of darkness and light, of bones and blue skies. It is a love letter to Australia and an ode to the art of looking up – a buoyant, beautiful and magical novel, abrim with warmth, wit and wonder.

436 pages Magic realist fiction

DALTON, Trent. *Boy Swallows Universe*

Brisbane, 1985: A lost father, a mute brother, a junkie mum, a heroin dealer for a stepfather and a notorious crim for a babysitter. It's not as if Eli Bell's life isn't complicated enough already. He's just trying to follow his heart and understand what it means to be a good man, but fate keeps throwing obstacles in his way – not least of which is Tytus Broz, legendary Brisbane drug dealer.

But now Eli's life is going to get a whole lot more serious: he's about to meet the father he doesn't remember, break into Boggo Road on Christmas Day to rescue his mum, come face to face with the criminals who tore his world apart, and fall in love with the girl of his dreams.\

A story of brotherhood, true love and the most unlikely of friendships, *Boy Swallows Universe* is heartbreaking, joyous and exhilarating.

474 pages Australian fiction

Winner Australian Book Industry, Book of the Year 2019

Winner Indie Book Award 2019

Winner People's Choice Awards, NSW Premier's Literary Awards 2019

Winner Australian Book Industry, Literary Fiction Book of the Year 2019

DALTON, Trent. *Love Stories*

Trent Dalton goes out into the world and asks a simple, direct question: 'Can you please tell me a love story?'

A blind man yearns to see the face of his wife of thirty years. A divorced mother has a secret love affair with a priest. A geologist discovers a three-minute video recorded by his wife before she died. A tree lopper's heart falls in a forest. A working mum contemplates taking photographs of her late husband down from her fridge. A girl writes a last letter to the man she loves most, then sets it on fire. A palliative care nurse helps a dying woman converse with the angel at the end of her bed. A renowned 100-year-old scientist ponders the one great earthly puzzle he was never able to solve: 'What is love?' Endless stories. Human stories. Love stories.

Inspired by a personal moment of profound love and generosity, Trent Dalton, bestselling author and one of Australia's finest journalists, spent two months in 2021 speaking to people from all walks of life, asking them one simple and direct question: 'Can you please tell me a love story?' The result is an immensely warm, poignant, funny and moving book about love in all its guises, including observations, reflections and stories of people falling into love, falling out of love, and never letting go of the loved ones in their hearts. A heartfelt, deep, wise and tingly tribute to the greatest thing we will never understand and the only thing we will ever really need: love. 352 pages Non-fiction

DAVE, Laura. *The Last Thing He Told Me*

Before Owen Michaels disappears, he smuggles a note to his beloved wife of one year: *Protect her*. Despite her confusion and fear, Hannah Hall knows exactly to whom the note refers—Owen's sixteen-year-old daughter, Bailey. Bailey, who lost her mother tragically as a child. Bailey, who wants absolutely nothing to do with her new stepmother.

As Hannah's increasingly desperate calls to Owen go unanswered, as the FBI arrests Owen's boss, as a US marshal and federal agents arrive at her Sausalito home unannounced, Hannah quickly realizes her husband isn't who he said he was. And that Bailey just may hold the key to figuring out Owen's true identity—and why he really disappeared.

Hannah and Bailey set out to discover the truth. But as they start putting together the pieces of Owen's past, they soon realize they're also building a new future—one neither of them could have anticipated.

With its breakneck pacing, dizzying plot twists, and evocative family drama, *The Last Thing He Told Me* is a riveting mystery, certain to shock you with its final, heartbreaking turn. 303 pages Thriller fiction

DISHER, Garry. *Sanctuary*

Grace is a thief: a good one. She was taught by the experts and she's been practising since she was a kid. She specialises in small, high-value items – stamps, watches - and she knows her Jaeger- Lecoultries from her Patek Philippes. But it's a solitary life, always watchful, always moving. It's not the life she wants.

Lying low after a run-in with an old associate, Grace walks into Erin Mandel's rural antiques shop and sees a chance for something different. A normal job. A place to call home.

But someone is looking for Erin. And someone's looking for Grace, too.

And they are both, in their own ways, very dangerous men. 363 pages Thriller fiction

DOERR, Anthony. *Cloud Cuckoo Land*

Among the most celebrated and beloved novels of recent times, *Cloud Cuckoo Land* is a triumph of imagination and compassion, a soaring story about children on the cusp of adulthood in worlds in peril, who find resilience, hope, and a book.

In the 15th century, an orphan named Anna lives inside the formidable walls of Constantinople. She learns to read, and in this ancient city, famous for its libraries, she finds what might be the last copy of a centuries-old book, the story of Aethon, who longs to be turned into a bird so that he can fly to a utopian paradise in the sky. Outside the walls is Omeir, a village boy, conscripted with his beloved oxen into the army that will lay siege to the city. His path and Anna's will cross.

In the present day, in a library in Idaho, octogenarian Zeno rehearses children in a play adaptation of Aethon's story, preserved against all odds through centuries. Tucked among the library shelves is a bomb, planted by a troubled, idealistic teenager, Seymour. This is another siege.

And in a not-so-distant future, on the interstellar ship Argos, Konstance is alone in a vault, copying on scraps of sacking the story of Aethon, told to her by her father.

Anna, Omeir, Seymour, Zeno, and Konstance are dreamers and outsiders whose lives are gloriously intertwined. Doerr's dazzling imagination transports us to worlds so dramatic and immersive that we forget, for a time, our own.
622 pages Space and time fiction

FALKINER, Suzanne. *Rose: the Extraordinary Voyage of Rose de Freycinet, the Stowaway Who Sailed Around the World For Love*

The voyage of Rose de Freycinet, the stowaway who defied the French for love.

In 1814, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, nineteen-year-old Rose Pinon married handsome naval officer Louis de Freycinet, fifteen years her senior. Three years later, unable to bear parting from her husband, she dressed in men's clothing and slipped secretly aboard his ship the day before it sailed on a voyage of scientific discovery to the South Seas. Living for three years as the sole female among 120 men, Rose de Freycinet defied not only bourgeois society's expectations of a woman in 1817, but also a strict prohibition against women sailing on French naval ships.

Whether dancing at governors' balls in distant colonies or evading pirates and meeting armed Indigenous warriors on remote Australian shores, or surviving shipwreck in the wintry Falkland Islands, Rose used her quick pen to record her daily experiences, becoming the first woman to circumnavigate the world and leave a record of her journey.

Suzanne Falkiner tells this story of courage, enduring love, curiosity and a spirit of adventure - and of the pivotal voyages that led to it - while revealing a uniquely female view into the hitherto largely male world of 19th-century life at sea.
357 pages Biography

FIDLER, Richard. *The Book of Roads and Kingdoms*

A lost imperial city, full of wonder and marvels. An empire that was the largest the world had ever seen, established with astonishing speed. A people obsessed with travel, knowledge and adventure.

When Richard Fidler came across the account of Ibn Fadlan - a tenth-century Arab diplomat who travelled all the way from Baghdad to the cold riverlands of modern-day Russia - he was struck by how modern Fadlan's voice was, like that of a twenty-first century time-traveller dropped into a medieval wilderness. On further investigation, Fidler discovered this was just one of countless reports from Arab and Persian travellers of their adventures in medieval China, India, Africa and Byzantium. Put together, he saw these stories formed a crazy quilt picture of a lost world. *The Book of Roads & Kingdoms* is the story of the medieval wanderers who travelled out to the edges of the known world during Islam's fabled Golden Age; an era when the caliphs of Baghdad presided over a dominion greater than the Roman Empire at its peak, stretching from North Africa to India. Imperial Baghdad, founded as the 'City of Peace', quickly became the biggest and richest metropolis in the world. Standing atop one of the city's four gates, its founder proclaimed: *Here is the Tigris River, and nothing stands between it and China.*

In a flourishing culture of science, literature and philosophy, the citizens of Baghdad were fascinated by the world and everything in it. Inspired by their Prophet's commandment to seek knowledge all over the world, these traders, diplomats, soldiers and scientists left behind the cosmopolitan pleasures of Baghdad to venture by camel, horse and boat into the unknown. Those who returned from these distant foreign lands wrote accounts of their adventures, both realistic and fantastical - tales of wonder and horror and delight.

Fidler expertly weaves together these beautiful and thrilling pictures of a dazzling lost world with the story of an empire's rise and utterly devastating fall.
430 pages Non-fiction
Winner of the Indie Book Awards 2023 Non Fiction Book of the Year
Shortlisted for the BookPeople Non Fiction Book of the Year 2023

FLANAGAN, Richard. *Question 7*

Beginning at a love hotel by Japan's Inland Sea and ending by a river in Tasmania, *Question 7* is about the choices we make about love and the chain reaction that follows.

By way of H.G. Wells and Rebecca West's affair through 1930's nuclear physics to Flanagan's father working as a slave labourer near Hiroshima when the atom bomb is dropped, this daisy chain of events reaches fission when Flanagan as a young man finds himself trapped in a rapid on a wild river not knowing if he is to live or to die.

At once a love song to his island home and to his parents, this hypnotic melding of dream, history, place, and memory is about how our lives so often arise out of the stories of others and the stories we invent about ourselves.
280 pages Biography

FOWLER, Karen Joy. *We are all completely beside ourselves*

What if you grew up to realise that your father has used your childhood as an experiment?

Rosemary doesn't talk very much, and about certain things she is silent. She had a sister, Fern, her whirlwind other half, who vanished from her life in circumstances she wishes she could forget. And it has been ten years since she last saw her beloved older brother Lowell. Now at college, Rosemary starts to see that she can't go forward without going back, back to the time when, aged five, she was sent away from home to her grandparents and returned to find Fern gone.

322 pages Psychological fiction

FUNDER, Anna *Wifedom*

Looking for wonder and some reprieve from the everyday, Anna Funder slips into the pages of her hero George Orwell. As she watches him create his writing self, she tries to remember her own...

And when she uncovers his forgotten wife, it's a revelation. Eileen O'Shaughnessy's literary brilliance shaped Orwell's work and her practical nous saved his life. But why – and how – was she written out of the story?

Using newly discovered letters from Eileen to her best friend, Funder recreates the Orwells' marriage, through the Spanish Civil War and WW II in London. As she rolls up the screen concealing Orwell's private life she is led to question what it takes to be a writer – and what it is to be a wife.

Compelling and utterly original, *Wifedom* speaks to the unsung work of women everywhere today, while offering a breathtakingly intimate view of one of the most important literary marriages of the 20th century. It is a book that speaks to our present moment as much as it illuminates the past.

451 pages Biography

GARMUS, Bonnie. *Lessons in Chemistry*

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing.

But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute take a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans, the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with - of all things - her mind. True chemistry results.

Like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later, Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show, *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ('combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride') proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

390 pages Historical fiction

GARNER, Helen. *The Season*

It's footy season in Melbourne, and Helen Garner is following her grandson's under-16s team. She not only goes to every game (give or take), but to every training session too, shivering on the sidelines at dusk, fascinated by the spectacle.

She's a passionate Western Bulldogs fan (with an imperfect grasp of the rules) who loves the epic theatre of AFL football. But her devotion to the under-16s offers her something else. This is her chance to connect with her youngest grandchild, to be close to him before he rushes headlong into manhood. To witness his triumphs and defeats, to fear for his safety in battle, to gasp and to cheer for his team as it fights for a place in the finals.

With her sharp eye, her generous wit and her warm humour, Garner documents this pivotal moment, both as part of the story and as silent witness. *The Season* is an unexpected and exuberant book: a celebration of the nobility, grace and grit of team spirit, a reflection on the nature of masculinity, and a tribute to the game's power to thrill us.

188 pages Non-fiction

GENTILL, Sulari. *The Woman in the Library*

In every person's story, there is something to hide...

The ornate reading room at the Boston Public Library is quiet, until the tranquillity is shattered by a woman's terrified scream. Security guards take charge immediately, instructing everyone inside to stay put until the threat is identified and contained. While they wait for the all-clear, four strangers, who'd happened to sit at the same table, pass the time in conversation and friendships are struck. Each has his or her own reasons for being in the reading room that morning--it just happens that one is a murderer.

Award-winning author Sulari Gentill delivers a sharply thrilling read with *THE WOMAN IN THE LIBRARY*, an unexpectedly twisty literary adventure that examines the complicated nature of friendship and shows us that words can be the most treacherous weapons of all. 250 pages Mystery fiction

GOODMAN, Alison. *The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies*

A high society amateur detective at the heart of Regency London uses her wits and invisibility as an 'old maid' to protect other women in a new and fiercely feminist historical mystery.

Welcome to the secret life of the Colebrook twins: unnoticed old maids to most, but unseen champions to those in need - society be damned.

Lady Augusta Colebrook, 'Gus', is determinedly unmarried, bored by society life, and tired of being dismissed at the age of forty-two. She and her twin sister, Julia, who is grieving her dead betrothed, need a distraction. One soon presents itself: to rescue their friend's goddaughter, Caroline, from her violent husband.

The sisters set out to Caroline's country estate with a plan, but their carriage is accosted by a highwayman. In the scuffle, Gus accidentally shoots the ruffian, only to discover he is Lord Evan Belford, an acquaintance from their past who was charged with murder and exiled to Australia twenty years ago. With Lord Evan injured and unconscious, the sisters have no choice but to bring him on their mission to save Caroline.

What follows is a high adventure full of danger, clever improvisation, heart-racing near misses, and a little help from a revived and rather charming Lord Evan. And so begin the beguiling adventures of the Colebrook twins ...

Discussion questions in back of book 452 pages Mystery fiction

GRENVILLE, Kate. *A Room Made of Leaves*

What if Elizabeth Macarthur – wife of the notorious John Macarthur, wool baron in the earliest days of Sydney – had written a shockingly frank secret memoir? And what if novelist Kate Grenville has miraculously found and published it? That's the starting point for *A Room Made of Leaves*, a playful dance of possibilities between the real and the invented.

Marriage to a ruthless bully, the impulses of her heart, the search for power in a society that gave women none: this Elizabeth Macarthur manages her complicated life with spirit and passion, cunning and sly wit. Her memoir lets us hear – at last! – what one of these seemingly demure women from history might really have thought.

At the centre of *A Room Made of Leaves* is one of the most toxic issues of our own age: the seductive appeal of false stories. This book may be set in the past, but it's just as much about the present, where secrets and lies have the dangerous power to shape reality.

Kate Grenville's return to the territory of *The Secret River* is historical fiction turned inside out, a stunning sleight of hand. 321 pages Historical fiction

GRENVILLE, Kate. *Unsettled: a Journey Through Time and Place*

'What does it mean to be on land that was taken from other people? Now that we know how the taking was done, what do we do with that knowledge?'

Kate Grenville is no stranger to the past. Her success and fame as a writer exploded when she published *The Secret River* in 2005, a bestseller based on the story of her convict ancestor, an early settler on the Hawkesbury River. More than two decades on, and following the defeat of the Voice referendum, Grenville is still grappling with what it means to descend from people who were, as she puts it, 'on the sharp edge of the moving blade that was colonisation'.

So she decides to go on a kind of pilgrimage, back through the places her family stories happened, and put the stories and the First Peoples back into the same frame, on the same country, to try to think about those questions. This gripping book is the result of that journey. 249 pages Non-fiction

GRENVILLE, Kate. *Restless Dolly Maunder*

Dolly Maunder was born at the end of the nineteenth century, when society's long-locked doors were starting to creak ajar for women. Growing up in a poor farming family in country New South Wales but clever, energetic and determined, Dolly spent her restless life pushing at those doors.

Most women like her have disappeared from view, remembered only in family photo albums as remote figures in impossible clothes, or maybe for a lemon-pudding recipe handed down through the generations. *Restless Dolly Maunder* brings one of these women to life as someone we can recognise and whose struggles we can empathise with.

In this compelling new novel, Kate Grenville uses family memories to imagine her way into the life of her grandmother. This is the story of a woman, working her way through a world of limits and obstacles, who was able—if at a cost—to make a life she could call her own. Her battles and triumphs helped to open doors for the women who came after.

242 pages, Historical fiction

HAM, Rosalie. *Molly*

It's 1914 and Molly Dunnage wants to see change: at home, at work and in underwear.

Her burgeoning corsetry business is starting to take off, thanks to some high-profile supporters. She's marching with Melbourne's suffragists for better conditions for women everywhere. And her family - her eccentric, confounding, adored father and aunt - are turning their minds to country retirement.

But as the clouds of war gather and an ominous figure starts skulking in the shadows of her life, Molly's dreams begin to falter. Then, when true love drops out of the sky and into her arms, her hopes for her life and the world are entirely upended.

With the dark humour, richly detailed settings and vividly drawn characters we've come to expect from Rosalie Ham, this prequel to the international bestseller *The Dressmaker* is an unforgettable story of hopes lost, love found - and corsets loosened.

389 pages Historical fiction

HAMMER, Chris. *Silver*

For half a lifetime, journalist Martin Scarsden has run from his past. But now there is no escaping.

He'd vowed never to return to his hometown, Port Silver, and its traumatic memories. But now his new partner, Mandy Blonde, has inherited an old house in the seaside town and Martin knows their chance for a new life together won't come again.

Martin arrives to find his old friend from school days has been brutally murdered, and Mandy is the chief suspect. With the police curiously reluctant to pursue other suspects, Martin goes searching for the killer. And he finds the past waiting for him.

He's making little progress when a terrible new crime starts to reveal the truth. The media descend on Port Silver, attracted by a story that has it all: sex, drugs, celebrity and religion. Once again, Martin finds himself in the front line of reporting.

Yet the demands of deadlines and his desire to clear Mandy are not enough: the past is ever present.

565 pages Mystery fiction

HAMMER, Chris. *The Seven*

Yuwonderie's seven founding families have lorded it over their district for a century, growing ever more rich and powerful.

But now—in startling circumstances—one of their own is found dead in a ditch and homicide detectives Ivan Lucic and Nell Buchanan are sent to investigate.

Could the murder be connected to the execution of the victim's friend thirty years ago—another member of The Seven—or even to the long-forgotten story of a servant girl on the brink of the Great War? What are the secrets The Seven are so desperate to keep hidden?

With the killer still on the loose and events spiraling out of control, the closer Ivan and Nell get to discovering the truth, the more dangerous their investigation becomes. Can they crack the case before more people die?

The Seven is a compelling thriller filled with intrigue, emotional depth and an evocative sense of place—where nothing is ever quite what it seems.

512 pages, Thriller fiction

HAMMER, Chris. *The Tilt*

A man runs for his life in a forest.
A woman plans sabotage.
A body is unearthed.

Newly-minted homicide detective Nell Buchanan returns to her home town, annoyed at being assigned a decades-old murder - a 'file and forget'.

But this is no ordinary cold case, as the discovery of more bodies triggers a chain of escalating events in the present day. As Nell starts to join the pieces together, she begins to question how well she truly knows those closest to her. Could her own family be implicated in the crimes?

The nearer Nell comes to uncovering the secrets of the past, the more dangerous the present becomes for her, as she battles shadowy assailants and sinister forces. Can she survive this harrowing investigation and what price will she have to pay for the truth?

Gripping and atmospheric, *The Tilt* is a stunning multi-layered novel.

473 pages, Thriller fiction

HAMMER, Chris. *Treasure & Dirt*

In the desolate outback town of Finnigans Gap, police struggle to maintain law and order. Thieves pillage opal mines, religious fanatics recruit vulnerable young people and billionaires do as they please.

Then an opal miner is found crucified and left to rot down his mine. Nothing about the miner's death is straightforward, not even who found the body. Sydney homicide detective Ivan Lucic is sent to investigate, assisted by inexperienced young investigator Nell Buchanan.

But Finnigans Gap has already ended one police career and damaged others, and soon both officers face damning allegations and internal investigations. Have Ivan and Nell been set up and, if so, by whom?

As time runs out, their only chance at redemption is to find the killer. But the more secrets they uncover, the more harrowing the mystery becomes, as events from years ago take on a startling new significance.

For in Finnigans Gap, opals, bodies and secrets don't stay buried forever.

496 pages Mystery fiction

HAMMER, Chris. *The Valley*

Nell Buchanan and Ivan Lucic are back – and Nell is thrown into her most emotionally fraught investigation yet.

A controversial entrepreneur is murdered in a remote mountain valley, but this is no ordinary case. Ivan and Nell are soon contending with cowboy lawyers, conmen, bullion thieves and grave robbers.

But it's when Nell discovers the victim is a close blood relative that the past begins to take on a looming significance.

What did take place in The Valley all those years ago? What was Nell's mother doing there, and what was her connection to troubled young police officer Simmons Burnside? And why do the police hierarchy insist Ivan and Nell stay with the case despite an obvious conflict of interest?

The Valley features a page-turning plot, intriguing characters and an evocative sense of place—where nothing is ever quite what it seems. Chris Hammer, the acclaimed author of the international bestsellers *Scrublands*, *Treasure & Dirt*, *The Tilt* and *The Seven*, presents another immersive and emotionally rewarding thriller. 448 pages Thriller fiction

HAMPSON, Amanda. *The Tea Ladies*

Tea lady Hazel Bates is the only person who moves across the invisible social divides within Empire Fashionwear, manufacturers of fashion and textiles. Her rattling tea trolley is a welcome sound all the way from the managing director's office down to the factory floor. She's cool-headed and reliable, always ready with a scalding pot of tea and a plate of biscuits (two each).

But when evidence of a kidnapping, arson and even a dead body turns up out of the blue, it's time for Hazel and her friends to put down their teapots and take up the cause.

A highly original and wonderfully entertaining cosy crime novel set in Sydney in the swinging sixties.

Discussion questions in back of book

374 pages Mystery fiction

HANNAH, Kristin. *The Great Alone*

Alaska, 1974. Untamed. Unpredictable. A story of a family in crisis struggling to survive at the edge of the world, it is also a story of young and enduring love.

Cora Allbright and her husband, Ernt – a recently returned Vietnam veteran scarred by war – uproot their thirteen-year-old daughter, Leni, to start a new life in Alaska. Utterly unprepared for the weather and the isolation, but welcomed by the close-knit community, they fight to build a home in this harsh, beautiful wilderness.

At once an epic story of human survival and love, and an intimate portrait of a family tested beyond endurance, *The Great Alone* offers a glimpse into a vanishing way of life in America. 440 pages Domestic fiction

HANNAH, Kristin. *The Nightingale*

Despite their differences, sisters Viann and Isabelle have always been close. Younger, bolder Isabelle lives in Paris while Viann is content with life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. But when the Second World War strikes, Antoine is sent off to fight and Viann finds herself isolated, so Isabelle is sent by their father to help her.

As the war progresses, the sisters' relationship and strength is tested. With life changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Viann and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

Vivid and exquisite in its illumination of a time and place that was filled with atrocities, but also humanity and strength, Kristin Hannah's novel will provoke thought and discussion that will have readers talking long after they finish reading. 440 pages Historical fiction

HANNAH, Kristin. *The Women*

'*Women can be heroes.*' When twenty-year old nursing student Frances 'Frankie' McGrath hears these unexpected words, it is a revelation. Raised on California's idyllic Coronado Island and sheltered by her conservative parents, she has always prided herself on doing the right thing, being a good girl. But in 1965 the world is changing, and she suddenly imagines a different path for her life. When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she impulsively joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path.

As green and inexperienced as the young men sent to Vietnam to fight, Frankie is overwhelmed by the chaos and destruction of war, as well as the unexpected trauma of coming home to a changed America. Frankie will also discover the true value of female friendship and the heartbreak that love can cause.

The Women is the story of one woman who goes to war, but it shines a light on the story of all women who put themselves in harm's way to help others.

A novel of searing insight and lyrical beauty, *The Women* is a profoundly emotional, richly drawn story with a memorable heroine whose extraordinary idealism and courage under fire defines an era.

471 pages Historical fiction

HARMEL, Kristin. *The Book of Lost Names*

Throughout WW2, forgers helped thousands escape Nazi-occupied France. In 1942, Eva is forced to flee Paris after the arrest of her Jewish father. Finding refuge in a small mountain town, she begins forging identity documents for Jewish children escaping to neutral Switzerland. But erasing people comes with a price, and along with Remy, a mysterious forger, Eva realises she must find a way to preserve the identities of those too young to remember. When Remy disappears and the resistance cell they work for is betrayed, the records they keep become even more crucial to remembering the truth.

Decades later, the book is recovered, leaving researchers desperate to decipher its codes. Only Eva holds the answers, but will she have the strength to face old memories and help reunite those lost during the war?

An engaging and evocative novel, *The Book of Lost Names* is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of bravery and love in the face of evil. 453 pages, War fiction

Set on timeless Wiradyuri country, where the life-giving waters of the rivers can make or break dreams, and based on devastating true events, Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray (River of Dreams) is an epic story of love, loss and belonging.
376 pages Historical fiction

HEPWORTH, Sally. *The Good Sister*

Fern Castle works in her local library. She has dinner with her twin sister, Rose, three nights a week. And she avoids crowds, bright lights and loud noises as much as possible. Fern has a carefully structured life and disrupting her routine can be ... dangerous.

When Rose discovers that she cannot fall pregnant, Fern sees her chance to pay her sister back for everything Rose has done for her. Fern can have a baby for Rose. She just needs to find a father. Simple.

Fern's mission will shake the foundations of the life she has carefully built for herself and stir up dark secrets from the past, in this quirky, rich and shocking story of unexpected love.
Winner of the Davitt Award for Adult Fiction 2021 330 pages Mystery fiction

HICKEY, Margaret. *Broken Bay*

Old loyalties and decades-long feuds rise to the surface in this stunning crime novel, set in an Australian landscape known for its jagged cliffs and hidden caves.

Detective Sergeant Mark Ariti has taken a few days' holiday in Broken Bay at precisely the wrong time. The small fishing town on South Australia's Limestone Coast is now the scene of a terrible tragedy.

Renowned cave diver Mya Rennik has drowned while exploring a sinkhole on the land of wealthy farmer Frank Doyle. As the press descends, Mark's boss orders him to stay put and assist the police operation.

But when they retrieve Mya's body, a whole new mystery is opened up, around the disappearance of a young local woman twenty years before . . .

Suddenly Mark is diving deep into the town's history - and in particular the simmering rivalry between its two most prominent families, the Doyles and Sinclairs.

Then a murder is committed at the Sinclairs' old home – and Mark is left wondering which is more dangerous - Broken Bay's hidden subterranean world or the secretive town above it . . .
377 pages Mystery fiction

HINTON, Hilde. *A Solitary Walk on the Moon*

For Evelyn, mornings pass as mornings always do. She ticks off the jobs at the laundromat and gives welcoming smiles to those who come in. If they've earned one.

Evelyn knows what is going on in her community because she pays attention. She sees the weariness of the frazzled shop owners, the woman with the nasty boyfriend, the nice man with the curly-topped dog, the car parking war and the forgetful man in a crumpled beige suit. The community might not notice Evelyn, because it is easy to overlook the seemingly ordinary. But Evelyn is far from ordinary. She isn't afraid to put things right, and is always ready to find lost property or lost people – even if that means breaking the rules.

For a boy with a struggling mum, and a lonely man with a smile in his eyes, Evelyn is going to make a difference, whether they like it or not. She will teach them that you don't have to be blood to be a family. And they will remind her of what comes from loving someone. It is up to Evelyn if she can pay the price.

With a joyous and unique touch, Hilde Hinton's extraordinary novel *A Solitary Walk on the Moon* gives us an insight into the people we pass on the street. In detailing their rich lives, she breaks then mends our hearts with her wisdom, her empathy and her unforgettable characters, who remind us what can happen if we stop and say hello.
287 pages Contemporary fiction

HONEYMAN, Gail. *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely fine*

Eleanor Oliphant leads a simple life. She wears the same clothes to work every day, eats the same meal deal for lunch every day and buys the same two bottles of vodka to drink every weekend.

Eleanor Oliphant is happy. Nothing is missing from her carefully timetabled existence. Except, sometimes, everything... 384 pages Contemporary fiction

Winner of the 2017 Costa Book Awards

Discussion questions in back of book

IRELAND, Lisa. *The One and Only Dolly Jamieson*

A compelling feel-good novel featuring a proud and gutsy heroine with a truly unbreakable spirit. Life is full of downs and ups . . .

Dolly Jamieson is not homeless, she's merely between permanent abodes. The 78-year-old spends her days keeping warm at the local library, and helping herself to the free morning tea. It's not so bad, really.

But it's certainly a far cry from the 1960s, when this humble girl from Geelong became an international star of the stage. As the acclaimed lead in the Broadway production of *The Rose of France*, all Dolly's dreams had come true. So how, in her old age, did she end up here?

When Jane Leveson, a well-to-do newcomer to the library, shows an interest in Dolly, the pair strike up an unlikely friendship – and soon Jane is offering to help Dolly write her memoirs.

Yet Dolly can detect a deep sadness in the younger woman's eyes. Perhaps by working together to recount the glittering highs, devastating lows and tragic secrets of Dolly's life, both women can finally face their pasts and start to heal . . . 358 pages, Contemporary fiction

Discussion questions in back of book

JAFFE, Meredith. *The Dressmakers of Yarrandarrah Prison*

Can a wedding dress save a bunch of hardened crims? The Full Monty meets Orange is the New Black in a poignantly comic story about a men's prison sewing circle.

Derek's daughter, Debbie, is getting married. He's desperate to be there, but he's banged up in Yarrandarrah Correctional Centre for embezzling funds from the golf club, and, thanks to his ex-wife, Lorraine, he hasn't spoken to Debbie in years. He wants to make a grand gesture - to show her how much he loves her. But what?

Inspiration strikes while he's embroidering a cushion at his weekly prison sewing circle - he'll make her a wedding dress. His fellow stitchers rally around and soon this motley gang of crims is immersed in a joyous whirl of silks, satins and covered buttons.

But as time runs out and tensions rise both inside and outside the prison, the wedding dress project takes on greater significance. With lives at stake, Derek feels his chance to reconcile with Debbie is slipping through his fingers ... A funny, dark and moving novel about finding humanity, friendship and redemption in unexpected places.

368 pages Australian fiction

JOHNSON, Susan. *Aphrodite's Breath*

What happens when you take your 85-year-old mother to live with you on a Greek island?

In life, as in myth, women are the ones who are supposed to stay home like Penelope, weaving at their looms, rather than leaving home like Odysseus. Meet eighty-five-year-old Barbara and her sixty-two-year-old writer-daughter Susan, who asked her mother - on a whim - if she wanted to accompany her to live on the Greek island of Kythera.

Aphrodite's Breath is a strikingly original, funny and forensic examination of love and finding home, amid the stories of the people, olives and wonders of the birthplace of Aphrodite. 350 pages Biography

JOHNSON, Susan. *From Where I Fell*

An anguished email from Pamela Robinson in Australia to her ex-husband in Paris accidentally ends up in the inbox of New York State teacher Chrisanthi Woods. Chrisanthi is sympathetic to Pamela's struggles and the women begin to tell each other the stories and secrets of their lives.

Pamela, responsible for raising her three sons, must re-invent the meaning of home following her divorce, and

Chrisanthi, her dreams long dampened, must find home by leaving it. Temperamental opposites, their emails turn into an exhilarating and provocative exchange of love, loss and fresh beginnings, by turns amusing, frank and confronting.
338 pages, Contemporary fiction

JOYCE, Rachel. *Miss Benson's Beetle*

It is 1950. In a devastating moment of clarity, Margery Benson abandons her dead-end job and advertises for an assistant to accompany her on an expedition. She is going to travel to the other side of the world to search for a beetle that may or may not exist.

Enid Pretty, in her unlikely pink travel suit, is not the companion Margery had in mind. And yet together they will be drawn into an adventure that will exceed every expectation. They will risk everything, break all the rules, and at the top of a red mountain, discover their best selves.

This is a story that is less about what can be found than the belief it might be found; it is an intoxicating adventure story but it is also about what it means to be a woman and a tender exploration of a friendship that defies all boundaries.
388 pages Adventure fiction

KADOTA, Yumiko. *Emotional Female*

Yumiko Kadota was every Asian parent's dream: model student, top of her class in medical school and on track to becoming a surgeon. A self-confessed workaholic, she regularly put 'knife before life', knowing it was all going to be worth it because it would lead to her longed-for career.

But if the punishing hours in surgery weren't hard enough, she also faced challenges as a young female surgeon navigating a male-dominated specialty. She was regularly left to carry out complex procedures without senior surgeons' oversight; she was called all sorts of things, from 'emotional' to 'too confident'; and she was expected to work a relentless on-call roster – sometimes seventy hours a week or more – to prove herself.

Eventually it was too much and Yumiko quit. *Emotional Female* is her account of what it was like to train in the Australian public hospital system, and what made her walk away.

Yumiko Kadota is a voice for her generation when it comes to burnout and finding the resilience to rebuild after suffering a physical, emotional and existential breakdown.
384 pages Biography

KAMALI, Marjan. *The Lion Women of Tehran*

Someday, you and me – we'll do great things. We'll live life for ourselves. And we will help others. We are cubs now, maybe. But we will grow to be lionesses. Strong women who make things happen.

1950, Tehran. Seven-year-old Ellie lives in comfort, wanting for nothing, until the death of her father brings a drastic change in fortune. At school, she meets Homa. Together, the girls play games, wander through the Grand Bazaar and share their ambitions of becoming 'lion women' and the first generation of women fully working in Iran.

Opportunity allows Ellie and her mother to return to their bourgeois life, and Ellie's memories of Homa fade. But years later, her sudden reappearance in Ellie's privileged world alters the course of both of their lives.

As the political turmoil in Iran builds to a breaking point, one earth-shattering betrayal will have enormous consequences.

Written with Marjan Kamali's signature prose, *The Lion Women of Tehran* is a sweeping exploration of how profoundly we are shaped by those we meet when we are young, and the way love and courage transform our lives.
327 pages Historical fiction

KEEGAN, Claire. *Small Things Like These*

It is 1985, in an Irish town. During the weeks leading up to Christmas, Bill Furlong, a coal and timber merchant, faces his busiest season. As he does the rounds, he feels the past rising up to meet him – and encounters the complicit silences of a people controlled by the Church.

Small Things Like These is an unforgettable story of hope, quiet heroism and tenderness.
116 pages, Historical fiction

KELLY, Cathy. *Other Women*

Three women. Three secrets. Three tangled lives...

Sid wears her independence like armour. So when she strikes up a rare connection with unlucky-in-love Finn, they are both determined to prove that men and women can just be friends. Can't they?

Marin has the perfect home, attentive husband, two beloved children – and a secret addiction to designer clothes. She knows she has it all, so why can't she stop comparing herself to other women?

Bea believes that we all have one love story – and she's had hers. Now her life centres around her son, Luke, and her support group of fierce single women. But there's something that she can't tell anyone...

Because as every woman knows, in marriage, love and friendship there is always another side to the story...

356 pages Domestic fiction

KENEALLY, Tom. *Corporal Hitler's Pistol*

How did Corporal Hitler's Luger from the First World War end up being the weapon that killed an IRA turncoat in Kempsey, New South Wales, in 1933?

When an affluent Kempsey matron spots a young Aboriginal boy who bears an uncanny resemblance to her husband, not only does she scream for divorce, attempt to take control of the child's future and upend her comfortable life, but the whole town seems drawn into chaos.

A hero of the First World War has a fit at the cinema and is taken to a psychiatric ward in Sydney, his Irish farmhand is murdered, and a gay piano-playing veteran, quietly a friend to many in town, is implicated.

Corporal Hitler's Pistol speaks to the never-ending war that began with 'the war to end all wars'. Rural communities have always been a melting pot and many are happy to accept a diverse bunch ... as long as they don't overstep. Set in a town he knows very well, in this novel Tom Keneally tells a compelling story of the interactions and relationships between black and white Australians in early twentieth-century Australia.

335 pages Historical fiction

KENNEDY, Louise. *Trespases*

One by one, she undid each event, each decision, each choice.

If Davy had remembered to put on a coat.

If Seamie McGeown had not found himself alone on a dark street.

If Michael Agnew had not walked through the door of the pub on a quiet night in February in his white shirt.

There is nothing special about the day Cushla meets Michael, a married man from Belfast, in the pub owned by her family. But here, love is never far from violence, and this encounter will change both of their lives forever.

As people get up each morning and go to work, school, church or the pub, the daily news rolls in of another car bomb exploded, another man beaten, killed or left for dead. In the class Cushla teaches, the vocabulary of seven-year-old children now includes phrases like 'petrol bomb' and 'rubber bullets'. And as she is forced to tread lines she never thought she would cross, tensions in the town are escalating, threatening to destroy all she is working to hold together.

Tender and shocking, *Trespases* is an unforgettable debut of people trying to live ordinary lives in extraordinary times.

Winner of The British Book Awards Book of The Year: Debut Fiction 2023

Winner of The An Post Irish Book Awards Novel of The Year 2022

Shortlisted for the 2023 Women's Prize for Fiction

311 pages Historical fiction

KENT, Hannah. *Devotion*

Prussia, 1836

Hanne Nussbaum is a child of nature - she would rather run wild in the forest than conform to the limitations of womanhood. In her village of Kay, Hanne is friendless and considered an oddity . . . until she meets Thea.

Ocean, 1838

The Nussbaums are Old Lutherans, bound by God's law and at odds with their King's order for reform. Forced to flee religious persecution the families of Kay board a crowded, disease-riddled ship bound for the new colony of South Australia. In the face of brutal hardship, the beauty of whale song enters Hanne's heart, along with the miracle of her love for Thea. Theirs is a bond that nothing can break.
The whale passed. The music faded.

South Australia, 1838

A new start in an old land. God, society and nature itself decree Hanne and Thea cannot be together. But within the impossible . . . is devotion. 413 pages Historical fiction

KIEZA, Grantlea. *Sister Viv*

Bangka Island, 1942: Australian Army nurse Vivian Bullwinkel was just twenty-six when Japanese soldiers marched her and her fellow nurses into the shallow waters of a remote beach to be executed.

Miraculously, Vivian would be the lone survivor - and she committed the rest of her long life to an exceptional peacetime career which she lived in tribute to her lost friends. The Lieutenant-Colonel would also be the first woman to be honoured with a statue at the Australian War Memorial for her extraordinary bravery and service - a country girl who become one of the highest ranking women in the Australian army.

When Japanese forces attacked Singapore, Vivian and sixty-four other nurses were ordered to evacuate, but soon their ship was bombed by enemy aircraft. Some of the women drowned, but Viv made it to Radji Beach on Bangka Island, off Sumatra, with twenty-one of her colleagues.

There Japanese soldiers forced the women to wade back into the sea to be shot. Somehow, Vivian lived and for the next three and a half years she was a prisoner of war in brutal Japanese camps where she helped others survive the horror. When peace was restored, Vivian became a giant of Australian nursing - and a key driver of Operation Babylift, the mass rescue of young orphans during the Vietnam War. For her extraordinary bravery and service, Vivian was awarded numerous honours, but she never forgot her fallen colleagues, living her life in tribute to them.

343 pages Biography

KINGSOLVER, Barbara.

Demon Copperhead

Demon's story begins with his traumatic birth to a single mother in a single-wide trailer, looking 'like a little blue prizefighter.' For the life ahead of him he will need all of that fighting spirit, along with buckets of charm, a quick wit, and some unexpected talents, legal and otherwise.

In the southern Appalachian Mountains of Virginia, poverty isn't an idea, it's as natural as the grass grows. For a generation growing up in this world, at the heart of the modern opioid crisis, addiction isn't an abstraction, it's neighbours, parents and friends. 'Family' could mean love – or reluctant foster care. For Demon, born on the wrong side of luck, the affection and safety he craves is as remote as the ocean he dreams of seeing one day. The wonder is in how far he's willing to travel to try and get there.

Suffused with truth, anger and compassion, *Demon Copperhead* is an epic tale of love, loss and everything in between.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction 2023

Winner of the 2023 Women's Prize for Fiction

548 pages, Contemporary fiction

KNAPP, Florence. *The Names*

Tomorrow – if morning comes, if the storm stops raging – Cora will register the name of her son. Or perhaps, and this is her real concern, she'll formalize who he will become.

It is 1987, and in the aftermath of a great storm, Cora sets out with her nine-year-old daughter to register the birth of her son. Her husband intends for her to follow a long-standing family tradition and call the baby after him. But when faced with the decision, Cora hesitates. Going against his wishes is a risk that will have consequences, but is it right for her child to inherit his name from generations of domineering men? The choice she makes in this moment will shape the course of their lives.

Seven years later, her son is Bear, a name chosen by his sister, and one that will prove as cataclysmic as the storm from which it emerged. Or he is Julian, the name his mother set her heart on, believing it will enable him to become his own person. Or he is Gordon, named after his father and raised in his cruel image - but is there still a chance to break the mould?

Powerfully moving and full of hope, this is the story of three names, three versions of a life, and the infinite possibilities that a single decision can spark. It is the story of one family, and love's endless capacity to endure, no matter what fate has in store. 343 pages Domestic fiction

KUANG, Rebecca F. *Yellowface*

This is one hell of a story.
It's just not hers to tell.

Athena Liu is a literary darling and June Hayward is literally nobody.

White lies

When Athena dies in a freak accident, June steals her unpublished manuscript and publishes it as her own under the ambiguous name Juniper Song.

Dark humour

But as evidence threatens June's stolen success, she will discover exactly how far she will go to keep what she thinks she deserves.

Deadly consequences...

What happens next is entirely everyone else's fault.

323 pages, Contemporary fiction

LAESTADIUS, Ann-Helen. *Stolen*

[Translated from the Swedish by Rachel Willson-Broyles].

Nine-year-old Elsa lives just north of the Arctic Circle. She and her family are Sami – Scandinavia's indigenous people – and make their living herding reindeer.

One morning when Elsa goes skiing alone, she witnesses a terrible crime. Elsa recognises the perpetrator but doesn't dare tell anyone – least of all the Swedish police – about what she saw. Instead, she carries her secret as a dark weight on her heart.

Ten years later, and Elsa is fighting two wars. One within her community, where male elders expect young women to know their place. And against the ever-escalating wave of prejudice and violence against the Sami. More reindeer are tortured and killed in Elsa's community. Reindeer are not just the Sami's livelihood, they also hold spiritual significance; attacking a reindeer is an attack on the culture itself. And there is the toll and the grief of suicide in the Sami community.

When Elsa finds herself the target of the man she encountered all those years ago, something inside of her finally breaks. The guilt, fear, and anger she's been carrying since childhood come crashing over her like an avalanche, and will lead Elsa to a final catastrophic confrontation.

Stolen is a powerful, propulsive and cinematic novel about a courageous young Sami woman struggling to defend her Indigenous heritage against the cruelty of the modern world – and fighting for the future of her people.

381 pages, Thriller fiction

LAWHON, Ariel. *Code Name Helene*

In 1936 intrepid young Australian journalist Nancy Wake is living in Paris after witnessing firsthand the terror of Hitler's rise in Europe, firing her resolve to join the fight to defeat the Nazis. When Nancy falls in love with a handsome French industrialist, no sooner has she become Mrs Henri Fiocca than the Germans invade and Nancy adopts another name, a codename – the first of many.

As the elusive Lucienne Carlier she smuggles people across borders and earns the nickname 'The White Mouse', along with a five million franc bounty on her head courtesy of the Gestapo. Forced to flee France for England, Nancy is trained by an elite espionage group under the codename H el ene. Finally, with mission in hand, she is airdropped back into France as the deadly Madame Andr ee.

But the closer to liberation France gets, the more exposed Nancy – and the people she loves – will become. Based on the true story of a woman who saved countless lives, Code Name H el ene is a thrilling tale of unflinching courage, remarkable sacrifice – and love. 450 pages War fiction

LAWHON, Ariel. *The Frozen River*

A gripping historical mystery based on the life and diary of renowned midwife Martha Ballard.

Maine, 1789: When a man is found entombed in the frozen Kennebec River, Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death.

As the local midwife and healer, Martha is good at keeping secrets. Her diary is a record of every birth, death and debacle that unfolds in the town of Hallowell. In that diary she has also documented the details of an alleged rape committed by one of the town's most esteemed gentlemen – the same man who has now been found dead in the ice.

While certain townspeople are eager to put both matters to rest, Martha suspects that the two crimes are linked, and that there is more to both cases than meets the eye. Over the course of one long, hard winter, whispers and prejudices mount, and Martha's diary lands at the centre of the scandal, threatening to tear both her family and her community apart.

The Frozen River is a thrilling, tense and tender story of an unsung heroine who refused to accept anything less than justice on behalf of those no one else would protect. 432 pages Historical fiction

LEFTERI, Christy. *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*

The unforgettable love story of a mother blinded by loss and her husband who insists on their survival as they undertake the Syrian refugee trail to Europe.

Nuri is a beekeeper; his wife, Afra, an artist. They live a simple life, rich in family and friends, in the beautiful Syrian city of Aleppo--until the unthinkable happens. When all they care for is destroyed by war, they are forced to escape. But what Afra has seen is so terrible she has gone blind, and so they must embark on a perilous journey through Turkey and Greece towards an uncertain future in Britain. On the way, Nuri is sustained by the knowledge that waiting for them is Mustafa, his cousin and business partner, who has started an apiary and is teaching fellow refugees in Yorkshire to keep bees.

As Nuri and Afra travel through a broken world, they must confront not only the pain of their own unspeakable loss, but dangers that would overwhelm the bravest of souls. Above all, they must journey to find each other again. Moving, powerful, compassionate, and beautifully written, *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* is a testament to the triumph of the human spirit. It is the kind of book that reminds us of the power of storytelling.

360 pages Historical fiction

LOCK, Kim. *The Other Side of Beautiful*

Meet Mercy Blain, whose house has just burnt down. Unfortunately for Mercy, this goes beyond the disaster it would be for most people: she hasn't been outside that house for two years now.

Flung out into the world she's been studiously ignoring, Mercy goes to the only place she can. Her not-quite-ex-husband Eugene's house. But it turns out she can't stay there, either.

And so begins Mercy's unwilling journey. After the chance purchase of a cult classic campervan (read tiny, old and smelly), with the company of her sausage dog, Wasabi, and a mysterious box of cremated remains, Mercy heads north from Adelaide to Darwin.

On the road, through badly timed breakdowns, gregarious troupes of grey nomads, and run-ins with a rogue adversary, Mercy's carefully constructed walls start crumbling. But what was Mercy hiding from in her house? And why is Eugene desperate to have her back in the city? They say you can't run forever...

Exquisite, tender and wry, this is a novel about facing anxiety and embracing life.

358 pages Domestic fiction

LOHREY, Amanda. *The Labyrinth*

'First the making – I recalled my father's words: the cure for many ills is to build something – and then the repetition, the going over and over so that time would rupture and be stopped in it's flow... Since my past and my future were hitched to my son's life sentence, I felt that if I stepped outside the present I risked being turned to stone.'

Erica Marsden's son, an artist, has been imprisoned for homicidal negligence. In a state of grief, Erica cuts off all ties to family and friends, and retreats to a quiet hamlet on the south-east coast near the prison where he is serving his sentence.

There, in a rundown shack, she obsesses over creating a labyrinth by the ocean. To build it—to find a way out of her quandary—Erica will need the help of strangers. And that will require her to trust, and to reckon with her past. The Labyrinth is a story of guilt and denial, of the fraught relationship between parents and children. It is also a meditation on how art can both be destructive and restorative. 246 pages Australian fiction
Winner of the 2021 Miles Franklin Literary Award.

LOWE, Fiona. *A Home Like Ours*

When three women with wildly different loyalties come together, what secrets and lies will be revealed?

Tara Hooper is at breaking point. With two young children, a business in a town struggling under an unexpected crime wave, and her husband more interested in his cricket team than their marriage, life is a juggling act. Then, when new neighbours arrive and they are exactly the sort of people the town doesn't want or need, things get worse.

Life has taught Helen Demetriou two things: being homeless is terrifying and survival means keeping your cards close to your chest. Having clawed back some stability through her involvement in the community garden, she dares to relax. But as she uncovers some shady goings-on in the council, that stability turns to quicksand.

For teenage mother Jade Innes, life can be lonely among the judgement of the town and the frequent absences of her boyfriend. A chance encounter draws her into the endangered community garden where she makes friends for the first time. Glimpsing a different way of life is enticing but its demands are terrifying. Does she even deserve to try? Can such disparate women unite to save the garden and ultimately stop the town from tearing itself apart?

A timely novel exploring prejudice and privilege.

548 pages Australian fiction

LYNCH, Paul. *Prophet Song*

How far would you go to save your family? On a dark wet evening in Dublin, scientist and mother-of-four Eilish Stack answers her front door to find GNSB on her step. Two officers from Ireland's newly formed secret police want to interrogate her husband, Larry, a trade unionist.

Ireland is falling apart. The country is in the grip of a government turning towards tyranny and when her husband disappears, Eilish finds herself caught within the nightmare logic of a society that is quickly unravelling. Soon, she must decide just how far she is willing to go to keep her family safe.

Exhilarating, terrifying and propulsive, Paul Lynch's Booker Prize-winning novel is a devastating vision of a country falling apart, and a moving portrait of the resilience of the human spirit faced with the darkest of times.

Winner of The Booker Prize 2023

309 pages Dystopian fiction

MCCARTHY, Wendy. *Don't Be Too Polite, Girls*

Wendy McCarthy has made her mark on Australia in many extraordinary ways. For more than 50 years, she has been on the leading edge of feminism and corporate and public life in this country, and her trailblazing advocacy and leadership have made her a widely respected and revered figure. Wendy is a woman who shaped her times as much as she was shaped by them, and now, at 80 years of age, she shares her remarkable life and achievements, and the lessons she learned – and taught us all.

From sheltered country schoolgirl to relentless campaigner for abortion and contraception, from passionate teacher to lifelong advocate for education, to smashing that glass ceiling again and again and showing the way to subsequent generations of women, Wendy has championed change across the public, private and community sector – in education, family planning, human rights, public health, overseas aid and development, conservation, heritage, media and the arts.

This inspiring and enlightening memoir is filled with cautionary tales and insider stories about being female in Australia – as well as a few helpful survival tips. Above all, it encourages the reader to find her own voice and listen to it.

507 pages. Biography

MCCONAGHY, Charlotte. *Once There Were Wolves*

Inti Flynn arrives in Scotland with her twin sister, Aggie, to lead a team tasked with reintroducing fourteen grey wolves into the remote Highlands. She hopes to heal not only the dying landscape, but a broken Aggie, too. However, Inti is not the woman she once was, and may be in need of rewilding herself.

Despite fierce opposition from the locals, Inti's wolves surprise everyone by thriving, and she begins to let her guard down, even opening up to the possibility of love. But when a local farmer is found dead, Inti knows where the town will lay blame. Unable to accept her wolves could be responsible, she makes a reckless decision to protect them, testing every instinct she has.

But if her wolves didn't make the kill, then who did? And what will she do when the man she's been seeing becomes the main suspect?

Discussion questions in back of book

258 pages Mystery fiction

MCCONAGHY, Charlotte. *Wild Dark Shore*

Dominic Salt and his three children are caretakers of Shearwater, a tiny island not far from Antarctica. Home to the world's largest seed bank, Shearwater was once full of researchers, but with sea levels rising, the Salts are now its final inhabitants. Until, during the worst storm the island has ever seen, a woman mysteriously washes ashore.

Isolation has taken its toll on the Salts, but as they nurse the woman, Rowan, back to strength, it begins to feel like she might be a turning point for them. While Rowan, long accustomed to protecting herself, starts imagining a future where she could belong to someone again.

But Rowan isn't telling the whole truth about why she set out for Shearwater. And when she discovers sabotaged radios and a freshly dug grave, she realizes Dominic is keeping his own secrets. As the storms on Shearwater gather force, they all must decide if they can trust each other enough to protect the precious seeds in their care before it's too late—and if they can finally put the tragedies of the past behind them to create something new, together.

A novel of breathtaking twists, dizzying beauty, and ferocious love, *Wild Dark Shore* is about the impossible choices we make to protect the people we love, even as the world around us collapses. 304 pages Mystery fiction

MCGILL, Jeff. *Rachel*

Rachel Kennedy stood out on a wild frontier dominated by men . . . her extraordinary and unputdownable pioneering story is told for the first time.

'Just a girl, but when it came to chasing wild horses nobody questioned Rachel Kennedy's skill in a saddle. What raised eyebrows was the type of saddle she used: a man's.'

Rachel Kennedy was a colonial folk hero. Born in the wild and remote Warrumbungle mountains of western New South Wales in 1845, she was described by Duke Tritton of *The Bulletin* as Australia's greatest pioneer woman of them all.

Rachel caught brumbies, hid bushrangers, went to war with squatter kings, fed starving families during the shearing strikes, worked as a revered bush nurse and midwife, and fought for the underdog after observing the bitter experiences of the Chinese on the gold fields. She also built rare friendships with Aboriginal people, including a lifelong relationship with her 'sister' Mary Jane Cain, a proud campaigner for the rights of her people.

Meticulously researched and written with compelling energy, this is a vivid and at times heartbreaking story of a pioneering woman who left a legacy that went well beyond her lifetime.

287 pages Biography

MCINTOSH, Fiona. *The Pearl Thief*

Severine Kassel is asked by the Louvre in 1963 to aid the British Museum with curating its antique jewellery, her specialty. Her London colleagues find her distant and mysterious, her cool beauty the topic of conversations around its quiet halls. No one could imagine that she is a desperately damaged woman, hiding her trauma behind her chic, French image.

It is only when some dramatic Byzantine pearls are loaned to the Museum that Severine's poise is dashed and the tightly controlled life she's built around herself is shattered. Her shocking revelation of their provenance sets off a frenzied hunt for Nazi Ruda Mayek.

Mossad's interest is triggered and one of its most skilled agents comes out of retirement to join the hunt, while the one person who can help Severine – the solicitor handling the pearls – is bound by client confidentiality. As she follows Mayek's trail, there is still one lifelong secret for her to reveal – and one for her to discover.

From the snowy woodlands outside Prague to the Tuileries of Paris and the heather-covered moors of Yorkshire comes a confronting and heart-stopping novel that explores whether love and hope can ever overpower atrocity in a time of war and hate. 500 pages Historical fiction

MCTIERNAN, Dervla. *The Good Turn*

Police corruption, an investigation that ends in tragedy and the mystery of a little girl's silence – three unconnected events that will prove to be linked by one small town.

While Detective Cormac Reilly faces enemies at work and trouble in his personal life, Garda Peter Fisher is relocated out of Galway with the treat of prosecution hanging over his head. But even that is not as terrible as having to work for his overbearing father, the local copper for the pretty seaside town of Roundstone.

For some, like Anna and her young daughter, Tilly, Roundstone is a refuge from trauma. But even this village on the edge of the sea isn't far enough to escape from the shadows of evil men. 386 pages Mystery fiction

MCTIERNAN, Dervla. *The Unquiet Grave*

Every grave has a story..

For years the boglands of Northern Europe have given up bodies of the long-deceased. Bodies that are thousands of years old, uncannily preserved. Bodies with strange injuries that suggest ritual torture and human sacrifice.

When a corpse is found in a bog in Galway, detective Cormac Reilly assumes the find is historical. But closer examination reveals that the dead man is Thaddeus Grey, a local secondary school principal who disappeared two years before.

There's nothing in Grey's past that would explain why he was murdered, or why his body was mutilated in a ritual manner. Cormac is certain that he is closing in on the killer when he is thrown off course by an unexpected plea for help from his ex-girlfriend, Emma, whose new husband has gone missing in Paris. Then another mutilated body is discovered on the other side of the country. Two days later, a third body is found. Press attention is intense.

Is there a serial killer at work in Ireland? Has Cormac been on the wrong trail? And if so, can he find the murderer before they strike again? 360 pages Mystery fiction

MCTIERNAN, Dervla. *What Happened to Nina?*

Nina and Simon are the perfect couple. Young, fun, and deeply in love. Until they leave for a weekend at his family's cabin in Vermont, and only Simon comes home.

What happened to Nina? Nobody knows. Simon's explanation doesn't add up. Nina's parents push the police for answers, and Simon's parents rush to protect him. They hire expensive lawyers and a PR firm that quickly ramps up a vicious, nothing – is - off - limits media campaign.

How far will his family go to keep him safe? Soon, facts are lost in a swirl of accusation and counter accusation. Everyone chooses a side, and the story goes viral, fuelled by armchair investigators and conspiracy theories. Journalists descend on their small Vermont town, followed by a few obsessive 'fans.'

How far will her family go to get to the truth? Nina's family is under siege, but they never lose sight of the only thing that really matters – finding their daughter. Outgunned by Simon's wealthy, powerful family, Nina's parents recognise that if playing by the rules won't get them anywhere, it's time to break them. 322 pages Thriller fiction

MANNING, Kirsty. *The Hidden Book*

Based on a true story of inspiring courage and determination in World War Two.

Europe 1940s: Imprisoned in the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, Spanish fighter and photographer Mateo Baca is ordered to process images of the camp and inmates for a handful of photo books being made for presentation to top Nazi figures. Just five books in total, or so the officials think...

Mateo manages to make a secret sixth book and, with the help of a local woman, Lena Lang, it remains hidden until the end of the war.

Australia, present day: When thirteen – year - old Hannah Campbell's Yugoslavian grandfather, Nico Antonov arrives in Australia to visit his family, one of the gifts he brings with him is an intriguing - looking parcel wrapped in a flour sack, which Roza, Hannah's mother, quickly hides.

Later, Hannah sneaks off in search of the mysterious package. She is horrified to find in it a photo book full of ghastly historical photographs of a terrible place full of people suffering. At first Hannah has little context for what she sees, but over the years, as she experiences love, grief and trauma, she understands what these photos came to mean, for herself, her freedom and for those who risked their lives to 'bear witness' to history.

A startling story of clandestine courage and treachery in World War Two, and how we must meet and overcome our pasts to move into our futures. 296 pages Historical fiction

MASON, Meg. *Sorrow and Bliss*

This novel is about a woman called Martha. She knows there is something wrong with her, but she doesn't know what it is. Her husband Patrick thinks she is fine. He says everyone has something; the thing is to just keep going.

Martha told Patrick before they got married that she didn't want to have children. He said he didn't mind either way because he has loved her since he was fourteen and making her happy is all that matters, although he does not seem able to do it.

By the time Martha finds out what is wrong, it doesn't really matter anymore. It is too late to get the only thing she has ever wanted. Or maybe it will turn out that you can stop loving someone and start again from nothing if you can find something else to want. The book is set in London and Oxford. It is sad and funny.

346 pages Domestic fiction

MATTERSON, Sophie. *The Crossing*

In 2020, at the age of thirty-one, Sophie Matterson set out to walk her five camels from Shark Bay in Western Australia to Byron Bay on the east coast. At a time when most of her friends were getting engaged or starting families, Sophie longed for adventure, independence and purpose. She broke up with her long-term boyfriend, packed all her belongings into saddlebags and trained her wild camels to follow her lead.

Her thirteen-month solo crossing was the ultimate test of resilience and self-sufficiency - with each state in various forms of lockdowns, Sophie would often walk for weeks without seeing another soul. She crossed harsh, remote deserts, navigated treacherously beautiful salt lakes, and visited country towns and isolated cattle stations. Along the way she survived life-and-death situations, fell in love in the middle of the Outback, and slowly began to trust herself and her own abilities.

The Crossing is an empowering memoir about giving up a conventional life in the pursuit of something more.

320 pages Biography

MAYNE, Kerryn. *Lenny Marks gets away with Murder*

Lenny Marks is good at not remembering.

She has spent the last twenty years not thinking about the day her mother left her when she was still a child. Her stepfather's parting words, however, remain annoyingly unforgettable: 'You did this.'

Now thirty-seven, Lenny prefers contentment and order over the unreliability of happiness and the messiness of relationships. She fills her days teaching at the local primary school, and her nights playing Scrabble with her pretend housemate, watching reruns of Friends and rearranging her thirty-six copies of The Hobbit.

Recently though, if only to appease her beloved foster-mum, Lenny has set herself the goal of 'getting a life'. Then, out of the blue, a letter arrives from the Adult Parole Board. And when her desperate attempts to ignore it fail, Lenny starts to unravel.

Worse, she starts to remember . . .

341 pages Mystery fiction

MEDVED, Lisa. *The Engraver's Secret*

Two women, and ancient map, and a devastating secret spanning centuries.

Spanish Netherlands, 1620s: Raised by her father Lucas to know her mind, Antonia Vorsterman sees everything that goes on in her world – all the rivalries and jealousies that course through the artists' studios and workshops of Antwerp.

Drawn into the lively household of the artist Peter Paul Rubens, whose work her father engraves for a living, Antonia begins to see a life of colour and possibility for herself – until Lucas entrusts her with a terrible secret that will alter the course of their family's future.

Belgium, present day: Haunted by the recent loss of her mother, art historian Charlotte Hubert moves to Antwerp to research her hero, the Baroque master Rubens, and to seek answers about the father she has never met.

But a startling discovery hidden inside an ancient map folio turns Charlotte's quiet academic life into a dangerous hunt for long-lost treasures, missing for 400 years. In the shadowy cloisters of the university, where ambition, obsession and violence run deep, she becomes certain of one thing – no one can be trusted.

Discussion questions in back of book

420 pages Historical fiction

MOLNAR, Marta. *The Secret Life of Sunflowers*

A gripping, inspiring novel based on the true story of Johanna Bonger, Vincent van Gogh's sister-in-law.

When Hollywood auctioneer Emsley Wilson finds her famous grandmother's diary while cleaning out her New York brownstone, the pages are full of surprises. The first surprise is, the diary isn't her grandmother's. It belongs to Johanna Bonger, Vincent van Gogh's sister-in-law.

Johanna inherited Vincent van Gogh's paintings. They were all she had, and they weren't worth anything. She was a 28 year old widow with a baby in the 1800s, without any means of supporting herself, living in Paris where she barely spoke the language. Yet she managed to introduce Vincent's legacy to the world.

The inspiration couldn't come at a better time for Emsley. With her business failing, an unexpected love turning up in her life, and family secrets unraveling, can she find answers in the past?

Discussion questions in back of book

399 pages Historical fiction

MORIARTY, Liane. *Apples Never Fall*

From the outside, the Delaneys appear to be an enviably contented family. Even after all these years, former tennis coaches Joy and Stan are still winning tournaments, and now that they've sold the family business they have all the time in the world to learn how to 'relax'. Their four adult children are busy living their own lives, and while it could be argued they never quite achieved their destinies, no-one ever says that out loud.

But now Joy Delaney has disappeared and her children are re-examining their parents' marriage and their family history with fresh, frightened eyes. Is her disappearance related to their mysterious house guest from last year? Or were things never as rosy as they seemed in the Delaney household?

487 pages Domestic fiction

MORIARTY, Liane. *Here One Moment*

If you knew when you were going to die, what would you do differently?

It all begins on a flight from Hobart to Sydney. The flight will be smooth. It will land safely. Everyone who gets on the plane will get off the plane.

But almost all of them will be changed forever. Because on this ordinary flight, something extraordinary happens. 'A lady', unremarkable until she isn't, predicts how and when many of the passengers are going to die. For some, death is far in the future; for others, it is very close.

A brilliantly constructed story that looks at free will and destiny, grief and love, and the endless struggle to maintain certainty and control in an uncertain world. Liane Moriarty is a modern-day Jane Austen who humorously skewers social mores while spinning a web of mystery and asking profound, universal questions. 511 pages Psychological fiction.

MORIARTY, Nicola. *Every Last Suspect*

Complicated, driven, loving. Manipulative, irresistible, monstrous.

Love or hate her, Harriet Osman is impossible to turn down. But someone in her life has finally snapped, leaving her lying in a pool of her own blood. Harriet isn't one to die quietly though, and she is determined to reveal her killer before she goes.

Was it her devoted husband, Malek, with a violent past? Her best friend and lover, Victoria, with a deadly secret only Harriet knew? Or the new woman in her life, fellow school mum Karen? The one with an impeccable reputation... or so she says?

Bullying, friendships and games (in and out of the bedroom) combine with envy, lust and revenge, creating a darkly twisted tale of drama and suspense where the question isn't who killed Harriet, but why did it take them so long?

376 pages Thriller fiction

MORTON, Kate. *Homecoming*

Adelaide Hills, Christmas Eve, 1959: At the end of a scorching hot day, beside a creek in the grounds of a grand country house, a local man makes a terrible discovery. Police are called, and the small town of Tambilla becomes embroiled in one of the most baffling murder investigations in the history of South Australia.

Many years later and thousands of miles away, Jess is a journalist in search of a story. Having lived and worked in London for nearly two decades, she now finds herself unemployed and struggling to make ends meet. A phone call summons her back to Sydney, where her beloved grandmother, Nora, who raised Jess when her mother could not, has suffered a fall and is seriously ill in hospital.

At Nora's house, Jess discovers a true crime book chronicling a long-buried police case: the Turner Family Tragedy of 1959. It is only when Jess skims through its pages that she finds a shocking connection between her own family and this notorious event — a murder mystery that has never been satisfactorily resolved.

An epic story that spans continents and generations, *Homecoming* asks what we would do for those we love, how we protect the lies we tell, and what it means to come home. Above all, it is an intricate and spellbinding novel from one of the finest writers working today.

631 pages, Thriller fiction

MOYES, Jojo. *We All Live Here*

Welcome to the Kennedy household:

Lila wrote a bestselling book about keeping your marriage alive, before discovering her ex was playing happy families with another woman. A woman she sees everyday at school pick-up.

Bill, her stepdad, moved in after Lila's mum died. He's kind, old-fashioned and driving her absolutely nuts. Celie, Lila's eldest, hates school. Hates it so much she's stopped going. Her mother's fine with that – because she doesn't know yet. Violet is nine and sings age-inappropriate rap songs, laughs at fart jokes and Lila dearly hopes she'll never, ever change.

And Truant the dog, who has just bitten the American actor who's suddenly landed on the Kennedys' doorstep. This is Gene – Lila's estranged father, and no one's idea of a role model. He walked out on Lila and her mum years ago – and wherever he goes domestic discord follows.

Because Gene's presence changes things in unexpected ways. Soon the girls discover a kindred spirit in a man always chasing life's joy. Bill even loosens up. And Lila finds herself, astonishingly, dating.

Something is happening to the Kennedy household – but what is it?

And will it break, or save, their family?

440 pages

Domestic Fiction

MOSS, Tara. *The War Widow*

Sydney, 1946.

War correspondent Billie Walker is happy to finally be home, but is haunted by the disappearance of her husband, Jack, in Europe. Determined not to rely on any man for her future, she reopens her late father's detective agency.

When a young man, the son of European immigrants, goes missing, Billie finds herself on a perilous trail that will lead up into the highest levels of Sydney society and down into its underworld. As the danger mounts and Billie realizes that much more than one young man's life is at stake, it becomes clear that though the war was won, it is far from over.

362 pages Mystery fiction

MURRIN, Alan. *The Coast Road*

It's 1994 in a small village on the coast of Ireland, and everyone is talking about Colette Crowley - the writer, the bohemian, the woman who left her husband and sons to pursue a relationship with a married man in Dublin.

Returning to discover what remains of her old life, Colette quickly finds that the man to whom she is still married is denying her access to her children. She enlists the help of Izzy, a housewife and mother of two, and the women forge a friendship that will send them on a spiralling journey - one on a path of self-discovery, and the other towards tragedy.

The Coast Road is a brilliantly observed novel about a closed community, the limits placed on women's lives and the consequences of daring to move against the tide. 310 pages Domestic fiction

NAPOLITANO, Ann. *Hello Beautiful*

A rich, compassionate tale of four sisters and the love affair that fractures their family.

Best friends and sisters, the four Padavano girls are seen as inseparable by everyone in their close-knit Italian American neighbourhood. Julia, the eldest, is the 'rocket' of the family – she always has a destination in mind and clear plans for how to get there. Sylvie is happiest with her nose in a book, dreaming of the kind of love you only read about in literature. Cecelia and Emeline, the twins, are the artist and the caregiver. From childhood, the four sisters complete each other.

When Julia falls in love with William Waters, a history student and college sports star, she's delighted by the way her plans for adulthood are coming to fruition; a husband, a house, a family of her own. But when darkness from William's past begins to block the light of his future, it is Sylvie, not Julia, who becomes his closest confidante – and the ensuing betrayal tears the sisters apart. 387 pages Domestic fiction

NEILL, Sam *Did I Ever Tell You This?*

In this unexpected memoir, written in a creative burst of just a few months in 2022, Sam Neill tells the story of how he became one of the world's most celebrated actors, who has worked with everyone from Meryl Streep to Isabel Adjani, from Jeff Goldblum to Sean Connery, from Steven Spielberg to Jane Campion.

By his own account, his career has been a series of unpredictable turns of fortune. Born in 1947 in Northern Ireland, he emigrated to New Zealand at the age of seven. His family settled in Dunedin on the South Island, but young Sam was sent away to boarding school in Christchurch, where he was hopeless at sports and discovered he enjoyed acting.

But how did you become an actor in New Zealand in the 1960 and 1970s where there was no film industry? After university he made documentary films while also appearing in occasional amateur productions of Shakespeare. In 1977 he took the lead in *Sleeping Dogs*, the first feature made in New Zealand in more than a decade, a project that led to a major role in Gillian Armstrong's celebrated *My Brilliant Career*.

And after that Sam Neill found his way, sometimes by accident, into his own brilliant career. He has worked around the world, an actor who has moved effortlessly from blockbuster to art house to TV, from Dr Alan Grant in the *Jurassic Park* movies to *The Piano* and *Peaky Blinders*.

Did I Ever Tell You This? is a joy to read, a marvellous and often very funny book, the work of a natural storyteller who is a superb observer of other people, and who writes with love and warmth about his family. It is also his account of his life outside film, especially in Central Otago where he established Two Paddocks, his vineyard famous for its pinot noir. 398 pages Biography

NELL, Joanna. *Mrs Winterbottom Takes a Gap Year*

It's the first day of the rest of their lives – but what will they do with it?

Husband and wife GPs Alan and Heather Winterbottom have worked side by side in their idyllic rural practice for over forty years but now they've decided to hang up their stethoscopes and retire. Joy! Celebration! Or not... Heather dreams of exploring the Greek Islands, of escaping the shackles of her routine life and embracing an exciting new adventure. Alan dreams of growing his own vegetables.

When things come to a head at a family lunch, Heather announces that she has decided to take a year off. From her old life, from her marriage – from Alan. Alone in beautiful Greece, Heather embarks on her very own odyssey – complete with unforgettable experiences, pitfalls and temptations. But could what's waiting for her back in Netherwood be Heather's biggest adventure yet? 323 pages Romance fiction

NGUYEN, Pahn Que Mai. *The Mountains Sing*

The Mountains Sing tells an enveloping, multigenerational tale of the Tran family, set against the backdrop of the Viet Nam War. Tran Dieu Lan, who was born in 1920, was forced to flee her family farm with her six children during the Land Reform as the Communist government rose in the North. Years later in Hà Noi, her young granddaughter, Hương, comes of age as her parents and uncles head off down the Ho Chí Minh Trail to fight in a conflict that will tear not just her beloved country but her family apart.

Vivid, gripping, and steeped in the language and traditions of Viet Nam, *The Mountains Sing* brings to life the human costs of this conflict from the point of view of the Vietnamese people themselves, while showing us the true power of kindness and hope. This is celebrated Vietnamese poet Nguyen Phan Que Mai's first novel in English
339 pages Historical fiction

Norrington, Leonie. *A Piece of Red Cloth: a Novel from Arnhem Land*

(Additional authors: Merrikiyawuy-Ganambarr Stubbs, Djawa Burarrwanga and Djawundil Maymuru).

It's early in the wet season. A flock of crested terns sweeps into the bay and dives towards Batjani. The birds are saying the foreigners are coming, as they do every year, but why are they so full of menace?

Batjani's beloved granddaughter Garritji is on the cusp of womanhood, about to go through the rituals preparing her for marriage. Batjani uses all means at her disposal to protect her granddaughter from the visiting Macassan trepang fishers, but she is betrayed. Can Garritji be saved?

This powerful and unique novel is based on oral history and told through Yolngu eyes, with ancestors as the Yolngu remember them: proud, strong, resilient people in control of their world and interacting with foreigners on their own terms.
372 pages Historical fiction.

NUNN, Kayte. *The Forgotten Letters of Esther Durrant*

A cache of unsent love letters from the 1950s is found in a suitcase on a remote island in this mysterious love story. 1951. Esther Durrant, a young mother, is committed to an island mental asylum by her husband. The hospital is at first Esther's prison but soon becomes her refuge.

2018. Free-spirited marine scientist Rachel Parker discovers a collection of hidden love letters, and is determined to track down the intended recipient.

2018. Meanwhile, Eve is helping her grandmother, a renowned mountaineer, write her memoirs. When Rachel contacts her, secrets kept buried for more than sixty years resurface...

The Forgotten Letters of Esther Durrant is a deeply atmospheric, resonant novel that charts the heart's wild places, choices and consequences.
375 pages Historical fiction

NUNN, Kayte. *The Last Reunion*

Five women come together at a New Year's Eve party after decades apart, in this thrilling story of desire, revenge and courage, based on a brave group of Australian and British WWII servicewomen.

Burma, 1945. Bea, Plum, Bubbles, Joy and Lucy: in search of adventure, attached to the Fourteenth Army, fighting a forgotten war in the jungle. Assigned to run a mobile canteen, navigating treacherous roads and dodging hostile gunfire, they become embroiled in life-threatening battles of their own.

Oxford, 1976. A woman slips into a museum and steals several rare Japanese netsuke, including the famed fox-girl. Despite the offer of a considerable reward, these tiny, exquisitely detailed carvings are never seen again.

London and Galway, 1999. On the eve of the new millennium, Olivia, assistant to an art dealer, meets Beatrix, an elderly widow who wishes to sell her late husband's collection of Japanese art. Olivia travels with Beatrix to a New Year's Eve party, deep in the Irish countryside, where friendships will be tested as secrets kept for more than fifty years are spilled.

Inspired by the women who served in the 'forgotten war' in WWII Burma, *The Last Reunion* is a love story and mystery and a tribute to the enduring power of female friendship.
367 pages Historical fiction

PARKER, Alli. *At the Foot of the Cherry Tree*

A stirring story of love and hope, based on the incredible true story of Australia's first Japanese war bride and a love that changed a nation forever.

Gordon Parker is an eager eighteen-year-old Australian boy desperate to fight for his country, and Nobuku 'Cherry' Sakuramoto is a sixteen-year-old girl struggling to survive in Japan in the aftermath of World War II. But when they fall in love, they change the course of history.

When Gordon arrives in Japan, he expects ruthless samurai, angry Japanese men ready to kill Australians at every corner. Instead, he finds Cherry, terrified of ex-enemy soldiers, a survivor of the atomic bomb. Against all the rules and all the odds, they fall in love. But when Gordon discovers the White Australia Policy prevents Cherry coming home with him as his war bride, he does what any twenty-year-old soldier would do. He vows to fight. Leaving Cherry alone and pregnant in post-war Japan, Gordon has to convince his family to accept his marriage and wage a desperate campaign against a xenophobic and war-scarred government to allow his wife and children to come home.

A sweeping story spanning seven years and two countries reeling from the aftermath of war *At the Foot of the Cherry Tree* is a powerfully moving novel about faith, trust and the power of a love that alters history – written by Gordon and Cherry's granddaughter, accomplished scriptwriter, Alli Parker. 324 pages Historical fiction

PATCHETT, Ann. *Tom Lake*

This is a story about Peter Duke who went on to be a famous actor.

This is a story about falling in love with Peter Duke who wasn't famous at all.

It's about falling so wildly in love with him – the way one will at twenty - four - that it felt like jumping off a roof at midnight.

There was no way to foresee the mess it would come to in the end.

It's spring and Lara's three grown daughters have returned to the family orchard. While picking cherries, they beg their mother to tell them the one story they've always longed to hear – of the film star with whom she shared a stage, and a romance, years before.

Tom Lake is a meditation on youthful love, married love, and the lives parents lead before their children are born. Both hopeful and elegiac, it explores what it means to be happy even when the world is falling apart.

309 Pages Domestic fiction

PENDZIWOL, Jean. *The Lightkeeper's Daughters*

Elizabeth eyes have failed. She can no longer read the books she loves or see the paintings that move her, but her mind remains sharp and music fills the vacancy left by her blindness.

When her father's journals are discovered on a shipwrecked boat, she enlists the help of a delinquent teen, Morgan, to read to her. As an unlikely friendship grows between them, Elizabeth is carried back to her childhood home – the lighthouse on Porphyry Island, Lake Superior – and to the memory of her enigmatic twin sister Emily.

But for Elizabeth, the faded pages of her father's journals reveal more secrets than she anticipates...

310 pages Mystery fiction

PETERS-LITTLE, Frances.

Jimmy Little: A Yorta Yorta Man

'Music had always been part of Jimmy Little's life. It was his greatest love and influence. In his own words, he was not a political activist, nor a leader, and he never claimed to be a cultural Elder, but, in spite of himself, he became all three.'

Born in 1937 on the banks of the Murray River, Jimmy Little came from a family with a rich connection to music and advocacy. His father was a vaudevillian performer and musician, his mother a talented singer, and all three were present at the Cumeragunja Walk-Off, one of the first Aboriginal mass protests.

At just sixteen years of age, Jimmy travelled to Sydney to make his radio debut on *Australia's Amateur Hour*, and success soon followed. In the face of discrimination and racism, Jimmy went on to woo the nation with his immense talent, charm and heart. He consistently topped the music charts with music that crossed multiple genres: from pop to country, folk songs and bush ballads, Jimmy's voice has been enjoyed by generations of Australians.

And now, his daughter Frances Peters-Little shares the full story behind her father's ascent to stardom. Interwoven with Frances' account of her father's life are Jimmy's personal reflections on the moments that made him, taken from several extensive interviews the pair had before Jimmy's death in 2012.

Jimmy Little: a Yorta Yorta Man is a story of music, family and advocacy. It is a lyrical insight into the remarkable life of an Australian music legend.

258 pages Biography

PICK-GOSLAR, Hannah.

My Friend Anne Frank

In this never-before-seen memoir, Bergen-Belsen survivor Hannah Pick-Goslar shares incredibly powerful words on the final untold portrait of her childhood friend, Anne Frank.\

When five-year-old Hannah Pick-Goslar and her family fled Nazi Germany to live in Amsterdam, she soon struck up a friendship with a precocious, outspoken and fun-loving girl named Anne Frank. For several blissful years, the girls were inseparable, enjoying carefree childhood games and sleepovers in their neighbourhood of Rivierenbuurt.

Then, one day in 1942, two best friends' lives were about to change for ever. As the Nazi occupation intensified, Anne and the Frank family vanished. As Hannah puzzled over the fate of her friend, hoping she was safe, her own family's fate began to unfold they were captured and taken to Westerbork transit camp, before being transported to Bergen-Belsen.

Amid horrific conditions and surrounded by death, Hannah heard astonishing news about her dear friend and risked her life to help her.

'As a girl I witnessed the world I loved crumble and vanish, destroyed by senseless hatred, and with it, my best friend Anne.'

In an incredible memoir of hope, strength and defiance, Hannah's story of survival is testament to the enduring power of friendship, love and remembering.

313 pages Biography

PITZORNO, Bianca. *The Seamstress of Sardinia*

The irresistible story of a young woman seeking freedom and happiness.

Born into poverty, the seamstress spends her days sewing in the houses of wealthy families. Her work is simple and honest; taught by her nonna, she skilfully prepares nightgowns, undergarments and children's clothes, leaving the finer work of dressmaking to the ateliers in Paris.

Her story weaves in and out of the lives of the people she works for, whose secrets and scandals she is privy to. Some are kind and generous, others blinded by their desire to climb the social ladder. She dreams of freeing herself from the hardscrabble life she has inherited but can't help being pulled back in by the love of the people around her.

Set at the dawn of the twentieth century, *The Seamstress of Sardinia* follows the girl as she grows into a woman, strives to educate herself and falls in love—always fighting for her independence in a world dominated by men and old social conventions.

287 pages Domestic fiction

PROSE, Nita. *The Maid*

I am your maid.

I know about your secrets. Your dirty laundry.

But what do you know about me?

Molly the maid is all alone in the world. A nobody. She's used to being invisible in her job at the Regency Grand Hotel, plumping pillows and wiping away the grime, dust and secrets of the guests passing through. She's just a maid – why should anyone take notice?

But Molly is thrown into the spotlight when she discovers an infamous guest, Mr Black, very dead in his bed. This isn't a mess that can be easily cleaned up. And as Molly becomes embroiled in the hunt for the truth, following the clues whispering in the hallways of the Regency Grand, she discovers a power she never knew was there. She's just a maid – but what can she see that others overlook?

Escapist, charming and introducing a truly original heroine, *The Maid* is a story about how the truth isn't always black and white – it's found in the dirtier, grey areas in between. 340 pages Mystery fiction

PURCELL, Leah. *The Drover's Wife*

Deep in the heart of Australia's high country, along an ancient, hidden track, live Molly Johnson and her children.

Husband Joe is away droving, leaving his family in the bush to fend for itself. Molly's children are her world, and life is hard with only their dog, Alligator, and a shotgun for protection – but it can be harder when Joe's around.

Molly's eldest son Danny is the true man of the house, determined to see his mother and siblings safe – from raging floodwaters, hunger and intruders. Danny is mature, but there are some things no child should see. He knows more than most just what it takes to be a drover's wife.

One night, Molly has a visitor – a black 'story keeper', Yadaka. He's on the run from authorities, and exchanges kindness for shelter. Both know that justice in this nation caught between two worlds can be as brutal as its landscape. But in their short time together Yadaka shows Molly a secret truth, and the strength to imagine a different path.

In this brave reimagining of the Henry Lawson short story that has become an Australian classic, Purcell brings us a compelling thriller of our pioneering past that confronts head-on issues of today: race, gender, violence and inheritance. 278 pages Historical fiction

PURMAN, Victoria *A Woman's Work*

The astonishingly rich prize of the 1956 *Australian Women's Weekly* cookery competition offers two women the possibility of a new kind of future, in this compassionate look at the extraordinary lives of ordinary women – our mothers and grandmothers – in a beautifully realised post-war Australia.

It's 1956, and while Melbourne is in a frenzy gearing up for the Olympics, the women of Australia are cooking up a storm for their chance to win the equivalent of a year's salary in the extraordinary *Australian Women's Weekly* cookery contest.

For two women, in particular, the prize could be life changing. For war widow and single mum Ivy Quinn, a win would mean more time to spend with her twelve-year-old son, Raymond. Mother of five Kathleen O'Grady has no time for cooking competitions, but the prize could offer a different kind of life for herself and her children, and the chance to control her own future.

As winter turns to spring both women begin to question their lives. For Kathleen, the grinding domesticity of her work as a wife and mother no longer seems enough, while Ivy begins to realise she has the courage to make a difference for other women and tell the truth about the ghosts from her past.

But is it the competition prize that offers the women a chance to free themselves from society's expectations, or is it their growing self-confidence and belief in a new kind of future? 344 pages Domestic fiction

REID, Taylor Jenkins. *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*

Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now?

Monique is not exactly on top of the world. Her husband has left her, and her professional life is going nowhere. Regardless of why Evelyn has selected her to write her biography, Monique is determined to use this opportunity to jumpstart her career.

Summoned to Evelyn's luxurious apartment, Monique listens in fascination as the actress tells her story. From making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave show business in the '80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way, Evelyn unspools a tale of ruthless ambition, unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love. Monique begins to feel a very real connection to the legendary star, but as Evelyn's story near its conclusion, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in tragic and irreversible ways.

388 Pages Contemporary fiction

RIMMER, Kelly. *The German Wife*

Berlin, 1930—When a wave of change sweeps a radical political party to power, Sofie von Meyer Rhodes's academic husband benefits from the ambitions of its newly elected chancellor. Although Sofie and Jürgen do not share the social views growing popular in Hitler's Germany, Jürgen's position with its burgeoning rocket program changes their diminishing fortunes for the better. But as Sofie watches helplessly, her beloved Berlin begins to transform, forcing her

to consider what they must sacrifice morally for their young family's security, and what the price for their neutrality will be.

Twenty years later, Jürgen is one of the many German scientists offered pardons for their part in the war, and taken to America to work for its fledgling space program. For Sofie, this is the chance to exorcise the ghosts that have followed her across the ocean, and make a fresh start in her adopted country. But her neighbors aren't as welcoming or as understanding as she had hoped. When scandalous rumors about the Rhodes family's affiliation with Hitler's regime spreads, idle gossip turns to bitter rage, and the act of violence that results will tear apart Sofie's community and her family before the truth is finally revealed.

441 pages Historical fiction

RIMMER, Kelly. *The Things We Cannot Say*

2019. Life changed beyond recognition for Alice when her son, Eddie, was born with autism spectrum disorder. She must do everything to support him, but at what cost to her family? When her cherished grandmother is hospitalised, a hidden box of mementoes reveals a tattered photo of a young man, a tiny leather shoe and a letter. Her grandmother begs Alice to return to Poland to see what became of those she held dearest.

WWII Alina and Tomasz are childhood sweethearts. The night before he leaves for college, Tomasz proposes marriage. But when their village falls to the Nazis, Alina doesn't know if Tomasz is alive or dead.

2019. In Poland, separated from her family, Alice begins to uncover the story her grandmother is so desperate to tell, and discovers a love that bloomed in the winter of 1942. As a painful family history comes to light, will the struggles of the past and present finally reach a heartbreaking resolution?

413 pages Domestic fiction

ROACH, Archie. *Tell Me Why: the Story of My Life My Music*

Not many have lived as many lives as Archie Roach – stolen child, seeker, teenage alcoholic, lover, father, musical and lyrical genius, and leader – but it took him almost a lifetime to find out who he really was.

Roach was only two years old when he was forcibly removed from his family. Brought up by a series of foster parents until his early teens, his world imploded when he received a letter that spoke of a life he had no memory of.

In this intimate, moving and often shocking memoir, Archie's story is an extraordinary odyssey through love and heartbreak, family and community, survival and renewal – and the healing power of music. Overcoming enormous odds to find his story and his people, Archie voices the joy, pain and hope he found on his path through song to become the legendary singer-songwriter and storyteller that he is today – beloved by fans worldwide.

Tell Me Why is a stunning account of resilience and the strength of spirit – and of a great love story.

Winner of the 2020 Indie Book of the Year Non-Fiction

378 pages Biography

Winner of the 2021 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Indigenous Writing

ROBOTHAM, Mandy. *The Girl Behind the Wall*

A city divided.

When the Berlin Wall goes up, Karin is on the wrong side of the city. Overnight, she's trapped under Soviet rule in unforgiving East Berlin and separated from her twin sister, Jutta.

Two sisters torn apart.

Karin and Jutta lead parallel lives for years, cut off by the Wall. But Karin finds one reason to keep going: Otto, the man who gives her hope, even amidst the brutal East German regime.

One impossible choice...

When Jutta finds a hidden way through the wall, the twins are reunited. But the Stasi have eyes everywhere, and soon Karin is faced with a terrible decision: to flee to the West and be with her sister, or sacrifice it all to follow her heart?

396 pages Historical fiction

ROONEY, Sally. *Normal People*

Connell and Marianne grow up in the same small town in the west of Ireland, but the similarities end there. In school, Connell is popular and well-liked, while Marianne is a loner. But when the two strike up a conversation - awkward but electrifying - something life-changing begins.

Normal People is a story of mutual fascination, friendship and love. It takes us from that first conversation to the years beyond, in the company of two people who try to stay apart but find they can't.

Winner of the 2019 Novel of the Year and Book of the Year at the British Book Awards

Winner of the 2018 Costa Novel Award

Winner of Specsavers National Book Awards International Author of the Year

Longlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2018

Longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction 2019

266 pages Man-Woman relationship fiction

ROSE, Heather. *Bruny*

Why is a massive bridge being built to connect the sleepy island of Bruny with the mainland of Tasmania? And why have terrorists blown it up?

When the Bruny bridge is bombed, UN troubleshooter Astrid Coleman agrees to return home to help her brother before an upcoming election. But this is no simple task. Her brother and sister are on either side of politics, the community is full of conspiracy theories, her mother is fading and her father is quoting Shakespeare. Only on Bruny does the world seem sane. Until Astrid discovers how far the government is willing to go.

Bruny is a searing, subversive novel about family, love, loyalty and the new world order. It is a thriller with a twist, a love story, and a cry from the heart that asks the question: what would you do to protect the place you love?

409 pages Thriller fiction

ROYAL, Linda Margolin *The Star on the Grave*

In 1940, as the Nazis sweep towards Lithuania, Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara defies his government and secretly issues visas to fleeing Jewish refugees. After the war, Sugihara is dismissed and disappears into obscurity.

Three decades later, in Australia, Rachel Margol is shocked when her engagement reveals a long-held family secret: she is Jewish. As she grapples with this deception and the dysfunction it has caused, unspoken tragedies from the past begin to come to light. When an opportunity arrives to visit Chiune Sugihara, the man who risked his life to save the Margols during World War II, Rachel becomes determined to meet him. But will a journey to Japan, and the secrets it uncovers, heal the family or fracture them for good?

The Star on the Grave is a powerful and moving novel inspired by the true story of Chiune Sugihara, and the thousands of people – including the author – who owe him their lives.

Discussion questions in back of book

280 pages Holocaust Historical fiction

SALES, Leigh. *Any Ordinary Day*

As a journalist, Leigh Sales often encounters people experiencing the worst moments of their lives in the full glare of the media. But one particular string of bad news stories – and a terrifying brush with her own mortality – sent her looking for answers about how vulnerable each of us is to a life-changing event. What are our chances of being struck by one? What do we fear most and why? And when the worst does happen, what comes next?

In this profound and layered book, Sales talks intimately with people who've faced the unimaginable, from terrorism to natural disasters to simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Expecting broken lives, she instead finds strength, hope, even humour. Sales brilliantly condenses the latest research on the way the human brain processes fear and grief, and poses the questions we too often ignore out of awkwardness. Along the way, she offers an unguarded account of her own challenges and what she's learned about coping with life's unexpected blows.

Heartfelt, candid and empathetic, *Any Ordinary Day* is about what happens when ordinary people, on ordinary days, are forced to suddenly find the resilience most of us don't know we have.

264 pages Non fiction

SCHLINK, Bernhard. *The Granddaughter*

May, 1964. At a youth festival in East Berlin, an unlikely young couple fall in love. In the bright spring days, anything seems possible for them - it is only many years later, after her death, that Kaspar discovers the price his wife paid to get to him in West Berlin.

Shattered by grief, Kaspar sets off to uncover Birgit's secrets in the East. His search leads him to a rural community of neo-Nazis, and to a young girl who accepts him as her grandfather. Their worlds could not be more different - but he is determined to fight for her.

The Granddaughter is a gripping novel that transports us from the divided Germany of the 1960s to contemporary Australia, asking what might be found when it seems like all is lost.

324 pages Domestic fiction

SCOLYER, Richard. *Brainstorm: A Dedicated Doctor. A Devastating Diagnosis. A Chance for a Medical Revolution*

Revealing his fight against a diagnosis of 'incurable' brain cancer, this is the remarkable story of 2024 co-Australian of the year Richard Scolyer.

Skin cancer is this country's most common cancer, and melanoma the deadliest form of it. Richard Scolyer, together with his colleagues at Melanoma Institute Australia, has dedicated years to groundbreaking research and succeeded in transforming even the most advanced cases of melanoma into a largely curable disease, bringing hope and healing to many.

Then in 2023, at the peak of his life, Richard was diagnosed with brain cancer.

As an internationally respected leading clinician and researcher, Richard was never going to accept the status quo - a medical approach unchanged in nearly two decades and an expectation of little more than a year to live. He instead chose to undertake world-first experimental treatment, based on melanoma science.

His brave decision could shorten or save it - the only certainty is that it will advance scientific understanding and ultimately help save the lives of others. 293 pages Biography

SCRIVENOR, Hayley. *Dirt Town*

My best friend wore her name, Esther, like a queen wearing her crown at a jaunty angle. We were twelve years old when she went missing.

On a sweltering Friday afternoon in Durton, best friends Ronnie and Esther leave school together. Esther never makes it home.

Ronnie's going to find her, she has a plan. Lewis will help. Their friend can't be gone, Ronnie won't believe it. Detective Sergeant Sarah Michaels can believe it. She has seen what people are capable of. She knows more than anyone how, in a moment of weakness, a person can be driven to do something they never thought possible. Lewis can believe it too. But he can't reveal what he saw that afternoon at the creek without exposing his own secret. Five days later, Esther's buried body is discovered. What do we owe the girl who isn't there?

Character-rich and propulsive, with a breathtakingly original use of voice and revolving points of view, *Dirt Town* delves under the surface, where no one can hide. With emotional depth and sensitivity, this stunning debut shows us how much each person matters in a community that is at once falling apart and coming together. Esther will always be a Dirt Town child, as we are its children, still. 352 pages Mystery fiction

SHAFAK, Elif. *The Island of Missing Trees*

It is 1974 on the island of Cyprus. Two teenagers, from opposite sides of a divided land, meet at a tavern in the city they both call home. The tavern is the only place that Kostas, who is Greek and Christian, and Defne, who is Turkish and Muslim, can meet, in secret, hidden beneath the blackened beams from which hang garlands of garlic, chilli peppers and wild herbs. This is where one can find the best food in town, the best music, the best wine. But there is something else to the place: it makes one forget, even if for just a few hours, the world outside and its immoderate sorrows.

In the centre of the tavern, growing through a cavity in the roof, is a fig tree. This tree will witness their hushed, happy meetings, their silent, surreptitious departures; and the tree will be there when the war breaks out, when the capital is reduced to rubble, when the teenagers vanish and break apart.

Decades later in north London, sixteen-year-old Ada Kazantzakis has never visited the island where her parents were born. Desperate for answers, she seeks to untangle years of secrets, separation and silence. The only connection she has to the land of her ancestors is a Ficus Carica growing in the back garden of their home.

In *The Island of Missing Trees*, prizewinning author Elif Shafak brings us a rich, magical tale of belonging and identity, love and trauma, memory and amnesia, human-induced destruction of nature, and, finally, renewal.

Shortlisted for the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction.

Discussion questions in back of book.

355 pages Domestic fiction

SHARWOOD, Anthony. *Kosciuszko : the incredible life of the man behind the mountain*

A long-gone historical figure comes to life when you add people and places to the scholarly world of history books, journals and old letters.

After Anthony Sharwood documented his trek across the Australian Alps in his bestseller *From Snow to Ash*, he started to think about the man whose name adorns Australia's highest peak, Mt Kosciuszko. Who, exactly, was Kosciuszko? Why is the mountain named after a man who never travelled here? Does his name even belong on the mountain?

Tadeusz Kosciuszko (1746 to 1817) was a military engineer, freedom fighter and hero of the American War of Independence and in his native Poland. In writing a biography that became a road trip in search of the man and his legacy, Anthony travelled to the USA, where Kosciuszko inspired George Washington and directly challenged his friend Thomas Jefferson to live up to his famous words "All men are created equal."

Then Anthony crossed the Atlantic to Poland, where Kosciuszko led a national uprising with the promise of freedom and equality for all Poles. Back in Australia, Anthony met the Ngarigo people of the mountains and heard their tales of dispossession and their hopes for the mountain's future. Kosciuszko was a champion of human rights who profoundly influenced the history and politics of two continents. In life and after death, a who's who of famous Europeans and Americans expressed their unalloyed admiration for him. Those big ideas that he fought for – liberty, opportunity, dignity for all – are as relevant as ever and still worth fighting for. Whether or not his name stays on the mountain, it turns out that Kosciuszko is the hero the world needs right now. 323 pages Biography

SHIPSTEAD, Maggie. *Great Circle*

'I was born to be a wanderer'.

From the night she is rescued as a baby out of the flames of a sinking ship; to the day she joins a pair of daredevil pilots looping and diving over the rugged forests of her childhood, to the thrill of flying Spitfires during the war, the life of Marian Graves has always been marked by a lust for freedom and danger.

In 1950, she embarks on the great circle flight, circumnavigating the globe. It is Marian's life dream and her final journey, before she disappears without a trace.

Half a century later, Hadley Baxter, a brilliant, troubled Hollywood starlet is irresistibly drawn to play Marian Graves, a role that will lead her to probe the deepest mysteries of the vanished pilot's life.

An journey over oceans and continents and a drama of power, *Great Circle* is a story of loss and obsession, sacrifice and survival, of the unknowable mysteries of freedom, love and life itself. 593 pages Historical fiction
Shortlisted for the Booker Prize 2021

SKESLIEN CHARLES, Janet. *The Paris Library*

Paris, 1939. Odile Souchet is obsessed with books, and her new job at the American Library in Paris - with its thriving community of students, writers and book lovers - is a dream come true. When war is declared, the library is determined to remain open. But then the Nazis invade Paris, and everything changes.

In Occupied Paris, choices as black and white as the words on a page become a murky shade of grey - choices that will put many on the wrong side of history, and the consequences of which will echo for decades to come. Montana, 1983.

Lily is a

lonely teenager desperate to escape small-town Montana. She grows close to her neighbour Odile, discovering they share the same love of language, the same longings. But as Lily uncovers more about Odile's mysterious past, she discovers a dark secret, closely guarded and long hidden.

Based on the true Second World War story of the heroic librarians at the American Library in Paris, this is a novel of romance, friendship, family, and of heroism found in the quietest of places. 423 pages War fiction

SMITH, Dominic. *Return to Valetto*

A nearly abandoned Italian village, the family that stayed, and long-buried secrets from World War II. On a hilltop in Umbria sits Valetto. Once a thriving village-and a hub of resistance and refuge during World War II-centuries of earthquakes, landslides and the lure of a better life have left it neglected. Only ten residents remain, including the widows Serafino - three eccentric sisters and their steely centenarian mother - who live quietly in their medieval villa. Then their nephew and grandson, Hugh, a historian, returns.

But someone else has arrived before him, laying claim to the cottage where Hugh spent his childhood summers. The unwelcome guest is the captivating and no-nonsense Elisa Tomassi, who asserts that the family patriarch, Aldo Serafino, a resistance fighter whom her own family harboured, gave the cottage to them in gratitude. Like so many threads of history, this revelation unravels a secret - a betrayal, a disappearance and an unspeakable act of violence - that has impacted Valetto across generations. Who will answer for the crimes of the past?

Dominic Smith's *Return to Valetto* is a page-turning excavation of the ruins of history, a riveting journey into one family's long-buried story, and a probing look at our commitment to justice.

358 pages Contemporary fiction

SOLLY, Kate. *Tuesday Evenings with the Copeton Craft Resistance*

Meredith established the Copeton Crochet Collective (no knitters please) because it would be like having friends, only with her in charge, and because there would be no men. It comes as a nasty shock, then, when Luke, the handsome grandson of no-nonsense Edith, decides to stay and learn to crochet.

Claire has five children, which is why people sometimes look at her with mild concern. She longs for an Insta-perfect life like her online hero, Siobhan, but she's drowning in domestic failure. She joins the Copeton craft group in the hope of making some non-virtual friends.

Yasmin is Muslim and proud. But sometimes it would be great if people stopped asking her about her hijab and instead asked who she thought was going to win MasterChef. Pregnant with her first child, she should be elated. So why can't she stop panicking? Perhaps crocheting a set of baby clothes can get her in the right headspace.

With plans for a new mosque and the resettlement of refugees in the retirement village, Copeton becomes a breeding ground for Islamophobia. Together with the other members of the group, this small band of fibre-arts enthusiasts battle racism and bigotry with colour and creativity, but will the fragile threads of community be enough to bind them when more than one member has something to hide?

Discussion questions in back of book

316 pages Contemporary fiction

Stephens, Mary-Lou. *The Jam Maker*

Jam is sweet but it can also burn.

Tasmania, 1874. Growing up in the impoverished tenements along the Hobart Rivulet, Harriet Brown is used to doing whatever it takes to survive. Including, at just twelve years old, shearing off her hair and pretending to be a boy to secure a job as label-paster at the George Peacock and Sons jam factory.

Four years later, the deceit becomes too much to bear and Harriet risks everything on the chance at a future with her ambitious friend and workmate Henry Jones. But this decision forces her into a new deception: play the role of expert jam maker, or else be cast out onto the streets.

As the secrets and lies grow, Harriet is driven to more and more desperate choices. Choices that will end with a dangerous secret which, if discovered, could destroy not only her life but the lives of those she loves and protects. Intertwined with the fascinating history of the Tasmanian jam industry and the striking historical figure Henry Jones, *The Jam Maker* is a tale of danger, deceit and the desperate measures one woman will take to succeed in love and life.

415 pages Historical fiction

STEVENSON, Benjamin. *Everyone in My Family has Killed Someone*

I was dreading the Cunningham family reunion even before the first murder.

Before the storm stranded us at the mountain resort, snow and bodies piling up.

The thing is us Cunninghams don't really get along. We've only got one thing in common- we've all killed someone. *My brother, My stepsister, My wife, My father, My mother, My sister-in-la, My uncle, My stepfather, My aunt Me.* 366 pages Mystery fiction

STROUT, Elizabeth. *Olive, Again*

Olive, Again follows the blunt, contradictory yet deeply loveable Olive Kitteridge as she grows older, navigating the second half of her life as she comes to terms with the changes - sometimes welcome, sometimes not - in her own existence and in those around her.

Olive adjusts to her new life with her second husband, challenges her estranged son and his family to accept him, experiences loss and loneliness, witnesses the triumphs and heartbreaks of her friends and neighbours in the small coastal town of Crosby, Maine - and, finally, opens herself to new lessons about life. 289 pages Domestic fiction

STROUT, Elizabeth. *Olive Kitteridge*

Olive Kitteridge: indomitable, compassionate and often unpredictable. A retired schoolteacher in a small coastal town in Maine, as she grows older she struggles to make sense of the changes in her life. She is a woman who sees into the hearts of those around her, observes their triumphs and tragedies.

We meet her stoic husband, bound to her in a marriage both broken and strong, and a young man who aches for the mother he lost – and whom Olive comforts by her mere presence, while her own son feels overwhelmed by her complex sensitives. A penetrating, vibrant exploration of the human soul, the story of Olive Kitteridge will make you laugh, nod in recognition, wince in pain, and shed a tear or two. 270 pages Domestic fiction
Winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

THOMSON, Glenna. *Gone*

I was there on the day Rebecca disappeared. I watched her hurry away. If I close my eyes I can still see her....

When Rebecca Bundy fails to return home after the last day of school in 1984, her father reports her missing. But the teenager has run away before and recently she's been bragging about going to Queensland, so the police tell the family to wait it out.

Days pass. Rumours swirl. A man seen loitering near the bus stop might have followed her. Was there something going on between Rebecca and a male teacher? What about the sheep farmer on Glen Lochan Road where she babysat? And why is her boyfriend, the rough cattle guy Bull Tennant, so sure something sinister has happened?

Then a shocking murder-suicide at a local farm diverts police attention and Rebecca's disappearance all too quickly becomes a cold case.

But her younger sister Eliza never forgets. For almost forty years she's been looking for answers. Once she kept Rebecca's secrets. Now she's ready to share her story...

Discussion questions in back of book 313 pages Mystery fiction

TOWLES, Amor. *Rules of Civility*

In a jazz bar on the last night of 1937, watching a quartet because she couldn't afford to see the whole ensemble, there were certain things Katey Kontent knew: how to sneak into the cinema and steal silk stockings from Bendel's - how to type eighty words a minute, five thousand an hour, and nine million a year; and that if you can still lose yourself in the first chapter of a Dickens novel then everything is probably going to be fine.

By the end of the year, she'd learned:

how to live like a redhead and insist upon the very best, that riches can turn to rags in the trip of a heartbeat, chance encounters can be fated, and the word 'yes' can be a poison.

That's how quickly New York City comes about, like a weathervane, or the head of a cobra. Time tells which.

335 pages Historical fiction

TOWLES, Amor. *The Lincoln Highway*

In June, 1954, eighteen-year-old Emmett Watson is driven home to Nebraska by the warden of the work farm where he has just served a year for involuntary manslaughter. His mother long gone, his father recently deceased, and the

family farm foreclosed upon by the bank, Emmett's intention is to pick up his eight-year-old brother and head west where they can start their lives anew.

But when the warden drives away, Emmett discovers that two friends from the work farm have hidden themselves in the trunk of the warden's car. Together, they have hatched an altogether different plan for Emmett's future.

Spanning just ten days and told from multiple points of view, Towles's third novel will satisfy fans of his multi-layered literary styling while providing them an array of new and richly imagined settings, characters, and themes.

576 Pages Historical fiction

TROLLOPE, Joanna. *Mum and Dad*

'What a mess, she thought now . . . what a bloody, unholy mess the whole family has got itself into.'

It's been twenty-five years since Gus and Monica left England to start a new life in Spain, building a vineyard and wine business from the ground up. However, when Gus suffers a stroke and their idyllic Mediterranean life is thrown into upheaval, it's left to their three grown-up children in London to step in . . .

Sebastian is busy running his company with his wife, Anna, who's never quite seen eye-to-eye with her mother-in-law. Katie, a successful solicitor in the City, is distracted by the problems with her long-term partner, Nic, and the secretive lives of their three daughters.

And Jake, ever the easy-going optimist, is determined to convince his new wife, Bella, that moving to Spain with their eighteen-month-old would be a good idea.

As the children descend on the vineyard, it becomes clear that each has their own idea of how best to handle their mum and dad, as well as the family business. But as long-simmering resentments rise to the surface and tensions reach breaking point, can the family ties prove strong enough to keep them together?

324 pages Contemporary fiction

TYLER, Anne. *French Braid*

When the kids are grown and Mercy Garrett gradually moves herself out of the family home, everyone is determined not to notice.

Over at her studio, she wants space and silence. She won't allow any family clutter. Not even their cat, Desmond. Yet it is a clutter of untidy moments that forms the Garretts' family life over the decades, whether that's a painstaking Easter lunch or giving a child a ride, a fateful train journey or an unexpected homecoming.

And it all begins in 1959, with a family holiday to a cabin by a lake. It's the only one the Garretts will ever take, but its effects will ripple through the generations.

244 pages Domestic fiction

TYLER, Anne. *Three Days in June*

Gail Baines is having a bad day. To start, she loses her job—or quits, depending on whom you ask. Tomorrow her daughter, Debbie, is getting married, and she hasn't even been invited to the bridal spa day. Then, Gail's ex-husband, Max, arrives unannounced on her doorstep. He has no place to stay, no suit for the wedding. Instead he has a cat (never mind that the groom is deathly allergic).

But the true crisis lands when Debbie shares with her parents a secret she has just learned about her own relationship. It will not only throw the wedding into question but also stir up Gail and Max's past.

Told with deep sensitivity and a tart sense of humour, *Three days in June* is a triumphant novel full of the joys and heartbreaks of love and marriage.

165 pages Domestic fiction.

WILKERSON, Charmaine. *Black Cake*

We can't choose what we inherit. But can we choose who we become?

In present-day California, Eleanor Bennett's death leaves behind a puzzling inheritance for her two children, Byron and Benny: a black cake, made from a family recipe with a long history, and a voice recording. In her message,

Eleanor shares a tumultuous story about a headstrong young swimmer who escapes her island home under suspicion of murder. The heartbreaking tale Eleanor unfolds, the secrets she still holds back, and the mystery of a long-lost child challenge everything the siblings thought they knew about their lineage and themselves.

Can Byron and Benny reclaim their once-close relationship, piece together Eleanor's true history, and fulfill her final request to "share the black cake when the time is right"? Will their mother's revelations bring them back together or leave them feeling more lost than ever?

Charmaine Wilkerson's debut novel is a story of how the inheritance of betrayals, secrets, memories, and even names can shape relationships and history. Deeply evocative and beautifully written, *Black Cake* is an extraordinary journey through the life of a family changed forever by the choices of its matriarch

377 pages Domestic fiction

WILLIAMS, Pip. *The Bookbinder of Jericho*

What is lost when knowledge is withheld?

In 1914, when the war draws the young men of Britain away to fight, it is the women who must keep the nation running. Two of those women are Peggy and Maude, twin sisters who work in the bindery at Oxford University Press in Jericho. Peggy is intelligent, ambitious and dreams of going to Oxford University, but for most of her life she has been told her job is to bind the books, not read them. Maude, meanwhile, wants nothing more than what she has. She is extraordinary but vulnerable. Peggy needs to watch over her.

When refugees arrive from the devastated cities of Belgium, it sends ripples through the community and through the sisters' lives. Peggy begins to see the possibility of another future where she can use her intellect and not just her hands, but as war and illness reshape her world, it is love, and the responsibility that comes with it, that threaten to hold her back.

In this beautiful companion to the international bestseller *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, Pip Williams explores another little-known slice of history seen through women's eyes. Evocative, subversive and rich with unforgettable characters, *The Bookbinder of Jericho* is a story about knowledge - who gets to make it, who gets to access it, and what is lost when it is withheld.

438 pages Historical fiction

Discussion questions in back of book

WILLIAMS, Pip. *The Dictionary of Lost Words*

In 1901, the word *bondmaid* was discovered missing from the Oxford English Dictionary. This is the story of the girl who stole it.

Motherless and irrepressibly curious, Esme spends her childhood in the Scriptorium, a garden shed in Oxford where her father and a team of lexicographers are gathering the words for the very first Oxford English Dictionary. Esme's place is beneath the sorting table, unseen and unheard. One day, she sees a slip containing the word *bondmaid* flutter to the floor unclaimed. Esme seizes the word and hides it in an old wooden trunk that belongs to her friend, Lizzie, a young servant in the big house. Esme begins to collect other words from the Scriptorium that are misplaced, discarded or have been neglected by the dictionary men. They help her make sense of the world.

Over time, Esme realizes that some words are considered more important than others, and that the words and meanings relating to women's experiences often go unrecorded. She begins to collect words for another dictionary: The Dictionary of Lost Words.

Set when the women's suffrage movement was at its height and the Great War loomed, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* reveals a lost narrative, hidden between the lines of a history written by men. It's a delightful, lyrical and deeply thought-provoking celebration of words, and the power of language to shape our experience of the world.

423 pages Historical fiction

WILSON, Ruth. *The Jane Austen Remedy*

An uplifting and delightfully bookish memoir about an 89-year-old woman who reclaims her life by re-reading each of Jane Austen's novels.

As she approached the age of seventy, Ruth Wilson began to have recurring dreams about losing her voice. Unable to dismiss her feelings of unexplainable sadness, she made the radical decision to retreat from her conventional life with her husband to a sunshine-yellow cottage in the Southern Highlands where she lived alone for the next decade.

Ruth had fostered a lifelong love of reading, and from the moment she first encountered *Pride and Prejudice* in the 1940s she had looked to Jane Austen's heroines as her models for the sort of woman she wanted to become.

As Ruth settled into her cottage, she resolved to re-read Austen's six novels and rediscover the heroines who had inspired her; to read between the lines of both the novels and her own life. And as she read, she began to reclaim her voice.

The Jane Austen Remedy is a beautiful, life-affirming memoir of love, self-acceptance and the curative power of reading. Published the year Ruth turns ninety, it is an inspirational account of the lessons learned from Jane Austen over nearly eight decades, as well as a timely reminder that it's never too late to seize a second chance
299 pages Biography

WINN, Raynor. *The Salt Path*

Just days after Raynor Winn learned that Moth, her husband of thirty-two years, was terminally ill, they lost their home and livelihood. With nothing left, little time and nowhere to go they decided to walk the 630 mile South West Coast Path, from Somerset to Dorset, via Devon and Cornwall.

Living wild, at the mercy of sea and sky, they discovered a new, liberating existence – but what would they find at the journey's end?
274 pages Autobiographies

Shortlisted for the Costa Book Awards.
Shortlisted for the Wainwright Prize.

WOOD, Charlotte. *Stone Yard Devotional*

A woman abandons her city life and marriage to return to the place of her childhood, holing up in a small religious community hidden away on the stark plains of the Monaro.

She does not believe in God, doesn't know what prayer is, and finds herself living this strange, reclusive life almost by accident. As she gradually adjusts to the rhythms of monastic life, she finds herself turning again and again to thoughts of her mother, whose early death she can't forget.

Disquiet interrupts this secluded life with three visitations. First comes a terrible mouse plague, each day signaling a new battle against the rising infestation.

Second is the return of the skeletal remains of a sister who left the community decades before to minister to deprived women in Thailand – then disappeared, presumed murdered.

Finally, a troubling visitor to the monastery pulls the narrator further back into her past.

With each of these disturbing arrivals, the woman faces some deep questions. Can a person be truly good? What is forgiveness? Is loss of hope a moral failure? And can the business of grief ever really be finished?

297 pages Thriller fiction

WORSLEY, Lucy. *Agatha Christie*

'Nobody in the world was more inadequate to act the heroine than I was.'

Why did Agatha Christie spend her career pretending that she was 'just' an ordinary housewife, when clearly she wasn't? As Lucy Worsley says, 'She was thrillingly, scintillatingly modern'. She went surfing in Hawaii, she loved fast cars, and she was intrigued by the new science of psychology, which helped her through devastating mental illness.

So why - despite all the evidence to the contrary - did Agatha present herself as a retiring Edwardian lady of leisure? She was born in 1890 into a world which had its own rules about what women could and couldn't do. Lucy Worsley's biography is not just of an internationally renowned bestselling writer. It's also the story of a person who, despite the obstacles of class and gender, became an astonishingly successful working woman.

With access to personal letters and papers that have rarely been seen, Lucy Worsley's biography is both authoritative and entertaining and makes us realise what an extraordinary pioneer Agatha Christie was - truly a woman who wrote the twentieth century.
415 pages Biography

YANG, Jane. *The Lotus Shoes*

China, 1800's.

When Little Flower is sold to Linjing's family, their fates are bound together in a tale of love, loss, triumph and tragedy...

As a child, Little Flower is sold to Linjing's wealthy family to become a *muizai*. In a fit of childish jealousy over her new handmaiden's ladylike bound feet and talent for embroidery, Linjing ensures Little Flower can never leave her to ascend in society.

Despite their starkly different places in the Fong household, over the years the two girls must work together to secure both their futures through Linjing's marriage. As the two grow up, they are by turns bitter rivals and tentative friends.

Until scandal strikes the family, and Linjing and Little Flower's lives are unexpectedly thrown into chaos. Linjing's fall from grace could be an opportunity for Little Flower - but will their intertwined fates lead to triumph, or tragedy for them both?

388 pages Historical fiction

YOUNGSON, Anne. *Three women and a Boat*

Meet Eve, who has departed from her thirty-year career to become a Free Spirit; Sally, who has waved goodbye to her indifferent husband and two grown-up children; and Anastasia, a defiantly independent narrowboat-dweller, suddenly vulnerable as she awaits a life-saving operation.

Inexperienced and ill-equipped, Sally and Eve embark upon a journey through the canals of England, guided by the remote and unsympathetic Anastasia. As they glide gently - and not so gently - through the countryside, the eccentricities and challenges of canal boat life draw them inexorably together, and a tender and unforgettable story unfolds.

Disarmingly truthful and narrated with a rare wit, *Three women and a boat* is a journey over the glorious waterways of England and into the unfathomable depths of the human heart by an inspirational new talent now in her seventies.

325 pages Contemporary fiction