

A stylized graphic of books and a pencil. On the left, there is a stack of three books. A pencil is positioned diagonally across the top of the stack. To the right of the stack, there are two more books standing upright. The entire graphic is rendered in white on a dark blue background.

# **THE PUBLISHING POST**

## **Issue 52**

CONTENTS

1	Verso Books Recognises Trade Union	25	Guts Publishing
2	Unionised HarperCollins US Staff to Strike Over Contract Disputes	27	Campaign Spotlight: Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow
3	The Latest in Crowdfund Publishing	29	LGBTQIA+ Celebrities Promoting Inclusive Literature!
5	Beach Reads: What to Anticipate in August	31	Orwell Prize 2022 Winners Announced
7	Our Summer Listens	33	Upcoming Publishing Events
9	Latest Acquisitions & Adaptations	35	Shuffling of the Shelves - July Part 2
11	Highlights In The Charts	37	Not to be Overlooked
13	From Page to Screen: Exploring Book to Movie Adaptations	39	Books to Get You Through a Heatwave
15	Translated Children's and YA Books	41	Upskilling Tips for Publishing – Resources
17	Latest in Celebrity Children's Books	43	Summer Romance Reads
19	An Insight Into Classic Covers	45	BookMachine CAMPUS Review: Metadata Best Practices For Publishers
21	Beach-Worthy Cover Designs	47	Examining the Legacy and Future of Reproductive Rights Through the Lens of Contemporary Prose
23	Job Opportunities		

EDITOR'S NOTE

As someone who was looking to get into publishing, I always found it hard to consistently keep up with what was happening in the industry. Remembering to visit separate websites, news sources, job portals and keep up with changes was quite challenging. I also know it can be difficult to find information, learn about trends in the industry, or about the specifics of roles that are not editorial.

*The Publishing Post* intends to provide all of this information and more to anyone wanting to learn about, or join, the publishing industry. We want to cover as much as we can for those, like us, who want to absorb as much of the industry as they can. *The Publishing Post* is a free resource that is encouraging, honest and

accessible to every single person who is considering publishing as a career.

*The Publishing Post* stands by the fact that 2022 is a time for breaking down barriers and encouraging diversity in the publishing industry. Learning about and being included in the industry should be for everyone.

The magazine is created by publishing hopefuls, for publishing hopefuls. Each and every person who works on the magazine each issue is dedicated to producing and educating fellow hopefuls with content that is informative and interesting.

Lastly, I just want to say a massive thank you to every single person who has supported, shared and

shouted about *The Publishing Post* since our first issue. On behalf of the whole team, we are so incredibly grateful and could not be more proud of the success.

Editor in Chief, Chelsea Graham

STAY UP TO DATE

Catch up on our previous issues, highlighted articles and recommended events at [www.thepublishingpost.com](http://www.thepublishingpost.com)

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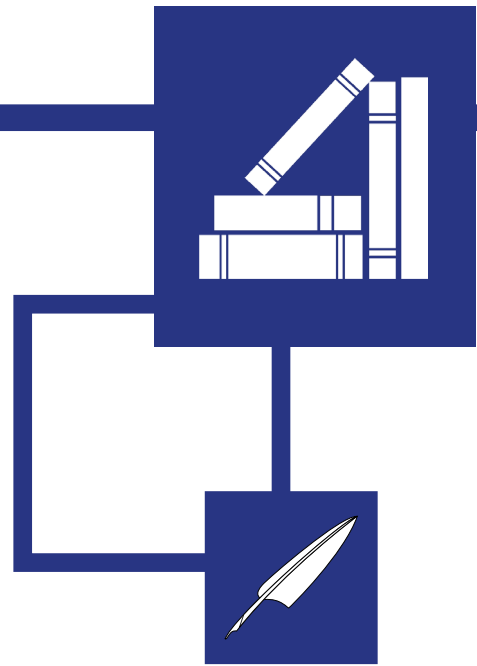
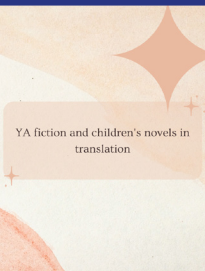
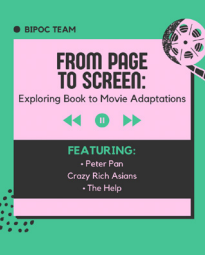
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The Publishing Post



# Verso Books Recognises Trade Union

By MEGAN WHITLOCK

After seventeen months of meetings, on 13 July, the radical publishing house Verso Books acknowledged its trade union. The announcement came last month via [the Verso Union's Twitter account](#) who later tweeted that they "cannot wait to start negotiations."

The recognition of the union comes at a time where discussions about pay, representation and working arrangements are at the forefront of publishing discourse, with the Verso Books Union also tweeting in June that "currently every member of staff is in a worse financial situation than in 2020." The news also came a week or so after unionised employees of the HarperCollins New York office voted to strike if the publisher didn't agree to a fair contract, bargaining for improved pay, benefits, diversity and union protection. They later went on to hold a picket line in Lower Manhattan, as covered elsewhere in this issue.

The Verso staff have unionised with the National Union for Journalists (NUJ). Although publishing doesn't



have a specialised union, the NUJ represents a variety of workers across the creative industries, media, PR and beyond, with approximately 1,000 members in its Books division and 2,000 members in the Magazine division. Another popular union for industry professionals to join is Unite, the second largest trade union in the UK. Unite covers a variety of roles in publishing, from content creation and sales to warehouse workers and administration.

As well as campaigning for a more equal workplace, unions help to negotiate pay rates, staffing and hours issues. It is also important to note that, despite younger people in the industry often facing the lowest pay and facing unpaid internships, [the SYP recently reported](#) that in 2018 union membership among younger people was only 8% compared to the 40% of union members aged forty or over.

A spokesperson from the Verso Books Union talked to [The Bookseller](#), who quoted the following in their report: "We are really excited to be recognised and to start negotiations with the Verso Board. The publishing sector is having a moment of self-examination and we are excited to join our colleagues who have begun organising across the industry, including our colleagues in Verso's US office. [...] For over 50 years Verso Books has been a leading publisher of emancipatory politics. In deciding to unionise, our staff look to combine radical publishing with organising and real solidarity with the wider trade union movement."

# Unionised HarperCollins US Staff to Strike Over Contract Disputes

By HANNAH COLLINS

On 20 July 2022, HarperCollins staff in the US staged a one-day strike to try and resolve ongoing disputes regarding their employee contracts. The UAW, which stands for United Auto Workers, represents more than 250 HarperCollins employees from all areas of the publishing industry, including design, editorial, legal, marketing, publicity and sales departments. Earlier this month, 99.5% of the HarperCollins Union voted to authorise a strike that could question and improve certain contractual details upheld by the company. Employees were asking for improved pay, better family leave benefits, a greater commitment to diversifying staff and stronger union protection.

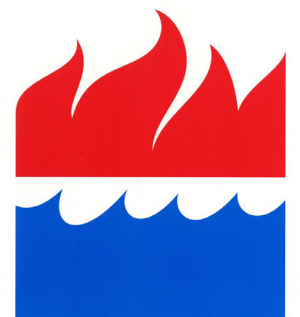
According to the UAW union, current contract negotiations with management at HarperCollins US began in December 2021, when a one-year pandemic extension of contracts was about to expire. Until a deal can be reached between employees and management, staff will continue to work without a contract. The union also stated that its HarperCollins members,

largely composed of women, earn on average \$55,000 (£46,000) annually, with a starting salary of \$45,000 (£37,600). Considering that the company's US offices are situated in large cities such as Boston and New York, this wage has been declared as too low to live on in these areas. Laura Harshberger, a Senior Production Editor in children's books and the union chairperson, said the following in a statement on the matter: "Most of us earn low salaries that are unlivable in major cities like New York and Boston," and this indeed explains why improving wages is a key driving force behind this strike. Many employees also stated that they felt pressured to work extra hours without additional pay or compensation.

These contractual negotiations at HarperCollins US are the first to take place since the company acquired and bought the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) trade division and the UAW union has stated that it is disputing HarperCollins' refusal to include former HMH employees based in Boston in the bargaining unit, or to recognize the seniority

of former HMH staff based in New York who now work for HarperCollins.

As well as discussing the unlivable wage situation, Laura Harshberger also stated that the proposals made by employees to HarperCollins' management are to make the company "a more diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace." She went on to discuss that HarperCollins "says publicly [that] it supports diversifying the industry, but management is refusing to meaningfully address the low pay rates or codify policy changes in our union contract. Our members are tired of empty gestures. They want meaningful change." It will be interesting to see, after this strike has taken place, what changes are made by the company and if it has any comments on the matter.



# The Latest in Crowdfund Publishing

BY EMMA REGAN AND JORDAN MAXWELL RIDGWAY

Previously, the Alternative Publishing team have explored the potential wild success of crowdfund publishing through Brandon Sanderson’s renowned Kickstarter campaign. This week we will be exploring two further examples of the growing success of crowdfund publishing as we continue to unpack the impact that this form of publishing is having on the industry and the opportunities it’s providing.

You may have heard of Monique Roffey, a Caribbean novelist whose 2020 Costa Book of the Year prize-winning novel *The Mermaid of Black Conch* received widespread acclaim. Set in the Caribbean in the 1970s, it uses a multiple-perspective narrative to weave the tale of Aycayia, a mermaid, and David, a fisherman. But don’t confuse this book for a light-hearted beach-soaked romance or a clear-cut fairy-tale. *The Guardian* describes it as “charming” and “bittersweet,” and the conclusion seems to run into murky waters.

Besides the enchanting tale and Roffey’s rise as a prominent voice in Caribbean literature, what makes *Black Conch* striking is also its own publishing tale. In a recent interview with *The Los Angeles Times*, Roffey explained that she launched “a Crowdfunder in September 2019 to pay for a publicity team to help get the book noticed.” *The Bookseller* even went on to cover the story as a result of this extremely rare turn of events, “it is believed this campaign is the first of its kind by an author.” It was then published by Peepal Tree Press, a small indie publisher, but unfortunately, this was during the same month the pandemic hit.

The novel nearly sank but with the rave reviews from Caribbean bookstagrammers, it began to garner attention and appear on shortlists.

There is lots to celebrate about the publishing of *Black Conch*. There’s the feminist rewrite of both an old myth and trope that is very often portrayed through

the male gaze (see Disney’s *The Little Mermaid*). There is the brilliant emergence of another powerfully voiced female Caribbean writer, a canon, which, like most, was previously reigned by men. And finally, when you consider all the pitfalls that stood in the way of this book, and how it was so nearly snagged up and lost in forces out of its control, the Caribbean community sifted it out and championed it, illustrating the power of the book community twice over through social media and crowdfund publishing.

Over in Scotland, another author is celebrating his crowdfunding publishing tale.

Arkbound, a charity book publisher, has recently launched its very own crowdfunding site called Crowdbound. The company, based in Glasgow and Bristol, decided to set up a crowdfunding website in order to maximise the efficiency in raising money to directly fund its authors and support its external projects.

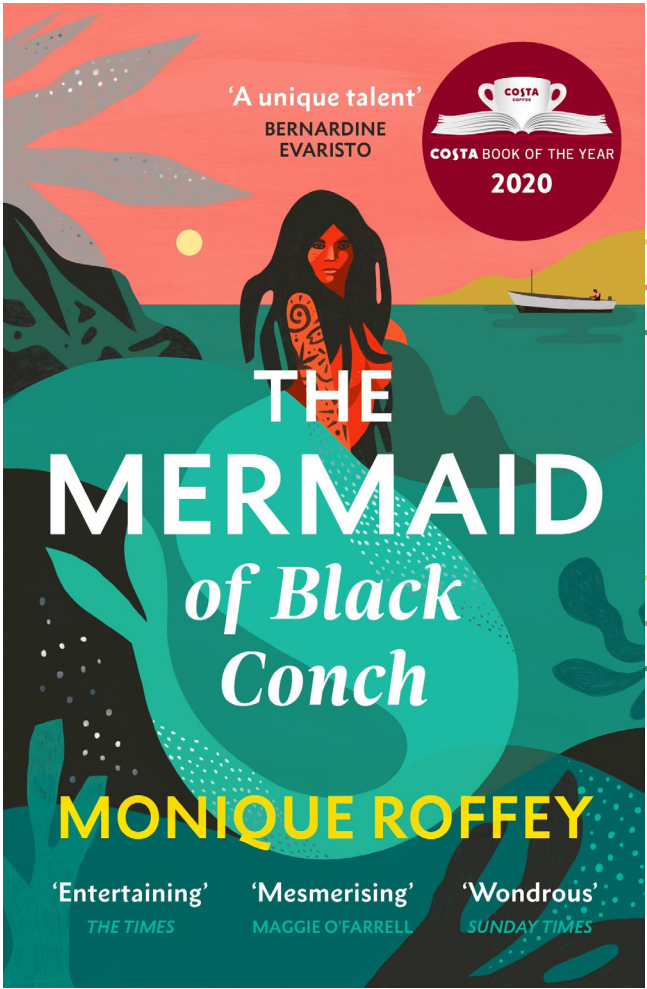
The crowdfunding site is committed to books and projects that cover social inclusion and environmental stability, yet the site offers a wider range of support and options available compared to other crowdfunding sites too. It also offers dedicated support for each approved campaign, and there are even match funding opportunities available.

Crowdbound has already published its first book after only a month of being active. John McGlade, an author based in Glasgow, has had his fair share of rejected submissions, but thanks to the launch of Crowdbound, he has become the first author to get his book published through the site.

*Invisible Schemes* explores how housing schemes impact on society through the characters McCann and his nephew Mark, taking the reader on a dark and twisted tale to the city’s unseen edge and uncovering the true hidden nature of the schemes and the powerful forces behind them.

It took McGlade only ten days of crowdfunding for him to reach his goal, and now after twenty previous failed submissions, his book finally has a release date for 15 August 2022.

“You start thinking you’ll never get it off the ground, so when you get the ‘yes’ it’s an amazing feeling especially when it’s your first book.



It’s such a big deal because you’ve put so much into the novel; it feels incredible when someone decides it’s worthwhile.” – John McGlade, *GlasgowWorld*

Up until recently, Arkbound had been largely dependent on grants to support book production, which often cost thousands of pounds. Now, Crowdbound is an innovative way for individuals and organisations to raise money and receive expertise and support in the process. Not only that, but because

Arkbound is a specialist charity with years of experience publishing books, for every £1 raised, Gift Aid can add a quarter.

It is easy to see the benefits crowdfunding publishing offers for people that either have their submissions denied or want to mitigate external interference. Crowdfunding publishing is becoming more and more accessible to others, and its prominence is not going unnoticed.

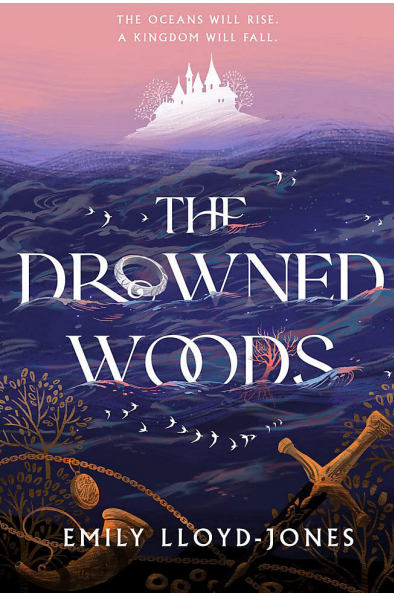


# Beach Reads: What to Anticipate in August

By MEG JONES, ALFIE KIMMINS, GEORGIA WELLS AND CHARLOTTE BARBER

## *The Drowned Woods* by Emily Lloyd-Jones

16 August, Hodder & Stoughton



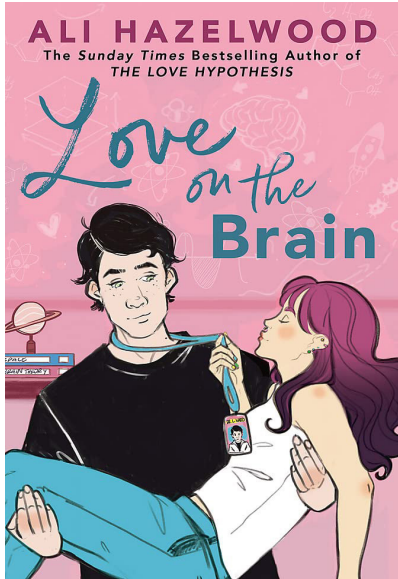
Emily Lloyd-Jones, author of *The Bone Houses*, is back with *The Drowned Woods*, a hauntingly dark tale infused with Welsh legend. Magic and conflict roam freely across the kingdoms of Wales, and Mereid is desperate for a quiet life. She has no interest in power, but her unique magical abilities make her highly sought after. Mer is the last water diviner, capable of manipulating water – a power the prince would kill to acquire. He once forced her to his

service, and for him, she killed thousands. Now, she is on the run. Mer does not want to use her magic, but when her old handler returns with a plan to take down the price's kingdom, she may have no choice. If she can destroy the magical well protecting his lands, she can destroy the foundations of his tyranny. With newfound allies, Mer must plan a heist capable of toppling a kingdom and come to terms with her magic. Whilst set in the same universe as *The Bones Houses*, this retelling of *Cantre'r Gwaelod* acts as a gripping standalone fairytale.

## *Love on The Brain* by Ali Hazelwood

23 August, Little, Brown Book Group

Ali Hazelwood is back with another anticipated explosive summer read with *Love on the Brain*. Striving to bring balance to the universe through science and academia, Bee Königswasser lives her life by one simple code: what would Marie Curie do? So, when NASA offers her the lead on a neuroengineering project, it's a no-brainer that she should accept.



So why doesn't she?

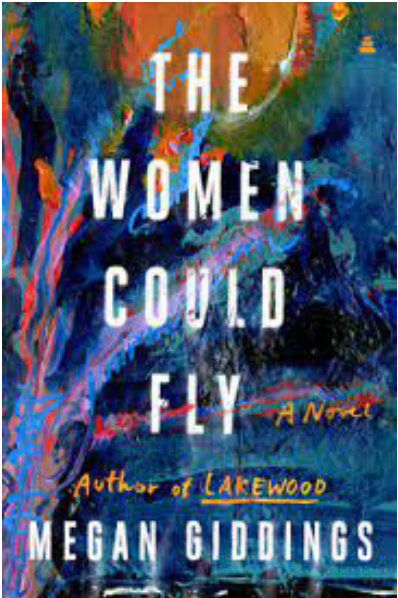
In the newest novel by Ali Hazelwood, hesitation comes in the form of Bee's tall, dark and handsome co-lead Levi Ward. Levi may be coming to her rescue on Bee's first day, catching her like the hero from a romance novel, but Bee can't forget how clear he made it in grad school that archenemies work best employed far away from one another. And that's what they were: archenemies.

However, when her goals and aspirations are put on the line, Bee is forced to realise that maybe the only code she should really be considering is: what would Bee Königswasser do?

## *The Women Could Fly* by Megan Giddings

18 August, Pan MacMillan

When she was young, Josephine Thomas' mother disappeared. She could have been kidnapped. Or murdered. Or worse – she could have been a witch. If it were true, then she must have run away to escape the risk of being put on trial.



Fourteen years later, she begins to understand what may have happened. It is State mandated that women must marry by thirty, or else enrol themselves on the registry to be closely monitored, forfeiting their autonomy. Jo is twenty-eight, unmarried and uncertain about her future. Given the chance to fulfil one last wish of her mother's, Jo decides to leave her life behind in search of a different fate.

## *The Book Eaters* by Sunyi Dean

18 August, HarperCollins

This captivating debut dark fantasy book from Sunyi Dean explores the story of six families that live in secrecy and survive on a diet of stories and legends. Devon is in high demand among the families due to the steady loss of females from her species. Her uncle, the head of her family, is eager to marry her off since her potential progeny would be essential to the survival of the species. When she eventually gives birth to a boy, that child is a dreaded Mind-Eater, a subsection of their race that survives by eating the minds of others rather than books. Mind Eaters are a perversion of their kind, and the boy would likely be weaponised if he is found out. Devon flees to prevent her son from suffering this fate.

Devon hunts prey for her son while she lives among humans to satisfy his need. However, time is running out because her family wants her back and because her son loses more and more of himself with each soul he devours.

## *Mr Perfect on Paper* by Jean Meltzer

9 August, Little, Brown Book Group

Dara Rabinowitz knows all about matchmaking. As the CEO of J-mate, a Jewish

dating app, she knows what the perfect husband should be: a baggage-free doctor who is, of course, Jewish. Despite sharing the secrets for love, Dara doesn't have much luck – something her beloved bubbe wants to fix. So, when her grandmother shares her checklist on national television, Chris Steadfast turns Dara's hunt for the perfect Jewish husband into TV gold. News anchor Chris ticks no boxes; he is a single father and not Jewish. But he's perfectly charming, and Dara can't help questioning her own formula for lasting love. Chris, too, feels an attraction to her he doesn't need, especially when realising that Dara's dating programme is his ticket to better TV ratings. As the pair compete with their feelings and their businesses, it's only a matter of time before things become complicated... right in front of the spotlight.





# Our Summer Listens

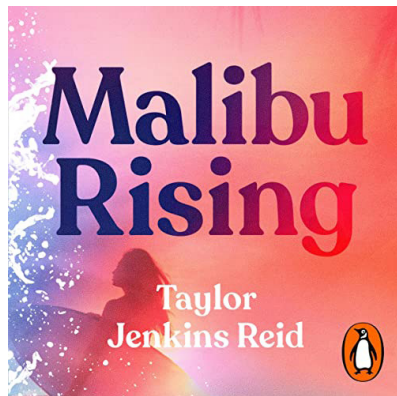
BY PAULINE BIRD, EMILY DE VOGELE AND CAMERON PHILLIPS

We are well into the swing of summer. The days are hot and long, the grass is green, and everything seems a little lighter. We are here to recommend to you our best summer listens, whether you want a new audiobook to listen to, or if you want to switch it up and take a break from reading physical books. These novels are perfect if you're on your way to the field for a picnic with friends, or lounging around in the warm weather.

## Emily's Pick:

My choice just had to be a Taylor Jenkins Reid book. She's the queen of summer and creates perfect atmospheres in her novels. *Malibu Rising* was written to be read in summer, no doubt about it. It follows the Riva family, famous for their father's career and their own achievements. One fateful night in August 1983, the oldest sister, Nina, throws her infamous end of summer party. However, unlike previous years, this party is full of secrets and

mysteries and the siblings must face the truth about their past, and each other's true identities, before the night is over.



There are simply no words to describe how stunning this book is. June and Nina, the sisters, are the most complex women I've ever read about. Jenkins Reid does them an absolute honour by writing them with so much love and compassion. The sibling dynamic grabs you and holds onto you for the entire novel, leaving you breathless by the end. There's a perfect balance between the beautiful nostalgia of summer, and the heartbreaking future that the siblings have on their horizon.

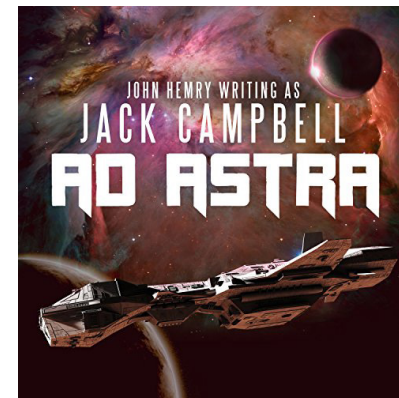
As with the rest of Jenkins Reid's novels, the narrator helps bring the story to life. She keeps a steady tone throughout, but not one of monotone, rather the opposite. Her voice perfectly encapsulates each sibling and their individual stories, love lives, and trauma.

There are a million things I could say about this book, but I'll leave you with this: listen to it, you won't regret it. *Malibu Rising* brings summer alive, it makes you feel like you're right there with the rest of the Riva siblings, in 80's Malibu.

## Cam's Pick:

My choice for the summer pick is Jack Campbell's *Ad Astra*. This series of short sci-fi stories focus on the types of fictional problems mankind could encounter after they pass the horizon. Exploring various moral and philosophical dilemmas, but never preaching to the unconverted, Jack Campbell's series of short stories are packed nicely in

his very low-key thoughtful style. They are very old school, Asimov and Clarke style science fiction stories, which Campbell never tries to hide, but they shine in their own unique way.



One thing that pulls me towards these stories, particularly set in space beyond our own horizon, are my own ambitions for this summer. I'd like to broaden my own horizons, re-engage and reconnect myself to my friends and hobbies, which have ebbed and flowed at various points over the COVID-19 pandemic. Short story science fiction are easy for me to digest, and these Jack Campbell's tales never outstay their welcome, whilst providing some thought provoking details and debates.

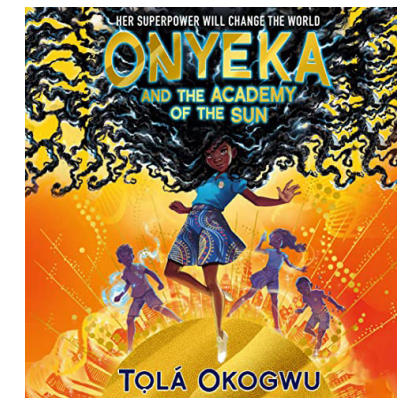
## Pauline's Pick:

When choosing a book for this issue's theme, I wanted to choose one that was fairly long – that children or families could listen to on a long journey whether in the car, train or plane. I also wanted to pick an audiobook which could transport the listener to another landscape that might be less familiar or new to listeners in the UK. Finally, I wanted to share a book that has been recently published, rather than share one that has been around for a while. With this criteria in mind, I selected *Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun* by Tolá Okogwu.

At 7 hours and 36 minutes long, it is a substantial listen. We have no holiday plans this year, but we've been on numerous long day trips in the car, and the children have really looked forward to listening to it as we travel to and from our destinations. In terms of diverse landscapes, this action-packed middle grade adventure begins in the UK, but the majority is set in Nigeria. Originally published in June 2022, it is an incredible testament to the wonderful audiobooks for children that are being created right now.

The first in a superhero series, we are introduced to the protagonist, Onyeka,

a British-Nigerian girl who discovers that her afro hair has psychokinetic powers. When this is revealed to her mother, she is quickly sent to the Academy of the Sun, where Soalri, children with various superpowers, are trained to become Protectors of Nigeria. But all is not what it seems, and soon their powers are put to the ultimate test as Onyeka hunts for her father, who disappeared after making a genetic breakthrough.



This immersive tale is expertly narrated by Nneka Okoye, who helps bring the vivid landscape and action-packed adventure to life. The whole family was fully invested in this story and we can't wait to listen to the next instalment!



# Latest Acquisitions & Adaptations

By Georgie Cutler and Eva Lee

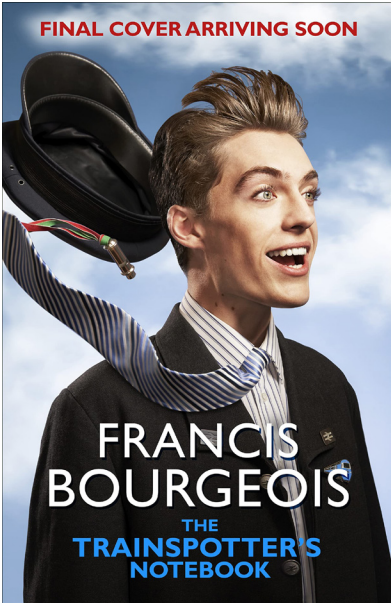
## Acquisition News

### Viking Snags Rights to Thriller Novels

The rights to *The Beach Party* and *The Perfect Escape* by author Nikki Smith were bought by Harriet Boughton and Vikki Moynes under Viking. Smith explains the books will contain “sun, sea, sand... and just a touch of murder. Split between the 1980s and present day, it follows six friends on the post-university holiday of their dreams... something terrible happens that binds them inextricably. Thirty years later, the truth has been collectively buried.” ([The Bookseller](#)). *The Beach Party* will release with e-book and audio versions in July 2023 followed by *The Perfect Escape* in July 2024.



### The Trainspotter's Notebook by Tiktok's Francis Bourgeois Acquired by Transworld



Transworld, a division of Penguin Random House, has bought the UK and Commonwealth rights to an upcoming release from the TikTok famous trainspotter. Francis Bourgeois amassed a social media following of over 4.3 million through his trainspotting videos during the pandemic and has since gone on to do campaigns with Gucci and Spotify. *The Trainspotter's Notebook* will contain stories of his

trainspotting adventures whilst highlighting the history of the railway networks that currently traverse Britain. It looks to be a champion of trainspotting, a hobby that Bourgeois disconnected from in his teenage years due to wanting to fit in. This deal was undertaken by the editorial director Henry Vines from Transworld and Millie Lean from YMU. It's currently set to be published on 27 October 2022.

## From Book to Screen

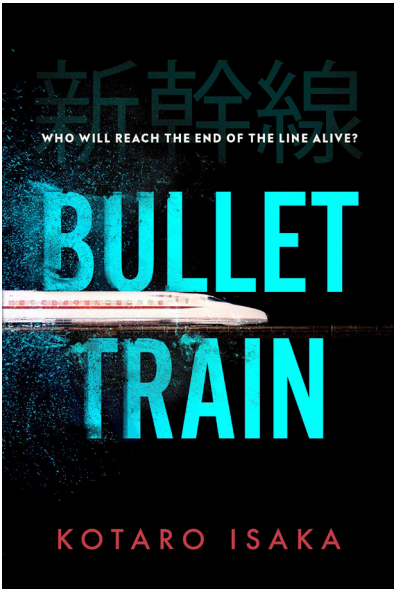
### What to Watch?

#### BBC picks up My Name is Leon

BBC has picked up another book adaptation after the recent success of Sally Rooney's *Conversations with Friends*. The upcoming film based on the novel of the same name written by Kit De Waal will be directed by Lynette Linton with screenplay by Shola Amoo. The story will follow nine-year-old Leon, a mixed-raced boy and his journey to reuniting with his brother after being separated and taken into care. Set

in Birmingham during the 1980s there will be moments of identity struggles and hardships faced for Leon. It is set to star Sir Lenny Henry who also serves as executive producer, Christopher Eccelston, Malachi Kirby and Olivia Williams. It is now available to watch on BBC iPlayer.

### Bullet Train Coming to the Big Screen



Kotaro Isaka's novel *Bullet Train* is making its way into cinemas this August. Translated into English by Sam Malissa, the high-octane crime thriller was shortlisted for the 2022 CWA (Crime Writers Association) Crime Fiction in Translation Prize. The novel takes place on a bullet train out of Tokyo. Five assassins are passengers on board the train, competing for a suitcase filled with money. The question is, who will make it to their destination?

The comedic adaptation features a star-studded cast, including Brad Pitt, Sandra Bullock, Brian Tyree Henry, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Joey King, Bad Bunny, Zazie Beetz and Hiroyuki Sanada. It is directed by David Leitch, who previously had hits with *Atomic Blonde* (2017) and *Deadpool 2* (2018). You can watch *Bullet Train* in cinemas from 3 August 2022.

they explore relationships, Asian-American stereotypes and culture differences living in American society. Not much is known for the casting and release date as more information is yet to be announced.

### Original Film to Develop Rosaline Palmer Takes The Cake

A feature film is being developed by Original Film of *Rosaline Palmer Takes The Cake* by Alexis Hall. Neal Moritz and Karina Rahardja are using the discretionary fund that Original Film has with Paramount to produce the venture. You may recognise Alexis Hall from their 2020 novel *Boyfriend Material*, which has been a huge success on BookTok. This novel, the first in Hall's *Winner Bakes All* series, follows Rosaline Palmer, whose main goal in life is to own her own bakery and provide for her daughter. She has managed to get a place on a famous baking show in Britain that may change her fortune. However, there she meets two contestants that may change her views on life, love and her long-term goals. The project is set to be executive produced by Cameron Fuller, Gregg Sulkin, and Maisie Richardson-Sellers. There is no word yet regarding a release date but we can't wait for the *Bake Off* inspired romance.

## In the Works

### Graphic Novel Shortcomings in the Works



The graphic novel is set to be directed by *Fresh off the Boat* star Randall Park making his first directorial debut, who will likely put a spin to the story. Adrian Tomine, the author of the book, is also lined up for screenplay and executive producer. The story follows trio Miko Hayashi, Ben Tanaka and Alice Kim as





# Highlights In The Charts



## ***The Year of Miracles (Recipes About Love & Grief & Growing Things)* by Ella Risbridger**

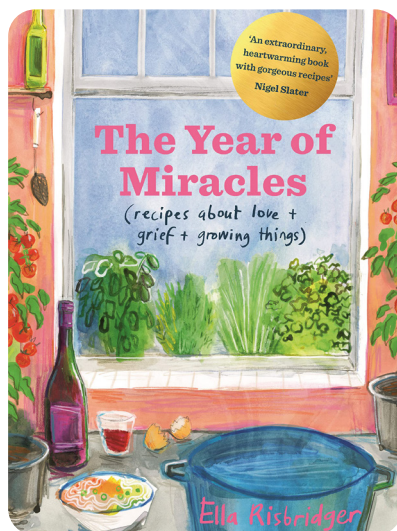
REVIEW BY NATALIE BECKETT

I have a book review to write on the hottest day of the year, a record breaking forty-one degrees to be exact. The book happens to be a cookbook and I decided last week I would make the 'Rhubarb and Custard Cake' on page 131. So now I'm standing in my kitchen and in both senses of the word, I'm baking.

As you might guess from the title, Risbridger's *The Year of Miracles* is so much more than a cookbook full of recipes, although the recipes are wonderful. It's about the power of cooking as an outlet for emotion as well as being a source of great emotion. And how, often, cooking is one way we show our love for others.

What started out in early 2020 as a book about "lovely dinner parties and chatting," quickly changed tone when dinner parties were no longer possible. As Ella explains in an interview about the book

on the *Desert Islands Dishes* podcast, she didn't want to write a book "that was like oh remember dinner parties weren't they wonderful." Instead, it follows the author's new life since the passing of her partner Jim. Broken down into the twelve months of the year, Ella walks the reader through her favourite recipes. Each one comes with its own beautiful personal essay and equally beautiful illustration created by Elisa Cunningham. In a world of Instagram-perfect dishes, this cookbook is as refreshingly unpretentious as it comes. It also manages to do the one thing that most cookbooks fail terribly at: encompassing the all-consuming joy of cooking.



Through descriptions that read as if Ella herself is speaking aloud, she teaches us that cabbage can be poetic and that leaning into "Quadruple Carb Soup" is a good thing. She proves that brownies can be made with three ingredients and reminds us that it's important not to be too precious about things, especially marinades. Friendship is a large and very welcome theme. We get to know her new flat mate Jo and what Ella cooks for Jo. She muses about a virtual cooking friendship that has blossomed with a friend called Georgie who lives in the countryside. I particularly like the bits about treasured morning walks with her best friend Nancy and Beezle the dog. Ella confesses she falls in love with people at first sight; knowing they are going to matter.

The cake is now finished and it's a soft yellow sponge with egg-yolk coloured icing, covered in striking pink freeze-dried raspberries. The raspberries are cooling and perfectly sharp against the sweet sponge. The baking in baking heat has been worth it. I pass slices of the cake around to family and friends and we talk about how beautiful and touching Ella's

book is. Later, as I turn the final few colourful pages and tidy up the cake, the book leaves one lasting message: do with what you have.

## ***The Swimmers* By Chloe Lane**

REVIEW BY MADELEINE LILY

*The Swimmers* follows a few days in the life of twenty-six-year-old Erin as readers witness her actions and emotions as she takes on the knowledge that her mother has decided she wants to take her own life through assisted suicide after living with motor neurone disease for more than a year.

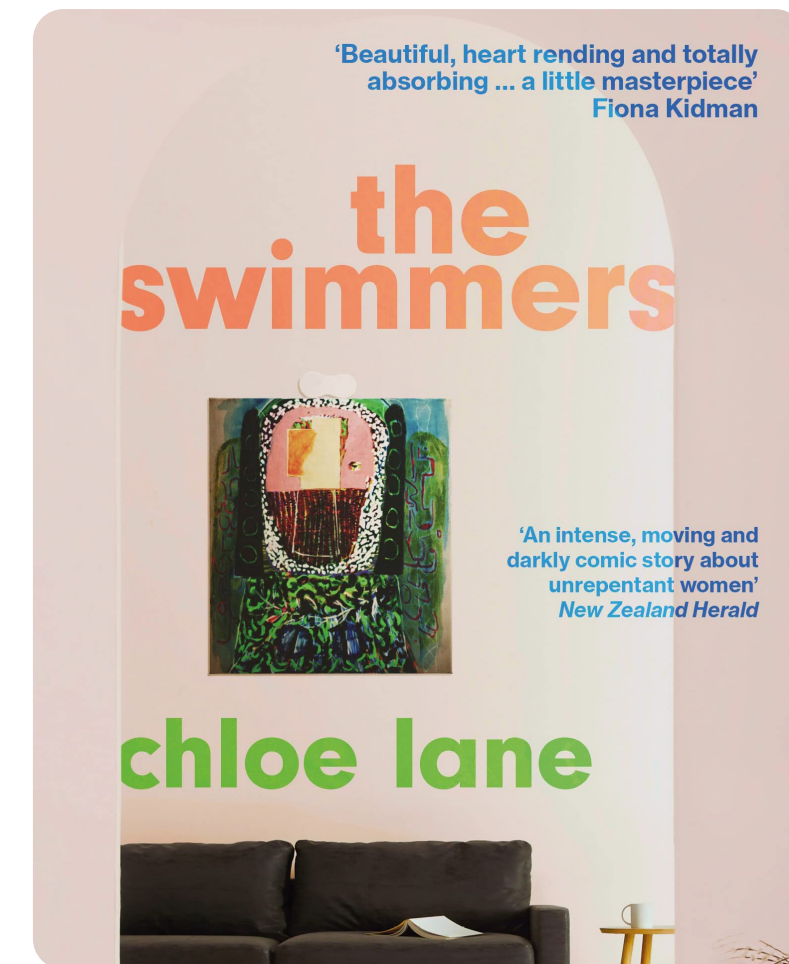
I have never read a book including MND and I have learnt a lot about the cruel disease and the impact it can have on those around it. The story had a sombre tone with dashes of humour throughout which was definitely needed to lighten moments between the heavy subject matter. The disjointed family were facing the task of helping fulfil her mother's final requests and you get a real sense of a family unit being forced together through circumstance, with all their imperfections and secrets slowly being revealed as the book progresses.

It is easy to feel for Erin at certain parts in the book and though some of her decisions were reckless, it is easy to understand why

she makes them. There is one bit in particular that involved a panda that was heartbreaking – it is sure to stay in my mind for a time after finishing this book! The book only follows a short time frame, but Lane works hard to make readers feel a connection with Erin. She faces her own emotions, questionable neighbours and her complicated family of former competitive swimmers. The subtle moments written in great detail assist the reader in understanding her circumstances.

A favourite character was Auntie Wynn who I loved getting to know more as the book went on. The details of the swimming competitions the characters used to compete in were a good comparison for how they approach their everyday lives. I also loved the little details added about the country.

The Swimmers was really like nothing I've read before. I am now a big fan of Chloe Lane's subtle writing style and I want to read more books from New Zealand!





# From Page to Screen: Exploring Book to Movie Adaptations

BY MICHELLE YE, JIA WEN HO AND LEANNE FRANCIS

From the pages of a novel to our flickering screens, there are so many movies that originate from books. Looking into different movie adaptations, we explore how minority ethnic groups have been represented in these films. It can feel like a hit or miss; sometimes a success inspires more accurate representations but other times, intentional or not, minority groups can be misrepresented.

## *Peter Pan*

J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* has been a popular children's story since its initial release in 1904. However, the indigenous characters have been consistently misrepresented. *Peter Pan*'s widespread popularity led to a plethora of film adaptations, the majority of which include discriminatory portrayals of indigenous characters. The first film adaptation was released in 1924: a silent film in which the indigenous characters' speech, written out on title cards, bears a marked

difference from the other characters. For example, "Peter Pan is the sun. He is the moon. He is the stars. Us [the indigenous characters] no let pirates hurt li'l boys." In these few short sentences, the film adopts the stereotype that indigenous people are stoic and speak in a simple manner, and also deifies Peter, creating a clear hierarchy elevating him above the indigenous characters.

Among the adaptations succeeding the 1924 film, many have also miscast and whitewashed indigenous characters, such as Tiger Lily (with the exception of the 2003 adaptation that cast Haida actress Carsen Gray). The 1924 film cast Chinese-American actress Anna May Wong as Tiger Lily, followed by an uncredited voice actress in Disney's 1953 animated film and most recently the casting of Rooney Mara in *Pan* (2015). These casting decisions, coupled with stereotyped performances, have perpetuated racist attitudes

from a century ago into modern day. As Disney is set to release a new live action adaptation, *Peter Pan and Wendy*, the casting of Cree actress Alyssa Wapanatâhk hopefully heralds the end of indigenous misrepresentation in this classic story.

## *Crazy Rich Asians*

One of the first all-Asian casts in Hollywood, this movie is adapted from the eponymous book by Kevin Kwan. It was the first time I have seen so many actors of Malaysian heritage in a blockbuster movie. There are three in total: Malaysia's beloved Michelle Yeoh, comedian Ronny Chieng and Henry Golding. The movie is set in Singapore and it was the most of Southeast Asia one could see on the big screen. Much of Singapore's culture was represented on screen: there was the making of kuih, a beloved dessert, the bustle of the food courts and also a gathering of aunties speaking in Singlish, a Singaporean English slang.

Furthermore, the movie showed an interesting contrast between Singaporean-Chinese and Chinese-Americans. Many Singaporeans have a perception that Chinese-Americans have traded their "Chinese culture" for a more individualistic American one. However, this perception is not without basis: unlike their American counterparts, many ethnic Chinese in Singapore do retain their culture, whether it be the language or religion, as they are the most populous on the island city. It is a disappointment that neither the book nor the movie acknowledge the vibrant cultural diversity in Singapore. In this regard, neither ethnic groups such as the Malays and Indians are mentioned. We have previously talked [here](#) about such issues in the book. Overall, however, it is an enjoyable movie that brings Singaporean culture into an international limelight.

## *The Help*

Kathryn Stockett's 2009 novel, *The Help*, found its way to the screen in 2011. Met with a mostly positive reception, the movie adaptation of *The Help* was awarded four Oscars after receiving a whopping \$169 million at the box office. The story takes place during the Civil Rights Movement in 1963, following the relationship between a white woman and

two Black maids, referred to as 'the help,' about whom she writes a book. *The Help* features a fantastic ensemble cast, including actors such as Octavia Spencer, Viola Davis, Emma Stone and Jessica Chastain, amongst others. Despite the all-star casting and 'feel-good' comedic scenes, *The Help* has rightfully faced a lot of criticism over the years, even by [some of the actors](#), for being a 'white saviour' movie.

Writer [Cydney Henderson](#) describes the 'white saviour' trope in movies as a narrative "where white characters come to the rescue of minorities in a feel-good tale that dilutes people of colour in their own stories." The movie has regained popularity in recent years after the tragic death of George Floyd, being shared around as a 'helpful' resource to [educate people](#) on the issue of racism. Not only does *The Help* perpetuate harmful stereotypes about Black women, but it primarily centres – and favours – the stories of white women and ironically fails to give a voice to Black women during the Civil Rights Movement, though that is the very premise of the novel and movie. With a new wave of Black stories by Black voices hitting our screens and [shelves](#) this year, there is hope that the narrative and types of stories we share will finally shift.



# Translated Children’s and YA Books

BY NIINA BAILEY AND TOBY SMOLLETT

When people talk about translated books, they often only talk about adult books. But there are plenty of translated children’s and young adult books out there. Even if these books are targeted for a younger audience, anyone can enjoy them. This issue, we wanted to recommend our favourite translated children’s and YA books. Enjoy!

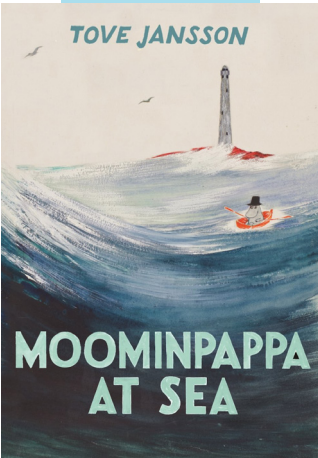
***Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke. Translated by Anthea Bell. Chicken House (2003)**

Have you ever wished your favourite book characters could come to life? If so, *Inkheart* is the book for you. It follows twelve-year-old Meggie and her father Mo, who can make objects and people appear from books by reading aloud. When Meggie was a child, Mo read three people out of a book called *Inkheart* who now want to take advantage of his power and capture him. It is up to Meggie and her great aunt Elinor to save Mo.

*Inkheart* is a book for people who love books. Mo, Meggie and Elinor all love books and understand how important they can be. This comes across very well in the writing and makes the reader feel understood. The

world-building is excellent, both in the real world and the descriptions of the world within the book. The characters feel alive and really elevate the story.

*Inkheart* was originally published in German as *Tintenherz* in 2003. It is the



first book in the *Inkworld* trilogy and is followed by *Inkspell* and *Inkdeath*.

***Moominpappa at Sea* by Tove Jansson. Translated by Kingsley Hart. Penguin Books (1965)**

*Moominpappa at Sea* is the seventh book in the *Moomin* book series, although they can be read in any order. The books follow the Moomin family and their friends as they live life and have adventures in Moominvalley. In this book, they set off to find a lighthouse in the sea because Moominpappa (who the book mostly focuses on) has grown tired of his life in Moominvalley. They find an island only inhabited by a fisherman and move into the lighthouse. The book follows Moominpappa in his endeavours to fix up the island and lighthouse while Moominmamma feels like she is not needed.

Even if this book was written for children, it can be enjoyed by anyone and even has some adult themes. Moominpappa essentially has a mid-life crisis and Moominmamma becomes depressed on the island because she misses home

and feels purposeless. In addition, the atmosphere in the book is palpable.

*Moominpappa at Sea* was originally published in Swedish as *Pappan och havet* in 1965 despite Tove Jansson being Finnish.

***The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Translated by Katherine Woods. Heinemann (1944)**

Originally published in French in 1943 (titled *Le Petit Prince*), *The Little Prince* is widely cited as one of the best-selling books of all time, with *Britannica* reporting that over 200 million copies have been sold to date. The tale told by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry is every bit as good as you would expect upon reading that number.

The story itself is timeless: a fable featuring space travel, a young prince and talking animals. The prince is, unsurprisingly, the protagonist of the story, journeying across asteroids and meeting adults with closed-off perspectives. The sincerity and open-mindedness of the young prince set him apart from his older (but less wise) peers. Although the book was originally written for children, the depth and breadth of the world and characters make it a moving and powerful read for all – you may well end up teary-eyed by the end.

***The Little Prince*  
ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY**



***Where We Go From Here* by Lucas Rocha. Translated by Larissa Helena. PUSH/Scholastic (2020)**

I recently read Lucas Rocha’s powerful novel *Where We Go From Here* over a couple of train journeys, and when I had finished my first thought was “wow, I need to see what else he’s written.” The book is open (in the best way), it pulls no punches and the world created and inhabited by the three main characters feels alive. The sensation is less of being sucked in, than of the contents of the book spilling out around you, coiling at your feet. Imagine then, my shock when I realised this is Lucas Rocha’s debut novel.

The story follows three queer men in Brazil, two of whom are HIV-positive. I decided against using the word ‘narrative’ for this story, because that suggests this is a very plot-driven book when it is actually closer to some of the auto-fiction that we have seen emerge in the past decade or so. Conversations are frank, and they need to be. This is not, however, a story purely of trauma. Characters are struggling, but with bravery. The concept of queer community is, by this point, beyond well known, but rarely is it expressed as realistically as it is here. A must-read, nothing less.





# Latest in Celebrity Children's Books

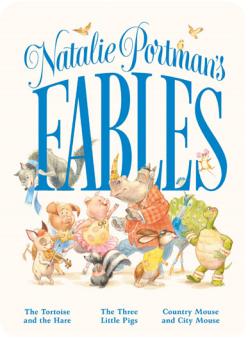
BY ANNABELLA COSTANTINO, LAUREN GANTT AND EMMA ROGERS

The interest in children's books written by celebrities has been a hot topic of discussion in publishing for years. With many actors, musicians and figures in the media having an existing fan base, publishers can easily harness their popularity to promote and publicise their work. So, let's dive in and explore some of the recent developments in celebrity children's books for all ages – varying widely in genre, format, theme and target audience.

## Actors

### Natalie Portman

From Natalie Portman, famous for her roles in *Thor* and *Star Wars*, comes *Natalie Portman's Fables*, a retelling of three children's tales. Published in 2020, Portman uses the classic stories of *The Tortoise and the Hare*, *The Three Little Pigs* and *Country Mouse and City Mouse* to encourage hard work and perseverance – these allegorical stories are perfect for children.



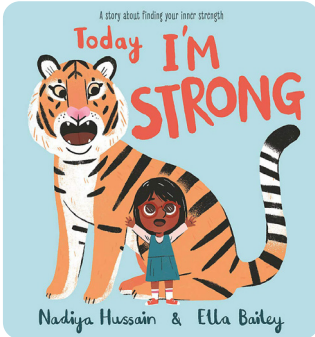
### Idris Elba

Earlier in 2021, it was announced that Golden Globe winner Idris Elba, known for his commitment to the Marvel cinematic universe, as well as *Zootopia*, *The Mountain Between Us* and *The Jungle Book*, has signed a book deal with HarperCollins. Set to publish later on this year, Elba has teamed up with author Robyn Charteris to produce both picture books and fiction inspired by his daughter. We look forward to learning more about these books later in the year!

## TV Figures

### Nadiya Hussain

Nadiya Hussain MBE rose to fame after winning *The Great British Bake Off* in 2015, growing as a national treasure in British TV. Her children's book, *Today I'm Strong*, is an uplifting picture book illustrated by Ella Bailey. School life can get tough – this book is all about finding inner strength



to overcome it all, with an empowering message for young children.

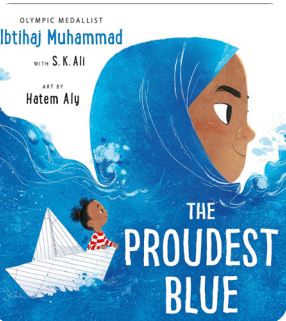
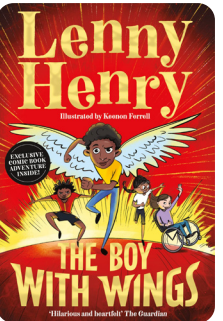
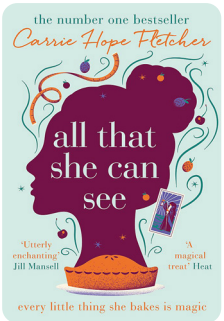
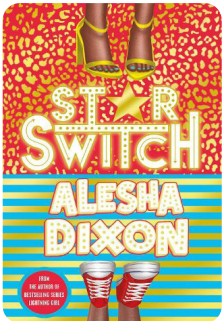
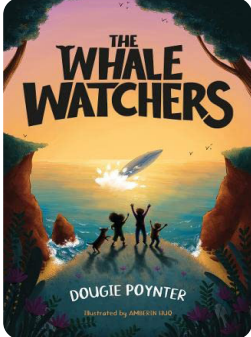
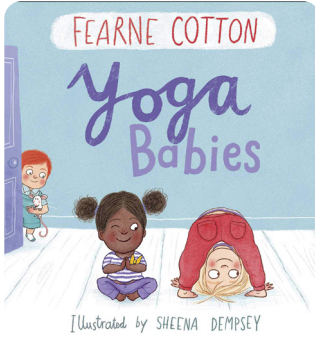
### Fearne Cotton

TV and radio presenter, now turned author, Fearne Cotton has come out with *Yoga Babies*, aimed at two to four-year-olds, illustrated by Sheena Dempsey. *Yoga Babies* is the first in a picture book series to introduce young children to yoga, with plenty of fun and simple yoga poses for little ones to try! The sequel, *Hungry Babies*, explores the differences in families' mealtimes.

## Musicians

### Dougie Poytner & Tom Fletcher

Members of the English pop band McFly, Dougie Poytner and Tom Fletcher, have collectively written various children's books. Most recently, Poytner has written *The Whale Watchers*, published by Owlet Press, which highlights climate change issues. This book



is in collaboration with WDC (Whale and Dolphin Conservation), to help raise funds for sea-life protection.

Meanwhile, Fletcher has been incredibly active in the children's publishing sphere for many years. Some of his most popular titles include *The Christmasaurus* series, originally published in 2016, as well as *The Dinosaur that Pooped* series, co-written with Dougie Poytner. He has also written *The Creakers* series, aimed for children between the ages of six and eight. The writing muscle must run in the family, as both his wife and sister also have several published works.

### Alesha Dixon

English singer, dancer and former X-Factor judge, Alesha Dixon, has written multiple children's books, with a main target audience of young girls as her demographic. Her books include *Lightning Girl* (2018) and the *Superhero Squad* series, as well as standalone titles, *Girls Rule* (2021) and *Star Switch* (2020). Her books all follow a theme of empowerment, fame and adventure and can be sold

in box sets, which is often an appealing format for children aged eleven and above.

## Influencers

### Zoe Sugg

YouTuber and influencer Zoe Sugg has built quite the online audience for herself over the last decade. Following the previous ghost-writing controversy surrounding her *Girl Online* series, she has most recently collaborated with Amy McCulloch to write a murder mystery for the YA arena. *The Magpie Society* is a duology, originally published by Penguin in 2020.

### Carrie Hope Fletcher

Most known for her musical theatre career and YouTube videos, Carrie Hope Fletcher has been writing since 2015, following her first non-fiction publication, *All I Know Now*. Since its success, she has gone on to publish many YA fiction titles, such as *On the Other Side* and *All That She Can See*. In 2020, she published her first children's book, *Into the Spotlight*, a re-telling of *Ballet Shoes* and

most recently, *The Double Trouble Society*, for readers aged nine and above.

## People in the Media

### Lenny Henry

*The Boy with Wings* is an exciting middle-grade adventure, written by comedian Lenny Henry CBE, with illustrations by Keenon Ferrell. Aimed at nine to twelve-year-olds, this is Henry's first novel for children. It tells the story of a boy called Tunde, who suddenly sprouts wings and learns that he and his friends are the ones responsible for saving the world!

### Ibtihaj Muhammad

Ibtihaj Muhammad, Olympic medallist, brings forward picture book, *The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family*. Faizah's first day of school is here and so is her older sister's first day of hijab, though not everyone at school is nice. *The Proudest Blue* is about the bonds between sisters and staying true to who you are. Published by Little, Brown, *The Proudest Blue* has gone on to become a *New York Times* bestseller.



# An Insight Into Classic Covers

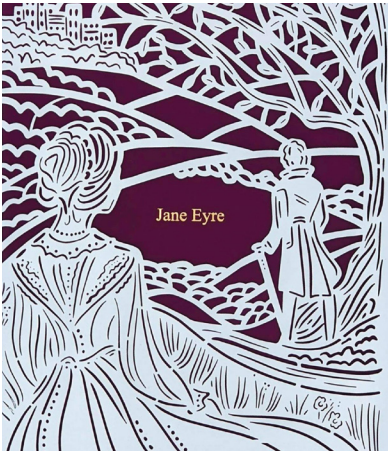
BY MEGAN POWELL, HANNAH SPRUCE, MICHAEL CALDER AND LUCY CARR

It is without a doubt that classic literature is home to some exquisite covers. The varying editions of the novels allow for readers to aspire to collect these gorgeous covers. Thanks to many of the classic novels being out of copyright, many sellers can redesign and create some wonderful pieces of art to coincide with the beautiful story being told inside. It is safe to judge a classic book by its cover when reading one of these special editions. The classics team have worked together to discuss some of our favourite editions, ranging from style to price, and there will surely be a collection you will want to add to your bookshelf.

## The Seasons Edition

This collection is very special and a must-have for classic readers. As the name suggests, the collection is separated into seasons featuring four classic novels, which are based, inspired or set in each of the four seasons. For example, the Winter collection groups *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and *A Tale of Two Cities* by

Charles Dickens. Thomas Nelson’s reproductions are delicately designed by Kate Armstrong, whose laser-cut book jackets creatively depict a key theme within the novel while adhering to the thematic scheme of the categorised season. This is expanded throughout the whole production of the book with sprayed edges to match the cover, alongside a collector’s bookmark and a perfectly selected quote from the novel to adorn the blurb. Each book is numbered, truly making this a remarkable collector’s choice. The Seasons Edition will make for a perfect present for readers with the truly stunning sleeves being expertly crafted to reflect not only the season but essence of the

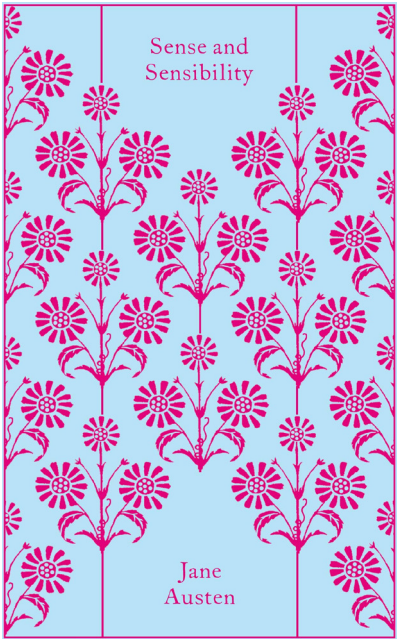


novel itself. The attention to detail is inspiring and will brighten your reading of the classic story. Current seasons editions were released from 2019–2021 and Thomas Nelson has updated plans for a 2022 Jane Austen collection – how exciting!

## Penguin Clothbound

First released in 2008, the Penguin Clothbound Classics began as a collection of ten novels, including *Great Expectations*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, with fantastically decorated linen cloth covers embossed with foil patterns. Each cover, designed by Coralie Bickford-Smith, adopts thematic imagery into its overarching, vibrant patterning and colour scheme, making the collection an excellent addition across bibliophilic shelves. Additionally, these charismatic novels come with a collection staple – an attached ribbon bookmark.

Initially a Waterstones exclusive collection, the Penguin Clothbound Classics became wildly popular among collectors and,

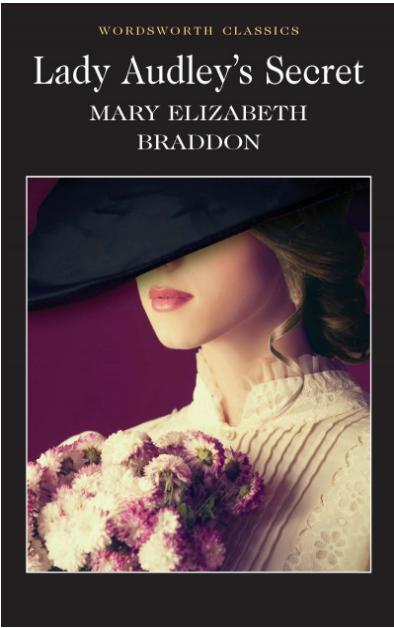


thereafter, distribution routes diversified, making the collection accessible. Now, the collection contains more than ninety novels, each with a unique design. A further three novels are anticipated to join the collection in 2023, with an edition of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* amongst the newcomers.

## Penguin English Library and Wordsworth Classics

You don’t need to spend a lot of money to have an impressive and high-quality classics collection, the Penguin English Library and the Wordsworth Classics offer a more affordable way to display your favourite titles. The Penguin English

Library is composed of 105 books spanning from Austen to Orwell, with the chance to get five classics for £25 and the summertime bundles, making it an easy way to get your collection started. Despite its low price-tag, the covers make a statement with their vibrant colours and designs which often focus on a quirky object associated with the text. The Wordsworth Classics have a different theme, with a signature background and varied pictures which often depict the characters or the setting of the book. These collections also have an academic benefit, with introductions and analysis from critics and specialists to enhance your reading of the text and their literary and cultural impact. Ultimately,



these two series are the perfect way to find and collect your next favourite classic.

## Chiltern Classics

Since 2018, Chiltern Publishing has released special collectible editions of beloved classics. Typically, they release eight new volumes a year, including one children’s book and a work of speculative fiction, amongst a wider mix of the most notable novels in the classic canon. Some of their 2022 releases include *Peter Pan* by James Matthew Barrie, *Good Wives* by Louisa May Alcott and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell and of course, if you look at their website you’ll find they’ve already released seminal works by the likes of Dickens, the Brontës and more.

Their covers mix traditional and modern printing techniques, so, for example, all the Jane Austen books reflect the size and format of the original books. With shining gilt edges, beautifully designed and satisfyingly textured covers, the Chiltern classic series invites you to judge books by their covers – even though you probably don’t need to buy a fourth edition of *Pride and Prejudice*, these collectibles are so pretty, it’s hard to think of reasons why you shouldn’t.





# Beach-Worthy Cover Designs

By AMY EVANS AND JULIETTE TULLOCH  
.....

The Cover Evaluation team have picked a selection of summer reads that are sure to keep you entertained on holiday, whether that's mythological retellings, family conflicts or first loves.

We've taken a look at how their cover designs encapsulate the themes of their stories and characters...

## *The Island of Forgetting* by Jasmine Sealy

If you're looking for a contemporary novel to dive into this summer, then *The Island of Forgetting* is one to add to your list. Spanning four decades, Sealy's 2022 debut (loosely based on Greek mythology) follows a family's adventures and tribulations as they run a beachfront hotel. The novel explores themes of longing, family bonds, estrangement and identity whilst set against the backdrop of Barbados. The design utilises heartfelt photography with neon colours, to illustrate the rawness of the novel yet its beautiful location. This is the perfect read for those who are fans of *Girl, Woman, Other* and *Homegoing*.

## *Beach Read* by Emily Henry

Emily Henry's *Beach Read* is a romance novel about two writers, Augustus and January, who write in different genres (literary fiction and romance). Living next door to each other for the summer, they decide to challenge each other to write in the other person's genre to help them solve their writer's block.

This version of the cover is effective because it reflects what the book is about. Like many romance books, *Beach Read* has the main couple featured on the front cover - we see Augustus reading a book and January with a book and pen next to her. It uses bright, eye-catching, primary colours to stand out on the shelf. From the cover, *Beach Read* definitely appears like a book you would want to read in the summer.

## *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

Readers of *Mexican Gothic* and *Gods of Jade and Shadow* will not be disappointed when they hear that Moreno-Garcia's most recent novel is now

available to read. *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* is a re-imagining of H.G. Well's *The Island of Dr Moreau* that transports us to 19<sup>th</sup> century Mexico and our main characters who are jolted by the arrival of an outsider. The cast include Carlota Moreau, the only daughter of the madman doctor, Montgomery Laughton, who assists the doctor with his scientific experiments and finally, the hybrids, who are the monstrosities that live in the shadows. The cover design is courtesy of [Faceout Studios](#) and captures the luxurious and vibrant atmosphere of the estate, while hinting at the isolation felt by Carlota, pictured alone yet surrounded by the chaotic jungle.

## *The Summer I Turned Pretty* by Jenny Han

*The Summer I Turned Pretty* is the first book in Han's popular young adult romance series, which was recently adapted into a series for Amazon Prime. The book follows the protagonist Isabel as she spends the summer at Cousins Beach with her family friends.

This edition has a pastel blue-green cover with daisies and shells on it. It doesn't



give much away about what actually happens in the book, but the title by itself definitely gives hints that it will be a romance. The shells help to create a summer atmosphere and give us a clue that the book is going to take place in a seaside setting. Overall, the different components of this cover come together to create a really aesthetically pleasing cover.

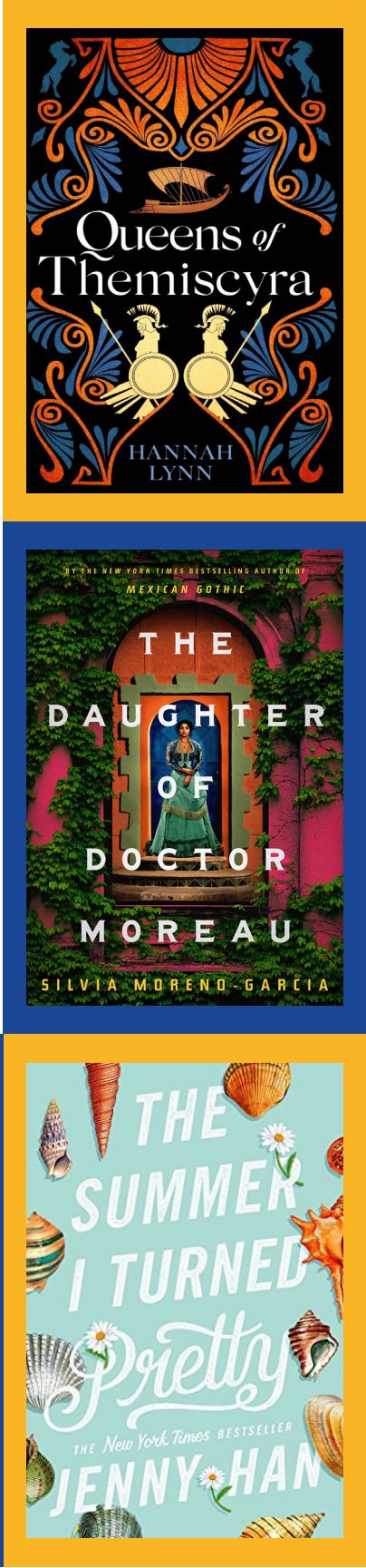
## *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart

*We Were Liars* is Lockhart's young adult suspense book, following the rich Sinclair family, who spend each summer on Beechwood Island. The novel follows Cadence, who loses her memories of a particular summer and slowly remembers what happened two years later.

The cover feels summery, as we see a group of people in the water with a blue sky and the sun behind them. At the same time, it feels mysterious, as the reader can't see any of the people's faces. The typeface of the title blurs and fades which also adds to the mysterious feeling and the sense that something is slightly off. The cover works well because it is simple whilst hinting what the book might be about.

## *Queens of Themiscrya* by Hannah Lynn

For fans of Miller's *The Song of Achilles* and Haynes' *A Thousand Ships*, there is another ancient retelling hot off the press that focuses on the Queen of the Amazons. *Queens of Themiscrya* is the perfect beach read to transport yourself to Athens and the lives of sisters Hippolyte and Penthesilea, who both take their turns at ruling. Following the design of the previous instalments in Lynn's Grecian Women series, the cover plays with hues of orange, blue and red, depicting two sisters on opposing sides, who are very different in their way of governing. Retellings of the mythological Amazons events are rare but this could be the next trend to hit the shelves.



# Job Opportunities

BY LEAH BIRD AND TASNEEM HAFIZ

## Foreign Rights Assistant at Walker Books Ltd

**Closing Date:** 7 August 2022

**Salary:** £24,000

**Location:** Vauxhall, London

A vacancy has opened up with Walker Books Ltd to support the Foreign Rights Team. This role is for a self-motivated individual looking to launch their career in rights. The publisher, Walker Books, will provide an exciting opportunity to work on award-winning and best-selling children's books across a wide range of formats.

Responsibilities of the role involve liaising with internal creative teams and attending work-in-progress meetings, managing marketing materials, logistics for book fair attendance and sales trips, print and email submissions, updating databases and mailing lists and providing support on compiling book fair catalogues and other presentations.

The ideal candidate will need to demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills. These include communication, time-management, organisational

and administrative skills with good attention to detail and awareness of project delivery. You will need to be proactive, work calmly under pressure and want to make positive contributions. The candidate will also need to have excellent working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications. In addition to an interest in international publishing and the importance of sales support to business development. As the candidate develops themselves into the role, you will need to show a willingness to travel to international book fairs and on sales trips.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



## Business Affairs Admin Assistant at Walker Books Ltd

**Closing Date:** 7 August 2022

**Salary:** £24,000

**Location:** Vauxhall, London

An opportunity has arisen with Walker Books Ltd to support the Business Affairs Department. Your role as Business Affairs Admin Assistant is to provide full administrative support for the department.

Responsibilities of the role include, but are not limited to, inputting information about contracts onto the various systems, producing and distributing reports, issuing permission agreements for Walker held/owned material, maintaining contract files, administering the signing of partnership agreements and providing general administrative support to the Business Affairs team.

The ideal candidate will need to have a good understanding in business affairs. You will also need to demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills which include communication (both written and verbal), time-management, organisational and administrative skills. The

successful candidate will also need to learn quickly, have excellent attention to detail, enjoy working within a team and be able to work on their own.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



## Admin Apprentice at Alain Charles Publishing

**Closing Date:** 5 August 2022

**Salary:** £16,800

**Location:** London

Alain Charles is looking for an enthusiastic HR Admin Apprentice to join their team.

You will be meeting and greeting visitors at the building, maintaining office equipment and ensuring office supplies are kept up-to-date. Your responsibilities will also include keeping the HR database up-to-date, responding to emails and being responsible for the inbox. The successful candidate will be delegating queries to ensure prompt responses, dispatching invoices and booking meeting rooms.

To apply, you will need to attend an online Zoom screening interview with their Talent Team and pass initial assessments in Maths and English. You will need to be confident in dealing with people, flexible and have good attention to detail. The ideal candidate will also be a people person.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

## Marketing & Publicity Intern, Children's at Bonnier Books UK

**Closing Date:** 7 August 2022

**Salary:** £21,158

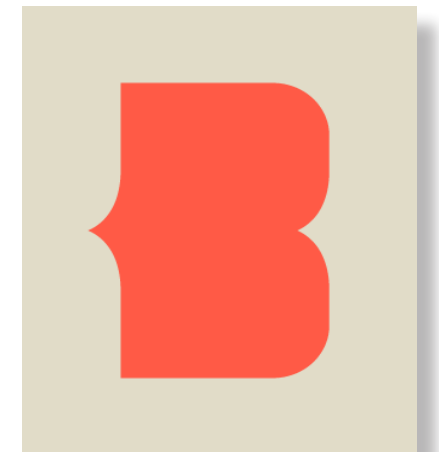
**Location:** Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London

Bonnier Books UK are looking for a Marketing & Publicity intern to work closely with their children's marketing and publicity team across an exciting range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, over a six month internship.

You will be learning essential team admin skills, such as monitoring a press inbox, organising mailings, processing invoices and updating databases. You will also be collating weekly PR updates, ordering books and working with the Sales team to keep stock levels replenished. The successful candidate will help with events, including booking travel for authors and teams as well as collate, log and send bookseller round ups and award submissions.

The successful candidate's responsibilities will also include logging and circulating press coverage, social media scheduling and content creation, supporting with the creation of marketing material and managing the flow of information and material delivery to select retailers.

The ideal candidate will have great organisational and time-management skills, be a self-starter and have initiative. You will also be a good communicator and team player, great attention to detail and be proactive and eager to learn. The successful candidate will be able to take ownership of tasks and show initiative in a fast-paced, fun and creative environment. The successful candidate will also participate in a Creative Access support programme alongside workplace training, including a programme of induction training, monthly masterclasses, wellbeing support, mentoring and more. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).





# Guts Publishing

BY LILY WEBBER

The importance of brave publishing (gutsy if you will) is the central manifesto for the publishing house founded by Julianne Ingles in 2019.

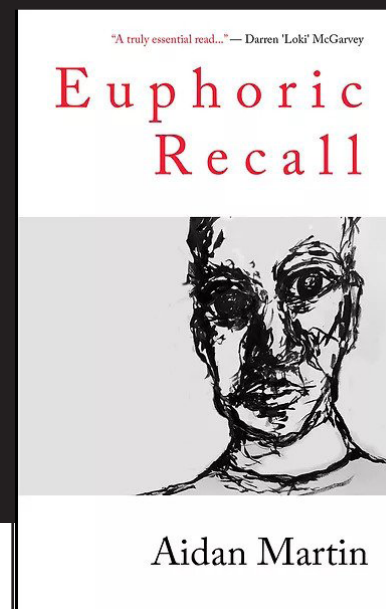
[Guts Publishing](#) is a London based independent press which publishes “ballsy memoirs and racy anthologies.” The founder, Julianne Ingles, started as a painter in 1990s Chicago. By 2004 she had started travelling and writing. She describes this period of her life as “feeding [her] work as an artist and writer.” Since founding Guts in 2019, the house has published sixty stories. Specifically, publishing real-life stories seems to be at the heart of Guts Publishing’s brand. The independent press focuses on shining a light over the uncomfortable and dares the reader to blink. Indeed, previously undiscussed topics are a common theme among all their published titles.

In regular newsletters Ingles updates on new moves and exciting debuts. Interestingly, a frequent topic of conversation for the founder is the blurring of fiction and non-fiction. Ingles asserts that “these days I don’t really know that the word fiction actually means all that much. Sometimes I think it just means – I’d rather not call it nonfiction.” Two years into the creation of Guts Publishing, Ingles decided to also publish fiction. Inspired by *Shuggie Bain*, the imprint decided to publish fictional novels and anthologies “that read like non-fiction but are not.”

An intriguing publishing house has, as you would assume, produced some very intriguing titles. One of the most notable titles published by Guts is *Euphoric Recall*, a memoir about drug addiction written by indie filmmaker Aidan Martin. Martin himself has described his experience of discovering Guts Publishing as an ‘aha’

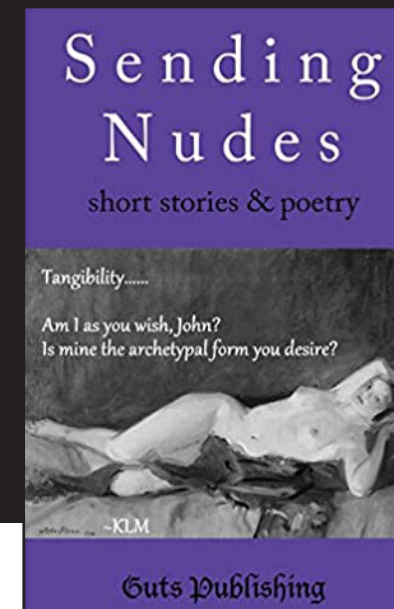
moment: “Their tagline had me hooked instantly: ‘Ballsy books about life’.” The memoir was praised in the Scottish Parliament in 2020: the MP Neil Findlay noted it as “a positive contribution to the debate around drugs and drug deaths in Scotland.” And, off the back of his novel, Martin has become a public speaker about the drug related death crisis in Scotland.

Another success of the maverick publishing house is *Sending Nudes*, an anthology about the act of nude picture taking – a perfect illustration of Guts’ ability to broadcast the taboo. Exploring “the need to be self-exposing,” the title explores a modern practice that certainly divides generations. Combining male and female perspectives, the anthology attempts to answer the question why we’re compelled to expose ourselves digitally.



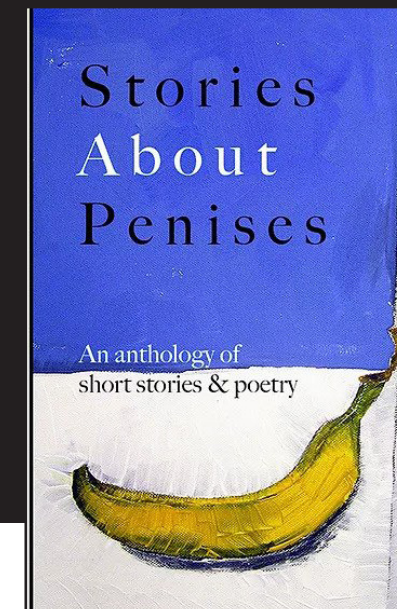
*The Peanut Factory* by Deborah Price is a memoir about squatting in 70s South London. Price’s life story is full of famous faces and the grubbiness of youthful rebellion. A subject rarely discussed, the novel elaborates on the appeal of squatting in the post-punk era. *Stories About Penises* is the debut title from the company, an anthology about male genitalia from all perspectives. *Blade in the Shadow* by Jillian Halket is a memoir about the impact of OCD on one young woman’s life and how she learns to embrace the messiness of life.

Guts Publishing has announced that in 2023 they will be publishing three more thought-provoking memoirs. *Flying with Fear* by Susan Milton is an autobiography of an airhostess with a fear of flying. Milton moved from Lancaster to Saudi Arabia in the 80s – she was confronted with a culture



shock, embracing the Islamic culture amidst her own struggle with dyslexia. *Smashed Not Wasted* by Sam Thomas is a memoir about addiction. Thomas is a writer, speaker and mental health advocate who speaks publicly about his struggles. Lastly, *Dear Mr Andrews* by Lotte Latham is an illustrated memoir of a self-proclaimed “Professional Hedonist.” Lotte is a thirty-year-old sex worker struggling with the stigma of her profession. The character Mr Andrews is a John who Lotte has written many letters to over email, having developed a complicated and confessional relationship with him. As such, the memoir will be written in second person, an interesting twist.

As well as publishing boundary-pushing books, Julianne runs a publishing coaching service for those wanting to break into the industry. She describes on



her website that she set up the service “because I’d like writers to know that pitching a book isn’t rocket science. Anyone can do it. You just need the right tools and some guidance. Which is where I come in!”

With so many interesting titles and such a strong sense of self, Guts Publishing is certainly a unique independent press and one we should all watch out for in years to come. You can follow them on Twitter, @GutsPublishing.





# Campaign Spotlight:

## Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

BY CAITLIN DAVIES, DANIELLE HERNANDEZ AND GEORGIA REES

Published on 14 July, the new novel, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, written by bestselling author Gabrielle Zevin, follows two friends on their exhilarating journey from childhood gamers to video game creators. It examines the challenges of collaboration as the pair design imaginative quests for their players to complete. Inspired by thrilling adventures within the novel, the team at Vintage Books has created some dazzling games of their own, in one of the largest marketing campaigns of the summer so far. From recreating the actual video game featured in the book, to designing unique proof copies to look like retro PC games, as well as hosting competitions for the best bookshop window display, every gamified aspect of this campaign entices the reader to immerse themselves in Zevin’s world.

*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* has already captured the attention of booksellers nationwide, by becoming bookshop.org’s July Book of The Month and a BBC Radio 2 Book Club pick, all while reeling in glowing reviews from a variety of readers and creating a buzz

on social media. This week we take a look at some of the eccentric marketing techniques Vintage have employed to gain readers’ attention and discuss how thinking outside the box can help a novel stand out in the tough summer season.

### Book Clubs and Events

*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* has firmly cemented itself as July’s must-read novel, dominating book club picks across the UK. As a novel focusing on a shared connection in the virtual world of gaming, it makes a perfect pick for the BBC 2 Book Club, a long-running virtual book club which brings together readers across the country. Their book club submissions are analysed, then selected, by a panel in collaboration with The Reading Agency, an organisation that strives to make reading accessible to all. *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* was also front and centre on bookshop.org as their July Book of the Month, with a large graphic banner sharing critical acclaim on the homepage. What’s more, customers received free shipping by purchasing this novel across July, and an opportunity

to win a National Art Pass, limited edition badge set and bookmark.

Gabrielle Zevin has also been busy touring across the USA and the UK to promote her latest book. Arriving in the UK, following an exciting launch day, she visited Waterstones Liverpool One and Waterstones Piccadilly, before travelling to Blackwell’s Oxford. Zevin also visited the ever-popular BookBar, in conjunction with their BookBar Summer Time event series. The ‘In Conversation’ event even featured a pop-up video games cave and pizza available for attendees. Also featuring as their July Book of the Month, the BookBar Instagram account has been sharing the excitement and reactions from their booksellers, as the “WhatsApp group has been going crazy with love for this novel.” As an incentive for pre-ordering the novel, BookBar also offered Yard Sale Pizza vouchers and exclusive gadget stickers to their first lucky customers. These accolades, combined with a busy events schedule, have succeeded in creating a conversation about *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*. Yet by using unconventional

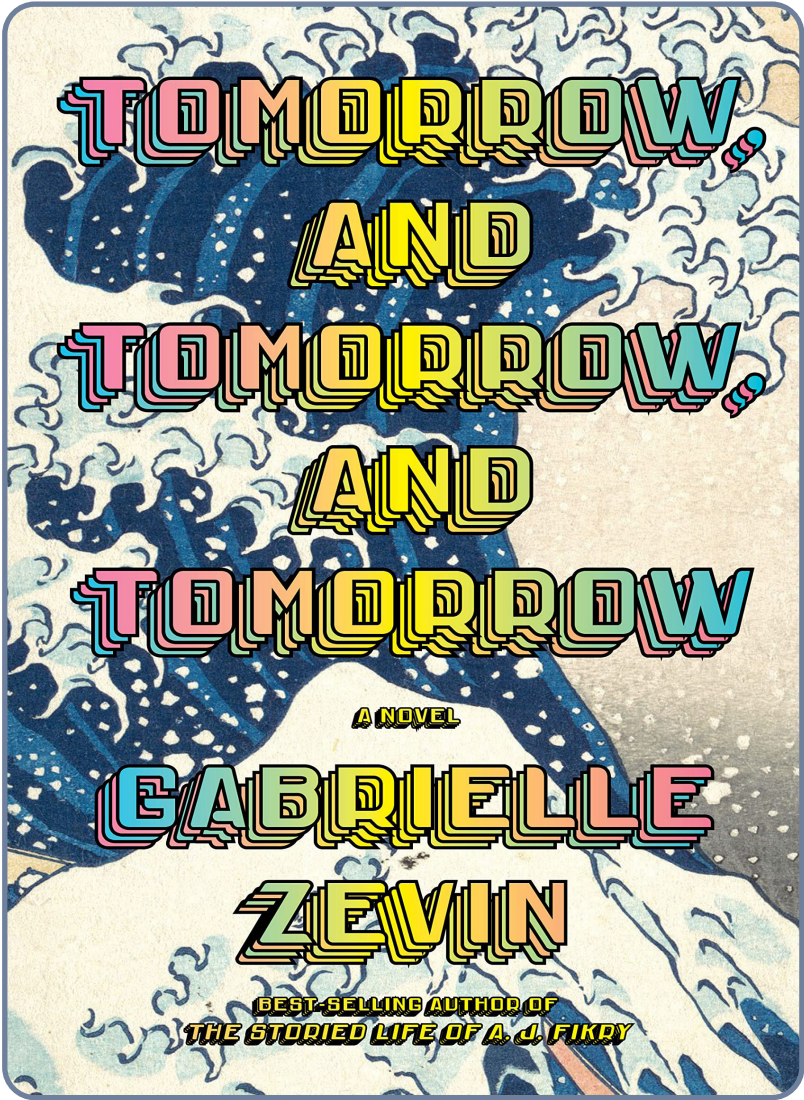
gaming-themed marketing tools, the conversation hasn’t stopped there.

### Immersive Marketing

Setting apart Zevin’s latest novel from other similar releases, the marketing team, headed by Katrina Northern, used a unique style of immersive marketing to bring the themes of the book to life. Waterstones’ flagship branch in Piccadilly played host to a real-life replica of the game “Emily Blaster” which is featured prominently in the book. The installation, in place for a week from publication on 14 July, allowed readers to transport themselves back in time to video games of the 1980s. Those who could not make it to the pop-up were instead treated to an online version, playable from their own devices.

Carrying on the video game theme, the team partnered with Penguin to launch an online tool to create your own video game avatar, which could then be posted under the #Tomorrowx3 tag on social media. Gabrielle Zevin even created and shared her own avatar on her Instagram account and also drew her followers’ attention to the specially created Tomorrowx3 Instagram filter.

Bookshops have really been encouraged to get behind this release with Waterstones promoting their own holographic exclusive edition, and many stores



creating fantastic window displays. Booksellers and bloggers also received a gorgeously designed proof copy made to look like an old VCR tape. Getting bookshops and booksellers excited is a key technique to reaching those high sales numbers, and Zevin and her team are masters at feeding the hype.

The success continues for *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, receiving favourable reviews from

authors and critics alike. The excitement for readers doesn’t have to end quite so soon, however, as Penguin has already reported that a film adaptation is in the works, set to be produced by Temple Hill and Paramount Studios. This has been a powerhouse of a book launch campaign, matching an exciting novel with marketing techniques that are equally immersive and have thrived in connecting with readers.



# LGBTQIA+ Celebrities Promoting Inclusive Literature!

By BECCA BINNIE, EMMA HOLBROOK, CARLY BENNETT AND LAUREN DOOLEY

Some people discover their next read on the shelves of their local bookstore, some turn to the recommendations of friends and other may turn to celebrities for inspiration. With their immense impact, celebrities have the capacity to influence their fans. This power needs to be used to promote and celebrate acceptance and love. This is especially true for the LGBTQIA+ community. As such, we want to celebrate some celebrities in the queer community that have promoted inclusive literature and highlight the amazing books they celebrate.

## Stephen Fry

Embracing who you are as well as your sexuality has always been a difficult aspect for anyone to come to terms with, but it's people like actor, comedian, director and writer Stephen Fry whose own self-embracement has encouraged hundreds of others to do the same. Since publicly coming out as gay very early in his acting career, Fry has taken every opportunity he can to show his support for the LGBTQIA+ community, especially in

the creative and media industries. Not only has he shown his support for fiction writers inspired by ancient Greek mythology for shining a light on diverse couples such as Apollo and Hyacinth or the love Artemis, a goddess who has been reimagined as asexual and potentially aromantic, bore for Orion while remaining a maid. He also went on to write three of his own retellings of Greek mythology with a heavy focus on the LGBTQIA+ community.

Though he is well known for his striking performance as disgraced, gay and Irish playwright Oscar Wilde in the 1997 film *Simply Wilde*, Fry has gained the hearts of many by promoting books of both fiction and non-fiction that accurately represent the struggles and the beauty that can be found within the LGBTQIA+ community. He has gone as far as to record audiobooks of such books and he is included amongst



many writers in an anthology of gay fiction, *Speak my Language, and Other Stories*.

## Graham Norton

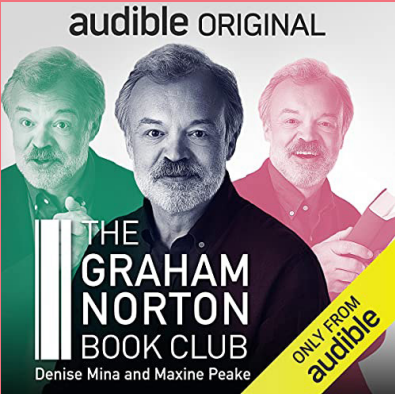
Graham Norton is a well-known Irish actor, author, comedian, commentator and writer. In May 2021, Norton began a podcast named *The Graham Norton Book Club*, where he is often joined by co-hosts journalist Alex Clark and author Sara Collins as well as a heap of famous writers and audiobook narrators. The podcast discusses all things books, including reviews, recommendations, interviews and the latest news. As a gay man, Norton uses this platform to spotlight many LGBTQIA+ voices and stories including those of Miriam Margolyes, Sarah Waters, Bernardine Evaristo, Jonathan Coe and N.K. Jemisin. Available on Audible, Norton's podcast is great for inclusive discussions surrounding representative and wonderful literature.

Furthermore, Graham Norton is a *New York Times* bestselling author

himself. His recent novel *Home Stretch*, published by Hachette in September 2020, follows the life of Connor in a 1987 small Irish community after a fatal accident. After the tragedy, Connor takes himself and his secrets to New York, where unspoken regrets and desires continue to haunt his new life. A tale of emigration, stigma and secrecy, *Home Stretch* is a novel representative of LGBTQIA+ struggle as Connor confronts his past.

## Roxane Gay

Comfortably moving through numerous spaces as an essayist, professor, social commentator and short story writer, Roxane Gay has published numerous titles exploring sexuality, race and feminism. *Bad Feminist* is her 2014 *New York Times* bestselling title, which has musings on sexuality woven into many of the essays that explore the way her feminism is often at odds with the pop culture she loves. *Difficult*

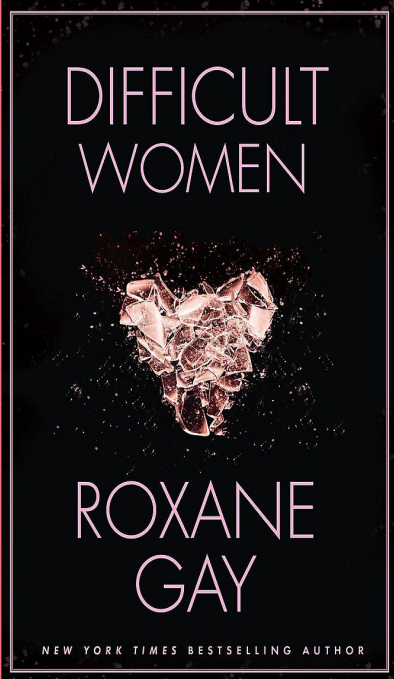


*Women*, her 2017 short story collection, was shortlisted for the Lambda Literary Award in Lesbian Fiction.

As well as being an award-winning LGBTQIA+ writer, Roxane Gay has also become something of a go-to for her diverse book recommendations, which she shares on *Goodreads* and *Medium*. LGBTQIA+ novels recommended by Gay include *Real Life* by Brandon Taylor, Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*; *Detransition, Baby* by Torrey Peters and *The Prophets* by Robert Jones Jr.

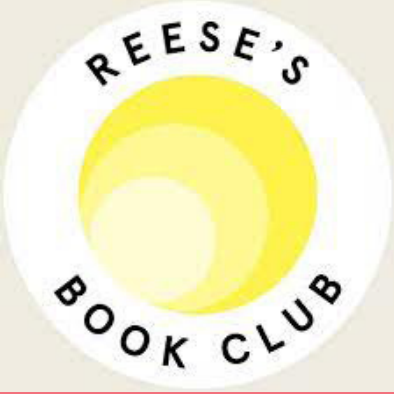
## Reese Witherspoon

While not part of the LGBTQIA+ community, Reese Witherspoon is becoming a vital ally through



her book club *Reese's Book Club*. Witherspoon's daughter recently stated that she does not look for a partner based on gender, and Witherspoon is using her immense platform to promote amazing, inclusive LGBTQIA+ books. The book club's Instagram reaches over 2.3 million readers, and recently collaborated with Leah Johnson, author of *You Should See Me In A Crown* and *Rise To The Sun*, to recommend nine books for Pride.

For Pride, this book club promoted Robby Weber's *If You Change Your Mind*, a contemporary story that celebrates gay love, and *Sofi and the Bone Song* by Adrienne Tooley, a sapphic fantasy. Two further important recommendations are *Different Kinds of Fruit* by Kyle Lukoff, a Middle Grade story that follows a child discovering their father is trans, and *Act Cool* by Tobly McSmith, a Young Adult book that celebrates transgender people.





# Orwell Prize 2022 Winners Announced

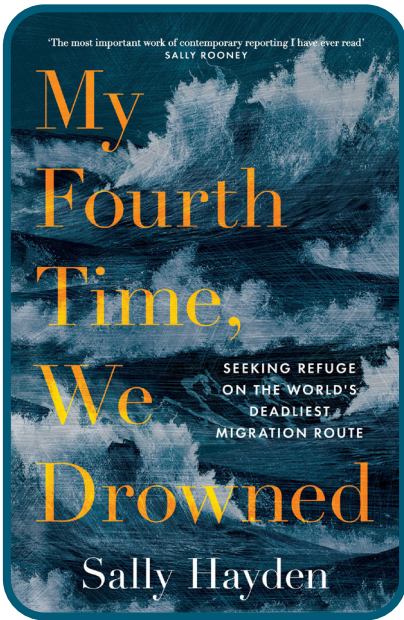
By CAITLIN EVANS, PARIDHI BADGOTRI, THOMAS CALDOW AND GABRIELLA SOTIRIOU

George Orwell’s literary legacy is one of prestige in two realms; politics and art. This is what the Orwell Prize aims to celebrate through their annual awards, as they declare recognition for literature that honours the work of their namesake. Founded in 1994, the Orwell Prizes have grown to become a highly sought-after award among political writers. This year’s Orwell Prize 2022 winners have now been announced and will each be receiving a prize of £3,000.

The prize is divided into four categories: The Orwell Prize for Political Writing, The Orwell Prize for Political Fiction, The Orwell Prize for Journalism, and The Orwell Prize for Exposing Britain’s Social Evils. Each category has its own specially curated panel of judges, appointed afresh every year. Despite their nuances, all four judging panels have one aim – to select the writing that best meets “the spirit of George Orwell’s own ambition to make political writing into an art.”

## Political Fiction: *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan (Faber & Faber)

Claire Keegan’s short novel, *Small Things Like These*, centres on coal merchant Bill Furlong and his family during the Christmas period of 1985. The setting is the town of New Ross in County Wexford. Furlong is a character that is pure of heart and Keegan’s descriptions show him to be encouraging and caring towards his five daughters. The family is happy and content. The tension of the tale arrives in the form of a discovery at the nearby convent which is home to women who are deemed “fallen.” The rest of the novel is fuelled by Furlong’s actions upon uncovering the true horrors of Ireland’s Catholic run asylums known as “Magdalene Laundries.” Tied in with this is Bill’s exploration of his childhood and his search for life’s meaning, giving the story a fable like feel. Keegan’s feminist reimagining of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* is hugely impactful despite its short length and displays wonderful sentimentality and tenderness.



## Political Writing: *My Fourth Time, We Drowned* by Sally Hayden (HarperCollins)

Sally Hayden’s *My Fourth Time, We Drowned* exposes the West’s hand in the state-sponsored violence in Libya. Her book delves through multiple social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, through which she got into contact with refugees who are seeking asylum. The stories of these refugees across North Africa highlights instances of sexual abuse, enslavements, torture and murders. According to Hayden, such a horrendous migrant crisis is a consequence of European policies. She depicts the United Nations corrupt agendas and EU’s economics of slave trade and bankrolling of Libyan militias. She examines Europe’s negligence of handling the crisis that they had fuelled. Furthermore, she asks the questions of why the stories of these refugees are left unreported and why nobody is trying to find solutions. In the end, the book unravels the stories of refugees who have been ignored by the world and their efforts in making themselves heard through a system which has tried to silence them.

## Journalism: George Monbiot (*The Guardian*)

The Prize for Journalism is awarded for sustained reporting, George Monbiot’s coverage of the climate crisis has certainly been that. With relentless energy he has shone a light on the greatest danger our society has ever faced, examining not only the science, but the systems perpetuating these problems. His article *Watching Don’t Look Up made me see my whole life of campaigning flash before me* (one of four shortlisted articles, all written for *The Guardian*) questions the motives of media companies and their commitment to ignoring the frightening environmental trends we are bearing witness to worldwide. Orwell made his anger at the manipulation and denial of truth clear, most famously in his novels *Animal Farm* and *1984*, and Monbiot does the same, reporting on a world which is eerily similar to the ones Orwell imagined. Monbiot’s fiery, provocative, and deeply human writing is essential reading for anyone looking to understand our world and a deserving winner of this year’s prize.



## Exposing Britain’s Social Evils: *The Cost of Covid: Burnley Crisis* by Ed Thomas (BBC News)

Exposing Britain’s Social Evils is a prize category aimed at pieces of journalism that delve into the political state of Great Britain and exposes the cracks in our society. This year, the prize is awarded to Ed Thomas, a Special Correspondent at *BBC News* whose work focuses on the struggles of modern Britain. *The Cost of Covid: A Year on the Frontline* was a piece that Ed Thomas has worked on for the past year along with picture correspondent Phill Edwards. They spent their time in Burnley, one of the poorest towns in England, getting first-hand witness of the impact of the pandemic. The exposé comes at a time when the cost-of-living crisis continues to increase, proving the poignancy of reports such as these that speak on the experience of those suffering the hardest. The Orwell Prize thus deemed this a piece of work that Orwell himself would have championed, as it calls for radical change and the improvement of the quality of life.



# Upcoming Publishing Events

By SOPHIE DICKINSON



## SYP South West Summer Book Club – Emily Henry’s *Beach Read*

7 August, 7:00 p.m.

Join the South West branch of the Society of Young Publishers on Zoom for a casual, summer-themed book club meeting on Emily Henry’s *Beach Read*. The event will offer the opportunity to chat about the book and meet other publishing hopefuls in a relaxed environment. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

## BookTok Festival at Waterstones Piccadilly

4 August, 11:00 a.m. onwards

Waterstones Piccadilly is hosting a one day BookTok festival, the first of its kind, offering the chance for the virtual book sphere to meet in real life and celebrate the growing phenomenon of BookTok! Join them for exclusive quizzes, merch giveaways, photo booth opportunities and craft and

embroidery workshops – all of which are free to attend! For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

In the afternoon, bookish activities continue with The Candid Bookclub, who are hosting a book club to discuss Ali Hazelwood’s *The Love Hypothesis*. Tickets for this section of the BookTok festival are available [here](#).

At 6:00 p.m., there will be an exclusive livestream with Taylor Jenkins Reid, to celebrate the success of her widely read novels *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, *Malibu Rising* and *Daisy Jones and The Six*. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

## Danielle Jawando in Conversation with Liz Flanagan

16 August, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Join Danielle Jawando and Liza Flanagan at Blackwells Manchester for a conversation about Jawando’s new YA novel *When Our Worlds Collided*. This powerful coming of age story covers chance encounters, injustice and how the choices we make can completely alter our future.

Danielle Jawando is an author and screenwriter, and her YA novel *And the Stars Were Burning Brightly* won the best senior novel in the Great Reads Award, as well as being shortlisted for the Waterstones Children’s Book Prize, among others. Liza Flanagan is an author and lecturer in creative writing at York St John University. Her debut YA novel *Eden Summer* was published by David Fickling Books and nominated for the Carnegie Medal. She is currently writing a historical novel for adults. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

## Laura Kay, Lily Linton and Bethany Rutter in Conversation with Kiley Dunbar

11 August, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Join Blackwells Manchester in welcoming Laura Kay, Lily Linton and Bethany Rutter to discuss their latest works *Tell Me Everything*, *Double Booked* and *Welcome to Your Life* – three brilliant new laugh-out-loud romantic comedies. They will be in conversation with host Kiley Dunbar, author of *The Borrow a Bookshop Holiday*. For more information on the speakers and their books, as well as ticket information and prices, click [here](#).

## Mohsin Hamid: *The Last White Man*

9 August, 7:00 p.m.

London Review Bookshop

Join Mohsin Hamid at the London Review Bookshop as he discusses his fifth novel *The Last White Man* (Hamish Hamilton). This continues his exploration of cultural and racial displacement, commenced in his previous novels *Moth Smoke*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* and *Exit West*. In *The Last White Man*, a man awakes one morning to find his skin has turned dark. Described as a contemporary remoulding of Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, this is not one to miss. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).



## Edinburgh International Book Festival

13–29 August

The Edinburgh International Book Festival brings together key thinkers, authors, performers and musicians from around the world, this year boasting a programme of more than 600 events

across the festival. This year’s vibrant programme builds upon the hybrid format of previous years, with many events available to livestream or watch online at a later date.

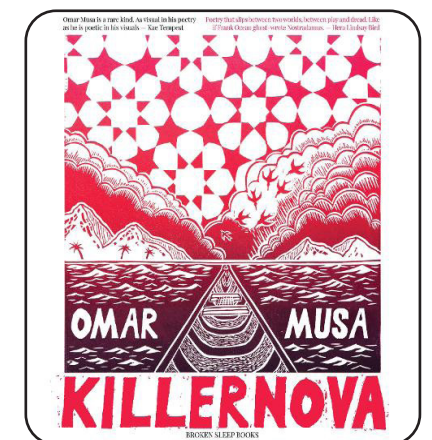
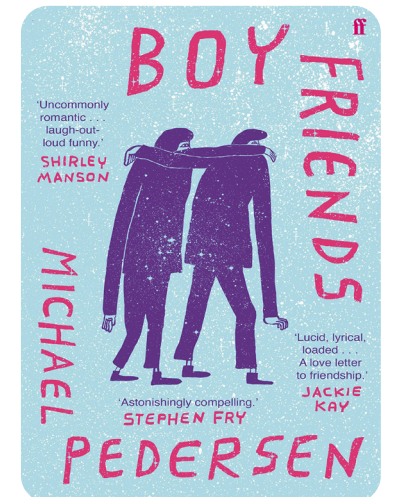
Of particular interest to those in the book trade is this year’s Business of Books strand of the festival, operating on a pay what you can basis. The Business of Books offers six events, ranging from industry issues to showcases of literary talent. Attendees can expect talks on celebrating literary inclusion and the evolution of YA literature, as well as marketing strategies and advice on writing for children. The ‘Business of Books’ aims to champion, inspire, inform and demystify publishing – a brilliant event for all publishing hopefuls! For more information, visit the festival website [here](#).

## An Evening with Michael Pedersen and Omar Musa

9 August, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Join Michael Pedersen and Omar Musa at Waterstones Nottingham as they launch their hotly anticipated and critically acclaimed new works *Boy Friends* and *Killernova*. Pedersen’s *Boy Friends* is an intimate yet expansive work of prose on grief, love and loss, which started out as a letter to one

of Pedersen’s close friends who passed away. Musa’s *Killernova* is a blistering work of poetry interrogating the themes of heritage and belonging. Join the two as they talk about love, belonging, and the act of writing poetry. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).





# Shuffling of the Shelves - July Part 2



BY HANNAH MOORE AND MELISSA TRAN

**It is no surprise that romance reads dominate the charts this month. With the summer holidays beginning and the UK being hit with a heatwave, page-turners are going to be soaring off the shelves!**

There has been movement in the Amazon charts, with big names being bumped from the top spots. Elin Hilderbrand takes the number five spot with *The Hotel Nantucket*. Hilderbrand explores romance, drama and relationships all set to the backdrop of the Hotel Nantucket which introduces a historical element to the novel. With previous page-turners such as *Golden Girl*, Hilderbrand lives up to her title as “the queen of beach reads” with this novel (*New York Magazine*). *Things We Never Got Over* by Lucy Score sits at number six. The novel follows Knox, who

typically keeps himself to himself, and Naomi who is constantly surrounded by drama. Readers have said that it is not “like most rom coms that are so over the top” as its characters are “so real” (*Amazon*). Score shows the ups and downs of relationships between families and partners and how characters once perceived as total opposites can come together.

Many of the same titles remain within the WHSmith’s charts, but there are some notable new entries as well. In the number one spot is *Sunday’s Child* (*The Rockwood Chronicles* Book Four) by Dilly Court, which explores the romance between Nancy and Freddie as Nancy struggles to discover the truth about where she came from. Court continues her series with a page-turning romance that keeps you excited for the next instalment. Stephen King’s Billy Summers sits at number eight. *Billy Summers* is a war veteran turned

hitman who wishes to retire from his post, but when he is offered one final job it is just too big to refuse. Yet, Billy soon learns that this job is not what it first seems and begins to regret his involvement. King’s thrillers are always well received by audiences with this novel being no exception. At number nine is *Three Sisters* by Heather Morris, the author of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. Following the story of sisters separated during the Nazi regime, Morris finishes her series with a gripping, heart-breaking instalment.

*Lightseekers* by Femi Kayode is high in the Waterstones chart this month with an exclusive edition recently hitting the shelves. Described as “inventive and original” Kayode crafts a thriller unlike any other, laced with Nigerian culture and politics (*Waterstones*). *Lightseekers* follows investigative psychologist Philip Taiwo who attempts to get to the bottom of why three young students were

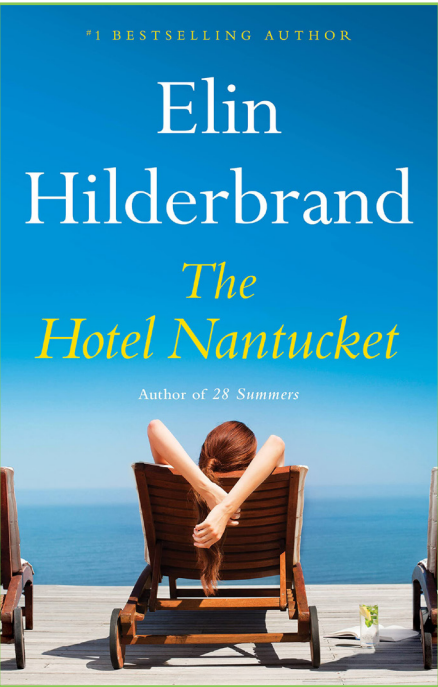
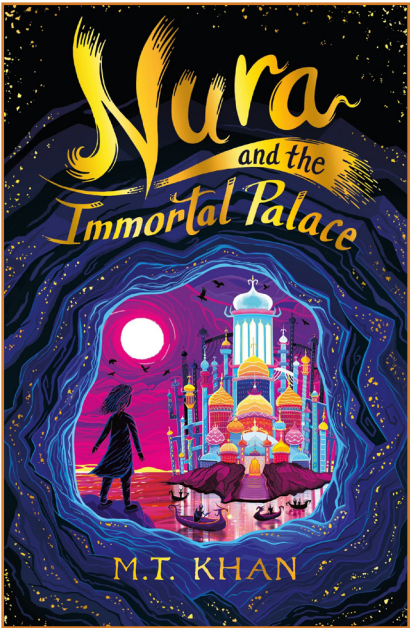
murdered at a university. This book is now Waterstones thriller of the month for July which demonstrates Kayode’s genius and the books’ popularity. Another novel at the top of the chart is *Nura and the Immortal Palace* by M. T. Khan. This is another book in the Waterstones chart which explores different cultures as Khan creates a magical story rooted in Muslim folklore. Khan introduces us to the young but brave protagonist, Nura, as she goes in search of buried treasure to help with her family’s financial troubles. Readers suggest this is not only a beautifully written children’s book but also “tells a bold tale that challenges greed and inequality” which makes this a highly informative book for children to get their hands on (*Waterstones Reviews*).

Currently trending on BookTok is *Funny You Should Ask* by Elissa Sussman. A

beachy, summer romance that will have you hooked from the first page. *Funny You Should Ask* follows the story of a reporter and a celebrity over the course of ten years as their lives intertwine. Sussman has created a witty romance that’s bright, eye-catching cover and glamorous characters have dazzled both the BookTok and Bookstagram communities. On a similar front, Emily Henry’s *You and Me on Vacation* remains a prevalent trend in book online communities. Another romance perfect for a summer, beach read, Henry’s novel follows Poppy and Alex in a laughter-filled story of love.

*The Terminal List* by Jack Carr is our noteworthy book this month. Carr is a number one *New York Times* bestselling author and a former Navy SEAL which he draws on in his writing. Carr’s thriller gained a new audience after *The*

*Terminal List* was made into a television series starring Chris Pratt. Pratt stars as James Reece, a Navy SEAL who seeks vengeance after the mysterious death of his entire platoon. The television show has had mixed reviews from audiences, for instance some have said: “Chris Pratt nailed it as James Reece, highly recommend,” another recommending that the book “captures [Reece’s] spirit even better” and others have questioned whether it “lived up to the crazy hype” that social media portrayed (*Twitter*). Overall, Carr’s books have seen a spike in popularity and will probably continue to do so if season two of *The Terminal List* arises!

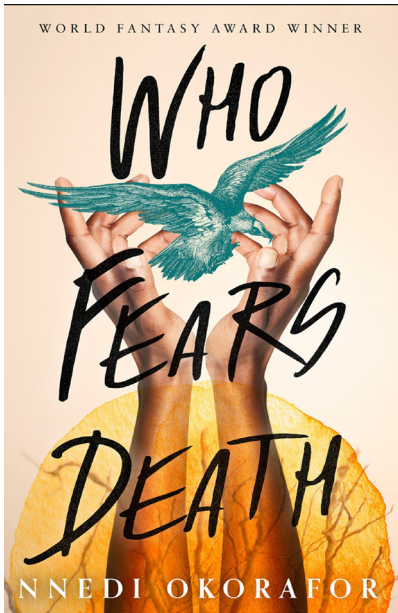




# Not to be Overlooked

BY GURNISH KAUR BIRDI AND NATALIA ALVAREZ

**Not To Be Overlooked** introduces a variety of wonderful but lesser-known books to assist readers in finding their next great reads. This week’s column covers a review of *Who Fears Death* by Nnedi Okorafor and *With Teeth* by Kristen Arnett.



## *Who Fears Death* by Nnedi Okorafor

After the publication of Okorafor’s award-winning fantasy novel, *Who Fears Death*, the fantasy genre has become a playground for writers of colour to explore and reclaim their personal and national identities.

*Who Fears Death* combines the thrill of the supernatural and sorcery with the discussion of belonging and race. We follow the journey of a young “Ewu” girl called Onyesonwu growing up in

post-apocalyptic Sudan. Sudan is a divided land where the “light-skinned” Nuru community oppresses the “dark-skinned” Okeke community. Onyesonwu is a product of her mother’s suffering and abuse from the Nuru men, making her an outcast to society. Onye faces brutal discrimination, yet her fierce determination prevails to the end of the novel. In hope of being accepted by society, Onye undergoes a female circumcision where she bonds closely with three girls, Binta, Diti and Luyu.

However, upon reaching maturity, Onye discovers her speculative powers of shapeshifting and communicating with death. This changes everything. Onye needs to learn how to control her powers yet battles with constant rejection as an “Ewu” girl. Onye’s character seeks education and justice not only for her mother but for herself. Onye is a powerful character even when she feels powerless.

Along the journey, she learns to love, forms friendships, finds power in her magic

and understands her identity. I deeply appreciate the themes of this novel; Okorafor portrays the complexity of lost identity in such a relatable manner. We see Onye grow and become stronger against the evils of humanity. She finally builds her resilience to seek revenge on her sorcerous Nuru father. At this moment I felt so proud of Onye’s character development. It truly felt like you have been on this quest with her.

I have enjoyed reading about African mythology, culture and history and broadening my literary scope. This novel is a great starter for introducing more diversity to your bookshelf. Okorafor’s writing allows you to escape into a futurist world while encapsulating the struggles of people of colour. Nnedi Okorafor uses African-futurism as a tool to empower her characters but also her readers.

Onye’s quest is jam-packed with action, and obstacles and her relationships will tug at your heart. I truly did not want Onye’s quest to end, but I was full of pride and tears when she finally took the final step to justice.

## *With Teeth* by Kristen Arnett

In Kirsten Arnett’s newest novel *With Teeth*, we are introduced to the intricacies of queer households in a way that has rarely been seen in fiction before. This is the author’s third publication and her second novel following her short story collection *Felt in the Jaw* and her hit debut novel *Mostly Dead Things*.

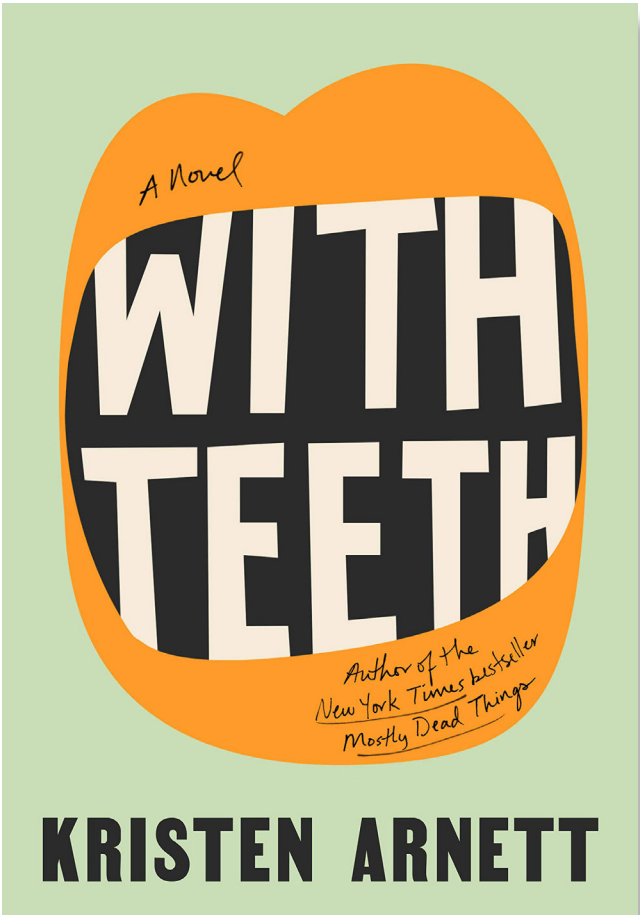
Published in June 2021 by Riverhead, *With Teeth* follows protagonist Sammie as her and her wife, Monika, face the trials and tribulations of being parents. The novel follows a scene-based narrative with each chapter having its own respective scene, and the chapters are clustered into sections named after the seasons. I felt that this helped to create an accurate timeline and made the progression of the novel run smoothly.

From as early as four years old, Sammie and Monika’s son Samson has behaved in a way that constantly unnerves Sammie. As a toddler, Samson willingly walks off with a man, nearly being abducted. In fourth grade he begins carrying a doll with him everywhere, often refusing to speak to anyone unless it is through this doll, and eventually the couple is called to the hospital after Samson bites another child. As Samson continues to grow and more instances pop up, Sammie must confront her own idea of what it means to be a parent,

and we as readers see the family unit from an outside perspective as the author raises questions of how much of ourselves – the good and the bad – we pass on to our children and the ways we let these traits impact our perceptions of them.

As the novel progresses, Sammie must examine her own destructive tendencies as she allows fear and anxiety to constantly impact the way she treats her child and the strain this puts on her relationship with him as well as her marriage with Monika. The author does a wonderful job switching from Sammie’s worries about

Samson to her own life and mind. We as readers feel for both the mother and son as they struggle with their relationship. I thought this novel was expertly crafted, and I enjoyed learning about the conflicting emotions Sammie carried around with her. I would recommend this book because of the complicated questions it raises as well as the unapologetic examination of parenthood, queer relationships and family dynamics.



# Books to Get You Through a Heatwave

BY LAUREN JONES, AMY WRIGHT, ROWAN JACKSON AND ANA MATUTE

Summer is currently in full swing in the UK as we're in the middle of one of the hottest heatwaves ever recorded. With that in mind, we've decided to pick some summery reads to enrich your heatwave experience, with a couple of suggestions for wintery books if you feel you need a distraction from the heat and want to transport your mind to a cold winter's day.

## Lobsters by Tom Ellen and Lucy Ivison

*Lobsters* is a light-hearted, humorous read that lives up to its tagline of "a socially awkward love story" in the best kind of way. The split-perspective YA novel follows eighteen-year-olds Hannah and Sam as they live out the summer between finishing their A-Levels and beginning university, which involves holidays, stress about results day, a healthy dose of teenage angst and, of course, romantic mishaps.

Hannah and Sam first meet in a bathroom where they're trying to escape the chaos of a house party. The awkward-yet-adorable chance encounter ends with Hannah

heading off to find her crush Freddie. Throughout the rest of the novel, we see Hannah and Sam attempt to reconnect, which results in some sweet, hilarious and painfully embarrassing moments. You'll easily get engrossed in *Lobsters* if you decide to pick it up, and it's perfect for a heatwave because it's such a fun and easy read!

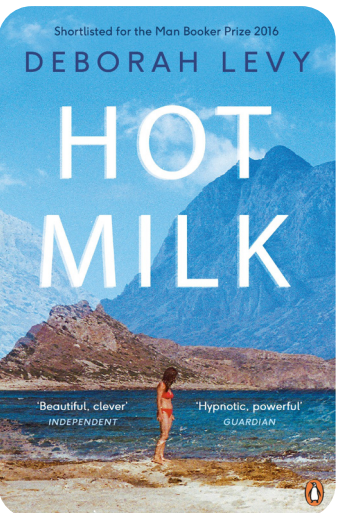
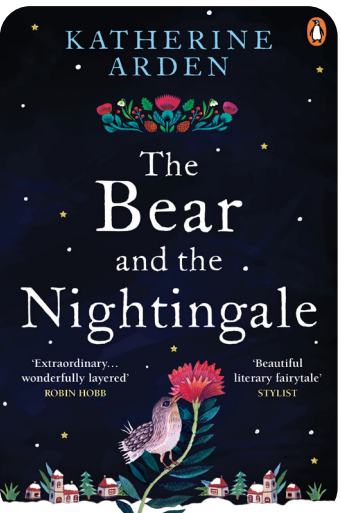
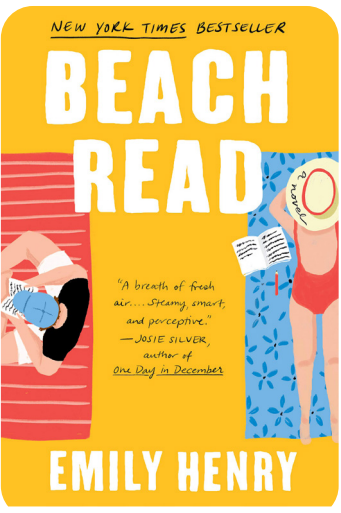
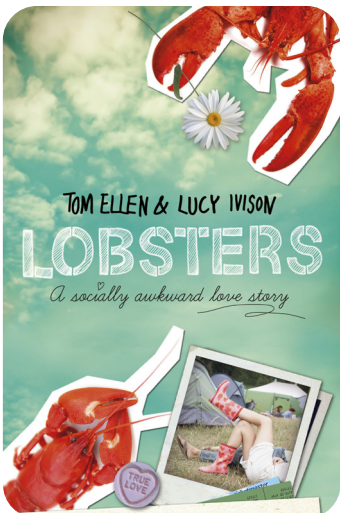
## Beach Read by Emily Henry

Another book that is perfect to help get you through a heatwave, whilst also providing some much-needed escapism, is *Beach Read* by Emily Henry. This fun romcom tells the story of authors January and Gus, who are both experiencing writer's block and agree to swap genres to see who can write a bestseller. The two become unlikely friends, having previously been rivals at college, and it becomes apparent that they have a lot more in common than previously thought. If you are looking for a feel-good novel with a cute but emotional storyline, *Beach Read* will certainly provide this with its page-turning romance,

heart breaking sorrow and witty humour. As the title suggests, it makes a great summer read, whether or not you are at the beach.

## The Bear and the Nightingale by Katherine Arden

Snowdrifts and frost demons, chilling blizzards and dark forests, *The Bear and the Nightingale* is a world away from the scorching heat. It is a whimsical tale steeped in Russian folklore and fairy tale. Vasilisa is a girl gifted with the second sight, which gives her the ability to see the spirits around her. She spends her childhood in her village, huddling around the fire at home with her siblings and listening to her nurse's fairy tales. But her way of life is threatened when her devout stepmother forbids the honouring of household spirits and attempts to control her wayward stepdaughter. Strange events then begin plaguing her village – crops fail, monsters prowl the forests and Vasilisa must find the courage to protect her family from this threat. This atmospheric book perfectly evokes the Russian wilderness and



winter and is a perfect escape to a world of magic and cold.

## Hot Milk by Deborah Levy

*Hot Milk* is a hypnotic, evocative and powerful novel set in Almeria, Spain. Its strange and powerful narrative focused on anthropology graduate Sofia and her hypochondriac and manipulative mother Rose is simultaneously captivating and haunting. Sofia and her mother have travelled to Spain with the hope of finding a diagnosis for Rose's strange and fluctuating ailments which have taken over Sofia's life. As Sofia explores the town, she begins to reflect upon her relationships and life

choices. Deborah Levy's elegant and lyrical prose is soaked with symbolism and is a powerful reflection on the complexity of the human mind and relationships. Sofia's anthropology focused mind provides us with intelligent and profound observations of the people that surround her, which adds further complexity and depth to the narrative. When reading *Hot Milk*, there is an overwhelming atmosphere of sweltering, stifling heat, which reflects Sofia's suffocating situation with her mother and makes for a great, almost feverish, summer read.

## In the Beginning Was the Sea by Tomás

## González. Translated by Frank Wynne

*In the Beginning Was the Sea* is an epistolary novel that tells the story of a couple in the '70s in Colombia that decide to leave the city and start living on the tropical Caribbean coast. The natural elements are essential throughout the novel as they reflect the relationship between the couple and show how life always comes back to nature. Full of powerful images, *In the Beginning Was the Sea* blends atmosphere and tension with intellectual characters battling love and sea. Allow *In the Beginning Was the Sea* to help you feel the breeze of the Caribbean while witnessing the trials of love.



# Upskilling Tips for Publishing – Resources

BY TANVI JAISWAL, MISHA MANANI AND GEORGIA STACK



For this feature, we are sharing different publishing resources to help you upskill. These are useful for expanding your industry knowledge, helping you to stand out in your applications and offering you tips and tricks to secure the job you want! It's great that you're reading *The Publishing Post* in the first place, as the magazine is in itself one of the most helpful free resources available to those seeking to break into the industry. We will be giving you more information about useful websites, social media accounts and videos, so that you can increase your chances of success.

## Useful Websites

- **Publishers Association:** A great place to expand your knowledge about the industry is the Publishers Association, which is the member organisation for UK publishing. Along with other industry updates, its specific page called 'About Publishing' covers topics from how publishing works, job profiles and how to write a perfect CV/cover letter. Consisting of insights from professionals working within publishing, the website is of use to amateurs as well as experienced workers looking for a change!
- **The Bookseller:** This is the perfect website for every publishing hopeful to get their daily updates about what is happening in the industry. *The Bookseller* covers publishing news not just in the UK but other countries as well, making it a universal platform of information. It also covers job vacancies and regularly updates new roles, so subscribe to their newsletter

today and stay on top of every bit of news in the industry!

- **Company websites:** Go and explore company websites of your preference. Contrary to popular belief, a lot of professionals still go back to the company websites for a lot of information. Be it research for an application, a contact for an editor or general updates on the upcoming list of books, company websites are the most reliable source of information you can get.

## Videos and Events

- **'Top 10 Interview Tips' by Ain Chiara:** You may encounter more than one interview for a job, as many recruitment processes in publishing require multiple stages. As the competition increases, HR needs to figure out how to narrow the number of candidates efficiently. Ain shares



her most useful tips for putting your best foot forward in a publishing interview and giving a good impression. She also includes advice on questions and how you can prepare for them.

- **'SYP How to Get into Publishing' and 'Getting Ahead':** The Society of Young Publishers sometimes adds the recordings of their webinars to their YouTube channel. These involve different panellists in publishing who discuss their journey and share their advice and top tips. They are followed by a live Q&A at the end for attendees.
- **'The Publishing Conference 2021' with Comma Press:** It is important to have an understanding of the industry and how it functions. This covers the publishing ecosystem, the different players, types of publishing and the business aspects. There is also a second part which focuses on [how to get into the publishing industry](#).

## Social Media Accounts To Follow

TikTok:

- **@ainchiara:** Ain is an ex-employee from Penguin Random House who

makes helpful videos on everything to do with the publishing world, but especially on her top advice for breaking into the industry.

- **@eleanormrose:** Eleanor is an ex-Bloomsbury employee and currently works for Bonnier Books. She has made TikToks including 'A Day in the Life of Working in Publishing' and often posts updates of what she is up to, such as conventions and conferences, for example. She also has a YouTube channel where she makes more in-depth, detailed videos.
- **Publishers:** Following the bigger publishing houses on TikTok, such as Penguin and Harper Collins, is also super useful as they often post their personal tips and tricks for success.

Instagram:

- **@publishers.pending:** This page is run by aspiring publishers to help others in the industry. Its posts focus on book reviews, industry tips and updates and sharing their routes into publishing.
- **@bookmachine:** This account regularly posts updates on its online courses available to those wishing to upskill.



It also shares job postings and useful links to blog posts, audio sessions and videos.

Twitter:

- **@SYP\_UK:** The Society of Young Publishers is a great account to follow. They host events such as book clubs and career talks, with networking opportunities as well.

Facebook:

- **Publishing Hopefuls:** This Facebook group is made up of hopefuls who regularly post about job postings, their own experiences in the industry and events.

Thanks for reading Issue 52! Join us again for Issue 53, where we will be covering Upskilling Tips for Virtual Networking.

# Summer Romance Reads

BY YASHIKA M, HAYLEY CADEL, MARY KARAYEL AND ALEXANDRA CONSTABLE

Inspired by the heatwave, the Trends team are looking at summer romance beach reads in this issue. Whether you're going abroad or staying at home, with the weather we're having, this trend is one we can all enjoy! Romance reads can be quite formulaic, which can be the appeal of them.

For readers looking for romances that are setting specific, readers can turn to specific publishers, for example, Mills & Boon. With books such as *Meet Me In Hawaii* by Georgia Toffolo and *Until I Met You* by Amber Rose Gill, Mills & Boon are not only keeping up with their USP, they are also commissioning writers who will potentially appeal to a younger audience and broaden this genre even further. In this article, we'll be looking at some of the key themes within this genre and provide some recommendations for you to enjoy in this heat.

First up is the coming-of-age cult fiction penned by Jenny Han, *The Summer I Turned*

*Pretty*. It's a perfect light read for the heat. This book brings with it the breeze of the beach which acts as a not-so-silent backdrop throughout the story.

The beach blends in with the charismatic yet emotionally confused characters – who are discovering their individualities along with their equations with each other – and how they tackle the puzzle of romance, inclination, and attention. The first of the trilogy, this book will grasp the interest of young adult fiction lovers and provide an exceptional climatic gravitas to the light narrative as well. This year it has been turned into a TV series, which will provoke a renewed interest in the novel.

Next up is Elena Armas's *The American Roommate Experiment*. Based on a very unique storyline, this book finds its roots in passion and affection. The protagonist is trying to get over a writer's block and stumbles upon the most unimaginable of situations, wherein she has a chance

at love due to her temporary housing arrangement. The fling blooms into genuine romance, making it a smooth and fun read simultaneously.

Books like *The Road Trip* and *Every Summer After* offer themselves as a contextual guide to relationships and the various circumstantial tests they go through, which maintains an effortless read throughout the course of the tale. These books sure will compliment that chilled iced tea on a serene summer evening.

Another popular trend within the romance genre is novels set in popular holiday destinations – some examples include *French Kissed*, *Love and Gelato* and *An Italian Scandal*. Whether you are travelling abroad this summer or not, these books are a great way to get into the holiday spirit and live vicariously through the protagonists and their summer romances. Due to be released this summer – 18 August 2022 – is Sophia Gravia's *What Happens in Dubai*. The novel narrates

the journey of Glaswegian protagonist Zara Smith, who, after having her heart broken, is ready for a summer of fun and adventure. If you like this, the novel is a standalone sequel to Gravia's debut novel *A Glasgow Kiss*, which you can also dig into this summer!

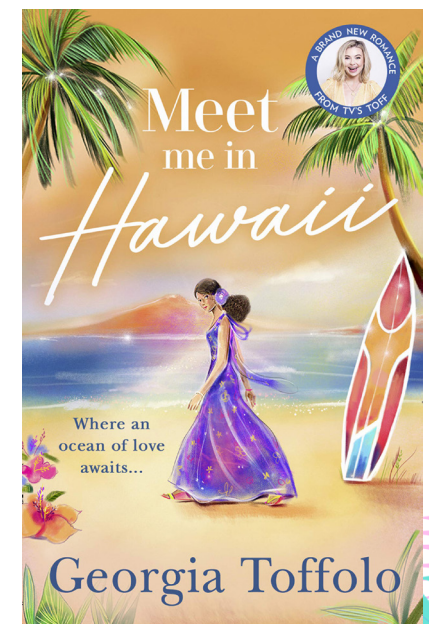
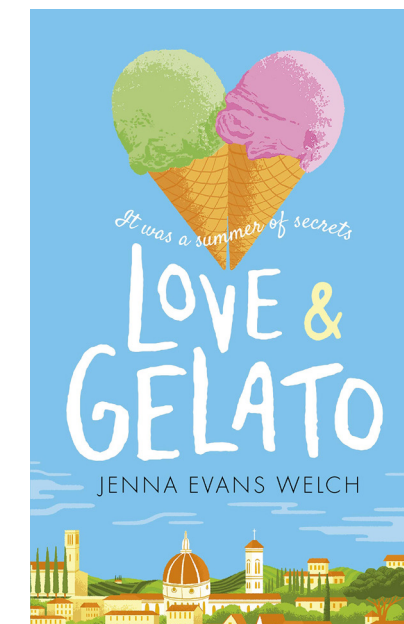
A surprising trend in the romance genre this summer is the exploration of highly emotional, dysfunctional relationships. Apparently, tragedies are this year's perfect beach read. A lot of this success is due to the traction Colleen Hoover's novels gained on TikTok with readers recording themselves crying as they reached the end of her book *It Ends With Us*. The book's blurb opens with "Sometimes the one who loves you is the one who hurts you the most," exemplifying Hoover's focus on the darker side of love. We think these books have become so popular for holiday reads because they offer pure escapism.

The wildly tragic plots offer people a complete immersive and unputdownable book. It is important to note that Hoover grapples with some much darker themes in this book, such as domestic violence, so it may not be everybody's cup of tea. Still, the book is number three in the Amazon charts this week despite being released in 2016.

In October of this year, Hoover will release her new novel *It Starts With Us*, a sequel offering fan favourite Atlas' side of the love story with Lily, which we imagine will become an instant bestseller, thanks to Hoover's huge popularity online. Until this new book is released, we suggest you read some of Hoover's other novels such as *Ugly Love* and *November 9*.

Here are a few more darker love story recommendations from other authors: *Twisted Love* by Anna Huang, *My Dark Vanessa* by Kate Elizabeth Russell and *One True Loves* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. The romance genre is a great way to unwind and relax and enjoy the weather this summer. As such a large genre, with so much range, we are certain there is something for every reader

to enjoy. From the sceptics to the firm fans, we hope this article has given everyone some recommendations to add to their summer reading list.





# BookMachine CAMPUS

## Review: Metadata Best Practices For Publishers

By JOANNE BOUSTEAD

Over the last couple of months, the wonderful people at BookMachine have given me the opportunity to try some of their CAMPUS video courses. So far, I've completed three courses with them, and today I'm sharing my review of their absolutely brilliant Metadata Best Practices for Publishers course, which has helped me to dive deep into the world of metadata and discoverability!

I first came across metadata during my publishing degree at university, and once I discovered it, I found myself fascinated by it. Metadata helps describe key characteristics, for example, genre, and therefore helps consumers find books. A good example of the usefulness of metadata is Amazon's bestseller list, where they rank books in very specific categories. After one lecture I had on metadata, I found the CAMPUS video course to be the perfect place to learn more about this subject. At first, I found the concept

of metadata to be quite daunting, especially with all the different acronyms floating around. At its heart, metadata is all about marketing a book in the most effective way possible – and it turns out there's many different ways to do this.

### What's in the course?

The online CAMPUS course is divided into five handy modules and is led by the Director of Sales and Education at Firebrand Technologies, Joshua Tallent. Module one takes you through the importance of metadata, and investigates why it is so important in boosting sales of books. What I particularly liked about this module is how it compared Nielsen Book studies in the UK and US. It was interesting to see the subtle differences that metadata can make in each country, but also the similarities in how complete metadata truly does do wonders for increasing sales in both countries.



Further modules include a rundown on how metadata is managed and delivered, and the best practices for metadata use. With my limited knowledge of metadata, I found these modules to be incredibly helpful and important. I had an understanding of ONIX feeds (Online Information Exchange) but did not know the importance of a metadata management system, or what type of system would be best to use – it turns out there's quite a debate on which systems publishers prefer! I also found it quite useful

to learn about the general best practices for metadata, including how to structure descriptions, what keywords to use and the different subject categories that can really help to market your book correctly. The course also provides some information on Amazon, which is incredibly helpful, especially in relation to how keywords are a necessity in improving visibility for individual titles.

The final module reinforces the importance of updating metadata (as you can probably tell, in general metadata is incredibly important for sales!), and how often you should be checking it. The module also gives information on creating metadata pre-publication, as well as giving you a helpful and handy timeline to show each stage in the metadata creation process. After publication, this module also details what you should be doing to effectively keep your title running and suggests that you should frequently monitor all your titles to ensure you have fixed any issues and relayed any necessary information (both to your readers and the platform you are selling the title on). I really appreciated the sheer amount of detail this module went into, as I never realised just how important up-to-date metadata can be.

### Who is this course for?

I would highly recommend the Metadata Best Practices for Publishers course to everyone working in publishing editorial and marketing departments, as there is an incredible amount of overlap on who is creating metadata. This video course will really help you to hone your skills and knowledge on metadata and will certainly help you to plan out timelines for those updates! I would also recommend the course to publishing hopefuls, like myself, who might just be curious and fascinated by metadata in general – it really is an interesting topic that I think is going to become increasingly important as the publishing industry continues to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of bookselling. If you can get ahead of the game and show some knowledge on metadata, then interviewers are sure

to be impressed by your curiosity and willingness to learn. I've definitely become a bit of a metadata nerd after this course!

### A note from BookMachine

"BookMachine CAMPUS is our suite of flexible, publishing-specific video courses designed to empower you in your career development. At BookMachine HQ, we're delighted to see the impact of the courses across the industry and how they are helping learners develop key skills! Our recent Spring Release saw the addition of six brand-new courses to the online library. Led by our knowledgeable tutors, specialists in publishing skills from TikTok to legal contracts, our catalogue is packed with expertise. Learn more about what you could achieve with CAMPUS [here](#)."

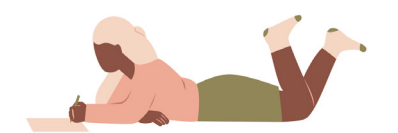


Artwork: bookmachine.org

# Examining the Legacy and Future of Reproductive Rights Through the Lens of Contemporary Prose

BY ELIZABETH OLADOYIN

As with many cultural products, books are considered representations of the past, present and future. In this article, we will look at how contemporary prose explores the issue of reproductive rights.



## The Past

### *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985)

Is America truly becoming Gilead? As shockwaves ripple around the world at the monumental decision reached by the supreme court to overturn Roe vs. Wade, many have begun making comparisons between the recent historical news and the disturbing world in Margaret Atwood's 1985 novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*. The fictional work depicts a future where

fertile women are turned into enslaved, child-bearing people. This has recently become a notable cultural reference point following its adaptation into a TV series in 2017. This adaptation aired around the same time Donald Trump, an alleged serial sexual assailant, was elected President of the United States, which left many people reeling and questioning the integrity of the political infrastructure that allowed someone as divisive as him to be elected. This feeling was only further cemented by the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh, another alleged sexual assailant, as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court who, along with other far-right justices, was responsible for the overturning of Roe vs. Wade and the abortion rights. Suddenly, what was once touted as an imaginative, far-fetched but brilliant, fictional piece seemed uncomfortably plausible.

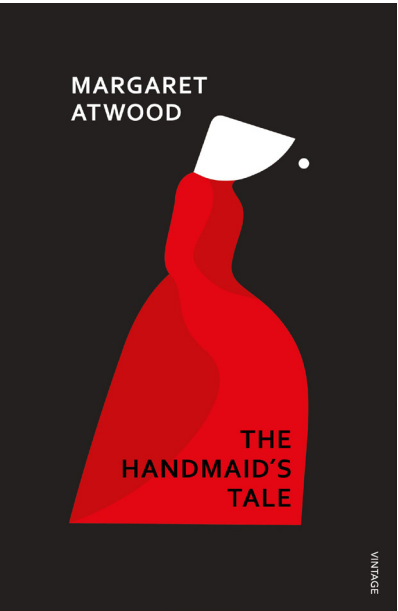
However, quiet resistance to "dystopian" literature emerged during the height

of the almost feverish deification of Margaret Atwood's writing. *The Handmaid's Tale* was an all too familiar story when viewed from an intersectional perspective. I occasionally found myself a bit irritated and envious during book club discussions of this novel because my white feminist allies are able to take in *The Handmaid's Tale* through the lens of a fictional dread, rather than an unsettling recollection of a very real and horrific past. Instead, I was overcome with comparisons to real women from Africa who were abducted from their homes, treated like property, sold off, separated from their families, and made to live in shacks and perform strenuous physical labour for no pay during the transatlantic chattel slavery era of the 16th through to the 19th century.

These discussions have since somewhat improved as more attention has been brought to these ideas from intersectional feminist thinkers, but it still bears

repeating and remembering. Margaret Atwood herself has recently explained that the book draws from real-world examples, though she mostly references Regan-era politics and the 1980s women's movement which was mostly led by cis-het white women.

This book, while it may not have been her initial



intention, exemplifies everything that those interested in protecting and reinstating the right to abortion must work against and leave behind in the past. *The Handmaid's Tale* successfully signifies the grave importance of enshrining the bodily autonomy of women into law and makes for an interesting read with this in mind.

Other important books within this category include:

*The Girls Who Went Away: The Hidden History of Women Who Surrendered Children for Adoption in the Decades Before Roe v. Wade* (2007) by Ann Fessler. An uneasy read depicting the hidden everyday tragedies unwed parents were forced into in the decade before the enactment of Roe vs. Wade. The book was written by a woman who herself was born to a young teenage mother in the mid-20th century and successfully shatters the elusive and false narrative often spun by pro-abortionists of "the good old days" before abortion was easily accessible.

*Women of Colour and the Reproductive Rights Movement* by Jennifer Nelson (2003). This book explores the other side of the reproductive rights coin and how the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s enabled accessible abortion options. Moreover, for some women, particularly women of colour, it was an opportunity to address the disproportionate deaths during pregnancy and demand safe maternity care and the guarantee that they could keep their children post-delivery.



## The Present

### *Detransition, Baby* by Torrey Peters (2021)

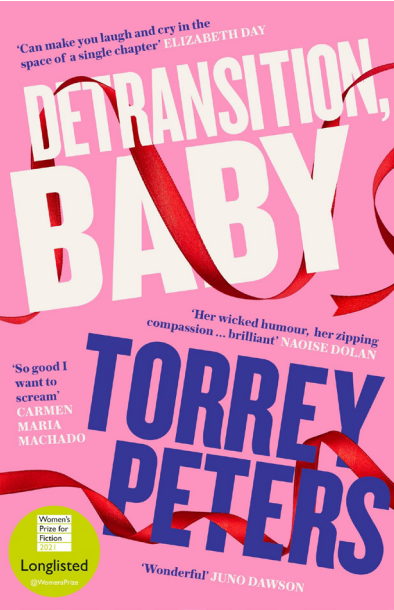
Though it may not immediately appear to fit in with the other books on the list, I believe that this may be one of the most important books to discuss here. *Detransition, Baby* is a book that deals with the consequences of society's constant scrutiny of transgender bodies, and the complexities of their reproductive decisions as a result of this. This highly emotive book recently made history as the first book written by a transgender woman to appear on the longlist of the Women's Prize for Fiction, signifying a long overdue change in the perception of transgender women as fundamentally different from their cis counterparts.

Despite the fact that Roe vs. Wade was overturned by the Supreme Court only a short time ago, access to abortion varies greatly from state to state, and there are already nine states in America where it is illegal to have an abortion. Some of these states do not grant exceptions for victims of rape or incest, and patients with serious illnesses are already being denied life-saving prescriptions because they contain abortifacients. The situation has been made worse by an ominous rise in transphobia that wrongly accuses transgender people of being responsible for the



loss of reproductive health care, even permeating some of America’s most respectable centrist and left-wing media institutions such as The New York Times, in which an opinion piece by Pamela Paul placed the blame on transgender women for the current political issues. This is in direct contradiction to the fact that transgender people already face widespread prejudice from medical professionals and that transgender men and some non-binary people also need access to abortion care, and as such these issues are equally important for them.

Additionally, there are new transphobic laws that threaten to revoke parental rights from adults who support their children’s



transitions, subject student-athletes to intrusive genital exams, and forbid drag queen performances in front of young audiences. These are all coming into effect at the same time as this attack on trans rights. As such, in this present time of upheaval and chaos, it is now more important than ever to counteract the prejudices transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are facing by including them in all discussions related to reproductive health.

Another book to consider purchasing is *Trans Reproductive and Sexual Health: Justice, Embodiment and Agency*, Edited by Damien W. Riggs, Jane M. Ussher, Kerry H. Robinson, and Shoshana Rosenberg. Set to be published December this year, this book will be an all-encompassing, near-definitive collection of academic writing that will certainly amour you with the facts.



**The Future**  
***Shout Your Abortion,***  
***Edited by Amelia Bonow & Emily Nokes.***  
**Including a foreword**  
**by Lindy West (2018)**

“The Left has never figured out a compelling way to advocate for abortion rights because the anti-choice movement has relentlessly flooded the discursive with so much propaganda that even those who support abortion rights often do so from an apologetic stance”.  
— Lindy West

*Shout Your Abortion* is a collection of creative work ranging from essays to photos and many other forms of creative expression by those inspired to share their personal journey of abortion. This book severely challenged my perspectives because, even as a pro-choice advocate, I realised that I still held internalised judgmental opinions towards people who had abortions. I would occasionally catch myself with condescending opinions about people who have had an abortion and would blame their lack of preparedness, or disregard of preventative contraceptive measurements as though the details around their intimacy were any concern of my own. I now hold a deep sense of shame for concerning myself

with the circumstances of another person’s abortion. *Shout Your Abortion* began from a person sharing their abortion story with #ShoutYourAbortion as a direct opposition to the US congress attempting to defund Planned Parenthood. It then evolved into a grassroots movement that inspired countless individuals to share their stories through various mediums such as art, fashion or through community events. The purpose of sharing these stories was to destigmatise abortion and put an end to the shame surrounding them. *Shout Your Abortion* is now also an LLC where supporters can purchase products to support the movement and its goals. They encourage people to take up the mantle and form their own collective version of Shout Your Abortion in their local area whether in the form of an art exhibit, concert, book club or film screening – it doesn’t matter so long as stories around the importance of safe, affordable and attainable abortions are being shared.



EDITED BY AMELIA BONOW & EMILY NOKES  
FOREWORD BY LINDY WEST

Unlike many other books I’ve read regarding the reproductive rights and bodily autonomy of women, *Shout Your Abortion* concludes with a call to action and rallying cry for all those who are interested in taking part in the revolution to definitively and permanently codify these rights into law. As such, I personally deem this book to be the North Star that any budding feminist should look to as a guiding light for the future.

Another book that offers similar instructive help for those who may be feeling out of options is *New Handbook for a Post-Roe America* by Robin Marty with a foreword by Amanda Palmer (2021). Almost as though containing psychic premonitions, this book has been created to provide readers with a robust and creative playbook on how to defend their reproductive freedoms in the few US states that still permit them. The book works to comprehensively prepare its readers with a play-by-play manual on how they should navigate the onslaught of encroaching changes to reproductive rights. Highly informative and, unfortunately, a modern imperative need.





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