The Reading Group Collection

We now have a number of sets that consist of large print copies. These sets have "*LP COLLECTION"* next to them. A number of the titles are considered "cross over" novels (popular with both teenagers and adults). These sets have "*TEEN"* next to them.

Any of the sets can be used by any Reading Group that is registered with Monmouthshire Library Service.

🕮 Abdolah, Kader. The House of the Mosque

Welcome to the house of the mosque...Iran, 1950. Spring has arrived, and as the women prepare the festivities, Sadiq waits for a suitor to knock on the door. Her uncle Nosrat returns from Tehran with a glamorous woman, while on the rooftop, Shahbal longs only for a television to watch the first moon landing. But not even the beloved grandmothers can foresee what will happen in the days and months to come. In this uplifting bestseller, Kader Abdolah charts the triumphs and tragedies of a family on the brink of revolution.

🕮 Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart

Okonowo is the greatest warrior alive. His fame has spread like a bushfire in West Africa and he is one of the most powerful men of his clan.

But he also has a fiery temper. Determined not to be like his father, he refuses to show weakness to anyone - even if the only way he can master his feelings is with his fists. When outsiders threaten the traditions of his clan, Okonowo takes violent action. Will the great man's dangerous pride eventually destroy him?

🕮 Akunin, Boris. Turkish Gambit

The Russo-Turkish war is at a critical juncture, and Erast Fandorin, broken-hearted and disillusioned, has gone to the front in an attempt to forget his sorrows. But Fandorin's efforts to steer clear of trouble are thwarted when he comes to the aid of Varvara Suvorova - a 'progressive' Russian woman trying to make her way to the Russian headquarters to join her fiancé.

Within days, Varvara's fiancé has been accused of treason, a Turkish victory looms on the horizon, and there are rumours of a Turkish spy hiding within their own camp. Our reluctant gentleman sleuth will need to resurrect all of his dormant powers of detection if he is to unmask the traitor, help the Russians to victory and smooth the path of young love.

🕮 Anderson, Sherwood. Winesburg, Ohio

Considered to be one of Sherwood Anderson's greatest works, "Winesburg, Ohio" is the portrayal of a fictitious American town and its inhabitants. "Winesburg, Ohio" is a collection of connected short stories depicting a variety of themes of rural American life. Heralded for its beautiful realism, "Winesburg, Ohio", is a classic collection of American stories whose influence upon American literature is considered to be nothing short of profound.

🕮 Anstee, Margaret Joan. Never Learn to Type

A fascinating account of a remarkable life that took the author, through hard work and determination, from rural England to the highest ranks of the United Nations Dame Margaret Anstee was born in the 1920s to a poor family in rural Essex. With the support of her parents and through her own determination, she graduated from Cambridge with first class honours, and entered the Foreign Office where she worked with the spy Donald Maclean shortly before his defection with Guy Burgess. Her career here ended as was customary at the time, when she married a diplomat and was posted to Singapore. As the marriage began to fail Margaret accepted a job at the United Nations in order to earn her fare back to England. It was the start of a career that was to push the boundaries at every step. She became the first woman to be posted to her beloved South America, where she drove through the Andes in her VW Beetle, she headed up the first Government think tank during Harold Wilson's Government and she was the first woman to break the glass ceiling at the United Nations. Dame Margaret Anstee served the United Nations for four decades, both at the New York Headquarters and in some of the poorest countries of the world attempting to help the victims of war, poverty and natural disasters…..

🕮 Archer, Jeffrey. Sons of Fortune *(LP COLLECTION)*

In the late 1940s in Hartford, Connecticut a set of twins is parted at birth. Nat Cartwright goes home with his parents, a schoolteacher and an insurance salesman. But his twin brother is to begin his days as Fletcher Andrew Davenport, the only son of a multi-millionaire and his society wife.

During the years that follow, the two brothers grow up unaware of each other's existence. Nat leaves college at the University of Connecticut to serve in Vietnam. He returns a war hero, he finishes school and becomes a successful banker. Fletcher, meanwhile, has graduated from Yale University and distinguishes himself as a criminal defence lawyer before he is elected to the Senate.

Even when Nat and Fletcher fall in love with the same girl they still don't meet. They continue on their separate paths until one has to defend the other for a murder he did not commit. But the final confrontation comes when Nat and Fletcher are selected to stand against each other for governor of the state.

🕮 Austen, Jane. Pride & Prejudice

Pride and Prejudice is a novel by Jane Austen, first published in 1813. The story follows the main character Elizabeth Bennet as she deals with issues of manners, upbringing, morality, education, and marriage in the society of the landed gentry of early 19th-century England. Elizabeth is the second of five daughters of a country gentleman living near the fictional town of Meryton in Hertfordshire, near London.

🕮 Azzopardi, Trezza. Remember Me *(LP COLLECTION)*

Lillian would say she's no trouble, content to let the days go by, minding her own business and bothering no one. She'd rather not recall the past and, at 72, doesn't see much point in thinking too much about the future. But when her closed existence is suddenly shattered by a random act of violence committed by a young girl, Lillian is catapulted abruptly out of her exile. Robbed of everything she owns, she embarks on a journey to find the thief -- but soon finds that what began as a search for stolen belongings has in fact become about the rediscovery of a stolen life.

🕮 Bainbridge, Beryl. The Girl in the Polka Dot Dress

In the summer of 1968, Rose sets off for the United States from Kentish Town; in her suitcase a polka-dot dress and a one-way ticket. Together with the sinister man known only as Washington Harold, she goes in search of the charismatic and elusive Dr Wheeler - the man Rose credits with rescuing her from a terrible childhood, and against whom Harold nurses a silent grudge.

As the odd couple journey across an America on the brink of paranoid disintegration, their journey mirrors that of Robert Kennedy's presidential campaign. As they draw ever closer to the elusive Dr Wheeler, one hot day in June at the Ambassador Hotel in LA, their search finally reaches its terrible climax.

🕮 Bank, Melissa. The Girl's Guide to Hunting and Fishing

After following the advice from a manual called "How to Meet and Marry Mr Right", Jane learns that in love there is neither pattern nor promise. This is a funny collection of connected stories and a portrait of Jane, a woman manoeuvring her way through love, sex and relationships.

🕮 Berridge, A.L. In the Name of the King

1640, and the pall of war hangs over France...

The young Chevalier de Roland has scarcely set foot in the city before he crosses swords with a cruel nobleman to defend a young woman's honour. Too late he learns he has stumbled on a conspiracy within the King's own household to seize power by secret alliance with Spain. Accused of treason and forced to flee into hiding, André must fight on alone, staking both his life and his honour in the battle to save France.

Blood and Steel is an epic swashbuckling page turner that sweeps from the political intrigues of Cardinal Richelieu to the great battlefields of the Thirty Years War.

🕮 Birch, Carol. Come Back, Paddy Riley

Anita's mother was the mermaid in the Belle Vue Fair Freak Show. Into their lives came Paddy Riley, a young Irish lad whose motto was 'the only crime in life is not to take up a good opportunity'. The opportunity was Anita's mother - hungry for love and romance. Their secret is safe until young Anita, their go-between, spins a jealous lie that tragically catches them all. Now

grown with children of her own, Anita has found a kind of peace with a sweet husband, and the past is past. Until that is, a man not unlike Paddy Riley comes to their town. It's an 'opportunity' that Anita cannot, for the life of her, seem to resist.

🕮 Blunt, Giles. Forty Words for Sorrow

Dark, atmospheric and terrifying psychological serial killer thriller set in a freezing Ontario winter, guaranteed to chill readers to the bone: ‘Forty Words for Sorrow is brilliant’ Jonathan Kellerman

When four teenagers go missing in the small northern town of Algonquin Bay, the extensive police investigation comes up empty. Everyone is ready to give up, except Detective John Cardinal, an all-too-human loner whose persistence only serves to get him removed from homicide.

Then the mutilated body of thirteen-year-old Katie Pine is pulled out of an abandoned mineshaft. And only Cardinal is willing to consider the horrible truth: that this quiet town is home to the most vicious of killers. With the media, the provincial police and his own department questioning his every move, Cardinal follows increasingly tenuous threads towards the unthinkable. But time isn’t only running out for him: there’s also another young victim tied up in a basement wondering how and when he will die.

🕮 Bradley, James. The Resurrectionist

London, 1826. Leaving behind his father's tragic failures, Gabriel Swift arrives to study with Edwin Poll, the greatest of the city's anatomists. It is his chance to find advancement by making a name for himself. But instead he finds himself drawn to his master's nemesis, Lucan, the most powerful of the city's resurrectionists and ruler of its trade in stolen bodies. Dismissed by Mr Poll, Gabriel descends into the violence and corruption of London's underworld, a place where everything and everyone is for sale, and where - as Gabriel discovers - the taking of a life is easier than it might seem.

🕮 Bronte, Charlotte. Jane Eyre

Raised by her aunt Sarah after her parents die of typhus, young Jane Eyre is later shipped off to a stark boarding school as the result of her perceived insolence, and suffers greatly at the hands of the cold, unusually strict administration. Upon turning 18 and completing her education, Jane finds work as a governess for Adele Varens, the ward of Edward Fairfax Rochester, master of Thornfield Hall. It doesn't take long for the young Adele to warm to Jane, and upon returning home the charming Rochester, too, falls under the spell of his modest yet captivating governess.

🕮 Brookner, Anita. Rules of Engagement *(LP COLLECTION)*

Elizabeth and Betsy are old school friends. Born in 1948 and unready for the sixties, they had high hopes of the lives they would lead, even though their circumstances were so different. When they meet again in their thirties, Elizabeth, married to the safe, older Digby is relieving the boredom of a cosy but childless marriage with an affair. Betsy seems to have found real romance

in Paris. Are their lives taking off, or are they just making more of the wrong choices without even realising it?

🕮 Bryson, Bill. Notes *from* a Small Island

After nearly two decades in Britain, Bill Bryson took the decision to move back to the States for a few years, to let his kids experience life in another country, to give his wife the chance to shop until 10 p.m. seven nights a week, and, most of all, because he had read that 3.7 million Americans believed that they had been abducted by aliens at one time or another, and it was thus clear to him that his people needed him.

But before leaving his much-loved home in North Yorkshire, Bryson insisted on taking one last trip around Britain, a sort of valedictory tour of the green and kindly island that had so long been his home. His aim was to take stock of the nation's public face and private parts (as it were), and to analyse what precisely it was he loved so much about a country that had produced Marmite, a military hero whose dying wish was to be kissed by a fellow named Hardy, place names like Farleigh Wallop, Titsey and Shellow Bowells, people who said 'Mustn't grumble', and *Gardeners' Question Time*.

🕮 Byatt, A. S. Possession: A Romance

Possession is an exhilarating novel of wit and romance, at once a literary detective novel and a triumphant love story. It is the tale of a pair of young scholars investigating the lives of two Victorian poets. Following a trail of letters, journals and poems they uncover a web of passion, deceit and tragedy, and their quest becomes a battle against time.

🕮 Camus, Albert. The Plague

The townspeople of Oran are in the grip of a deadly plague, which condemns its victims to a swift and horrifying death. Fear, isolation and claustrophobia follow as they are forced into quarantine. Each person responds in their own way to the lethal disease: some resign themselves to fate, some seek blame, and a few, like Dr Rieux, resist the terror.

An immediate triumph when it was published in 1947, The Plague is in part an allegory of France's suffering under the Nazi occupation, and a story of bravery and determination against the precariousness of human existence.

🕮 Cezair-Thompson, Margaret. The Pirate's Daughter

An unforgettable story of love and adventure, spanning three decades of Jamaican history.

Jamaica, 1946. Errol Flynn washes up on in the *Zaca*, his storm-wrecked yacht. Ida Joseph, the teenaged daughter of Port Antonio's Justice of the Peace, is intrigued to learn that the 'World's Handsomest Man' is on the island, and makes it her business to meet him. For the jaded

swashbuckler, Jamaica is a tropical paradise that Ida, unfazed by his celebrity, seems to share. Soon Flynn has made a home for himself on Navy Island, where he entertains the cream of Hollywood at parties that become a byword for decadence - and Ida has set her heart on marrying this charismatic older man who has singled her out for his attention. Flynn and Ida do not marry, but Ida bears Flynn a daughter, May, who will meet her father but once. *The Pirate's Daughter* is a tale of passion and recklessness, of two generations of women and their battles for love and survivial, and of a nation struggling to rise to the challenge of hard-won independence.

🕮 Charlesworth, Monique. The Children's War

A heartrending coming-of-age novel set in a war-torn Europe, The Children's War is subtle and romantic literary fiction at its best.

A young girl sits alone in a station waiting room in Marseilles. Part Jewish, Ilse has been sent out of Nazi Germany to safety in Morocco by her mother. This is the beginning of an uneasy life, shifting across borders, blown by circumstances beyond her control. Fleeing through France as the Nazis invade, she is thrown in the path of an intense young soldier, François, in whom darkness and light seem inextricably mixed.

Inside Germany, a boy struggles with his destiny in the Hitler Youth. Nicolai is a reluctant warrior. Despite the comfort of his Hamburg home, he comes to feel that he is a stranger in his own land. As war steals their youth away, both Ilse and Nicolai search for love in a time of terror. Subtle in its depiction of people and worlds now vanished, this epic novel of occupation and war powerfully evokes the battles behind enemy lines, those of home and of heart.

🕮 Chevalier, Tracy. Falling Angels

Will friendship overcome the social boundaries of Edwardian London in this bestselling historical tale perfect for fans of Audrey Niffenegger and Sarah Waters.

One cold January morning, in the wake of Queen Victoria's death, two young sets of eyes meet across the graves at Highgate Cemetery. One pair belongs to smartly dressed Lavinia Waterhouse, whose mother clings to the traditional values she sees slipping away; the other to Maude Coleman,
whose mother longs to escape the stifling grip of Victorian society. Thrust together by the girls' friendship, these two very different families embark on a new century that promises electricity, emancipation and other changes that will shake the very foundations of their lives.

🕮 Chevalier, Tracy. Girl with a Pearl Earring

17th Century Holland. When Griet becomes a maid in the household of Johannes Vermeer in the town of Delft, she thinks she knows her role: housework, laundry and the care of his six children.

But as she becomes part of his world and his work, their growing intimacy spreads tension and deception in the ordered household and, as the scandal seeps out, into the town beyond.

📖 Clare, Horatio. A Single Swallow

From the slums of Cape Town to the palaces of Algiers, through Pygmy villages where pineapples grow wild, to the Gulf of Guinea where the sea blazes with oil flares, across two continents and fourteen countries - this epic journey is nothing to swallows, they do it twice a year. But for Horatio Clare, writer and birdwatcher, it is the expedition of a lifetime.

Along the way he discovers old empires and modern tribes, a witch-doctor's recipe for stewed swallow, explains how to travel without money or a passport, and describes a terrifying incident involving three Spanish soldiers and a tiny orange dog. By trains, motorbikes, canoes, one camel and three ships, Clare follows the swallows from reed beds in South Africa, where millions roost in February, to a barn in Wales, where a pair nest in May.

📖 Clare, Horatio. Running for the Hills (NF)

When Jenny and Robert fall in love in the late 1960s they decide to build a new future together, away from the city. They escape to an isolated sheep farm nestled on a mountainside. It has no running water but it is beautiful and rugged. Their young sons can roam wild.

As their flock struggles, money runs low and rain drives in horizontally across the fields, inside the ancient house their marriage begins to unravel. Wilful and romantic, Jenny refuses to abandon her farm. She will bring her boys up single-handedly on the mountain. Together they embark on a perilous adventure.

Running for the Hills is astonishing family memoir - Horatio Clare vividly recreates his mother's extraordinary way of life and his own bewitching childhood in a magical story of love and struggle.

📖 Coe, Jonathon. The Terrible Privacy of Maxwell Sim

Maxwell Sim seems to have hit rock bottom: separated from his wife and daughter, estranged from his father, and with no one to confide in even though he has 74 friends on Facebook. He's not even sure whether he's got a job until suddenly a strange business proposition comes his way which involves a long journey to the Shetland Isles - and a voyage into his family's past which throws up some surprising revelations.

A story for our times, Maxwell finds himself at sea in the modern world, surrounded by social networks but unable to relate properly to anyone.

📖 Cooper, Artemis. Patrick Leigh Fermor (NF- biography)

Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915-2011) was a war hero whose exploits in Crete are legendary, and above all he is widely acclaimed as the greatest travel writer of our times, notably for his books

about his walk across pre-war Europe, *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*; he was a self-educated polymath, a lover of Greece and the best company in the world.

Artemis Cooper has drawn on years of interviews and conversations with Paddy and his cloest friends as well as having complete access to his archives. Her beautifully crafted biography portrays a man of extraordinary gifts - no one wore their learning so playfully, nor inspired such passionate friendship.

🕮 Cormier, Robert. Heroes *(TEEN)*

A provocative story about the return home of teenage war hero and war victim, Francis Joseph Cassavant. He is forced to confront his past - the youth leader he idolised and who betrayed him, and the girl he still loves. The book gets to the heart of human nature and the moral issues and choices we have to make.

🕮 Cornwell, Bernard. Sharpe's Eagle

After the cowardly incompetence of two officers besmirches their name, Captain Richard Sharpe must redeem the regiment by capturing the most valued prize in the French Army-a golden Imperial Eagle, the standard touched by the hand of Napoleon himself.

🕮 D'Aguiar, Fred. The Longest Memory

Written in taut, poetic language, THE LONGEST MEMORY is set on a Virginian plantation in the 19th century, and tells the tragic story of a rebellious, fiercely intelligent young slave who breaks all the rules: in learning to read and write, in falling in love with a white girl, the daughter of his owner, and, finally, in trying to escape and join her in the free North. For his attempt to flee, he is whipped to death in front of his family, and this brutal event is the pivot around which the story evolves.

🕮 Dalrymple, William. From the Holy Mountain (NF)

A rich blend of history and spirituality, adventure and politics, laced with the thread of black comedy familiar to readers of William Dalrymple's previous work.

In AD 587, two monks, John Moschos and Sophronius the Sophist, embarked on an extraordinary journey across the Byzantine world, from the shores of the Bosphorus to the sand dunes of Egypt. Their aim: to collect the wisdom of the sages and mystics of the Byzantine East before their fragile world shattered under the eruption of Islam. Almost 1500 years later, using the writings of John Moschos as his guide, William Dalrymple set off to retrace their footsteps.

Taking in a civil war in Turkey, the ruins of Beirut, the tensions of the West Bank and a fundamentalist uprising in Egypt, William Dalrymple's account is a stirring elegy to the dying civilisation of Eastern Christianity.

🕮 Davies, Stevie. The Web of Belonging

Jess has lived peacefully in Shrewsbury with her husband Jacob for many years. He is solid, dependable and treats her well. She is content just to be his wife and to look after 'The Oldies', the relatives they took in one by one as they became helpless and dependent.

Little did they expect the amount of trouble three elderly people could bring. First there is Brenda, the most self-sufficient of the lot and a supporter of worthy causes. Then there is May, a turbulent woman who needs constant watching after punching the health visitor. She rails about a woman who looked after six priests for 45 years and won a medal from the Pope. Finally there is Cousin Nathan, who is of a holy disposition and insists on quoting Scripture at every opportunity.

They live in contented discord until one evening Jacob simply disappears. 'Arrange the funeral,' cries May. Then Jacob is spotted in Ludlow on the arm of a blonde...

🕮 De Bernieres, Louis. Captain Corelli's Mandolin

It is 1941 and Captain Antonio Corelli, a young Italian officer, is posted to the Greek island of Cephallonia as part of the occupying forces. At first he is ostracised by the locals, but as a conscientious but far from fanatical soldier, whose main aim is to have a peaceful war, he proves in time to be civilised, humorous - and a consumate musician.

When the local doctor's daughter's letters to her fiancé - and members of the underground - go unanswered, the working of the eternal triangle seems inevitable. But can this fragile love survive as a war of bestial savagery gets closer and the lines are drawn between invader and defender?

🕮 Diamant, Anita. The Red Tent

Her name is Dinah. In the Bible her fate is merely hinted at in a brief and violent detour within the verses of the Book of Genesis that recount the life of Jacob and his infamous dozen sons. *The Red Tent* is an extraordinary and engrossing tale of ancient womanhood and family honour. Told in Dinah's voice, it opens with the story of her mothers - the four wives of Jacob - each of whom embodies unique feminine traits, and concludes with Dinah's own startling and unforgettable story of betrayal, grief and love. Deeply affecting and intimate, *The Red Tent* combines outstandingly rich storytelling with an original insight into women's society in a fascinating period of early history and such is its warmth and candour, it is guaranteed to win the hearts and minds of women across the world.

🕮 Diaz, Junot. Drown

Originally published in 1997, Drown instantly garnered terrific acclaim. Moving from the barrios of the Dominican Republic to the struggling urban communities of New Jersey, these

heartbreaking, completely original stories established Díaz as one of contemporary fiction's most exhilarating new voices.

🕮 Dibdin, Michael. Medusa

When a group of Austrian cavers exploring a network of abandoned military tunnels in the Italian alps come across human remains at the bottom of a deep shaft, everyone assumes the death was accidental - until the still unidentified body is stolen from the morgue and the Defence Ministry puts a news blackout on the case. And is the recent car bombing in Campione d'Italia, a tiny tax haven surrounded on all sides by Switzerland, somehow related? The whole affair has the whiff of political intrigue. That's enough to interest Aurelio Zen's boss at the Interior Ministry, who wants to know who is hiding what from who and why.

The search for the truth leads Zen back into the murky history of post-war Italy and obscure corners of modern-day society to uncover the truth about a crime that everyone thought was as dead and buried as the victim.

🕮 Dickens, Charles. The Mystery of Edwin Drood

Dickens's final novel, left unfinished at his death, is a tale of mystery whose fast-paced action takes place in an ancient cathedral city and in some of the darkest places in nineteenth-century London. Drugs, sexual obsession, colonial adventuring and puzzles about identity are among the novel's themes. At the centre of the plot lie the baffling disappearance of Edwin Drood and the many explanations of his whereabouts.

A sombre and menacing atmosphere, a fascinating range of characters and Dickens's usual superb command of language combine to make this an exciting and tantalising story.

Also included in this volume are a number of unjustly neglected stories and sketches, with subjects as different as murder and guilt and childhood romance. This unusual selection illustrates Dickens's immense creativity and versatility.

🕮 Dickens, Charles. Little Dorrit

Little Dorrit is a classic tale of imprisonment, both literal and metaphorical, while Dickens' working title for the novel, *Nobody's Fault*, highlights its concern with personal responsibility in private and public life. Dickens' childhood experiences inform the vivid scenes in Marshalsea debtor's prison, while his adult perceptions of governmental failures shape his satirical picture of the Circumlocution Office. The novel's range of characters - the honest, the crooked, the selfish and the self-denying - offers a portrait of society about whose values Dickens had profound doubts.

🕮 Dobbs, Michael. Never Surrender *(LP COLLECTION)*

Winston Churchill embarks on a battle of wills with Adolf Hitler in the run-up to Dunkirk. The compelling new historical novel from the acclaimed author of Winston's War.

Winston Churchill at his lowest ebb – pitted in personal confrontation with Adolf Hitler, and with ghosts from his tormented past.

In his bestselling novel Winston's War, Michael Dobbs brilliantly combined imagination and fact in a vivid recreation of Churchill's remarkable journey from the wilderness to Downing Street. It won acclaim from critics and caught the mood of the reading public. Now he draws on his unrivalled insight into the workings of power to bring the Greatest Briton to life once again.

10 May 1940. Hitler launches his devastating attack that within days will overrun France, Holland and Belgium, and that will bring Britain to its knees at Dunkirk. Only one man, Winston Churchill, seems capable of standing in his way. Yet Churchill is isolated, mistrusted by many of his colleagues, and tormented by ghosts from his past.

This is the story of those four crucial weeks in which Churchill and Hitler faced each other in a battle of wills. At its end, Hitler was at the gates of Paris and master of all he surveyed. But Churchill had already broken him on the most crucial battlefield of all, the battlefield of the mind.

🕮 Duncker, Patricia. Hallucinating Foucault

A captivating first novel of love and madness, *Hallucinating Foucault* tells of a devoted reader's quest to find and liberate Paul Michel, enfant terrible of French Letters, who is schizophrenic and incarerated in an asylum. As its builds towards a startling conclusion, the novel unravels and probes the intriguing connections between writer Paul Michel and philosopher Michel Foucault, and the elusive bond that exists between writer and reader.

🕮 Eugenides, Jeffrey. Middlesex

'I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of l974.'

So begins the breath taking story of Calliope Stephanides and her truly unique family secret, born on the slopes of Mount Olympus and passed on through three generations.

Growing up in 70s Michigan, Calliope's special inheritance will turn her into Cal, the narrator of this intersex, inter-generational epic of immigrant life in 20th century America.

🕮 Evans, Nicholas. The Horse Whisperer

In the still of a snow-covered morning in upstate New York, a girl out riding her horse is hit by a 40-ton truck. Though horribly injured, both thirteen-year-old Grace Maclean and her horse Pilgrim survive. But the impact on their lives is devastating. Grace's mother Annie hears about a man called Tom Booker, a 'whisperer' who is said to have the gift of healing troubled horses. Abandoning her job, Annie sets off across the continent with Grace and Pilgrim to find him. Under the massive Montana sky, all their lives are changed for ever.

🕮 Fallon, Jane. Getting Rid of Matthew

What to do if Matthew, your secret lover of the past four years, finally decides to leave his wife Sophie and their two daughters and move into your flat, just when you're thinking that you might not want him anymore . . .

PLAN A: Stop shaving your armpits. And your bikini line. Tell him you have a moustache that you wax every six weeks Stop having sex with him. Pick holes in the way he dresses. Don't brush your teeth. Or your hair. Or pluck out the stray hag-whisker that grows out of your chin. Buy incontinence pads and leave them lying around

PLAN B: Accidentally on purpose bump into his wife Sophie Give yourself a fake name and identity Befriend Sophie Actually begin to really like Sophie Snog Matthew's son (who's the same age as you by the way. You're not a paedophile) Buy a cat and give it a fake name and identity Befriend Matthew's children. Unsuccessfully Watch your whole plan go absolutely horribly wrong

🕮 Feldman, Ellen. Scottsboro

Alabama, 1931. A posse stops a freight train and arrests nine black youths. Their crime: fighting with white boys. Then two white girls emerge from another freight car, and within seconds the cry of rape goes up. One of the girls sticks to her story. The other changes her tune, again and again. A young journalist, whose only connection to the incident is her overheated social conscience, fights to save the nine youths from the electric chair, redeem the girl who repents her lie, and make amends for her own past.

Stirring racism, sexism, and anti-Semitism into an explosive brew, *Scottsboro* is a novel of a shocking injustice that reverberated around the world.

🕮 Fforde, Jasper. First Among Sequels

Thursday Next is back. And this time it's personal . . .Officially, Literary Detective Thursday Next is off the case. Once a key figure in the BookWorld police force, she is concentrating on her duties as a wife and mother. Or so her husband thinks . . .

Unofficially, Thursday is working as hard as ever - and in this world of dangerously short attention spans, there's no rest for the literate.

Can Thursday stop *Pride and Prejudice* being turned into a vote-em-off reality book?

Who killed Sherlock Holmes?

And will Thursday get her teenage son out of bed in time for him to save the world?

🕮 Fforde, Jasper. Something Rotten

Thursday Next, Head of JurisFiction and ex-SpecOps agent, returns to her native Swindon accompanied by a child of two, a pair of dodos and Hamlet, who is on a fact-finding mission in the real world. Thursday has been despatched to capture escaped Fictioneer Yorrick Kaine but

even so, now seems as good a time as any to retrieve her husband Landen from his state of eradication at the hands of the Chronoguard.

It's not going to be easy. Thursday's former colleagues at the department of Literary Detectives want her to investigate a spate of cloned Shakespeares, the Goliath Corporation are planning to switch to a new Faith based corporate management system and the Neanderthals feel she might be the Chosen One who will lead them to genetic self-determination.

With help from Hamlet, her uncle and time-travelling father, Thursday faces the toughest adventure of her career. Where is the missing President-for-life George Formby? Why is it imperative for the Swindon Mallets to win the World Croquet League final? And why is it so difficult to find reliable childcare?

🕮 Ford, Richard. The Sportswriter

Frank Bascombe has a younger girlfriend and a job as a sportswriter. To many men of his age, thirty-eight, this would be a cause for optimism, yet Frank feels the pull of his inner despair and especially of his recent losses - his preferred career has ended, his wife has divorced him, and a tragic accident took his elder son. In the course of this Easter weekend, Frank will lose all the remnants of his familiar life, though he will emerge heroic with spirits soaring. This is a magnificent novel that propelled Richard Ford into the first rank of American writers.

🕮 Franzen, Jonathan. The Corrections

The Lamberts – Enid and Alfred and their three grown-up children – are a troubled family living in a troubled age. Alfred is ill and as his condition worsens the whole family must face the failures, secrets and long-buried hurts that haunt them if they are to make the corrections that each desperately needs. Stretching from the Midwest in the mid-century to Wall Street and Eastern Europe in the age of globalised greed, The Corrections brings an old-time America of freight trains and civic duty into wild collision with the era of home surveillance, hands-off parenting, do-it-yourself mental healthcare, and New Economy millionaires. It confirms Jonathan Franzen’s position as one of the most brilliant interpreters of American society and the American soul currently at work.

🕮 Fuentes, Carlos. The Crystal Frontier

Young Jose Francisco grows up in Texas, determined to write about the border world - the immigrants and illegals, Mexican poverty and Yankee prosperity - stories to break the stand-off silence with a victory shout, to shatter at last the crystal frontier.

🕮 Gaarder, Jostein. Sophie's World

Sophie is an ordinary Norwegian girl. One day she receives a video tape on which a certain Alberto Knox talks directly to her from ancient Greece. They then start meeting on different occasions. Alberto takes Sophie on an odyssey of the history of philosophy, from Ancient Greece, over the Roman Empire, the Middle ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the big revolutions and up to today. Throughout this journey, they start to realise that they are only fictions of a story writer's imagination and start conceiving a plan for escaping into reality. ...Sophie's World

🕮 Gaiman, Neil. The Graveyard Book (TEEN)

When a baby escapes a murderer intent on killing the entire family, who would have thought it would find safety and security in the local graveyard? Brought up by the resident ghosts, ghouls and spectres, Bod has an eccentric childhood learning about life from the dead. But for Bod there is also the danger of the murderer still looking for him - after all, he is the last remaining member of the family. A stunningly original novel deftly constructed over eight chapters, featuring every second year of Bod's life, from babyhood to adolescence. Will Bod survive to be a man?

🕮 Gayle, Mike. Wish You Were Here

After 10 years together Charlie Mansell has been dumped by his live-in girlfriend, Sarah. All he wants to do is wallow in misery, but mates Andy and Tom have a better idea, a week of sun and souvlaki in Malia, party capital of the Greek Islands. But Charlie and his mates aren't 18 anymore, or even under 30.

🕮 Gaynor, Lily. God's Needle (NF)

In 1957 freshly qualified nurse and WEC missionary Lily Gaynor set sail for Guinea-Bissau, to live among the Papel tribe. Tuberculosis, malaria, and typhoid were rife. Children were grossly malnourished; witch doctors flourished. Lily set up a clinic under the mango trees, administering penicillin ('God's needle'). Medical care didn't stop there: pigs, cows, rabbits and hens all passed through Lily's hands. Many villagers suffered agonizing toothache: Lily learned emergency dentistry. The book is filled with one arresting medical story after another.

🕮 Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. The Yellow Wallpaper

Charlotte Perkins Gilman was America's leading feminist intellectual of the early twentieth century. The Yellow Wall-Paper and Other Stories makes available the fullest selection of her short fiction ever printed. In addition to her pioneering masterpiece, 'The Yellow Wall-Paper'

(1890), which draws on her own experience of depression and insanity, this edition features her Impress 'story studies', works in the manner of writers such as James, Twain, and Kipling. These stories, together with other fiction from her neglected California period (1890-5), throw new light on Gilman as a practitioner of the art of fiction. In her Forerunner stories she repeatedly explores the situation of 'the woman of fifty' and inspires reform by imagining workable solutions to a range of personal and social problems

🕮 Goldacre, Ben. Bad Science (NF)

Ben Goldacre's wise and witty bestseller, shortlisted for the Samuel Johnson Prize, lifts the lid on quack doctors, flaky statistics, scaremongering journalists and evil pharmaceutical corporations.

Since 2003 Dr Ben Goldacre has been exposing dodgy medical data in his popular Guardian column. In this eye-opening book he takes on the MMR hoax and misleading cosmetics ads, acupuncture and homeopathy, vitamins and mankind's vexed relationship with all manner of 'toxins'. Along the way, the self-confessed 'Johnny Ball cum Witchfinder General' performs a successful detox on a Barbie doll, sees his dead cat become a certified nutritionist and probes the supposed medical qualifications of 'Dr' Gillian McKeith.

Full spleen and satire, Ben Goldacre takes us on a hilarious, invigorating and ultimately alarming journey through the bad science we are fed daily by hacks and quacks.

🕮 Grant, Helen. The Vanishing of Katharina Linden (TEEN)

Shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal, Helen Grant's first teen novel *The Vanishing of Katharina Linden* follows a misfit teenager as she attempts to unravel the mystery of several strange disappearances in the small town of Bad Münstereifel. *The Vanishing of Katharina Linden* bridges the world of the traditional Grimm fairytale with the darker world of Angela Carter's adult fairytales.

On the day Katharina Linden disappears, Pia is the last person to see her. Terror is spreading through the town. How could a ten-year-old girl vanish in a place where everybody knows everybody else?

Pia is determined to find out what happened to Katharina.

But then the next girl disappears. . .

🕮 Green, John. The Fault in Our Stars (TEEN)

"I fell in love the way you fall asleep: slowly, then all at once."

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love.

🕮 Greene, Graham. Our Man in Havana

Wormold is a vacuum cleaner salesman in a city of power cuts. His adolescent daughter spends his money with a skill that amazes him, so when a mysterious Englishman offers him an extra income he's tempted. In return all he has to do is carry out a little espionage and file a few reports. But when his fake reports start coming true, things suddenly get more complicated and Havana becomes a threatening place.

🕮 Gregson, Julia. Jasmine Nights

1942 and the world is at war. It is a war that has already shattered families and devastated countries. But for some, it will also mean the greatest of adventures.

In a burns hospital in Sussex, a beautiful young singer performs to a ward full of injured soldiers. Saba is captivating and one pilot, Dom, shudders as her gaze turns his way. He can't bear her to see his scars but resolves to write to her once they have healed.

The world is on the brink of enormous change. Saba's journey as a singer with ENSA takes her to the fading glamour of Alexandria and the heat and decadence of Turkey. On the glamorous Middle Eastern social circuit, Saba rubs shoulders with double agents and diplomats, movie stars and smugglers. Some want her voice, some her friendship, and some the secrets she is perfectly placed to discover...

JASMINE NIGHTS is a tale of decadence and destruction, of love and of danger. It is the captivating love story set in an extraordinary world.

🕮 Grenville, Kate. The Secret River

Following a childhood marked by poverty and petty crime in the slums of London, William Thornhill is sentenced in 1806 to be transported to New South Wales for the term of his natural life. With his wife and children, he arrives in a harsh land to a life that feels like a death sentence.

🕮 Gross, Andrew. Don't Look Twice

A revenge killing.
A dead public attorney.
And a family caught in the cross-fire.

For local detective Ty Hauck, life is good. A waterfront house, a new girlfriend and, after uncovering a Wall Street scandal, he's even a local hero. But then a day trip with his daughter turns into a bloodbath. Inner-city violence seems to have invaded his quiet Greenwich suburn. Or does someone just want it to appear that way?

If so, it's someone powerful enough to kill without fear of reprisal. Ty suspects things go deeper, maybe all the way to Washington and the Middle East. And everyone, from the FBI to his own family, wants him to stop looking. But with his estranged brother, Warren, in danger, Ty can't turn away. He ignores the warnings… with devastating and explosive consequences.

🕮 Haddon, Mark. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is a murder mystery novel like no other. The detective, and narrator, is Christopher Boone. Christopher is fifteen and has Asperger's Syndrome. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He loves lists, patterns and the truth. He hates the colours yellow and brown and being touched. He has never gone further than the end of the road on his own, but when he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

🕮 Hall, M.R. The Coroner (Local author)

Coroner Jenny Cooper investigates . . .

When those in power hide the truth, she risks everything to reveal it.

When lawyer, Jenny Cooper, is appointed Severn Vale District Coroner, she's hoping for a quiet life and space to recover from a traumatic divorce, but the office she inherits from the recently deceased Harry Marshall contains neglected files hiding dark secrets and a trail of buried evidence.

Could the tragic death in custody of a young boy be linked to the apparent suicide of a teenage prostitute and the fate of Marshall himself? Jenny's curiosity is aroused. Why was Marshall behaving so strangely before he died? What injustice was he planning to uncover? And what caused his abrupt change of heart?

In the face of powerful and sinister forces determined to keep both the truth hidden and the troublesome coroner in check, Jenny embarks on a lonely and dangerous one-woman crusade for justice which threatens not only her career but also her sanity.

🕮 Hamid, Mohsin. The Reluctant Fundamentalist

'Excuse me, sir, but may I be of assistance? Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard. I am a lover of America . . . '

So speaks the mysterious stranger at a Lahore cafe as dusk settles. Invited to join him for tea, you learn his name and what led this speaker of immaculate English to seek you out. For her is more worldy than you might expect; better travelled and better educated. He knows the West better than you do. And as he tells you his story, of how he embraced the Western dream -- and a Western woman -- and how both betrayed him, so the night darkens. Then the true reason for your meeting becomes abundantly clear . . .

🕮 Hardy, Thomas. Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Set in Hardy's Wessex, *Tess* is a moving novel of hypocrisy and double standards. Its challenging sub-title, *A Pure Woman,* infuriated critics when the book was first published in 1891, and it was condemned as immoral and pessimistic.

It tells of Tess Durbeyfield, the daughter of a poor and dissipated villager, who learns that she may be descended from the ancient family of d'Urbeville. In her search for respectability her fortunes fluctuate wildly, and the story assumes the proportions of a Greek tragedy. It explores Tess's relationships with two very different men, her struggle against the social mores of the rural Victorian world which she inhabits and the hypocrisy of the age.

In addressing the double standards of the time, Hardy's masterly evocation of a world which we have lost, provides one of the most compelling stories in the canon of English literature, whose appeal today defies the judgement of Hardy's contemporary critics.

🕮 Hart, John. Down River

Going back is never easy ...Adam Chase has spent the last five years in New York trying to forget. When he left North Carolina, Adam left for good. Now he has no choice but to return - and being remembered as a murderer doesn't help. Within hours of arriving, Adam is beaten up, accosted and has to face the hostility of those closest to him, including Grace, the young woman he cannot forget. Nothing has changed. And then people start turning up dead. For a man only just acquitted of murder, Adam's homecoming does not go well. And he has a dark streak, a history of violence. Everyone doubts. No one trusts him. And as the past threatens to overshadow the present, Adam becomes the prime suspect for the new murders. He alone can clear his name ...

🕮 Harvey, Samantha – The Wilderness

It's Jake's birthday. He has lost his wife, his son is in prison and he is about to lose his past. Jake has Alzheimer's.

As the disease takes hold of him, the key events of his life shift, and what until recently seemed solid fact melts into surreal imaginings. Is his daughter alive or long dead? And why exactly is his son in prison? There was a cherry tree once, and a yellow dress, but what do they mean? Is there anything he'll be able to salvage from the wreckage?

🕮 Hay, Elizabeth. Garbo Laughs

Set in Ottawa in the 1990s, Garbo Laughs is the quixotic tale of tall, thin Harriet Browning, a woman inflamed by the movies she was deprived of as a child. Bent on seeing everything she has missed, Harriet rapidly becomes so saturated with old movies, seen repeatedly and swallowed whole, that she no longer fits into the real world. Equally addicted are Harriet's three companions-of-the-screen: a boy who loves Frank Sinatra, a girl with Bette Davis eyes, and an earthy sidekick named after Dinah Shore. Breaking in upon this quiet backwater, during the devastating ice storm of 1998, come two refugees from Hollywood, the jaded widow of a famous screenwriter and her movie-expert stepson. They are the embodiment of harsh reality and in their wake come blackouts, arguments, accidents, illness and sudden death. In the end, what chance does real life stand when we can live through the silver screen instead? What hope does real love have when movie love, in all its brief intensity, is the so much more seductive option? In this brilliant and poignant comedy of second-hand desire, movies and movie lovers take the starring roles.

🕮 Heaney, Seamus ed. The Rattle Bag (NF)

Conceived as a collection of the editors' own favourite poems, The Rattle bag has established itself as a classic anthology of our time. Seamus Heaney and Ted Hughes have brought together an inspired and diverse selection, ranging from undisputed masterpieces to rare discoveries, as well as drawing upon works in translation and traditional poems from oral cultures. In effect, this anthology has transformed the way we define and appreciate poetry, and it will continue to do so for years to come.

🕮 Henderson, Emma. Grace Williams Says it Loud

This isn't an ordinary love story. But then Grace isn't an ordinary girl. On her first day at the Briar Mental Institute, Grace meets Daniel. He sees someone to share secrets and canoodle with, someone to fight for. This is Grace's story: her life, its betrayals and triumphs, the disappointment and loss, the taste of freedom

🕮 Hill, Susan. A Kind Man

Tommy Carr was a kind man; Eve had been able to tell that after half an hour of knowing him. There had never been a day when he had not shown her some small kindness and even after the tragic death of their young daughter, their relationship remained as strong as before. Grief takes its toll however, and it's not surprising that by the following Christmas, Tommy is a shadow of his former self, with the look of death upon him.

But what happens next is entirely unexpected, not least for the kind man...

🕮 Hill, Susan. In the Springtime of the Year

After just a year of close, loving marriage, Ruth has been widowed. Her beloved husband, Ben, has been killed in a tragic accident and Ruth is left, suddenly and totally bereft. Unable to share her sorrow and grief with Ben's family, who are dealing with their pain in their own way, Ruth becomes increasingly isolated.

🕮 Hislop, Victoria. The Island

On the brink of a life-changing decision, Alexis Fielding longs to find out about her mother's past. But Sofia has never spoken of it. All she admits to is growing up in a small Cretan village before moving to London. When Alexis decides to visit Crete, however, Sofia gives her daughter a letter to take to an old friend, and promises that through her she will learn more.

Arriving in Plaka, Alexis is astonished to see that it lies a stone's throw from the tiny, deserted island of Spinalonga - Greece's former leper colony. Then she finds Fotini, and at last hears the story that Sofia has buried all her life: the tale of her great-grandmother Eleni and her daughters and a family rent by tragedy, war and passion. She discovers how intimately she is connected with the island, and how secrecy holds them all in its powerful grip...

🕮 Horn, Shifra. Tamara Walks on Water

To understand the end you have to look for the beginning...'

As a little girl in Jaffa, Israel, Tamara has an insatiable desire for stories, constantly asking questions of those around her, and demanding explanations. However, no-one ever seems to give Tamara the whole story, so instead she must piece together the various narratives herself in what will become a lifelong attempt to unravel the hidden secrets of her tangled family history, and so bring some meaning to her own life.

Raised by her fiercely independent maternal grandmother, Simcha, who jealously guards her from others, in particular her paternal grandmother, Rashella, Tamara's love of stories develops into a voracious appetite for life itself. An impulsive, passionate seeker of knowledge in all its forms, nothing prepares her for the thrilling intensity and the danger of falling deeply, madly in love for the first time...

🕮 Hosseini, Khaled. The Kite Runner

Afghanistan, 1975: Twelve-year-old Amir is desperate to win the local kite-fighting tournament and his loyal friend Hassan promises to help him. But neither of the boys can foresee what will happen to Hassan that afternoon, an event that is to shatter their lives. After the Russians invade and the family is forced to flee to America, Amir realises that one day he must return to Afghanistan under Taliban rule to find the one thing that his new world cannot grant him: redemption.

🕮 Humphrys, John. Blue Skies & Black Olives

It was a moment of mad impulse when John Humphrys decided to buy a semi-derelict cottage and a building site on a plot of land overlooking the Aegean. After all, his son Christopher was already raising his family there so he would help build the beautiful villa that would soon rise there. What could possibly go wrong?

Everything. John was to spend much of the next four years regretting his moment of madness

Sometimes comic, at other times infuriating, here father and son tell a story by turns hilarious and revealing about a country that intrigues and infuriates in equal measure.

🕮 Hunt, Samantha. The Invention of Everything Else

Louisa is an imaginative and curious chambermaid who, while cleaning rooms at the New Yorker Hotel, stumbles across a man living permanently in room 3327, which he has transformed into a scientific laboratory. Brought together by a shared interest in the pigeons that nest in the hotel, Louisa discovers that the mysterious guest is Nikola Tesla, one of the most brilliant - and most neglected - inventors of the twentieth century.

The Invention of Everything Else charts the relationship of the girl and the genius during the last week of Tesla's life, when sinister forces are closing in on him. As well as being an engaging literary mystery, this exceptional novel movingly tells the life story of this extraordinary man and also recounts the heartbreak and redemption of one ordinary family...

🕮 Jones, Lloyd. Mister Pip

'You cannot pretend to read a book. Your eyes will give you away. So will your breathing. A person entranced by a book simply forgets to breathe. The house can catch alight and a reader deep in a book will not look up until the wallpaper is in flames.'

Bougainville. 1991. A small village on a lush tropical island in the South Pacific. Eighty-six days have passed since Matilda's last day of school as, quietly, war is encroaching from the other end of the island.

When the villagers' safe, predictable lives come to a halt, Bougainville's children are surprised to find the island's only white man, a recluse, re-opening the school. Pop Eye, aka Mr Watts, explains he will introduce the children to Mr Dickens. Matilda and the others think a foreigner is coming to the island and prepare a list of much needed items. They are shocked to discover their acquaintance with Mr Dickens will be through Mr Watts' inspiring reading of Great Expectations.

But on an island at war, the power of fiction has dangerous consequences. Imagination and beliefs are challenged by guns. Mister Pip is an unforgettable tale of survival by story; a dazzling piece of writing that lives long in the mind after the last page is finished.

🕮 Jordan, Toni. Addition

Grace Lisa Vandenburg counts. The letters in her name (19). The steps she takes every morning to the local café (920). The number of poppy seeds on her orange cake, which dictates the number of bites she'll take to eat it. Grace counts everything, because that way there are no unpleasant surprises.

Seamus Joseph O'Reilly (also a 19) thinks she might be better off without the counting. If she could hold down a job, say. Or open her cupboards without conducting an inventory, or leave her flat without measuring the walls.

Grace's problem is that Seamus doesn't count. Her other problem is . . . he does.

As Grace struggles to balance a new relationship with old habits, to find a way to change while staying true to herself, she realises that nothing is more chaotic than love.

🕮 Joyce, Rachel. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

When Harold Fry nips out one morning to post a letter, leaving his wife hoovering upstairs, he has no idea that he is about to walk from one end of the country to the other. He has no hiking boots or map, let alone a compass, waterproof or mobile phone. All he knows is that he must keep walking to save someone else's life.

🕮 Kennedy, Emma. The Tent, the Bucket and Me

Pack your suitcases, we're off! The best selling and hilarious 1970s childhood memoir of wet, windy and utterly disastrous family camping trips.

🕮 Kent, Trilby. Smoke Portrait

Set in 1936 in Belgium and Ceylon, Smoke Portrait traces the development of an unlikely friendship between a young Belgian teenager, Marten Kuypers, and Glen Phayre, a young English woman in her twenties. Glen has left England to live with her aunt, who runs a tea plantation in Ceylon and fills her days with good works, among them the task of writing letters to a Belgian prisoner. But the letters go astray, and are received instead by Marten, eager to discover the wide world outside his small village, and desperately missing his older brother Krelis, who has vanished and is presumed dead. Marten decides to reply to Glen in the guise of the grown-up prisoner she is expecting to hear from, and as their correspondence evolves, they both assume identities that, while false in many respects, remain true to their own selves in other ways. Gradually they come to depend on each other, and their pen friendship proves to be crucial when events in their real lives take on a darker, more threatening significance in the shadow of the impending world war.

🕮 Kingsolver, Barbara. The Lacuna

Mexico, 1935. Harrison Shepherd is working in the household of Diego Rivera and his wife Frida Kahlo. When exiled Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky arrives, Shepherd throws in his lot with art and the revolution.

🕮 Laski, Marghanita. Little Boy Lost

This is an emotionally-charged novel about a young Englishman whose French wife was murdered by the Gestapo at the beginning of the Second World War, leaving her child to be taken into hiding. After the war, Hilary Wainwright goes to France to look for his son.

🕮 Lee, Harper. To Kill a Mockingbird

'Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with exuberant humour the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the thirties. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice. But the weight of history will only tolerate so much.

To Kill a Mockingbird is a coming-of-age story, an anti-racist novel, a historical drama of the Great Depression and a sublime example of the Southern writing tradition.

🕮 Lee, Laurie. Cider with Rosie (NF)

Summer was also the time of these: of sudden plenty, of slow hours and actions, of diamond haze and dust on the eyes; of jazzing wasps and dragonflies, haystooks and thistle-seeds, snows of white butterflies, skylark's eggs, bee-orchids, and frantic ants... All this, and the feeling that it would never end, that such days had come forever... All sights twice-brilliant and smells twice-sharp, all game-days twice as long... we used up the light to its last violet drop, and even then we couldn't go to bed.

Cider With Rosie is the best and most vital kind of memoir, rich with colourful, sensuous impressions of life in an English village after the First World War. It overflows with stories and characters made fantastical by the writer's child-perspective, and it draws the reader irresistibly into the lost land of the past. With this beautiful special edition, Vintage Classics celebrates 100 years since the birth of the author, Laurie Lee, and salutes this remarkable, surprising and well-loved classic.

🕮 Lee, Laurie. As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning

As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning is a beautiful and moving follow-up to Laurie Lee's acclaimed *Cider with Rosie*

Abandoning the Cotswolds village that raised him, the young Laurie Lee walks to London. There he makes a living labouring and playing the violin. But, deciding to travel further a field and knowing only the Spanish phrase for 'Will you please give me a glass of water?', he heads for Spain. With just a blanket to sleep under and his trusty violin, he spends a year crossing Spain,

from Vigo in the north to the southern coast. Only the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War puts an end to his extraordinary peregrinations . . .

🕮 Lindley, Maureen. The Private Papers of Eastern Jewel

Peking, 1914. Eight-year-old Eastern Jewel peers from behind a screen as her father, Prince Su makes love to a servant girl. Caught spying by her thirteenth sister, Eastern Jewel's sexual curiosity sees her banished to live with distant relatives in Tokyo, then forced into a passionless marriage in freezing Mongolia. Increasingly isolated, at night she is plagued by disturbing fantasies and unsettling dreams. But she refuses to be pinned down by anyone - least of all a man - and in the dazzling city of Shanghai she puts her thrill-seeking nature to work spying for the Japanese, spurning everything she once held dear Based on the real-life story of Yoshiko Kawashima, Chinese princess turned ruthless Japanese spy, The Private Papers of Eastern Jewel is an intoxicating tale of sexual manipulation and self-discovery that spans three countries and a world war.

🕮 Locke, Attica. Black Water Rising

On a dark night, out on the Houston bayou to celebrate his wife's birthday, Jay Porter hears a scream. Saving a distressed woman from drowning, he opens a Pandora's Box. Not the lawyer he set out to be, Jay long ago made peace with his radical youth, tucked away his darkest sins and resolved to make a fresh start. His impulsive act out on the bayou is heroic, but it puts Jay in danger, ensnaring him in a murder investigation that could cost him is practice, his family and even his life. Before he can untangle the mystery that stretches to the highest reaches of corporate power, he must confront the demons of his past. A provocative thriller with an exhilarating climax, Black Water Rising marks the arrival of an electrifying new talent.

🕮 Lopez, Barry. Arctic Dreams: Imagination and Desire in a Northern Landscape

Lopez's journey across our frozen planet is a celebration of the Arctic in all its guises. A hostile landscape of ice, freezing oceans and dazzling skyscapes. Home to millions of diverse animals and people. The stage to massive migrations by land, sea and air. The setting of epic exploratory voyages. And, in crystalline prose, Lopez captures the magic of the Arctic - the essential mystery and beauty of a continent that has enchanted man's imagination and ambition for centuries.

🕮 Lovric, M. R. Carnevale

1782. The 13-year old daughter of a Venetian merchant family is lured naked from her bath by a stray cat and finds herself in the arms of Casanova - the legendary seducer of women.

Twenty-five years later Cecilia is in Albania, now a portrait painter of some renown, her fame in this area eclipsed only by her reputation as the last woman in Venice to have been loved by

Casanova. Enter a young man from England, a troubled poet, looking for adventure at any price - a man who begins his affair with Cecilia with the announcement 'I rather look on love as a hostile transaction.' For Cecilia, who had blossomed under the tender, unselfish love of another man, Byron proves a rude awakening.

While Casanova hid nothing from her, Byron hides everything, but she paints rich portraits of both men. This unique and extraordinary novel combines sensuous descriptions of painting with rich portraits of real people, all set against the decaying grandeur of Venice.

🕮 McMorris, Kristina. Letters From Home

Two people. An unforgettable moment. One extraordinary love story.

In Chicago, Illinois, two people are about to lock eyes across a crowded dance floor. The following moment will spark the love story of a lifetime…

The year is 1944 and America has just entered the war. Young men and women are being drafted in to fight with their allies on Europe's distant shores. Throughout America, sweethearts are saying their last goodbyes.

Liz Stephens is already betrothed to budding US politician Dalton Harris, but when she meets GI Morgan McClain, she feels an instant and intense connection. But then he dances with her flirtatious best friend Betty and Liz is left feeling like just another soldier's fancy.

Betty is mesmerized by Morgan and begs Liz to write letters for her to post to him overseas. Liz reluctantly agrees, in the end anxious to retain a connection to him. As the last searing days of World War II loom, a correspondence begins that will alter the course of their lives forever.

🕮 Madden, Deirdre. Molly' Fox's Birthday

Dublin. Midsummer. While absent in New York, the celebrated actor Molly Fox has loaned her house to a playwright friend, who is struggling to write a new work. Over the course of this, the longest day of the year, the playwright reflects upon her own life, Molly's, and that of their mutual friend Andrew, whom she has known since university. Why does Molly never celebrate her own birthday, which falls upon this day? What does it mean to be a playwright or an actor? How have their relationships evolved over the course of many years?

Molly Fox's Birthday calls into question the ideas that we hold about who we are; and shows how the past informs the present in ways we might never have imagined.

🕮 Magorian, Michelle. Goodnight Mister Tom *(TEEN)*

Goodnight Mister Tom - winner of the Guardian Children's Fiction Award - by Michelle Magorian has delighted generations of children. It's the story of young Willie Beech, evacuated to the country as Britain stands on the brink of the Second World War. A sad, deprived child, he slowly begins to flourish under the care of old Tom Oakley - but his new-found happiness is shattered by a summons from his mother back in London. As time goes by Tom begins to worry

when Willie doesn't answer his letters, so he goes to London to find him, and there makes a terrible discovery.

🕮 Mailer, Norman. The Naked and the Dead

Based on Mailer's own experience of military service in the Philippines during World War Two, 'The Naked and the Dead' is a graphically truthful and shattering portrayal of ordinary men in battle. First published in 1949, as America was still basking in the glories of the Allied victory, it altered forever the popular perception of warfare.

Focusing on the experiences of a fourteen-man platoon stationed on a Japanese-held island in the South Pacific during World War II, and written in a journalistic style, it tells the moving story of the soldiers' struggle to retain a sense of dignity amidst the horror of warfare, and to find a source of meaning in their lives amisdst the sounds and fury of battle.

🕮 Martel, Yann. Life of Pi

One boy, one boat, one tiger ...After the tragic sinking of a cargo ship, a solitary lifeboat remains bobbing on the wild, blue Pacific. The only survivors from the wreck are a sixteen year-old boy named Pi, a hyena, a zebra (with a broken leg), a female orang-utan and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger. The scene is set for one of the most extraordinary and best-loved works of fiction in recent years.

🕮 Mawer, Simon. The Glassroom

Cool. Balanced. Modern. The precisions of science, the wild variance of lust, the catharsis of confession and the fear of failure - these are things that happen in the Glass Room.

High on a Czechoslovak hill, the Landauer House shines as a wonder of steel and glass and onyx built specially for newlyweds Viktor and Liesel Landauer, a Jew married to a gentile. But the radiant honesty of 1930 that the house, with its unique Glass Room, seems to engender quickly tarnishes as the storm clouds of WW2 gather, and eventually the family must flee, accompanied by Viktor's lover and her child.

But the house's story is far from over, and as it passes from hand to hand, from Czech to Russian, both the best and the worst of the history of Eastern Europe becomes somehow embodied and perhaps emboldened within the beautiful and austere surfaces and planes so carefully designed, until events become full-circle.

🕮 Miller, Rebecca. The Private Lives of Pippa Lee

Pippa seems to have everything in life. But suddenly she finds her world beginning to unravel. Amid the buzzing lawnmowers and suburban coffee mornings, she starts to wonder how she came to be in this place. The answer is a story of wild youth, unexpected encounters, affairs and betrayals, and the dangerous security of marriage. It brilliantly reveals the challenges of modern life – and all the possibilities that it holds.

🕮 Mills, Mark. The Savage Garden

Set in Italy in 1958, 'The Savage Garden' is the story of two unsolved murders - one committed in the late Renaissance, the other in 1944, during the dying days of the German army's occupation.

🕮 Mitchell, David. The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet

In your hands is a place like no other: a tiny, man-made island in the bay of Nagasaki, for two hundred years the sole gateway between Japan and the West. Here, in the dying days of the 18th century, a young Dutch clerk arrives to make his fortune. Instead he loses his heart.

Step onto the streets of Dejima and mingle with scheming traders, spies, interpreters, servants and concubines as two cultures converge. In a tale of integrity and corruption, passion and power, the key is control - of riches and minds, and over death itself.

🕮 Moggach, Deborah. Final Demand *(LP COLLECTION)*

Natalie is a girl who should be going somewhere. Beautiful, bright and ambitious, she's stuck in a dead-end job in the accounts department of Nu-Line Telecommunications, living her life through wild weekends and yearning for something more.

When she sees a chance to change her life, she takes it. After all, it's only a minor crime. Nobody's going to get hurt. But other people do get hurt, because Natalie's actions do have consequences - tragic consequences. Poignant and beautifully written, *Final Demand* is a cautionary tale about the battle between greed and love, about human hopes and our own frailty in the face of temptation.

🕮 Montefiore, Santa. The Swallow and the Hummingbird

When George Bolton returns home to Devon at the end of the war, Rita assumes that her childhood sweetheart will marry her and that their future will be a reassuring continuation of their past. But the boy who joined the RAF has come back a man, and a man irrevocably changed by the horrors that he has seen. Unable to settle back into the sleepy seaside village, George resolves to spend a year on the family farm in Argentina, and, despite her disappointment, Rita promises to wait for him.

Rita keeps her promise. But for George there are irresistible temptations, and an agonising choice to make ...

🕮 Moore, Lorrie. A Gate at the Stairs

With America quietly gearing up for war in the Middle East, twenty-year-old Tassie Keltjin, a 'half-Jewish' farmer's daughter from the plains of the Midwest, has come to university - escaping her provincial home to encounter the complex world of culture and politics.

When she takes a job as a part-time nanny to a couple who seem at once mysterious and glamorous, Tassie is drawn into the life of their newly-adopted child and increasingly complicated household. As her past becomes increasingly alien to her - her parents seem older when she visits; her disillusioned brother ever more fixed on joining the military - Tassie finds

herself becoming a stranger to herself. As the year unfolds, love leads her to new and formative experiences - but it is then that the past and the future burst forth in dramatic and shocking ways.

Refracted through the eyes of this memorable narrator, *A Gate at the Stairs* is a lyrical, beguiling and wise novel of our times.

🕮 Morgan, Clare. A Book for All and None

Raymond, a brilliant but ageing don whose specialty is Nietzsche, has withdrawn into a lonely world of scholarship. Beatrice is in Oxford researching Virginia Woolf, and distancing herself from her husband, Walter. When Beatrice reappears in Raymond's life, they embark on a love affair.

🕮 Morpurgo, Michael. Private Peaceful

Heroism or cowardice? A stunning story of the First World War from a master storyteller.

Told in the voice of a young soldier, the story follows 24 hours in his life at the front during WW1, and captures his memories as he looks back over his life. Full of stunningly researched detail and engrossing atmosphere, the book leads to a dramatic and moving conclusion.

Both a love story and a deeply moving account of the horrors of the First World War, this book will reach everyone from 9 to 90.

🕮 Mosse, Kate. The Winter Ghosts

The Great War took much more than lives. It robbed a generation of

friends, lovers and futures. In Freddie Watson's case, it took his beloved brother and, at times, his peace of mind. Unable to cope with his grief, Freddie has spent much of the time since in a sanatorium.

In the winter of 1928, still seeking resolution, Freddie is travelling through the French Pyrenees - another region that has seen too much bloodshed over the years. During a snowstorm, his car spins off the mountain road. Shaken, he stumbles into the woods, emerging by a tiny village. There he meets Fabrissa, a beautiful local woman, also mourning a lost generation. Over the course of one night, Fabrissa and Freddie share their stories of remembrance and loss. By the time dawn breaks, he will have stumbled across a tragic mystery that goes back through the centuries.

By turns thrilling, poignant and haunting, this is a story of two lives touched by war and transformed by courage.

🕮 Mosse, Kate. Labyrinth

July 1209: in Carcassonne a seventeen-year-old girl is given a mysterious book by her father which he claims contains the secret of the true Grail. Although Alais cannot understand the strange words and symbols hidden within, she knows that her destiny lies in keeping the secret of the labyrinth safe...

July 2005: Alice Tanner discovers two skeletons in a forgotten cave in the French Pyrenees. Puzzled by the labyrinth symbol carved into the rock, she realises she's disturbed something that was meant to remain hidden. Somehow, a link to a horrific past - her past - has been revealed.

🕮 Moyes, Jojo. Me Before you

Lou Clark knows lots of things. She knows how many footsteps there are between the bus stop and home. She knows she likes working in The Buttered Bun tea shop and she knows she might not love her boyfriend Patrick.

What Lou doesn't know is she's about to lose her job or that knowing what's coming is what keeps her sane.

Will Traynor knows his motorcycle accident took away his desire to live. He knows everything feels very small and rather joyless now and he knows exactly how he's going to put a stop to that.

What Will doesn't know is that Lou is about to burst into his world in a riot of colour. And neither of them knows they're going to change the other for all time.

🕮 Nemirovsky, Irene. Suite Francaise

In 1941, Irène Némirovsky sat down to write a book that would convey the magnitude of what she was living through by evoking the domestic lives and personal trials of the ordinary citizens of France. Némirovsky's death in Auschwitz in 1942 prevented her from seeing the day, sixty-five years later, that the existing two sections of her planned novel sequence, *Suite Française*, would be rediscovered and hailed as a masterpiece.

Set during the year that France fell to the Nazis, *Suite Française* falls into two parts. The first is a brilliant depiction of a group of Parisians as they flee the Nazi invasion; the second follows the inhabitants of a small rural community under occupation. *Suite Française* is a novel that teems with wonderful characters struggling with the new regime. However, amidst the mess of defeat, and all the hypocrisy and compromise, there is hope. True nobility and love exist, but often in surprising places.

🕮 Ness, Patrick. The Ask and the Answer Book 2 (*TEEN*)

Fleeing before a relentless army, Todd has carried a desperately wounded Viola right into the hands of their worst enemy, Mayor Prentiss. Immediately separated from Viola and imprisoned, Todd is forced to learn the ways of the Mayor's new order. But what secrets are hiding just outside of town?

Science Fiction

🕮 Nicholls, David. *One Day*

'I can imagine you at forty,' she said, a hint of malice in her voice. 'I can picture it right now.'

He smiled without opening his eyes. 'Go on then.'

15th July 1988. Emma and Dexter meet for the first time on the night of their graduation. Tomorrow they must go their separate ways.

So where will they be on this one day next year?

And the year after that? And every year that follows?

Twenty years, two people, ONE DAY. From the author of the massive bestseller STARTER FOR TEN.

🕮 Nix, Garth. Sabriel *(TEEN)*

Who will guard the living when the dead arise? Sabriel is sent as a child across the Wall to the safety of a school in Ancelstierre. Away from magic; away from the Dead. After receiving a cryptic message from her father, 18-year-old Sabriel leaves her ordinary school and returns across the Wall into the Old Kingdom. Fraught with peril and deadly trickery, her journey takes her to a world filled with parasitical spirits, Mordicants, and Shadow Hands - for her father is none other than The Abhorson. His task is to lay the disturbed dead back to rest. This obliges him - and now Sabriel, who has taken on her father's title and duties - to slip over the border into the icy river of Death, sometimes battling the evil forces that lurk there, waiting for an opportunity to escape into the realm of the living. Desperate to find her father, and grimly determined to help save the Old Kingdom from destruction by the horrible forces of the evil undead, Sabriel endures almost impossible challenges whilst discovering her own supernatural abilities - and her destiny.

🕮 North, Freya. Pillow talk

Petra Flint is a talented jeweller, crafting beautiful pieces intended to delight and enchant. But she has a troubled past which manifests itself in frequent sleepwalking. She'd love stability, but because of past experiences and the bad example set by her parents, she's understandably cautious. In fact, she doubts true love exists.

🕮 Obrecht, Tea. The Tiger's Wife

Set in war-torn Yugoslavia, 'The Tiger's Wife' is a tale inspired by one woman's experience of the never-ending violence that swept the Balkans.

🕮 Olafsdottir, Audur Ava. Butterflies in November

'It's been a tough day. She's been dumped. Twice. She's accidentally killed a goose. And now she's suddenly responsible for her best friend's deaf-mute son.

But when a shared lottery ticket turns the oddly matched pair into the richest people in Iceland, she and the boy find themselves on a road trip across the country. With cucumber hotels, dead sheep and any number of her exes on their tail, *Butterflies in November* is a blackly comic and uniquely moving tale of motherhood, friendship and the power of words.'

🕮 Ondaatje, Michael. The English Patient

This magnificent novel about love and confusion is set at the end of the Second World War, and follows a small group of shell-shocked characters thrown together in an Italian villa.

🕮 Pamuk, Orhan. The Museum of Innocence

The Museum of Innocence - set in Istanbul between 1975 and today - tells the story of Kemal, the son of one of Istanbul's richest families, and of his obsessive love for a poor and distant relation, the beautiful Fusun, who is a shop-girl in a small boutique.

The novel depicts a panoramic view of life in Istanbul as it chronicles this long, obsessive, love affair between Kemal and Fusun; and Pamuk beautifully captures the identity crisis esperienced by Istanbul's upper classes who find themselves caught between traditional and westernised ways of being.

🕮 Pellegrino, Nicky. Summer at the Villa Rosa

Raffaella Moretti, by far the most beautiful girl in the southern Italian town of Triento, is about to marry the only boy she has ever loved. It seems that nothing but happiness lies in store for Raffaella. Yet, just one year later, she is a widow, and has had to take a job as housekeeper in the Villa Rosa, for the young American who is temporarily working in Triento.

As Raffaella struggles to recapture her own lost happiness she starts looking for ways to help those around her to do the same. There is Silvana the baker's wife, her passion barely hidden; Carlotta the gardener's daughter with her mysterious grief, and the kind and gentle owner of the Gypsy Tearoom who offers Raffaella friendship. As the lives of these villagers interweave, Raffaella is pulled into the centre of a conflict that threatens not only to divide Triento but also to destroy all she holds dear.

Filled with food, love and longing, SUMMER AT THE VILLA ROSA is like taking a seat in a sun-drenched piazza, and becoming a tiny part of the endless spectacle of life there.

🕮 Perez-Reverte, Arturo. The Queen of the South

Güero Dávila is a pilot engaged in drug-smuggling for the local cartels. Teresa Mendoza is his girlfriend, a typical narco's *morra*, quiet, doting, submissive. But then Güero's caught playing both sides and in Sinaloa that means death.

Teresa finds herself alone, terrified, friendless and running to save her life, carrying nothing but a gym bag containing a pistol and a notebook that she has been forbidden to read. Forced to leave Mexico, she flees to the Spanish city of Melilla where she meets Santiago Fisterra, a Galician involved in trafficking hashish across the Strait of Gibraltar. When Santiago's partner is captured, it is Teresa who steps in to take his place. Now Teresa has plunged into the dark and ugly world that once claimed Güero's life - and she's about to get in deeper . . .

🕮 Picoult, Jodi. Plain Truth

An Amish farmer finds the body of a baby hidden in his barn. When the police are summoned, they discover that the mother is an unmarried 18-year-old, and believe that the baby did not die of natural causes. Can Ellie Hathaway defend the girl?

🕮 Pressfield, Steven. The Legend of Baggar Vance *(LP COLLECTION)*

In the Depression year of 1931, on the golf links at Krewe Island off Savannah's windswept shore, two legends of the game - Bobby Jones and Walter Hagen - meet for a mesmerizing thirty-six hole showdown. They are joined by another player, a troubled war hero called Rannulph Junah. But the key to the outcome lies not with these golfing titans but with Junah's caddie and mentor, the mysterious, sage and charismatic Bagger Vance - for he is the custodian of the secret of the Authentic Swing...

Written in the spirit of Bernard Malamud's The Natural and sharing the magic of the celebrated Kevin Costner film Field of Dreams, Steven Pressfield's first novel - never before published in the UK - reveals the true nature of the game. Page-turning, spellbinding and affecting, it is a novel for golfers and non-golfers alike - a story in which the search for the Authentic Swing becomes a metaphor for the search for the Authentic Self.

🕮 Pryce, Malcolm. Don't Cry For Me Aberystwyth

Aberystwyth's celebrated crimefighter Louie Knight finds himself at sea caught in a web of intrigue spanning the world from Patagonia ato Aberystwyth. He sets out on the trail of a legendary document stolen long ago from Adolf Eichmann. It is said to contain a revelation about the ultimate fate of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

🕮 Reilly, Matthew. Seven Ancient Wonders

It is the biggest treasure hunt in history with contesting nations involved in a headlong race to locate the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

4500 years ago, a magnificent golden capstone sat at the peak of the Great Pyramid of Giza. It was a source of immense power, reputedly capable of bestowing upon its holder absolute global power. But then it was divided into seven pieces and hidden, each piece separately, within the seven greatest structures of the age.

Now it's 2006 and the coming of a rare solar event means it's time to locate the seven pieces and rebuild the capstone. Everyone wants it – from the most powerful countries on Earth to gangs of terrorists . . . and one daring coalition of eight small nations. Led by the mysterious Captain Jack West Jr, this determined group enters a global battlefield filled with booby-trapped mines, crocodile-infested swamps, evil forces and an adventure beyond imagining.

'More action, hair-raising stunts and lethal hardware than you'd find in four Bond movies. Reilly is the hottest action writer around' *Evening Telegraph*

🕮 Roffey, Monique. The White Woman on the Green Bicycle

This novel tells how when George and Sabine Harwood arrive in Trinidad from England George instantly takes to their new life but Sabine feels isolated, heat-fatigued, and ill at ease with the racial segregation and the imminent dawning of a new era. George eventually finds out that Sabine has been keeping secrets from him.

🕮 Rowe, Rosemary. The Legatus Mystery *(LP COLLECTION)*

The murdered body of a visiting ambassador from Rome is discovered in the temple of the Imperial cult and once again freedman and pavement-maker Libertus is called upon to investigate. Events take a bizarre and chilling turn when the body disappears, and then unearthly wails are heard coming from the temple and mysterious bloodstains start to appear from nowhere. But Libertus is sure there is a more human explanation for the murder and he is to uncover still more unsettling events before the truth is finally revealed...

🕮 Ryan, Chris. Firefight

Former SAS Captain Will Jackson is a man with nothing to lose. His life was torn apart the day a terrorist attack killed his family. Now he leads a life of grief-stricken obscurity, until he is asked to take on a mission in Afghanistan. As events unfold, Will discovers that somebody is playing a deadly game with him.

🕮 Sansom, C.J. Winter in Madrid

1940: The Spanish Civil War is over, and Madrid lies ruined, its people starving, while the Germans continue their relentless march through Europe. Britain now stands alone while General Franco considers whether to abandon neutrality and enter the war.

Into this uncertain world comes Harry Brett: a traumatised veteran of Dunkirk turned reluctant spy for the British Secret Service. Sent to gain the confidence of old schoolfriend Sandy Forsyth, now a shady Madrid businessman, Harry finds himself involved in a dangerous game – and surrounded by memories. Meanwhile Sandy’s girlfriend, ex-Red Cross nurse Barbara Clare, is engaged on a secret mission of her own – to find her former lover Bernie Piper, a passionate Communist in the International Brigades, who vanished on the bloody battlefields of the Jarama.

In a vivid and haunting depiction of wartime Spain, *Winter in Madrid* is an intimate and compelling tale which offers a remarkable sense of history unfolding, and the profound impact of impossible choices.

🕮 Shamsie, Kamila. Burnt Shadows

In a prison cell in the US, a man stands trembling, naked, fearfully waiting to be shipped to Guantanamo Bay. How did it come to this? he wonders. August 9th, 1945, Nagasaki. Hiroko Tanaka steps out onto her veranda, taking in the view of the terraced slopes leading up to the sky. Wrapped in a kimono with three black cranes swooping across the back, she is twenty-one, in love with the man she is to marry, Konrad Weiss. In a split second, the world turns white. In the next, it explodes with the sound of fire and the horror of realisation. In the numbing aftermath of a bomb that obliterates everything she has known, all that remains are the bird-shaped burns on her back, an indelible reminder of the world she has lost. In search of new beginnings, she travels to Delhi two years later. There she walks into the lives of Konrad's half-sister, Elizabeth, her husband James Burton, and their employee Sajjad Ashraf, from whom she starts to learn Urdu. As the years unravel, new homes replace those left behind and old wars are seamlessly usurped by new conflicts. But the shadows of history - personal, political - are cast over the entwined worlds of the Burtons, Ashrafs and the Tanakas as they are transported from Pakistan to New York, and in the novel's astonishing climax, to Afghanistan in the immediate wake of 9/11. The ties that have bound them together over decades and generations are tested to the extreme, with unforeseeable consequences. Sweeping in its scope and mesmerising in its evocation of time and place, "Burnt Shadows" is an epic narrative of disasters evaded and confronted, loyalties offered and repaid, and loves rewarded and betrayed.

🕮 Sharpe, Tom. Wilt in Nowhere *(LP COLLECTION)*

When his endlessly capricious wife Eva receives plane tickets for the family to visit Auntie Joan and Uncle Wally in Atlanta, Wilt knows only one thing - that nothing could entice him to fly three thousand miles over the water, and especially not two rotund Americans with more money than sense. What better way to escape and find equilibrium then to embark on a walking tour? Just Wilt, the countryside, and an ill-judged bottle of whiskey...

Meanwhile, Eva finds her plans to inherit Joan and Wally's fortune slipping away faster than her sanity, thanks to a combination of sinister teenage quadruplets with foul mouths, and her unexpected role as lead suspect in a drug-trafficking plot.

Outrageous, darkly comic, and packed with calamity on top of calamity, Tom Sharpe's latest episode of Wilt's misadventures is a razor-sharp farce that will delight fans both old and new.

🕮 Sheers. Owen. Resistance

Resistance opens in 1944, as the women of a small Welsh farming community wake one morning to find that their husbands have gone. Soon after that a German patrol arrives in their valley. In his

hugely anticipated debut novel, Owen Sheers has produced a beautifully imagined and powerfully moving story of love and loss.

🕮 Sieghart, William ed. Winning Words *(POETRY)*

Faster, higher, stronger: winning words are those that inspire you on to Olympian goals. From falling in love to overcoming adversity, celebrating a new born or learning to live with dignity: here is a book to inspire and to thrill through life's most magical moments. From William Shakespeare to Carol Ann Duffy, our most popular and best loved poets and poems are gathered in one essential collection, alongside many lesser known treasures that are waiting to be discovered. These are poems that help you to see the miraculous in the commonplace and turn the everyday into the exceptional - to discover, in Kipling's words, that yours is the Earth and everything that's in it.

🕮 Sittenfield, Curtis. The American Wife

In the year 2000, in the closest election in American history, Alice Blackwell’s husband becomes president of the United States. Their time in the White House proves to be heady, tumultuous, and controversial. But it is Alice’s own story - that of a kind, bookish, only child born in the 1940s Midwest who comes to inhabit a life of dizzying wealth and power - that is itself remarkable. Alice candidly describes her small-town upbringing, and the tragedy that shaped her identity; she recalls her early adulthood as a librarian, and her surprising courtship with the man who swept her off her feet; she tells of the crisis that almost ended their marriage; and she confides the privileges and difficulties of being first lady, a role that is uniquely cloistered and public, secretive and exposed. In Alice Blackwell, Curtis Sittenfeld has created her most dynamic and complex heroine yet. American Wife is not a novel about politics. It is a gorgeously written novel that weaves race, class, fate and wealth into a brilliant tapestry. It is a novel in which the unexpected becomes inevitable, and the pleasures and pain of intimacy and love are laid bare.

🕮 Smith, Dodie. I Capture the Castle

'I write this sitting in the kitchen sink' is the first line of this timeless, witty and enchanting novel about growing up. Cassandra Mortmain lives with her bohemian and impoverished family in a crumbling castle in the middle of nowhere. Her journal records her life with her beautiful, bored sister, Rose, her fadingly glamorous stepmother, Topaz, her little brother Thomas and her eccentric novelist father who suffers from a financially crippling writer's block. However, all their lives are turned upside down when the American heirs to the castle arrive and Cassandra finds herself falling in love for the first time.

🕮 Stockett, Kathryn. The Help

Enter a vanished and unjust world: Jackson, Mississippi, 1962. Where black maids raise white children, but aren't trusted not to steal the silver . . .

There's Aibileen, raising her seventeenth white child and nursing the hurt caused by her own son's tragic death; Minny, whose cooking is nearly as sassy as her tongue; and white Miss Skeeter, home from College, who wants to know why her beloved maid has disappeared.

Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny. No one would believe they'd be friends; fewer still would tolerate it. But as each woman finds the courage to cross boundaries, they come to depend and rely upon one another. Each is in a search of a truth. And together they have an extraordinary story to tell...

🕮 Strachan, Mari. The Earth Hums in B Flat

Gwenni Morgan is not like any other girl in this small Welsh town. Inquisitive, bookish and full of spirit, she can fly in her sleep and loves playing detective. So when a neighbour mysteriously vanishes, and no one seems to be asking the right questions, Gwenni decides to conduct her own investigation. She records everything she sees and hears: but are her deductions correct? What is the real truth? And what will be the consequences of finding out, for Gwenni, her family and her community?

🕮 Taylor, Jonathon ed.. Overheard – Stories to read aloud

From village storytellers to nineteenth-century serialisations, from pub anecdotes to dramatic monologues, storytelling is an enduring art form. This collection of short stories reconnects storytelling with its oral and performative roots. There are stories here for performance, stories which play with sound, stories which dramatise conflicting voices, and stories which are musical in style.

Because of the way these stories speak from the page, it doesn't matter whether or not they are actually read out loud. Rather, these are stories which might equally be 'performed' on the reader's mental stage, heard in the reader's mind's-ear.
There is a burgeoning culture in the U.K. and beyond of oral story-telling and prose writers performing their work live, a culture which has developed out of the popularity of poetry in performance. There are numerous collections and anthologies which aim to capture the energy of performance poetry on the page. There is, though, no comparable literature for stories in performance – making this collection unique.

In order to demonstrate the huge diversity of possible performance styles in prose, the collection mingles flash fiction with more sustained stories, genre fiction with realism, experimental pieces with oral storytelling. Contributors are similarly varied in their styles, backgrounds, experience and genres, and include Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Ian McEwan, Blake Morrison, Louis De Bernières, Adele Parks, Kate Pullinger, Adam Roberts, Michelene Wandor, Vanessa Gebbie, Judith Allnatt, Jo Baker, David Belbin, Panos Karnezis, Jane Holland, Gemma Seltzer, Ailsa Cox and Will Buckingham.

🕮 Thompson, Harry. This Thing of Darkness

In 1831 Charles Darwin set off in *HMS* Beagle under the command of Captain Robert Fitzroy on a voyage that would change the world. Tory aristocrat Fitzroy was a staunch Christian who believed in the sanctity of the individual in a world created by God: Darwin the liberal cleric and natural

historian went on to develop a theory of evolution that would cast doubt on the truth of the Bible and the descent of man. The friendship forged during their epic expeditions on land and sea turned into bitter enmity as Darwin's theories threatened to destroy everything Fitzroy stood for ...

🕮 Tomalin, Claire. Samuel Pepys – The Unequalled Self

Samuel Pepys achieved fame as a naval administrator, a friend and colleague of the powerful and learned, a figure of substance. But for nearly ten years he kept a private diary in which he recorded, with unparalleled openness and sensitivity to the turbulent world around him, exactly what it was like to be a young man in Restoration London. This diary lies at the heart of Claire Tomalin's biography. Yet the use she makes of it - and of other hitherto unexamined material - is startlingly fresh and original. Within and beyond the narrative of Pepys's extraordinary career, she explores his inner life - his relations with women, his fears and ambitions, his political shifts, his agonies and his delights.

🕮 Torday, Paul. The Girl on the Landing

Elizabeth has been married to Michael for ten years. She has adjusted to a fairly monotonous routine with her wealthy, decent but boring husband. Part of this routine involves occasional visits to Beinn Caorrun, the dank and gloomy house in a Scottish glen that Michael inherited. There are memories there that Michael will not share with her.

But then Michael begins to change. It starts when he thinks he sees, in a picture, the figure of a girl on a landing. As he changes, life becomes so much more fun and Elizabeth sees glimpses of a man she can fall in love with at last. But who - or what - is changing Michael ...?

🕮 Tremain, Rose. The Road Home

Lev is on his way from Eastern Europe to Britain, seeking work. Behind him loom the figures of his dead wife, his beloved young daugher and his outrageous friend Rudi who - dreaming of the wealthy West - lives largely for his battered Chevrolet. Ahead of Lev lies the deep strangeness of the British: their hostile streets, their clannish pubs, their obsession with celebrity. London holds out the alluring possibility of friendship, sex, money and a new career and, if Lev is lucky, a new sense of belonging...

🕮 Tressell, Robert. The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists is a classic representation of the impoverished and politically powerless underclass of British society in Edwardian England, ruthlessly exploited by the institutionalized corruption of their employers and the civic and religious authorities.

Epic in scale, the novel charts the ruinous effects of the laissez-faire mercantilist ethics on the men, women, and children of the working classes, and through its emblematic characters, argues for a socialist politics as the only hope for a civilized and humane life for all. It is a timeless work whose political message is as relevant today as it was in Tressell's time. For this it has long been honoured by the Trade Union movement and thinkers across the political spectrum.

🕮 Trollope, Anthony. The Warden

The tranquil atmosphere of the cathedral town of Barchester is shattered when a scandal breaks concerning the financial affairs of a Church-run almshouse for elderly men. In the ensuing furore, Septimus Harding, the almshouse's well-meaning warden, finds himself pitted against his daughter's suitor Dr John Bold, a zealous local reformer. Matters are not improved when Harding's abrasive son-in law, Archdeacon Grantly, leaps into the fray to defend him against a campaign Bold begins in the national press. An affectionate and wittily satirical view of the workings of the Church of England, *The Warden* is also a subtle exploration of the rights and wrongs of moral crusades and, in its account of Harding's intensely felt personal drama, a moving depiction of the private impact of public affairs.

🕮 Twain, Mark. The Diary of Adam and Eve

Master storyteller Mark Twain hilariously recreates the very first days, portraying Adam as something of a recluse, and a man who is ill prepared for the arrival of Eve, a talkative, emotional and highly charged female. Yet, in time, and after many moments of conflict, they begin to learn to live together and come to realise that men and women can, in fact, exist in harmony.

🕮 Usher, L.E. Miss

Mary Miss McCloskey has come to London and established herself as a bookseller. She is befriended by Edmund, member of a notable literary family, whose success as a writer is as much the result of his name as recognition of his talent. Their unconventional affair heightens Miss's distaste for the pretensions and complacency of the literati and her discovery of a library of books about women murderers prompts her to look anew at Edmund - will she murder him?

Miss weaves together memories of an Australian childhood, the trials and terrors of women murderers, the arcane matters of bookselling and the intricacies of natural poisons with an acerbic look at literary London. Surprising, chilling but also funny and moving it looks into the mysteries of love and hatred with piercing insight.

🕮 Valentine, Jenny. The Ant Colony *(TEEN)*

Number 33 Georgiana Street houses many people and yet seems home to none. To runaway Sam it is a place to disappear. To Bohemia, it's just another blip between crises, as her mum ricochets off the latest boyfriend. Old Isobel acts like she owns the place, even though it actually belongs to Steve in the basement, who is always looking to squeeze in yet another tenant. Life there is a kind of ordered chaos. Like ants, they scurry about their business, crossing paths, following their own tracks, no questions asked.

But it doesn't take much to upset the balance. Dig deep enough and you'll find that everyone has something to hide…

🕮 Waller, Robert James. The Bridges of Madison County

This story of a photographer searching for the covered bridges of Madison County and a farm wife waiting for the fulfilment of a girlhood dream, the one true love of her life, gives voice to the romantic longings of men and women everywhere.

🕮 Watkins, Paul. The Forger

Paris, 1939. Europe is on the brink of a second World War. David Halifax, a young American art student, is arrested for forgery. Unbeknownst to Halifax, an unscrupulous art dealer has put some of his paintings on the market, attempting to pass them off as Old Masters. When the ruse is uncovered, it is Halifax who is arrested, and charged with forgery. Then, as the Nazis converge upon Paris, Halifax is press-ganged into service by the Resistance: he must forge a number of great paintings, so that the originals don't fall into the hands of the invaders. Halifax is painfully aware that this unwanted commission could cost him his life.

🕮 Waugh, Evelyn. Men at Arms

Guy Crouchback, determined to get into the war, takes a commission in the Royal Corps of Halberdiers. His spirits high, he sees all the trimmings but none of the action. And his first campaign, an abortive affair on the West African coastline, ends with an escapade which seriously blots his Halberdier copybook. *Men at Arms* is the first book in Waugh's brilliant trilogy, *Sword of Honour*, which chronicles the fortunes of Guy Crouchback.

🕮 Webster, Jason. Duende: A Journey in Search of Flamenco

Having pursued a conventional enough path through school and university, Jason Webster was all set to enter the world of academe as a profession. But when his aloof Florentine girlfriend of some years dumped him unceremoniously, he found himself at a crossroads. Abandoning the world of libraries and the future he had always imagined for himself, he headed off instead for Spain in search of duende, the intense emotional state – part ecstasy, part desperation – so intrinsic to flamenco. Duende is an account of his years spent in Spain feeding his obsessive interest in flamenco: he subjects himself to the tyranny of his guitar teacher, practicing for hours on end until his fingers bleed; he becomes involved in a passionate affair with Lola, a flamenco dancer (and older woman) married to the gun-toting Vicente, only to flee Alicante in fear of his life; in Madrid, he falls in with Gypsies and meets the imperious Jesús. Joining their dislocated, cocaine-fuelled world, stealing cars by night and sleeping away the days in tawdry rooms, he finds himself spiralling self-destructively downwards. It is only when he arrives in Granada bruised and battered, after two years total immersion in the flamenco lifestyle that he is able to put his obsession into context. In the tradition of Laurie Lee's classic As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning, Duende charts a young man’s emotional coming of age and offers real insight into the passionate essence of flamenco.

🕮 Westall, Robert. The Machine Gunners *(TEEN)*

'Some bright kid's got a gun and 2000 rounds of live ammo. And that gun's no peashooter. It'll go through a brick wall at a quarter of a mile.'

Chas McGill has the second-best collection of war souvenirs in Garmouth, and he desperately wants it to be the best. When he stumbles across the remains of a German bomber crashed in the woods - its shiny, black machine-gun still intact - he grabs his chance. Soon he's masterminding his own war effort with dangerous and unexpected results....

🕮 Wiltshire, Terri. Carry me Home

Lander, Alabama, 1904. When young Emma Scott claims she has been raped by a 'black hobo', a chain of events is triggered that will affect generations to come. In modern-day Lander, Canaan Phillips has fled her abusive husband and returned to Lander and her fierce Southern Baptist grandmother, who brought her up after her mother's suicide. Canaan's one friend during her childhood was her grandmother's simple brother, Luke. Now frail and elderly, Luke is still living in the corncrib shack that has been his home for thirty years. In early-twentieth-century Lander, Emma Scott has taken an instant and violent dislike to her new child - a white-skinned boy named Luke. Abused and neglected, Luke eventually befriends Squeaky, a black boy whose family farms nearby. When tragedy strikes, Luke takes to the railroad, and as he enters manhood on the rails, we begin to discover the truth behind the events that led to his birth. In the twentieth century, Canaan, too, is slowly coming to terms with her painful past. And, with the help of her adored Uncle Luke, she is learning to love again. This is a heart-rending and luminous story about loyalty, hardship, love and friendship. It is also a reminder that goodness can prevail even through the cruellest hardships.

🕮 Winman, Sarah. When God was a Rabbit

1968. The year Paris takes to the streets. The year Martin Luther King loses his life for a dream. The year Eleanor Maud Portman is born.

Young Elly's world is shaped by those who inhabit it: her loving but maddeningly distractible parents; a best friend who smells of chips and knows exotic words like 'slag'; an ageing fop who tap dances his way into her home, a Shirley Bassey impersonator who trails close behind; lastly, of course, a rabbit called God. In a childhood peppered with moments both ordinary and extraordinary, Elly's one constant is her brother Joe.

Twenty years on, Elly and Joe are fully grown and as close as they ever were. Until, that is, one bright morning when a single, earth-shattering event threatens to destroy their bond forever.

Spanning four decades and moving between suburban Essex, the wild coast of Cornwall and the streets of New York, this is a story about childhood, eccentricity, the darker side of love and sex, the pull and power of family ties, loss and life. More than anything, it's a story about love in all its forms.

🕮 Whyte, Jack. Knights of the Black & White

The exciting first book in a brand new fictional trilogy about the most important events in the history of the Order of the Knights Templar.

The Templars represent a widely popular period of history, but the roots of their fellowship have been shrouded in contemporary conspiracy theory and media glamour….this trilogy tells the true tales of the Knights Templar; beginning with why they formed after the First Crusade and why they continued to grow in power and influence.

Immediately after the deliverance of Jerusalem, the Crusaders, considering their vow fulfilled, drifted back to their homes. But some considered that the defence of this precarious conquest, surrounded as it was by Mohammedan neighbours, still remained. In 1118, during the reign of Baldwin II, Hugues de Payens, a knight of Champagne, and eight of his companions bound themselves by a perpetual vow, taken in the presence of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, to defend the Christian kingdom and all god fearing pilgrims who wished to visit the Holy Land. Baldwin accepted their services and assigned them a portion of his palace, adjoining the temple of the city; hence their title "pauvres chevaliers du temple" (Poor Knights of the Temple).

🕮 Zusak, Markus. The Book Thief

HERE IS A SMALL FACT - YOU ARE GOING TO DIE

1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier.

Liesel, a nine-year-old girl, is living with a foster family on Himmel Street. Her parents have been taken away to a concentration camp. Liesel steals books. This is her story and the story of the inhabitants of her street when the bombs begin to fall.

SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION - THIS NOVEL IS NARRATED BY DEATH

It's a small story, about:

a girl

an accordionist

some fanatical Germans

a Jewish fist fighter

and quite a lot of thievery.

ANOTHER THING YOU SHOULD KNOW - DEATH WILL VISIT THE BOOK THIEF THREE TIMES