



TEEN TITLES

OUR COVER BOOK

# INHERITANCE

by Christopher Paolini is reviewed  
on page 24 by Connor Douglas  
from Liberton High



# TEEN TITLES 57

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*Teen Titles* aims to promote reading and literacy in a fun way that appeals to all young people. *Teen Titles* is committed to improving reading within Edinburgh and beyond.

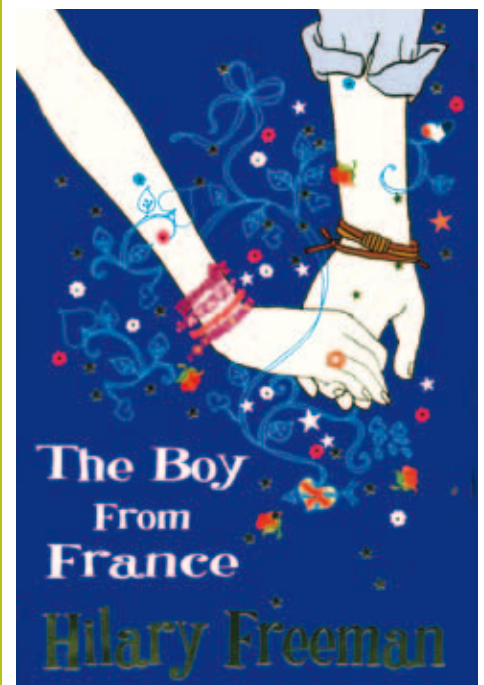
Welcome to *Teen Titles* 57, our second issue of 2013/14. In this issue, we get in a huddle with Tom Palmer, author of *Scrum!* and *Ghost Stadium*, and Chris Higgins tells us how she got inspiration for *The Day I Met Suzie*.

### Cleo Jones

Manager  
Information and Learning Resources  
The City of Edinburgh Council  
2 Pepper Place  
Edinburgh  
EH16 4BB

Cover image from *Inheritance* by Christopher Paolini published by Corgi, reproduced by kind permission of Random House.  
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## TEEN ISSUES



'realistic'

## The Boy from France

Series: Camden Town Tales  
Hilary Freeman  
Piccadilly Press £6.99 ISBN 9781848123014

**Vix and her friends are part of an exchange visit with a school in France. Xavier, Vix's student, turns out to be gorgeous, but will their new relationship cope with the secrets that Vix feels she must keep?**

This was a great book and I loved how you found out about Vix's life the more you read. Some of the girls in the story were a bit nasty but that made it seem more realistic.

**AMY MONTGOMERY**  
Leith Academy

## Geek Girl

Holly Smale  
HarperCollins £6.99 ISBN 9780007489442

**Meet nerdy Harriet who is bright but unpopular, and find out how she goes about changing from geek to chic.**

I found this very hard to get into as it described a trip to a shopping mall, which made pretty dull reading. The plot was unrealistic as it's hard to believe that anyone would be asked to be a model at a mall by a fashion scout. I found Harriet to be a real pain who came out with far too many random facts – some were ok, such as did you know that bluebirds don't see the colour blue? Great cover, but the content doesn't match.

**JULIA LAUGHLAND**  
Royal High



## Diary of a Mall Girl

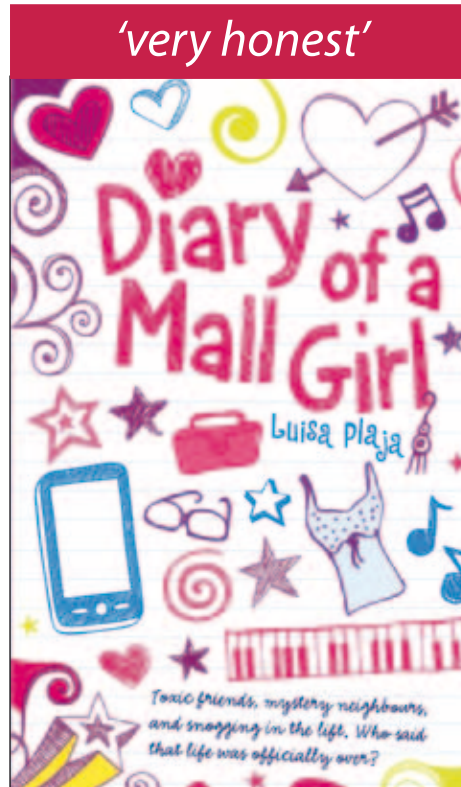
Luisa Plaja  
Curious Fox £6.99 ISBN 9781782020127

**Molly is 15 and lives in the residential section of the mall. The mall is the centre of most of the town's teenagers' social life – it is where they hang out and get their first part-time job. However, things start to get a bit chaotic when mysterious twins Jasper and Jewel move in upstairs from Molly.**

This book was very good and I can honestly say it is now one of my favourites. It describes the life of a teenager perfectly. There were ups and downs, but the story came across as very

honest and I felt I could trust the author and sympathise with Molly. It is quite a girly book in a way and the main character is a girl, so maybe girls would enjoy it more than boys.

**JOANNA LAMB**  
Craigmount High



## Freaks Like Us

Susan Vaught  
Bloomsbury £6.99 ISBN 9781408836163

**Freak, Drip and Sunshine are all in the SED classroom for Severely Emotionally Disturbed kids. When Sunshine disappears Freak somehow gets the blame. Sunshine did tell him something, but the voices in his head won't stop clamouring.**



A very interesting perspective on the victims of bullying, this book really made me think. Maybe we should try to be a wee bit nicer to other people and be more considerate to others. I think it is good that the story raised my awareness of the support some people need and it highlighted that sometimes you don't know who your true friends are.

**ROSE MURRAY**  
Craigmount High

## The Fault in Our Stars

John Green  
Penguin £7.99 ISBN 9780141345659

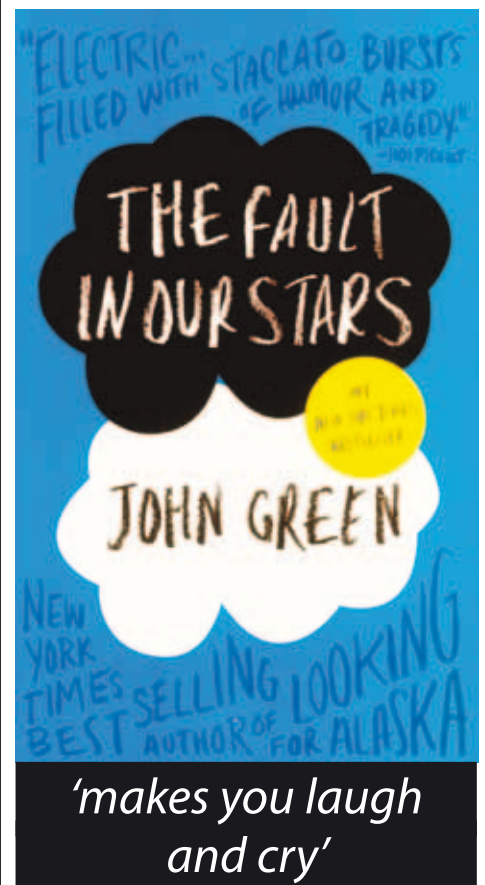
**Hazel is reluctant to go to the Cancer Kids Support Group because she thinks it is a waste of time. However, she changes her mind when she meets the lovely Augustus Waters. This is their story.**

This book was amazing! The writing and the descriptions of the characters and their feelings were brilliant. The author really made me care about the characters, not just Hazel and Augustus, but the supporting characters too. This book definitely pulls at your heart-strings and I was crying at the end. Get the tissues ready and enjoy a fantastic book!

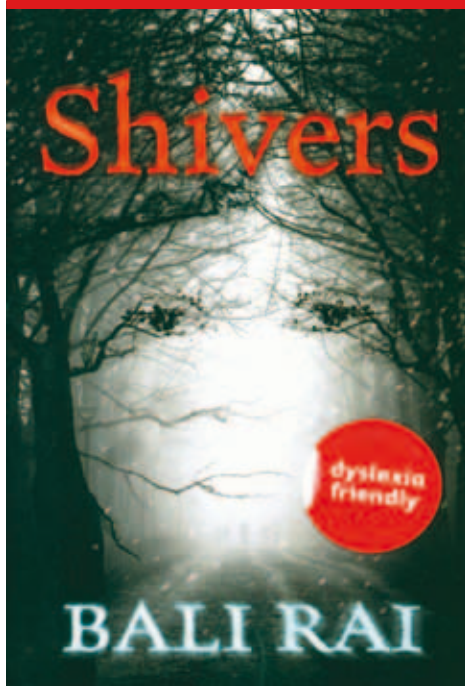
**JADE AIMERS**  
Craigmount High

This book is really, really good! It makes you laugh and cry (sometimes at the same time) and once you've finished it, you'll want to go back and read it all over again. Both the main characters were explained well, but I could still picture them in my head and it wasn't too prescriptive or clichéd in any way. Although I knew from the beginning that the ending would be sad, I thought it was handled perfectly. Quite a brilliant book and I'm looking forward to reading lots more by John Green!

**WENDY TUNNAH**  
Craigmount High



*'a complete surprise'*



## Shivers

Bali Rai  
Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 9781781121900

**Sam's dad was accused of something by the police when he was only young, and he and his mum had to move into a small flat. Sam was bullied on the estate and at school, but when he meets brave and beautiful Cassie his life changes. However Cassie has troubles of her own, and maybe Sam's life hasn't changed for the better.**

I thought this book was exciting, but maybe not as scary as I thought it would be! The three best parts were when Sam first met Cassie in the snowstorm, when they got revenge on Sam's bully, and when they broke into a house to get something back belonging to Cassie. The ending was a complete surprise and definitely not a nice one. Overall, the book was fantastic and a page turner. This is a great book for young people who are maybe not good readers.

**KIERAN BLACKIE**  
Craigroyston Community High

## Waiting for Gonzo

Dave Cousins  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192745460

**The story follows Marcus from his first day at his new school, and his attempts to make a good impression on his classmates which all go horribly wrong – especially drawing a moustache on a classmate's painting. Interwoven with his attempts to be cool is his relationship with his older sister and parents.**

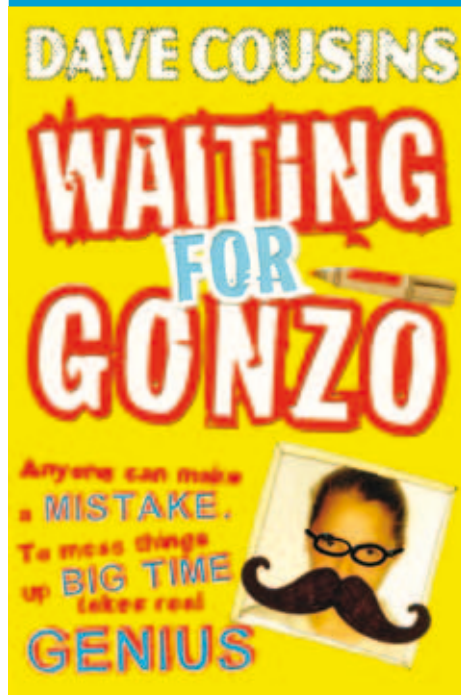
The book is told in diary form to the mysterious Gonzo – and you will have to read the whole book to find out who Gonzo is! – as Marcus recounts his tales of woe and talks to Gonzo about life and growing up. I liked the way that every situation he found himself in seems to go wrong and he can't understand why this is happening. There are plenty of moments when I could only chuckle as another mishap occurred. This is not the type of book I would normally read, but I thoroughly enjoyed the story and would recommend it to others, boys especially should give it a go.

**ALISTAIR HOLBURN**  
Craigroyston Community High

I chose this book because it looked exciting and had the best blurb and it certainly lived up to my expectations. It was funny but still managed to contain real-life aspects. The story starts really quickly and I was instantly hooked. The ending is good too. I'd definitely read more books by this author and if I had to describe this one in three words it would be funny, exciting and honest.

**REBECCA ROLLO**  
Craigmount High

*'funny, exciting  
and honest'*



## OMG! Is This Actually My Life?

Rae Earl  
Walker Books £6.99 ISBN 9781406340013

**This is the diary of Hattie Moore, which reveals the life of typical teenager who is**

**trying to become a hot goddess and get boys to fancy her, but is being held back by her crazy family and lack of boobs!**

I had only read a few diary-based books in the past and wasn't particularly keen on them. However, I couldn't put this book down until the end. The issues with which Hattie dealt were realistic although maybe slightly predictable. The book was fast paced and the diary had the perfect swift language. The only thing I didn't like about the story was the emotional aspects between the main character and the reader. In other words, you could only understand how Hattie felt if you had experienced similar situations in your own life. Apart from this niggle, I thoroughly enjoyed the book.

**JULIYA AFANASJEVA**  
Craigroyston Community High



## The Swallow Tales

K M Peyton  
Random House £7.99 ISBN 9780552566926

**Three short stories all based around 11-year-old Rowan and her desperate desire for a pony of her own. When her father, driving too fast as ever, hits a stray horse enough to wound but not kill him, Rowan wonders if her dream might come true at last.**

*The Swallow Tales* is a lovely story. The book is well written and really puts you in Rowan's place, as you embark on the journey through the challenges she faces, and all her hopes and fears. I enjoyed reading this book and would recommend it to anyone who likes horses.

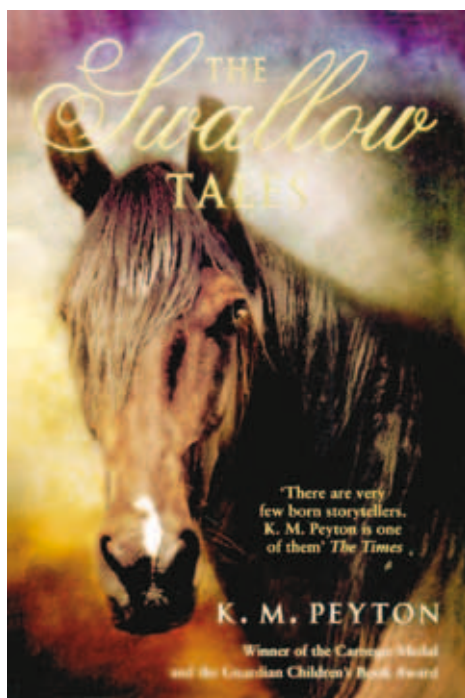
**AMINA KADDOURI**  
Currie Community High

I really enjoyed these three adventure stories because they were about horses and I love them. Although it was quite boring at the start, it became really good and I couldn't stop reading the book. I recommend that you read this book.

**SARA MICHNO**  
Currie Community High

At first this book looked a bit daunting, as there are three books in one. I did though get right into it. I felt really sorry for Rowan, especially when she was worried about the horses. This book is not just for horse lovers. It is a great book if you like reading about people's problems and finding out how to solve them.

**JESSICA ADAMS**  
Gracemount High



*'a lovely story'*

## Black Sheep

Ná'ima B Robert  
Frances Lincoln £6.99 ISBN 9781847802534

**Dwayne has been a part of RDS (Run da Streetz) since he was 11 and he's okay with doing just that: running the streets. But then he meets Misha, geeky, beautiful Misha, and tings ain't so clear anymore.**



This is a really deep, realistic book. You will be able to identify people at your school who fit the characters of Dwayne and Misha. It is quite a long book, but it is enjoyable in an emotional sort of way.

**AIMEE MURCHIE**  
Gracemount High



*'a really deep, realistic book'*

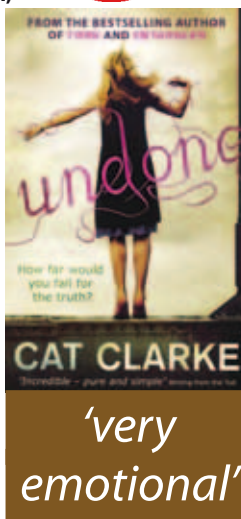
## Undone

Cat Clarke  
Quercus £6.99 ISBN 9781782064015

**Jem and Kai have been best friends since forever. So when Kai commits suicide, Jem decides to follow him, despite the fact that he has written letters to her from beyond the grave to help her cope and recover. But Jem's plan for revenge against those she blames for Kai's death goes horribly, horribly wrong.**

This book is upsetting as well as very moving. It's a stand-out novel. I've not read anything like it before and I read a lot. It is a book that deals with teenage suicide from the viewpoint of the best friend left behind. The only thing it reminds me of is *The Wintergirls* by Laurie Halse Anderson, but this book is better. This book may make you angry.

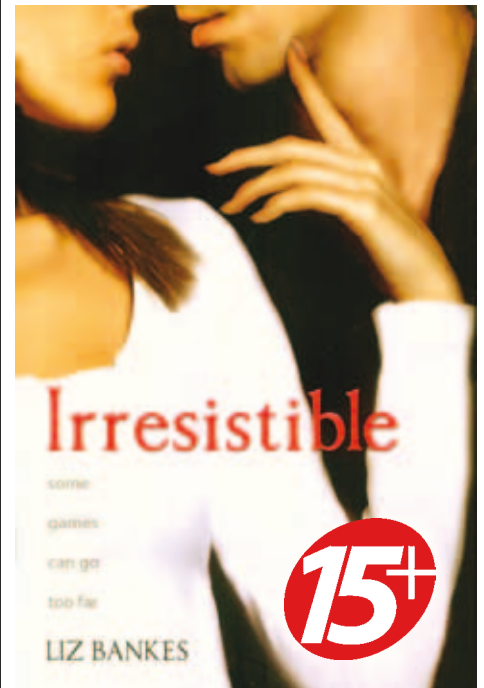
**CALLUM HUGHES**  
Holy Rood High



*'very emotional'*

This is a really good read and was very hard to put down. It was very emotional and you really felt for the characters especially at the end. I think teenagers around my age would like it (I'm 16), but there is stuff in it that is not appropriate for younger readers.

**PAMELA ARUGU**  
Holy Rood High



*'a gripping storyline'*

## Irresistible

Liz Banks  
Piccadilly Press £6.99 ISBN 9781848123380

**Mia Joseph has just turned 16 and is delighted when she gets a summer job at the ultra-posh Radleigh Castle Hotel where the owner's son is the oh-so-hot Jamie Elliot-Fox. Work as a waitress is fun, particularly with fellow newcomer Dan, but Jamie's bad-boy persona is a constant distraction.**

This book was a lot better than I thought it would be. I couldn't laugh out loud when I was reading it cos I was in a class, but it is very funny.

**ELLIE DEIGHAN**  
Holy Rood High

I thought that this was a really good book with a gripping storyline. Jamie was a complete idiot. The heroine was sweet-natured but she fell too easily for the wrong guy. This is a good read.

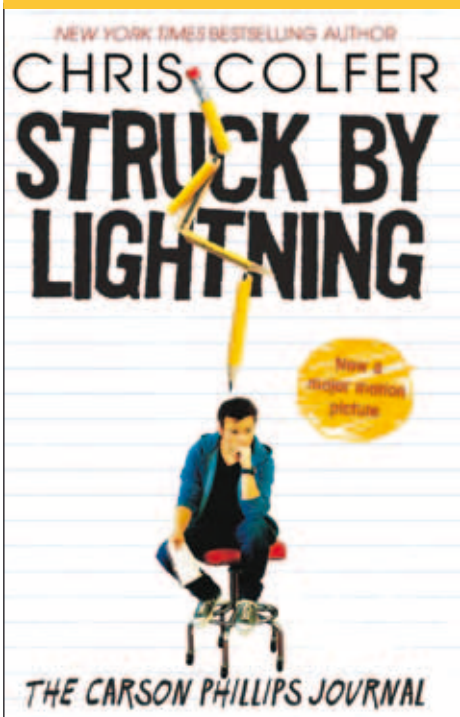
**TAYLOR GARDNER**  
Holy Rood High

This was a mature read considering it is written for teenagers. I did find it very funny in places.

**AISLING SAVAGE**  
Holy Rood High

# REVIEWS

'a lot of action'



## Struck by Lightning

Chris Colfer  
Atom £6.99

ISBN 9780349001357

**Carson Phillips is in a school he hates with people he hates. He plans to escape to university and study journalism, but will have to create a school magazine to make his application to university better. He needs to find a way of working with his fellow students if he wants his dream to come true.**

I think *Struck by Lightning* is a good book because lots of things happen at the same time, so there is a lot of action going on. I picked up the book because the name of it sounds interesting and on the front cover it looks like something bad happens to a boy in school and I was interested to find out what. On the back the first sentence makes it sound more worthwhile reading. I didn't finish it, because I ran out of time, but it would have been great to find out the ending.

**SHANNON SPENDIFF**  
Forrester High

## The Chain

Keith Gray

Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 9781781122297

**Four short stories linked together by one book as it passes from person to person and becomes the object of a theft, a cheap present, a hiding place for the winning card at a poker game, and finally helps to prolong a life.**

My favourite story was 'Cal's Test'. Cal starts off being the kind of kid who always does his homework, but thinks he has to change and starts to hang about with bad people.

**ROSS MCKENZIE**  
Forrester High

I like how the four cards on the front cover are different suits which represent the four stories in this book. The title of *The Chain* also connects the characters in some way. I like how the blurb continues this idea, giving each story its own 'blurb' on the back of one of the playing cards. The stories are designed to be easy to read and I enjoyed this as a change of pace.

**JAKE BARR**  
Forrester High

We both liked the front cover – it's very appealing for both boys and girls. I like the structure of four stories, because you can read them quickly. You can also choose which one you want to read first. I'm not sure how the stories are connected in a chain as the title suggests, I didn't find the link. I would have preferred just one story in a book this size. The words are at the right level for me, there's nothing too hard.

**JORDAN DUFFY AND CONNOR MACKINNON**  
Forrester High



## Winter of Grace

Kate Constable

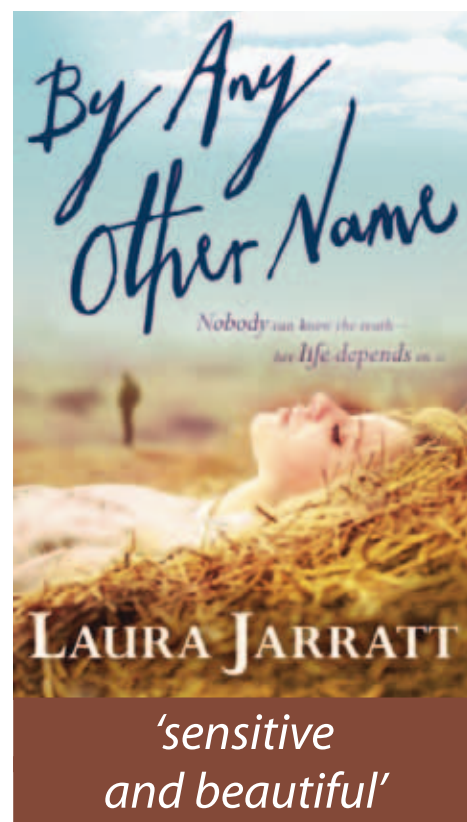
Allen & Unwin £6.99 ISBN 9781742377728

**Bridie and Stella have been friends for ever; Stella is normally the centre of attention and the one who attracts boys. When a new boy they meet prefers Bridie and starts to change her life, she begins to question whether she still has room for Stella.**

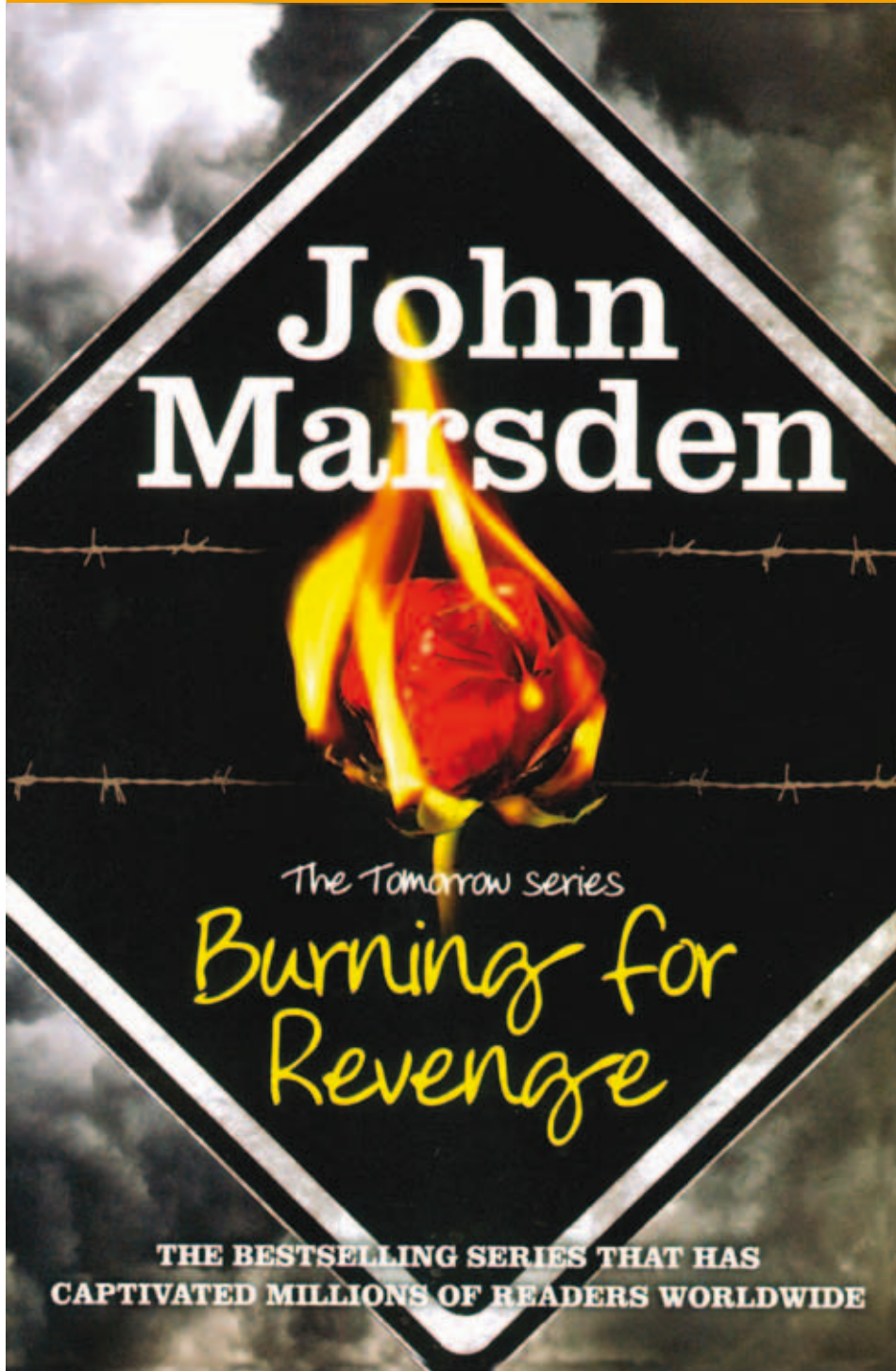
The cover of this book is nice, it looks like it's about a girl and I was interested to know more. The blurb looked good – I wanted to read this! The story is as girly as I thought it would be, but it also has political and religious themes. I really enjoyed it and the characters are very likeable.

**EILIDH CARLISLE**  
Forrester High

'political and religious themes'



*'the plot is well developed'*



## By Any Other Name

Laura Jarratt  
Electric Monkey £6.99 ISBN 9781405256735

**Holly (not her real name) and her family are in a witness protection programme. She can't risk being found by the men she has run away from, and it is hard to fit in and make friends when you can't tell anyone the truth about who you are, and you've had to leave everything behind.**

This is a descriptive and heart-rending book about finding yourself. It is mainly a romance which surprised me as the book's synopsis suggests a much darker mystery. Also this book addresses issues around autism and how it affects families. This sensitive and beautiful view on a situation gives us an emotional invite into the lives of people with autism. Though I loved this book I think that the violence is over-exaggerated and doesn't fit with the rest of the story.

**FIONA STEWART ROPER**  
Boroughmuir High

## Burning for Revenge

Series: The Tomorrow  
John Marsden  
Quercus £6.99 ISBN 9781782061250

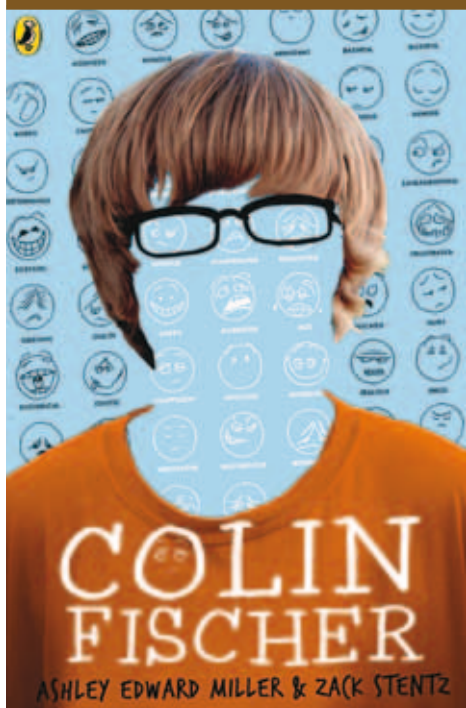
**Caught up in a terrible war between Australia and New Zealand, Ellie and her gang of fellow teenagers continue to fight. When they end up right in the middle of their enemy's territory, they do what needs to be done. But having been through so much, can their friendship take it?**

My favourite character in the book is Ellie. She is a good thinker and she makes helpful decisions when she and her friends are in difficult situations. The plot of the book is well developed. The order of events is systematic. The worst character in the book is Lee who always makes hasty decisions waiting for others to follow him. I personally like the book as it encourages hopeless people and more so the girl child Ellie, she leads her friends towards achieving their goal and getting ruling power from their colonizers. It also encourages those who might lose hope easily not to. I agree with the writer's opinion of dealing with situations as they are. I would encourage everyone to read this book which has been written in simple and easy to understand language.

**SAMUEL KINJA THOMAS**  
Muthambi Boys' School, Kenya  
(twinned with Drummond Community High)



*'definitely recommend it'*



## Colin Fischer

Ashley Edward Miller and Zack Stentz  
Puffin £6.99 ISBN 9780141343990

**When a gun is fired in Colin Fischer's school, he isn't scared, like everyone else: he is curious, and determined to solve the mystery of who did it. An unlikely detective, Colin hates the colour blue, being touched and loud noises (they make him bark like a dog). But strange as it may be, it turns out Colin is a brilliant detective.**

I didn't think this was really me but I thought it would be good for people who like detective books and action. I thought it was good how the author put in detail about Colin and what he did; I felt that was quite believable. It showed you all the different classes in a US high school – the nerds, jocks etc – and what it would be like to be in school there. A good high-school mystery book.

**MEGAN ROSE**  
Broughton High

I think this is just a great book about Colin, who has autism. The book is good for people who like descriptive types of books. I would definitely recommend it. All the different emotions that the characters show matched real emotions and there wasn't anything fake about the book. I would read other books by this author because the book has a meaning. I liked the length of it too. Fantastic!

**CAMERON WALLER**  
Broughton High

## From What I Remember

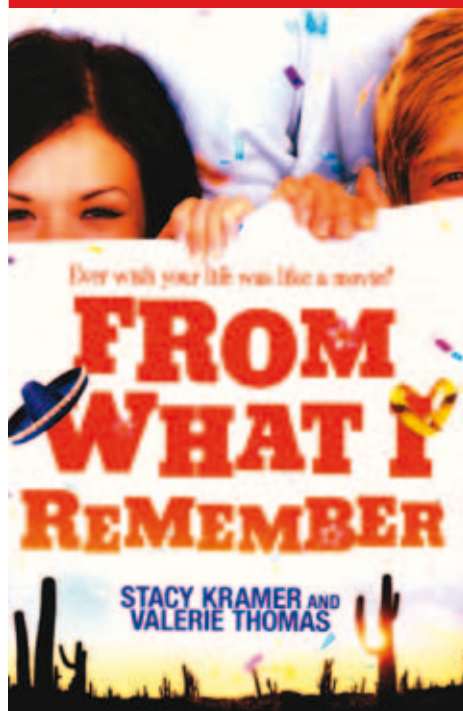
Stacy Kramer and Valerie Thomas  
Electric Monkey £7.99 ISBN 9781405264112

**How come high-achieving Kylie has just woken up with a raging hangover in Mexico with Max, the hottest guy in her year, and how come they are both wearing wedding rings? Kylie is due to give a hugely important speech to her classmates in just a few hours. What exactly has she done in the last 48 hours?**

This was quite boring. It wasn't my style. I couldn't really follow the story – it jumped around a lot and I wasn't sure if it was about one person or more. I am not sure who would like it and I don't think many of my friends would want to read it. I think it is for older teenagers because it is about marriage and stuff.

**NICOLE THOMSON**  
Broughton High

*'wasn't my style'*



## Butter

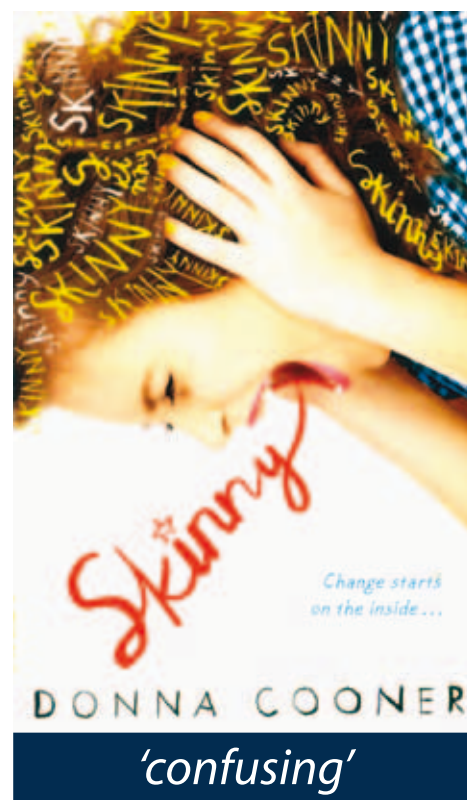
Erin Lange  
Faber and Faber £7.99 ISBN 9780571294404

**'Butter' is a teenage boy who weighs over 400 pounds. Bullied at school because of his weight, Butter sets up a website and announces that he will eat himself to death on New Year's Eve live on the internet. Suddenly he finds himself surprisingly popular with his classmates. Will Butter carry out his plan?**

While I found this book initially quite funny and entertaining and also a little bit sad, I started reading another book at the same time and that other book took precedence. I lost interest in *Butter* long before the end and stopped reading it. I am sure that many other young teenagers might get more out of it, but for me it wasn't very interesting.

**JOE MAYER**  
Trinity Academy

*'I lost interest'*





## Skinny

Donna Cooner  
Electric Monkey £6.99 ISBN 9781405263986

**Ever Davies is 15 years old and heavily overweight. She has a voice in her ear that she calls Skinny, constantly whispering at her about what other people think of her and reminding her how fat she is. Ever decides to undergo gastric surgery to reduce her weight, but even then Skinny won't go away.**

I was interested in this book but its structure got more and more confusing – the 'voice' in her head was like a totally different character. I found myself concentrating too much on who was doing the speaking and not having time to think about the problems the main character had in her life: issues about her weight and self-esteem.

**REBECCA HUXTABLE**  
Wester Hailes Education Centre



## One Crow Alone

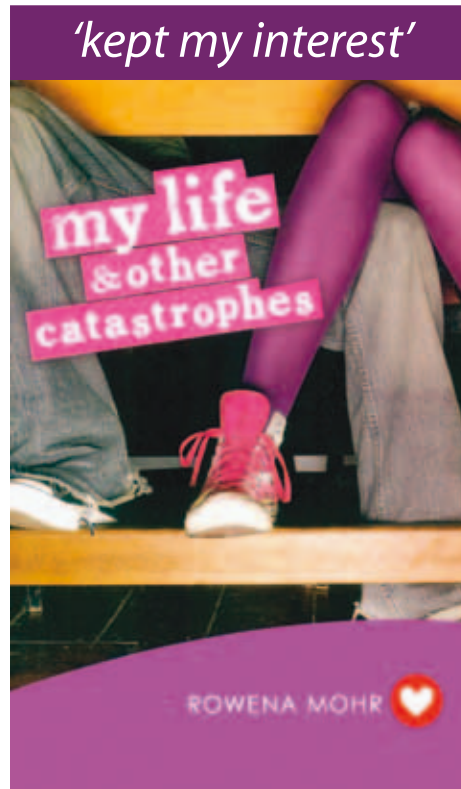
S D Crockett  
Macmillan £12.99 ISBN 9780230760325

**A young Polish girl travels from Poland to England to look for her mother, but finds a lawless, brutal society there.**

I loved this book! It was interesting, different to my usual reads and had a refreshing storyline. I thought the events were depicted really well and it had a great shock ending! The

use of names conjured up the environment well, eg Anwen and Bran in Wales, and I liked the character of Alice, who brought some young energy to the book. After reading this, I immediately went out to buy *After the Snow*. I'd thoroughly recommend this book to teenagers.

**OWEN HARVEY**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



## My Life and Other Catastrophes

Rowena Mohr  
Allen & Unwin £6.99 ISBN 9781742377674

**Erin's English teacher asks her to keep a diary for six months and through it we learn of her chaotic family, her friendships and her failures in romance.**

I liked this book. It was good to read about things girls my age can identify with – Erin's problems with her stepfather, friends and schoolmates. It kept my interest and was easy to read. I thought the diary style made it much more interesting than normal books and enjoyed being able to read it in chunks. I'd recommend it – it's good to see family life and troubles at school through the eyes of a teenage girl – and I also liked the romantic ending!

**HEATHER BYRNE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

This was a good, interesting book about teenagers. The diary entries were easy to read and I liked knowing what Erin got up to every day. People could relate to her not liking her

step-dad, but having to see him in school all the time. Rami was a good character too. I'd definitely recommend this book to girls my age, it's worth reading!

**SANDRA PACIOREK**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

## Ishmael and the Hoops of Steel

Michael Gerard Bauer  
Templar Publishing £6.99 ISBN 9781848777385

**A humorous look at life in an all-boys school, as seen through the eyes of Ishmael and friends.**

I liked the bright cover ... and the daft title, which made me want to read on!

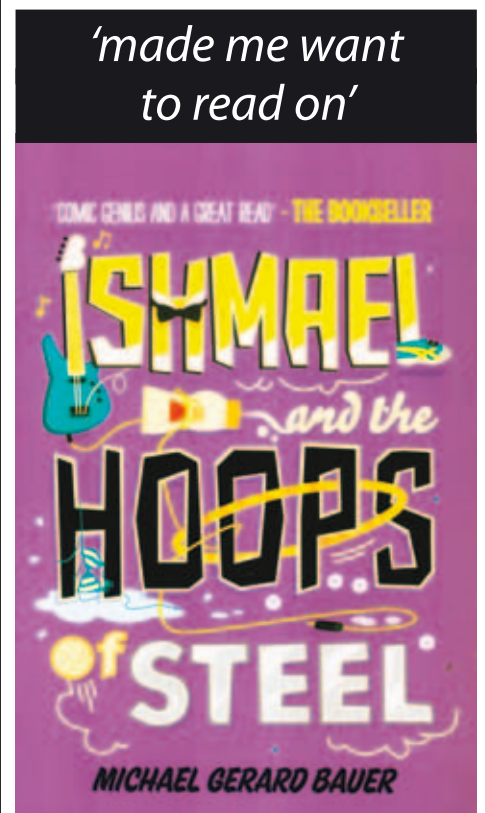
**LUC COUTY**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

This was a good story. I thought the Australian setting might update my knowledge of the country – there were some unusual names, but the rest was quite English! I liked reading about boys my own age and the plot – school troubles, romance – was like the *Wimpy Kid* books I enjoy.

**RYAN LESLIE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

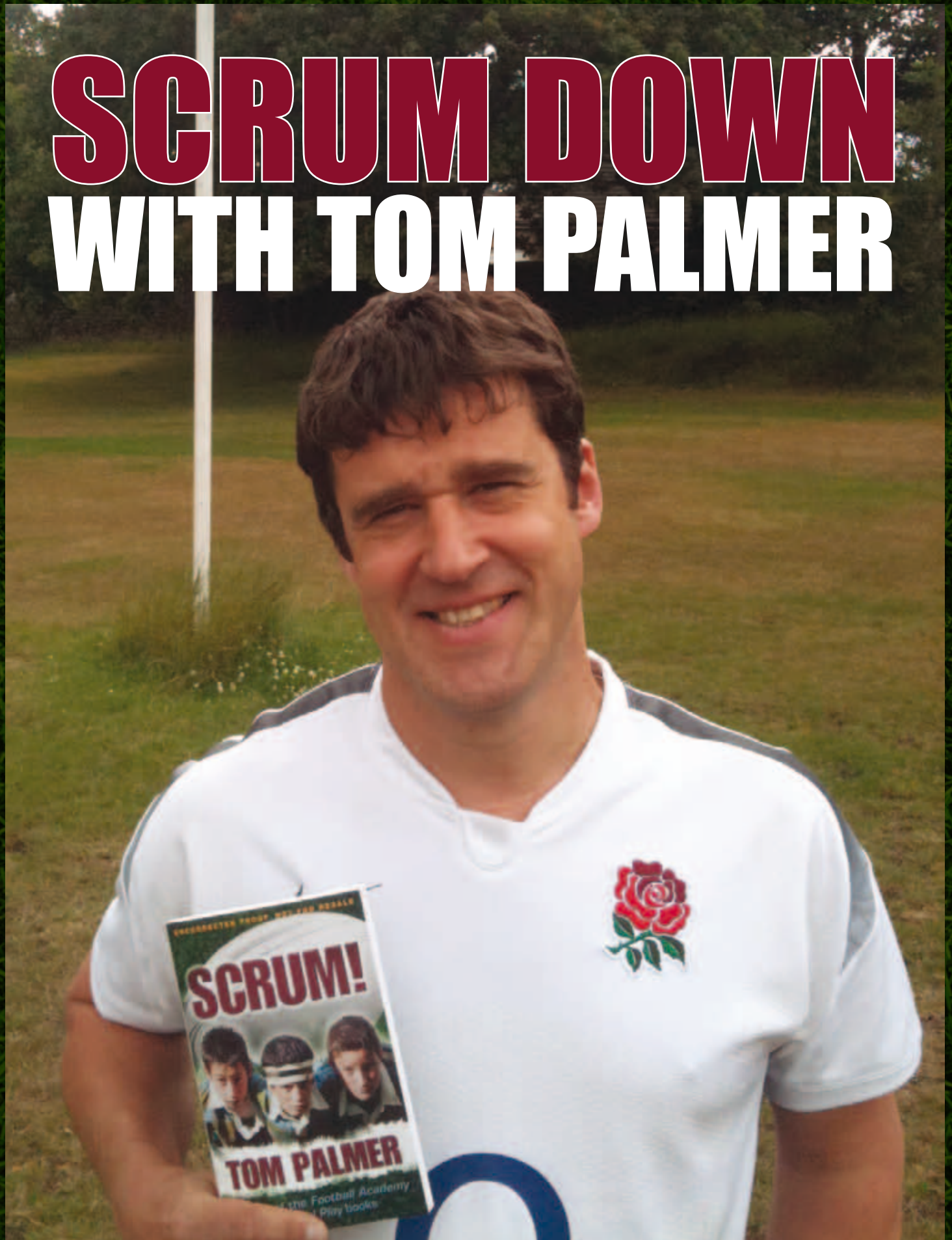
The cover of this book was confusing – quite girly but also looked like it was about basketball. I enjoy funny books but this was a bit mushy for me.

**JOSH DUNN**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



# THE BIG TEEN TITLES INTERVIEW

# SCRUM DOWN WITH TOM PALMER



# THE BIG TEEN TITLES INTERVIEW



Broughton High students Jason Jarvis, Andrew Irving and Bradley Whyte visited Stewart's Melville College and joined Stewart's Melville students Alexander Rhodes, Hamish Garratt and James Stuart to interview Tom Palmer – and here's what they asked.

**Q** How do you come up with ideas? Do you just lie in bed and think of something and get writing?

**A** It's usually stuff I'm obsessed with, like football, and crime – a lot of my books are about crime in football. So they come from being annoyed by match fixing and things like that. But with the rugby one, that came from rugby league and rugby union and how they are always slagging each other off, and I wanted to write one where a boy had to choose between playing rugby league and rugby union. Where I live in Yorkshire people play both and are always having a go at each other so I thought it'd be good to put one person through that wringer. My books are usually about real stuff or stuff I have read in the news.

**Q** Which is your favourite book that you've written?

**A** Probably one called *Offside* which is about a young footballer in Ghana who is illegally trafficked to Europe. And a lot of that goes on, but also his family are fair-trade cocoa

bean farmers and so I went to Ghana and I met footballers, and I went to a fair-trade area and found out about their lives. I am proud of it most because it represents something bad that was happening that I wanted to raise awareness of.

**Q** In all your books do you always go to experience what happens first-hand? In your latest book, in the manuscript you gave us, you said you slept in the football stadium to get experience. Have you done that for all your books?

**A** Yes. I try too. Firstly, I think it's good to try and get it accurate but also because I like to do interesting stuff. I wanted to camp on the pitch because I thought it would be really exciting. It wasn't – it was quite dull! It wasn't scary or anything like that. I went to Ghana to see the cocoa-bean growing. I went to Russia – I was writing about Russian billionaires so I went to a posh hotel when billionaires were there so I could watch them. I try to put myself in the position my characters would find themselves in. Because it's fun!

**Q** What made you want to be an author?

**A** Reading probably. I got into reading quite late because my mum encouraged me to read about football, and so I got into reading at about 17 and once I started liking books I wanted to write my own. I looked up to authors and I wanted to be like them.

**Q** What did you read when you were our age?

**A** Nothing! Seriously, I hated reading.

**Q** What book eventually got you into reading?

**A** *The Illustrated History of Leeds United* (everyone laughs when I tell them this!) I used to write at the end of each season,

there were a few blank pages I used to write stuff in – that was my first ever writing. I used to write really bad stuff about how bad Leeds were!

**Q** Do you ever write stories about your own real experiences?

**A** Yes – there's lots of stuff I put in my stories about stuff that's really happened. If something hasn't happened to me I'll try and make it happen by, like I said, going there. It is all fiction but there are bits in there of memories of mine. In *Ghost Stadium*, that draws on a very strange experience I had when I was about 18 which was sort of ghostly, not so much what happened but how I felt – absolutely paralysed with fear. It was useful to have had that horrible experience.

**Q** The *Foul Play* books are part football, part detective books, and the *Squad* books are part football, part spy. Do you have any other combinations you might use in the future?

**A** That's a good question! I haven't thought of one yet, but I suppose the new series is a new combination. Have you ever made those Airfix kits, the plastic planes that you glue together? My daughter is nine, and we've made a couple of planes together, and it gave me the idea of combining making plastic models with a story where you jump into the past or the future – a boy ends up finishing a Spitfire and the minute he finishes it he ends up in a Spitfire in the Battle of Britain and he's got to get out. And then there'll be a book set in a Lancaster bomber, one in a Chinook. So that's kind of combining my interest in model aeroplanes with my interest with the past. But no more football combos. I'd quite like to do a boarding school/rugby one.

**Q** Who's your favourite author?

**A** I really like Anthony Horowitz and I like Mal Peet who writes good football, sort of ghost football books. But I have been reading Roald Dahl's biography recently and he is really interesting because he was a fighter pilot in the Second World War and he was a spy in America in the 1940s and he was such a fascinating man so I am interested in him as a person – I love his books too, but not as much as other books.

**Q** When your books weren't being published, did you ever feel like giving up?

**A** No, I didn't, once I got started. I didn't think I'd do it as a job; I just wanted to see if I could write a book and get it published, I didn't think it would be a job job. I always tried and then if I knew it was bad or I couldn't get it published, I'd try at something else and keep going. I think that the key to it is never give up – if you've got something you really want to do, don't give up.

**Q** Have you ever thought about becoming a sports journalist?

# THE BIG TEEN TITLES INTERVIEW

**A** I'd like to but I think it's a very different skill, I think it'd be hard for me to get into because there's so many people doing it. I could probably get into feature writing from where I am now. That's quite intense, you're told what to write and when to write it, and it's got to be done that day. I like the way I can write things over a few months, I don't particularly fancy writing to a strict deadline to be honest. I'd rather watch Leeds and scream and shout!

**Q** Do you ever wake up in the morning after you've had a dream, and just think, I've just got to write that!

**A** Yes! If there is a problem in the book and I don't know what the solution is, often I will wake up and just know what it is. I'm not big on all that stuff but I think your unconscious can work stuff out for you and deliver it for you without you having to think it through consciously. It is like you put something in and it comes out a few days later, and I completely believe in that, but not in a ridiculous way.

**Q** Under what conditions do you write?

**A** I wrote on a train last night, I'll write on a train tonight. I might write in a café in Edinburgh later today. Wherever I am I'll

write – I'll write in Leeds tomorrow, have a cup of coffee. But when I am at home I'll do it at my desk. I have a desk in the back room and I'll just do it there. But I am rubbish at writing at home because unfortunately there's always FIFA in the next room. For instance, I'll decide I'll write for half an hour then I'll play one game on FIFA, but I end up playing for half an hour on FIFA and not writing! So it's better when I am out!

**Q** Have you ever stayed up really late writing a book?

**A** No, I'm rubbish at writing after 8pm; I can't do anything except play FIFA.

**Q** Who is the first person you go to once you've just finished a book?

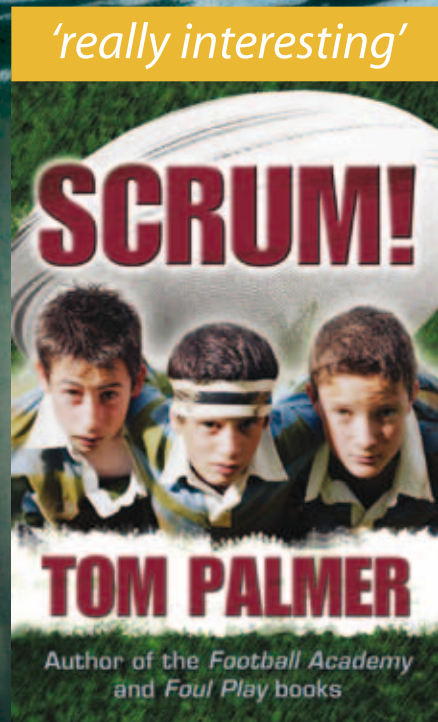
**A** My wife, and she goes through it and she'll absolutely rip it to shreds and two thirds of what she'll say will be spot on. Also, I'm in a writing group so we'll show each other our stuff and I occasionally show my stuff to a class in a school. It's great – the more feedback I get the better. My Spitfire book, ten people have read it already and it has really helped to make it a better book. Much better.

**Q** Have you ever been in the middle of a story and then you have run out of ideas?

**A** Yes! I was writing one about a prison camp set in the future where the children had to escape or at the end of the year they would be killed. So when they were 16 they would be killed, because the people in charge could kill 16-year-olds but not anyone under that, and so the children had to escape. I wrote about twenty thousand words and it was going all right, but I just thought it wasn't working. I had researched it for three months and then written it for three, while doing other things, and it just wasn't up to it, so I stopped. If you are bored writing, stop writing because it is going to bore the reader.

**Q** What has been the biggest success for your books? For example, an award or something?

**A** Sadly I have not won anything yet, although I got shortlisted for the Blue Peter Award. The biggest success is when you get an email or a tweet from a parent who says 'My child has always hated reading, and thanks to you he has just gone to bed early because he wants to read.' Something like that is ace – that is better than awards and all that, isn't it?



## Scrum!

Tom Palmer  
Barrington Stoke £5.99  
ISBN 9781842999448

When Steven's mum remarries and moves to the south of England, Steven has some

**tough choices to make. Does he stick with playing and supporting rugby league like his dad, or does he switch to rugby union, like his step-dad?**

We think this novel was really interesting because to have a lot of friends and play for a rugby team, and then to have to move to another part of the country and lose it all would be very tough. We think Steven is very determined to keep up with rugby and become a professional, because he travels from the south to the north of England every Saturday. We think this was a good book and would recommend it to younger teenagers.

**ANDY IRVINE, JASON JARVIS AND BRADLEY WHYTE**  
Broughton High

## Ghost Stadium

Tom Palmer  
Barrington Stoke £5.99  
ISBN 9781781122273

**It is the start of the summer holidays, and Luc, Irfan and Jack have a plan to make this year the best ever – they are going to sneak into a nearby abandoned football stadium and camp there overnight. The stadium is rumoured to be haunted – are the boys up to the challenge?**

*Ghost Stadium* draws you right in and makes

you want to read on. We would recommend this book for sports fans or even just someone who likes a good ghost story. We would recommend this book to all teenagers.

**BRADLEY WHYTE, JASON JARVIS AND ANDY IRVINE**  
Broughton High



*'draws you right in'*

## FOCUS ON FAMILY

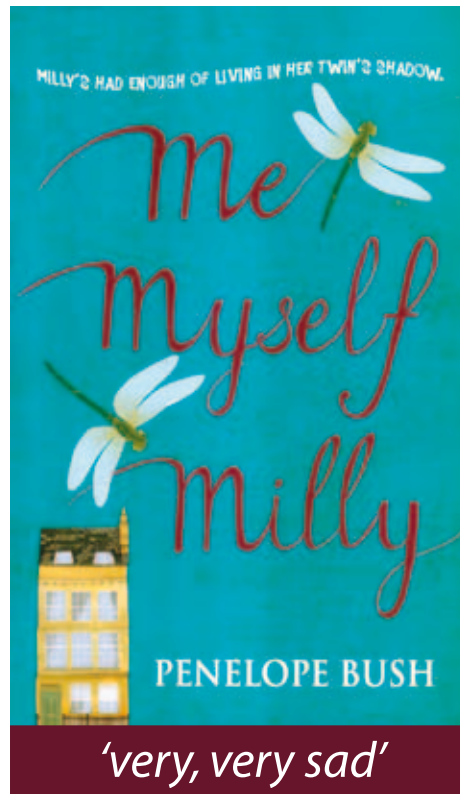
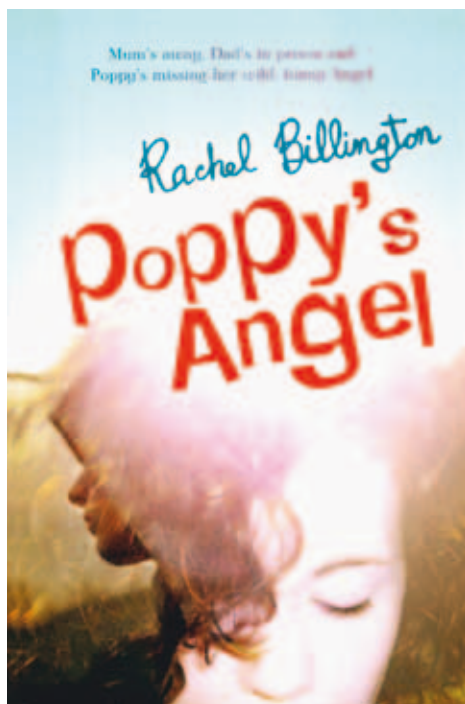
### Poppy's Angel

Rachel Billington  
Frances Lincoln £6.99 ISBN 9781847803627

**Poppy's father is in prison and her mother has to go away, so Poppy is sent to stay with a friend, but she is unhappy and misses her friend Angel. When he calls her for help and she finds him lying bleeding, Poppy has to try to help him without getting into trouble herself.**

I liked this book because of the storyline; it's quite a serious book about death, difficult relationships and Poppy's best friend Angel, who has joined a gang. It was interesting and it caught me up in the story. It was like books I have read before, about serious topics, but this one didn't have any funny parts in it at all and I liked that. Poppy feels sorry for her friend and you find out how this affects her. Overall I would recommend this book to whoever likes reading books that your mind can get caught up in.

**HANNAH FLOCKHART**  
Forrester High



### Me Myself Milly

Penelope Bush  
Piccadilly Press £6.99 ISBN 9781848122529

**Milly has grown up in the shadow of her twin sister, Lily, and the tragedy that happened to her. Now Milly wants to get on with her own life and she starts by writing a journal, telling her secrets and getting to know the boy who's moved into the flat upstairs.**

This is probably one of the saddest books I've ever read. It's all about an 'incident' with twins. You find out about Milly and her life and Effy the chatterbox, who I can relate to. It's rather confusing to begin with, but once you sink in and discover what has happened everything falls into place. Personally, I figured it out at the beginning, but I've seen too many movies like this. I'm glad I read it when I was alone, because I was sobbing. Don't get the wrong idea, it's an amazing book, it's just very, very sad. I promise, if you read it, you'll cry too.

**JODIE MURRAY**  
Queensferry High

I was a little sceptical when I first saw the cover and was a little reluctant to read the book, as it is not the genre that I usually like. However, when I got to about the fifth or sixth chapter I found it quite hard to stop reading. It was really well written with tension rising and falling at all of the right moments and you could relate to the characters, although at one point I found certain aspects of the story kind of confusing. I probably won't read it again, but might recommend it to some of my friends. If you like

books by Jacqueline Wilson then this book may suit you as it is similar to her style but for people a little bit older.

**IMOGEN PAGE**  
Queensferry High

### Finding Cherokee Brown

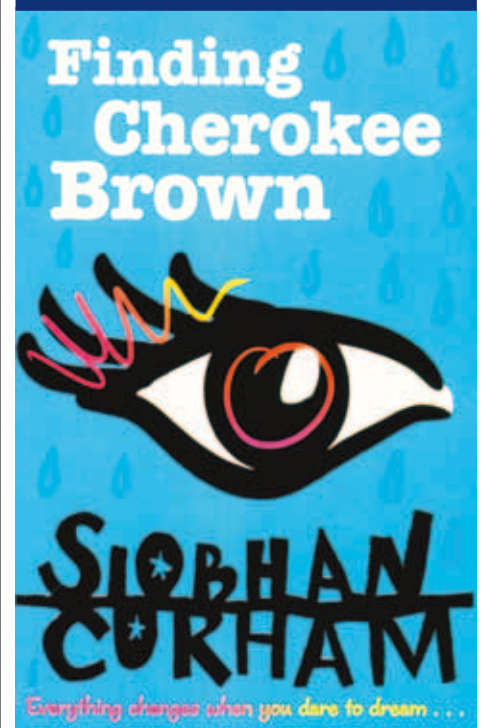
Siobhan Curham  
Egmont £6.99 ISBN 978140526038

**Clare starts to write a book about her life, but decides to stick to the facts as that way she will have to make her boring life interesting. Then she finds out that her real name is Cherokee Brown and her father, instead of being in America as her mum has always told her, lives a few miles across London.**

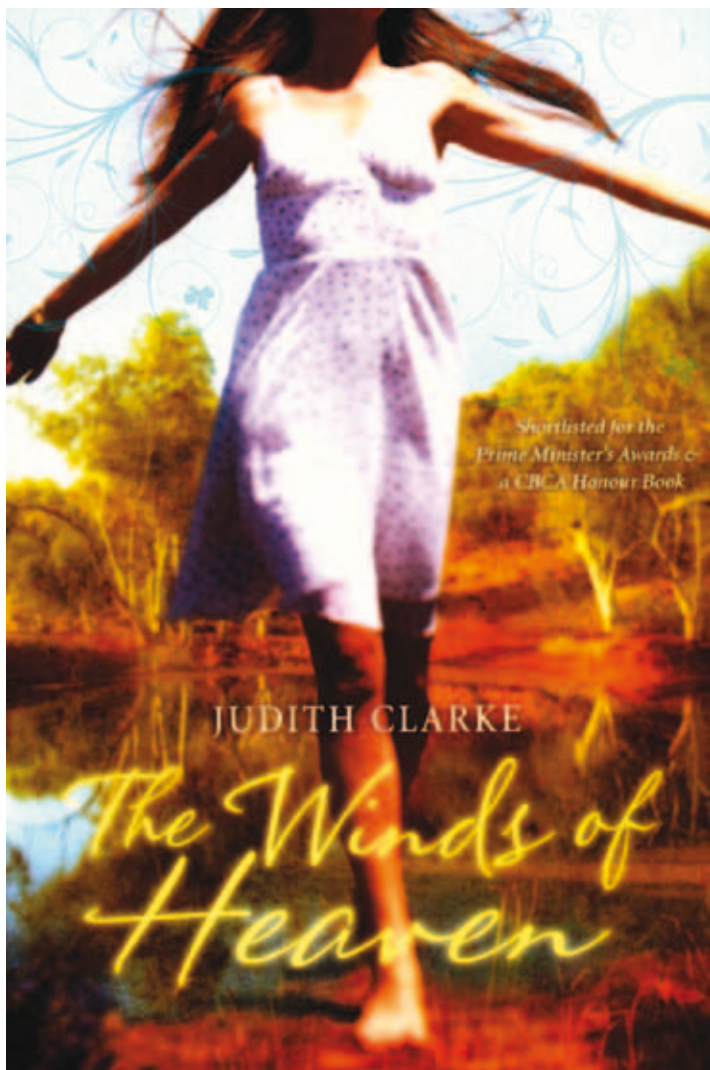
I really enjoyed this book because it has emotion, suspense and pretty much everything a good book should have. I really liked the premise of this book in which Clare, having had to live most of her life with her crummy stepfather and Devil's offspring brother, finds everything changing when her real dad appears. Every character in *Finding Cherokee Brown* has his or her own distinctive personality. It is a really brilliant book!

**CABHAN MARR**  
Trinity Academy

*'emotion, suspense  
and pretty much  
everything'*



# REVIEWS



*'brought a tear to my eye'*

## The Winds of Heaven

Judith Clarke  
Allen & Unwin £6.99 ISBN 9781742378336

**Clem has often been in awe of her seemingly confident and free-spirited cousin Fan. As they grow up, Clem goes off to university, while Fan finds herself a married mother at a young age and sinking further into depression.**

I found this novel to be touching, imaginative and well written. *The Winds of Heaven* takes a deep look at love, depression, sisterhood and life. Clementine worships and adores her cousin Fan. They both come from very different backgrounds. Fan, although she initially seems more self-assured, is being abused by her mother and her father has left, while Clementine in contrast is loved by both of her parents. I would recommend this book to anyone. It brought a tear to my eye and I would read this again.

**SOPHIE INNES**  
Trinity Academy

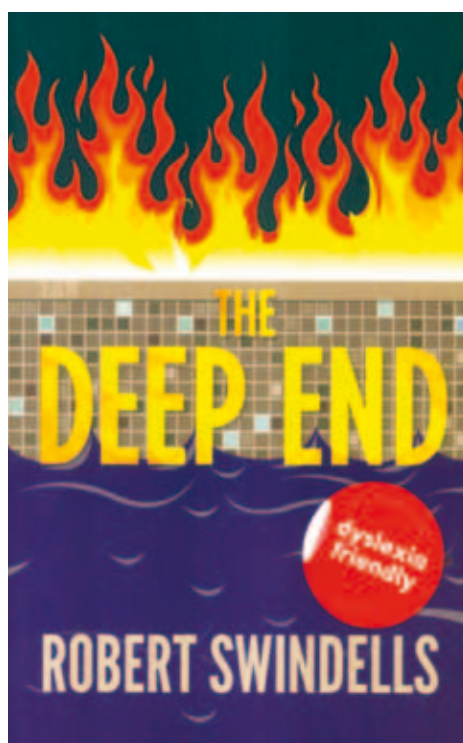
## The Deep End

Robert Swindells  
Barrington Stoke £6.99  
ISBN 9781781121894

**Lisa Seal swims every day and she and her family are surprised but delighted when her trainer says she should try for the Olympics. But the local council want to save money by closing the local baths. Lisa's boyfriend Rick has the protest all ready and under control. Or has he?**

This book is easy to understand, has a good storyline and the chapter endings leave you wanting to find out more. My favourite part was finding out about the rumours and lies the council were spreading around in an attempt to close the pool. I would recommend this book to pupils with dyslexia and anyone who likes a good, intriguing story.

**GARY TICKLE**  
Gracemount High



## JUST FOR LAUGHS



*'funny in bits'*

## Awesome

Pete Johnson  
Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 9781781121870

**Ben MacBean goes to a new school and people think he is Ben Moore, the star of hit show Awesome! He enjoys playing along, but then things get tricky.**

This was a very fast read and I wasn't completely convinced by the storyline. It was funny in bits and I think slightly younger girls and boys would both enjoy it.

**DANIEL ALLISON**  
Craigmount High

## The Day the Music Died

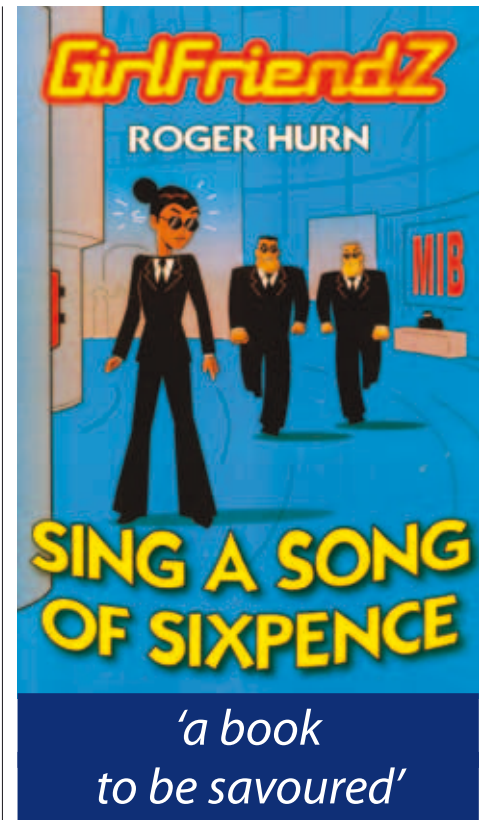
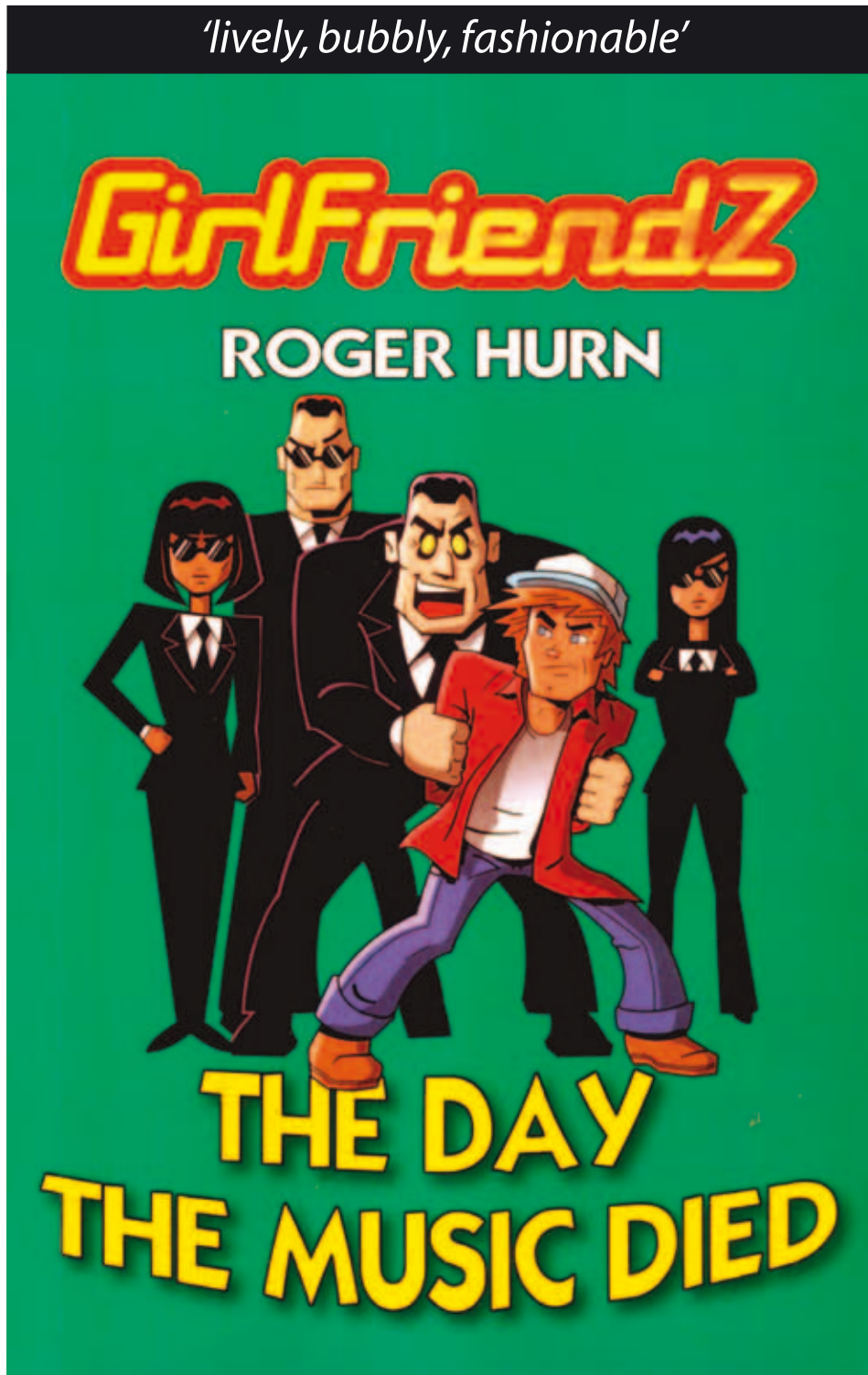
Series: GirlFriendZ  
 Roger Hurn  
 Ransom Publishing £5.99 ISBN 9781781271506

**GirlFriendZ are the number one band in a world where music is banned, and they are on the run from The Zargons and their MIB (Music is Banned) agents, who want to catch the girls dead or alive.**

I would recommend this book for a younger age group although it depends on how good the reader is – I thought this book was too easy for me. It was nice to have some images in the book. The girls in the group are lively, bubbly, fashionable – girls for our generation! I would recommend you read the book for yourself as it is a good read. I would read the other books in the series.

**AMBER MARSH**  
 Queensferry High

*'lively, bubbly, fashionable'*



## Sing a Song of Sixpence

Series: GirlFriendZ  
 Roger Hurn  
 Ransom Publishing £4.99 ISBN 9781781271551

**Will the Zargons defeat girl band GirlFriendZ?**

When I first saw the cover I thought this was a book that I'd enjoy. The font was a good size and I loved the cartoon characters. I like the 'thinness' of the book as it was entertaining and quick to get through and there seem to be others in the series too. The spying element was interesting, but I loved the fact the story centred round a girl band.

**TARA RAMSAY**  
 Royal High

I found this interesting as I love music and the four girls sing a lot. It was exciting too as the band weren't allowed to talk about the album in public in case anyone stole their ideas. I liked the end and found the length just right. A book to be savoured!

**LAUREN MARSHALL**  
 Royal High

*Sing a Song of Sixpence* was interesting and I liked the Facebook format, it felt familiar. The black and white drawings can add to our imagination. Eve Rose was my favourite band member with wild cool hair – a bit like Scary Spice maybe?

**KARLA RAMPAGE**  
 Royal High

FACT-PACKED



*'lots of facts'*

## Made on Earth

Wolfgang Korn  
A & C Black £6.99 ISBN 9781408173916

Ever wondered how our clothes get to us, or what happens to them when we are finished with them? This is the incredible journey of a red fleece body warmer which started its life

in the oil fields of the Middle East. The story of globalisation brought down to earth.

I enjoy information books more than fiction so I was really surprised how the author managed to tell the story of the red fleece but still include lots of facts and interesting information about globalisation.

**KYLE WALKER**  
Leith Academy



## Moviestar Planet: The Official Guide

Egmont £4.99 ISBN 9781405265829

A handbook to Moviestar Planet with tips, tricks and secrets, and everything you need to know about creating a movie star and making an animated movie.

This book has been very helpful for my account on the game. It has helped me earn fame and coins and get more clothes. I would recommend this book to people with a Moviestar Planet account who enjoy the game.

**DENISE TULLOCH**  
Queensferry High

The Guide to Moviestar Planet is the worst book I have ever read! It is basically a guide to an online game about movie stars and VIPs. This book would be fantastic for a girly six-year-old, or someone who wants a really bad read. All in all a terrible book; I would not recommend it at all.

**ISAAC RILEY**  
Queensferry High

## The Insider's Guide to MiniClip: The Official Handbook

Egmont £7.99 ISBN 9781405265683

Facts and tips on more than 100 MiniClip games.

I used to play MiniClip and I think the idea of having an avatar is quite good as you can customise him/her. There is a good variety of games that you can play online and the online system servers are ok.

**BEN COLLINS**  
Forrester High

I don't play games, but the front cover of this book doesn't look too bad. It doesn't interest me but if you like games then this is a very informative and interesting book. I think MiniClips are more interesting for younger children to play.

**SKY CAMPBELL**  
Forrester High

I would recommend this to people who play MiniClip because the games are interesting. It makes you want to buy more games because not all of them are free.

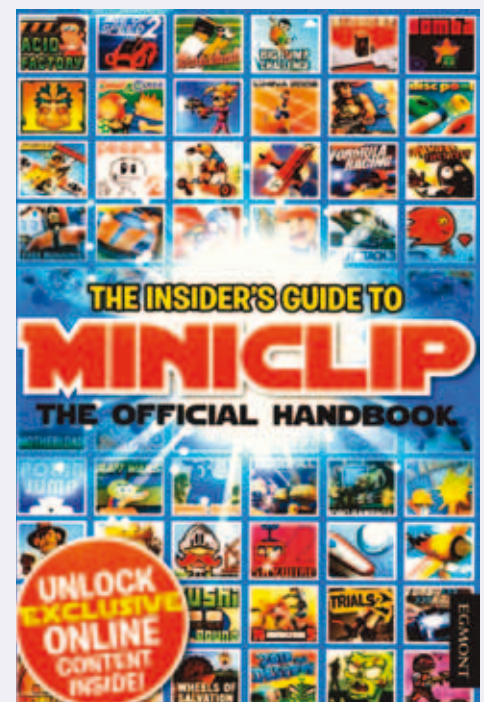
**DYLAN MCKENZIE**  
Forrester High

I would recommend it because I like most of the games, I think its ok!

**LEWIS HAMILTON**  
Forrester High

I'd rather play than read the book!

**ARRAN BATHGATE**  
Forrester High





## THRILLERS & CHILLERS

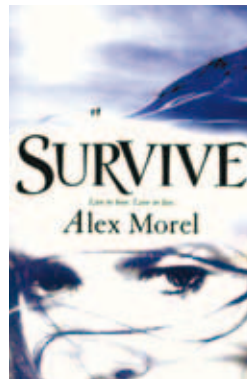
### Survive

Alex Morel  
Electric Monkey £6.99 ISBN 9781405264136

**A suicidal girl wants to kill herself on her way home to her mum's for Christmas, but her plane crashes and her plans change.**

This is a brilliant book about a manic depressive, Jane, who is trying to kill herself, but is thwarted when she and one boy are the only survivors of a plane crash. I found this book depressing and strangely funny at the same time. I think that it's best for senior students but I cried when I finished it. I loved the way their relationship developed. It was unexpected as they seemed to loathe each other initially. Having to try and survive in adverse conditions really brought them together.

**SOPHIE WRIGHT**  
Royal High



*'I cried when I finished it'*

### Shiverton Hall

Emerald Fennell  
Bloomsbury £6.99 ISBN 9781408827789

**Arthur is very surprised when he is offered a place at the spooky sounding school Shiverton Hall. The building looks very scary from the outside but Arthur soon makes friends with George the ghost expert, and Jake and Penny. However, not everyone at Shiverton Hall is quite as friendly.**



This book is really good! At first it was a bit slow when the characters were packing their bags and getting ready, but once the story got going properly it was really gripping. I couldn't stop reading because I was excited and wanted to find out what was happening. I especially liked the ending which was both surprising and good. A great spooky tale!

**JODIE GLASGOW**  
Craigmount High

I really got into this engaging story right away. I could relate to Arthur as he struggled with wanting to go to the school and not wanting to go, but being desperate to leave his brother. I thought the story was believable, even though Arthur was seeing 'ghosts', and how the author linked these episodes to dreams. I was pleased that he made friends at the school and was welcomed into that group. This is definitely one for Harry Potter fans!

**LAUREN SCOTT**  
Craigmount High

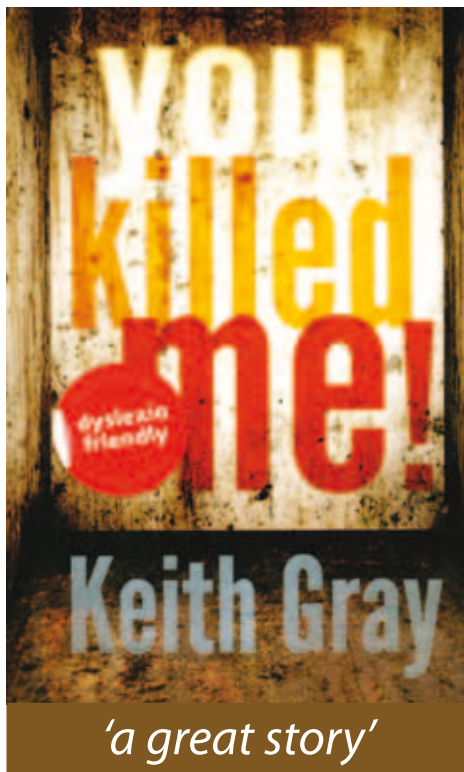
### Paper Valentine

Brenna Yovanoff  
Simon & Schuster £6.99 ISBN 9780857078148

**Lillian starved herself to death, and comes back to haunt her best friend Hannah because someone is murdering girls in their area, leaving paper valentines on each victim. As Hannah slowly pieces the clues about these murders together, she moves into danger.**

This is a really dark, well written book. I was impressed by the 'usual' murder but with a supernatural twist. I enjoyed reading it and really wanted to know who the killer was. There were lots of red herrings, and even when I thought I knew who had done it, the story twisted again. The ending was a good surprise and I was kept guessing right till the end.

**DAISY WHITE**  
Craigmount High



*'a great story'*

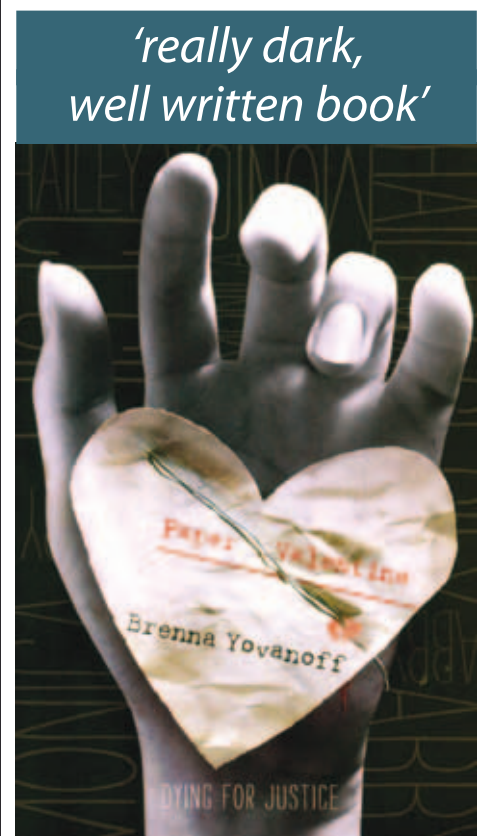
### You Killed Me!

Keith Gray  
Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 97817811214887

**Toby wakes up to find a dead Len Grimsby at the foot of his bed. When Toby is taken back in time, he sees how his seemingly innocent actions had consequences he could never have imagined. Can he unravel the series of events which led to Len being killed, and do it without causing further damage?**

This book is one of the best books in the world for me because it's easy to read if you have dyslexia like me. The only reason I read this book was because it said it was dyslexia friendly. I am not a book reader but this was a great story. This book is my favourite book.

**RYAN MARTIN**  
Leith Academy



*'really dark, well written book'*

# REVIEWS



## Siege

Sarah Mussi  
Hodder £10.99 ISBN 9781444914849

**Leah Jackson at 16 has enough on her plate, with a chronically depressed mother, a six-year-old sister and a very troubled 13-year-old brother. But one day some kids at her school get hold of guns and start shooting students and teachers. Is Connor one of them? And how on earth is Leah going to survive?**

This book is just like the shootings in a school in America that happened recently. It's a very sad book but it is also very unexpected and dramatic: none of them can believe what is happening to them. Leah Jackson is a great and bold heroine who really wants to protect her brother and her sister and even her mother, too. People who like books that make them think will love this book.

**FATIMA SHAH**  
Holy Rood High

I thought that this was a good book, very fast paced and it really jumped the gun at the start (no pun intended!). Even though what she describes is quite violent she is a good enough author not to make you feel sick. It has a very unpredictable ending but it is very human. This is the best thriller I've read.

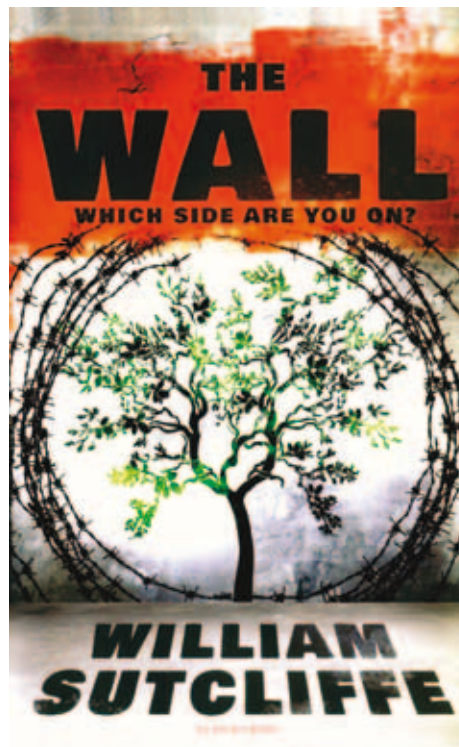
**EILISH BOWERS**  
Holy Rood High

This book really made you think, especially how government as well as society works. With the siege being set in a school, it felt realistic, and I was a little unnerved walking along the corridors here! It was a good book, but the twists and turns in the plot made it great.

**LAURYN WHYTE**  
Gracemount High

This book is not really my type of book, but it is easy to read and quite gory. I did think it was quite melodramatic and I didn't like the fact that it was written in the present tense – though I realised at the end why it was.

**MORRIGAN MILLAR**  
Gracemount High



## The Wall

William Sutcliffe  
Bloomsbury £12.99 ISBN 9781408837450

**Joshua's only friend is David. No-one else likes Joshua, and at 13 he is prepared to accept that things will stay this way until he reaches 19 and the joys of conscription. But then he finds a way under The Wall that divides Amarias, the weird town he lives in, and his life is changed – irrevocably.**

This is a fascinating novel that explores what it must be like to live in a divided society. The fast-paced action means that this book is very difficult to put down. The hero decides to follow his heart and I loved this, because we all want to do that but more often than not there are obstacles in our way: obstacles that have nothing to do with us.

**SHANNON FAGAN**  
Holy Rood High

I really enjoyed this story since it brought to life the conflict which we hear so much about in the news, and it made it seem more real. This book would appeal to older readers with an interest in current affairs.

**GEMMA KING**  
Currie Community High

## Hostage Three

Nick Lake  
Bloomsbury £12.99 ISBN 9781408828212

**Amy is on the holiday of a lifetime, sailing around the world with her father and stepmother in a desperate attempt on their part to stop her teenage excesses. But desperate really does become the case when they are kidnapped by Somalian pirates.**



15+

The summary of the book suggested a well-written, action-packed story but from page one, the novel was lacking that oomph needed to capture the reader. It wasn't overly well written and I believe areas could have been vastly improved with a higher standard of language. Overall, it was a bit of a disappointment.

**PHILLIPA LUMSDEN**  
Currie Community High



'very clever'

## Killing Rachel

Series: The Murder Notebooks  
Anne Cassidy  
Bloomsbury £6.99 ISBN 9781408815519

**Joshua and Rose know that even though the authorities think that their parents are dead, they are still alive – somewhere. Things become even more complicated when an ex-friend of Rose's appears to have committed suicide. Are all these events connected?**

This book was really good. It was easy to pick up what was happening even if you hadn't read the first book and it is written in a very clever way so that you have no idea what is going to happen next. For me I found the fact that she likes her step-brother a bit weird so I didn't sympathise with her, however I definitely wouldn't like to be in her situation. This book is for young(ish) teenagers – I think if you were over 15 you would find it a bit boring.

**CHARLOTTE DOIG**  
Holy Rood High



## The Bunker Diary

Kevin Brooks  
Penguin £7.99 ISBN 9780141326122

**After being kidnapped, Linus is held in an underground bunker with no windows and no doors. The lift is the only way out. Gradually other people arrive and the kidnapper starts to play games. Can Linus survive? This book is his diary.**

I enjoyed this book quite a lot. I thought it was really interesting how the author got such a diverse plot out of such a minimalist setting. I would recommend it to anyone who likes mystery or thriller books.

**CAMERON BRADLEY**  
Portobello High

## Gamer

Chris Bradford  
Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 9781781121382

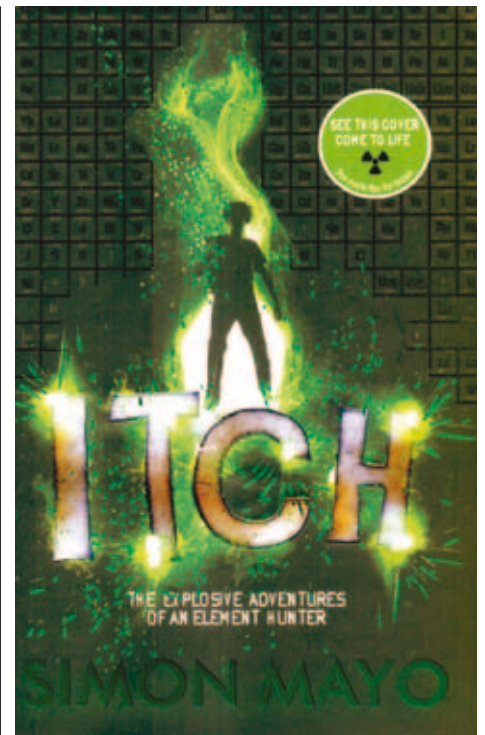
**Virtual Kombat is the most realistic game ever, so when Scott is chosen take part he jumps at the chance. When his friend goes missing in one of the battles he soon discovers that this is more than a game.**

I thought this book was very good and I would recommend the book to young teens as there are some challenging words in it. If you like action books this book is the one for you to read. It makes it feel like you're in the book watching Scott play the game which makes the book more exciting.

**ALEX HUTH**  
Castlebrae Community High

I didn't really enjoy this book because it was very boyish. I still had a favourite part though which was when Scott got taken to the rich man's orphanage. I felt very sorry for him because he had to live on the street with lots of bullies. I would recommend this book to boys because it has a lot of action in it.

**KELSEY WALLACE**  
Castlebrae Community High



## Itch

Simon Mayo  
Doubleday £10.99 ISBN 9780857531308

**Itchingham Lofte loves science and experiments, which sometimes go horribly wrong. He has set out to collect samples of all the elements in the periodic table, but when he buys an unusual rock to add to his collection his problems start.**

I was really impressed by this book. It started well, had an amazing ending and everything in between was fabulous. The storyline was particularly good, as it flowed and wasn't predictable, but not too far-fetched either as it could still happen. Everything that happened did so in the most exciting way, making the book impossible to put down. It was one of the best books I have read this year because it was original and different, and very well written. Regardless of gender or genre preference, this is an amazing book and I think almost anyone who reads this will love it.

**SAMANTHA TULLOCH**  
Queensferry High

At the start of the story it's hard to understand what's going on and to get a good feel for the characters. As you progress through the story though, it gets a lot better and really comes to life as you follow Itch's adventures. The book itself can feel more like a science lesson than a fictional story as you get to find out a lot about elements. The book is also very long and can take a lot of your time if you put the effort into reading it. I would recommend this to people who like a typical action adventure story.

**JOHN LACEY**  
Queensferry High

# REVIEWS

## Betrayal

Series: Empty Coffin  
Gregg Olsen  
Splinter £12.99

ISBN 9787402789588

**Olivia Grant, a foreign exchange student, is stabbed to death at a party and soon the list of suspects is growing, with her friends and boyfriend under suspicion. It's up to twins Hayley and Taylor Ryan to try to untangle the web of shocking secrets that surrounds them all.**



This book keeps you on edge throughout the whole story; you never can anticipate what's going to happen next. It's a real thriller and is very detailed; it gives you a clear image of what is happening. The book's title *Betrayal* is a perfect way to describe it. Finding out that the book was based on a real murder story makes it chilling to think it actually happened.

**KELSEY MACFADYEN**  
Castlebrae Community High

I thought this book was very good, it was a very challenging read and it keeps you hanging till the very last page. I would recommend it to older readers because it is a very difficult book and has lots of information to take in.

**KELSEY WALLACE**  
Castlebrae Community High

## Hysteria

Megan Miranda  
Bloomsbury £6.99

ISBN 9781408834848

**Mallory brutally killed her boyfriend, and though she was found not guilty her boyfriend's mum does not agree. So, Mallory has decided to go away to Monroe Prep School so she can escape her demons. But she soon discovers that escaping your problems can be harder than you'd think.**



*Hysteria* has a good storyline, but for me it wasn't my kind of book, I found it boring in the beginning and I couldn't really get into it. The story is well written and I enjoyed it when the main character started at her new school, but I found some of the characters confusing and some a bit scary. I would recommend this book

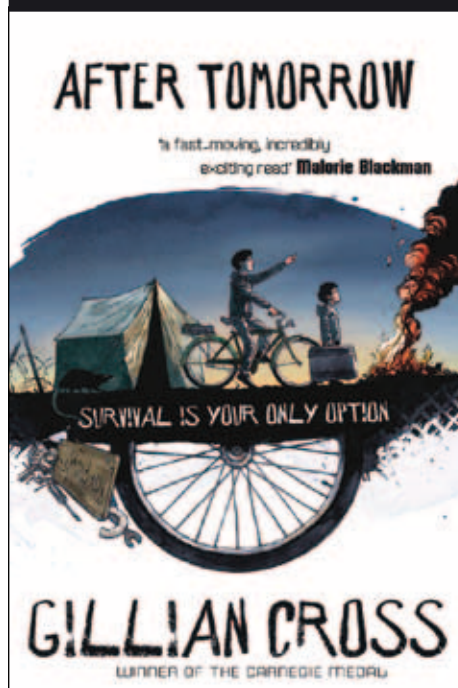
to people with a dark side. But if you are like me and don't have much of a dark side then I wouldn't recommend this book.

**HANNAH DICKSON**  
Boroughmuir High

I like that this book kept you constantly on the edge and that it was very hard to predict what would happen next. It was full of excitement and *Hysteria* will be grasping at you throughout the book. Although I enjoyed the book there were some parts that could be slightly repetitive and it did move slowly. I liked that the author put a lot of emotion into the characters making them interesting and unique, and you felt like you were with them. I would definitely recommend this book because it was extremely exciting and was very realistic.

**GEMMA DRYDEN**  
Boroughmuir High

*'you will undoubtedly stop and think'*



## After Tomorrow

Gillian Cross  
OUP £6.99

ISBN 9780192756268

**Matt and his family wake up to a world where everything has changed. Their friends are gone, money has no value and armed robbers roam the streets. No-one is safe. Their only hope of survival is to escape through the Channel Tunnel to France, but there is danger everywhere.**

I thought that *After Tomorrow* was extremely well written and flowed as a book. The characters were insightful enough to pull you into their world long enough to reach the first

plot twist. Altogether this book is exciting and action packed, and once you get to the end, you will undoubtedly stop and think about what is to come for the human race if we carry on like this. A definite dystopian world, fans of this genre will love it.

**JULIET BOURKE**  
Queensferry High

## Raining Fire

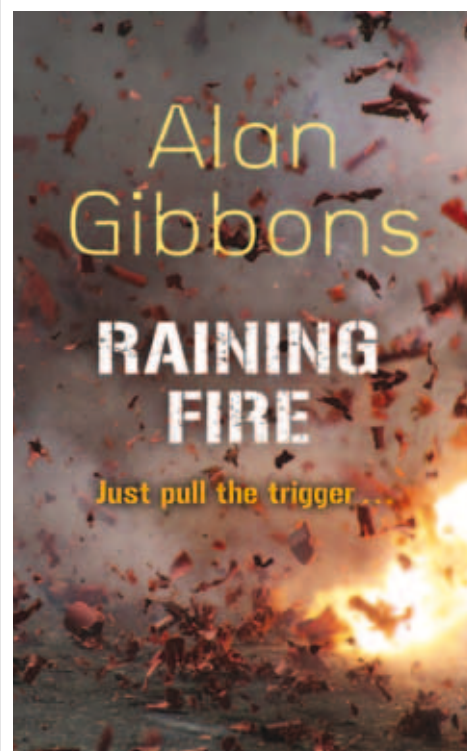
Alan Gibbons  
Orion £8.99

ISBN 9781780620275

**Ethan comes from a tough Manchester estate, but is a promising footballer and has been selected to go on a training programme in the United States. When his brother Alex becomes involved with criminals, Ethan has to jeopardise his entire career. As Ethan fights to stop Alex from going to jail, a riot breaks out.**

When you read a book, you want to feel like you are there, taking in the moment. Paying attention to intrinsic details, Alan Gibbons has captured every second in the book to such a high standard that, even if he hadn't experienced it himself, you feel that he has done. There is a famous saying by John Locke, a philosopher, who once stated, 'No man's knowledge here can go beyond his experience.' I believe that Gibbons defies this with his impressive ability to judge accurately the thoughts and feelings running through somebody's head. It is a very worthwhile exercise to learn: walking a mile in somebody else's shoes, and Gibbons has done this brilliantly.

**JACK LIDDALL**  
Trinity Academy



## The Lost Girl

Sangu Mandanna  
Random House £6.99 ISBN 9781849416177

**Eva is Amarra's echo – she has been created artificially so that if Amarra ever dies, Eva can stand in as her replacement. Eva has been studying Amarra's life for ever, but she hates it – she wants nothing more than to make her own choices, live her own life and choose who to love.**



I quite liked this. At first it was confusing but later on you get what the author is trying to tell you. If you keep on reading you will understand how Amarra is different from her other and how she wants to do things her way, and not be a slave. This is a good book about what it is like to have no choice, and if you keep on fighting you will reach your goal.

**AASHI GIRI**  
Broughton High

It was a really good book. It is believable – it is like something the government might do in the future. It reminded me of *Slated* by Teri Terry. I think teens would like this because it kind of makes you think about whether people are doing this already. If they ever make a movie of this and they make the characters terrible, I will hunt them down!

**ESTHER KUKIRIZA**  
Broughton High

## In Too Deep

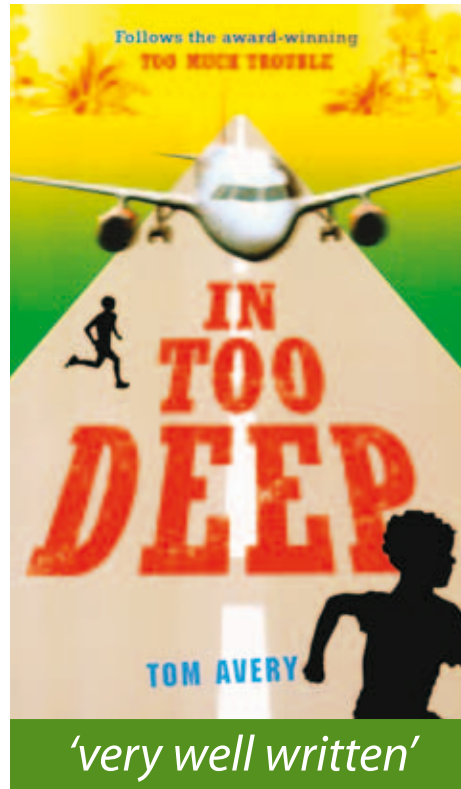
Tom Avery  
Frances Lincoln £6.99 ISBN 9781847803894

**Prince and Emmanuel have found out that their father is trapped in Tanzania, working for gangsters to pay off an impossible debt that means he may never see them again. With their mother having suddenly reappeared after four years away, they set out on a dangerous mission to Africa to try to find their father.**

This is the sequel to *Too Much Trouble*. It is a very well written book from the perspective of the younger brother, Prince. Tom Avery sets the time and place at the start of each chapter, which allows the reader to understand the story. As for the characters, there is almost a mental war going on between them. Prince has a 'money equals happiness' theory, but towards the

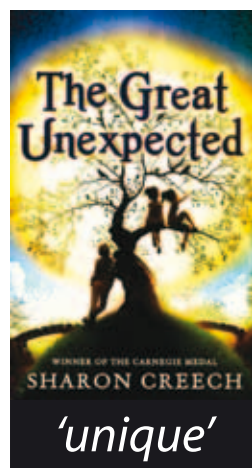
end they settle their differences. I thoroughly recommend this story to anyone who likes modern adventure stories. You will love the way the setting transports you from England to Tanzania to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**DUNCAN CAMERON**  
Balerno Community High



## The Great Unexpected

Sharon Creech  
Andersen Press £9.99 ISBN 9781849390927



**This is a novel which interlinks two stories – childhood friends in America meeting a boy who falls from a tree, and two elderly Irish ladies plotting revenge for all their past ills.**

This was a unique book, unlike anything I'd read before. It was clever to have the two stories linked together and

made for a really interesting plot. I liked the cliff-hangers posed by the old ladies and thought the characters generally were strong and believable. The book might appeal more to girls because of its female characters, but I think any reader would enjoy it.

**SIAN PHILLIPS**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

I'm quite open-minded about what I read and thought linking the two stories together was a good idea.

**RYAN BORTHWICK**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

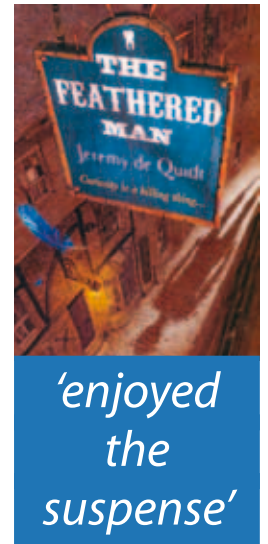
## The Feathered Man

Jeremy de Quidt  
David Fickling Books £10.99  
ISBN 9780385613590

**When his boss pulls a diamond tooth from the mouth of a dead man, Klaus is forced to go on the run.**

I was able to read this book quickly and enjoyed the suspense in it. There were some evil characters and I found the Professor interesting. Overall, it was quite an exciting book and one I'd recommend to my friends.

**ORLA WILLIAMSON**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



## The Diamond Thief

Sharon Gosling  
Curious Fox £6.99 ISBN 9781782020134

**Set in Victorian London, this book tells the story of a young trapeze artist, Remy Brunel, who is forced to be a thief by the evil circus owner. A young detective is on her case – but is he really her saviour?**

This is quite an unpredictable book with a really interesting plot with lots of twists. The story is fast moving and exciting and I was

gripped throughout. The title and the blurb first attracted me to this book and I wasn't disappointed with the contents. It is a story which any teenager could enjoy and I'll be recommending it to my friends.

**RACHEL WYSE**  
Craigmount High





## The day we met Chris Higgins

Chris Higgins, a teen writer of psychological thrillers, come into the library at the Royal High School, Edinburgh earlier this year and spoke to Mrs Pia and Mrs Quinn's English classes. Chris told us about her life and writing, and whetted our appetites by reading from *The Day I Met Suzie*. Teenage issues are high on Chris's agenda and she gets it so right! Melissa Mukundwa rounded things off by interviewing her.

**Q** What made you become a writer?

**A** At school I was pretty rubbish at maths and science but good at English, and loved to read. As a child I had a dream to write, and although it's taken me a while, I'm really happy to be doing what I'm doing now – writing for others to read.

**Q** How do you start when writing a book?

**A** I usually start with a character in mind and go with the flow at the beginning. Sometimes people I meet or know give me inspiration. I have friend who is in the Samaritans, where she is trained to listen and not give advice, and that's why I used

the Samaritans in the new book.

**Q** What did you do before writing?

**A** I was a teacher... became ill, then I decided to go for it and write. My teenage children and teaching gave me plenty of ideas. My first story *32c That's Me* was a personal story, although it's not about me.

**Q** Is it fair to say your books are becoming darker?

**A** Well noticed! I am veering towards the psychological drama or thriller, although I also write for younger children too with *My Funny Family* and *Secrets Club*.

### The Day I Met Suzie

Chris Higgins  
 Hodder £6.99 ISBN 9780340997024

**How can one girl 'morph' into another? Read this thriller and find out.**

I enjoyed the way the story jumped about from character to character and place to place, eg the Samaritans back to the main story. Suzie is a creepy sad girl at the beginning, who almost

changes places with Indy by the end of the book. I liked Indy's boyfriend and family but a wee bit more about Suzie's background would have been made the book more interesting. It is a great book for boys and girls and although the cover looks a bit 'girly' it's fine for boys too.

**KATE MCMARTIN**  
**Royal High**

There was lots of action which kept me interested and wanting to find out what happens next. The relationship between scary, homeless Suzie and content, happy Indy was well developed and the ending caught me by surprise. This wouldn't have been my first choice – it was a good thriller/scam, but for me not as good as Malorie Blackman. A pretty close second though!

**JULIA LAUGHLAND**  
**Royal High**

I thought this book was brilliant! The characters were all unique and made me want to follow what happened to them. They seemed a bit older than me, but they weren't all as mature! The message of not letting strangers get into

your life – the importance of getting to know people gradually – was good, and seeing how Suzie became a clone, and the way the changes she made built up was sinister. I loved the ending and will read all of Chris's other books!

**MELISSA MUKUNDWA**  
Royal High

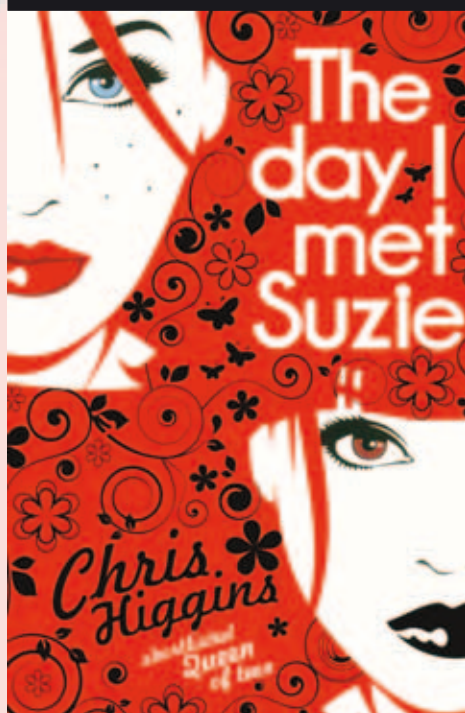
We both love this book! We enjoyed the realistic way it was written and it didn't seem like an older person telling the story. We were a bit creeped out as we didn't expect what actually happened. It seemed a bit dodgy at the beginning – strange to think that Indy and her family didn't suspect what was happening with Suzie. We think it would be a good idea to write a prequel as it would be good to know a bit more about Suzie and see how she managed to achieve what she did. It would be interesting seeing her point of view of what happened. We were both a bit concerned about *having* to read a book for *Teen Titles* – but we'd recommend this to everyone!

**PHOEBE HALL AND BETHAN JONES**  
Royal High

The book started strongly, but dipped a little in the middle for me when Indy found herself worried about money and her boyfriend. Towards the end the pace speeds up and the ending I found satisfactory and surprising. I felt sorry for both girls in different ways, but I much preferred Indy. My favourite book by this writer is *He's After Me*, and I plan to read others too! I would like a second book, 'When Suzie Gets Caught'.

**ROBYN SMITH**  
Royal High

*'I loved the ending'*



## SCI-FI & FANTASY



*'I was devastated'*

### Time Between Us

Tamara Ireland Stone  
Doubleday £9.99 ISBN 9780857531155

**Anna and Bennet exist in two different worlds, separated by hundreds of miles and seventeen years. However, Bennet has a very special talent – he can travel through space and time.**

This is like a teenage *Time Traveller's Wife*. I was devastated for Anna when she was snatched away from Bennet but the ending made up for it. I would recommend this to all my friends, not your typical teenage romance.

**MEGHAN JOYCE**  
Leith Academy

### Erebos

Ursula Poznanski  
Allen & Unwin £7.99 ISBN 9781742379531

**Erebos is an intelligent computer game with a disturbing agenda. This book was translated from German but set in London.**

This was a mystery/thriller mainly, but the stuff about computer gaming was great. I liked the fact that as a reader you saw the world of gaming through the main character Nick's eyes. How he is sceptical initially then gets totally drawn into the addiction of the game. I found it amazing how Nick was manipulated to do things that the game ordered, such as murder. The ending was surprising and shocking, but everything added up and all the pieces were brought together. This book was a bit like a modern Sherlock Holmes. Highly recommended!

**BULELANI NDHLELA**  
Royal High

This book is about as addictive as the game in the book is supposed to be. It has lots of twists and turns, and towards the end becomes very unexpected. The characters were brilliantly written and even the secondary ones have real personalities. The plot was fast moving and made me want to read on. Although it takes Nick a while to find out how sinister things are shaping up to be, I still was hooked!

**MAC DANIELS**  
Royal High

As a gamer myself I was a bit critical about the game in the book. I liked the look of the book at first and the plot seemed good, but I disliked the writing style. I didn't care about the characters or find them realistic. The book didn't work for me.

**KIERAN GILLON**  
Royal High



# REVIEWS

## Sorrowline

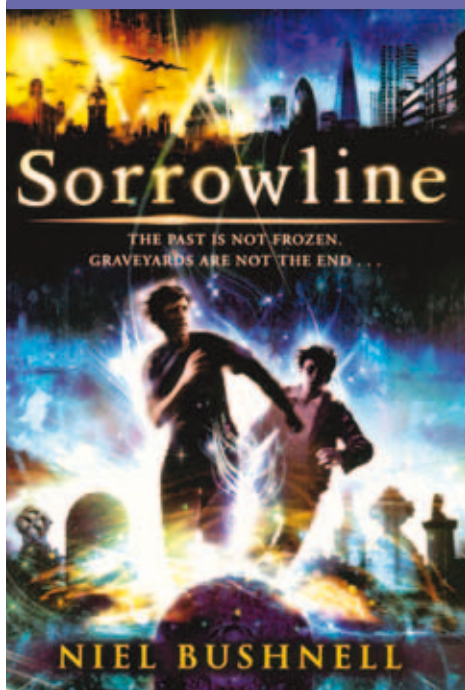
Series: Timesmith Chronicles  
Niel Bushnell  
Andersen Press £6.99 ISBN 9781849395236

**Jack, a Yard Boy who has the ability to travel in time through Sorrowlines, finds himself in 1940s war-torn London.**

This is a great novel! It is a great read and I would strongly recommend it. I don't tend to read this action/adventure genre but I was pleasantly surprised and enjoyed it because it showed how your life could change at any moment.

**AMY BEGBIE**  
Tynecastle High

'a great read'



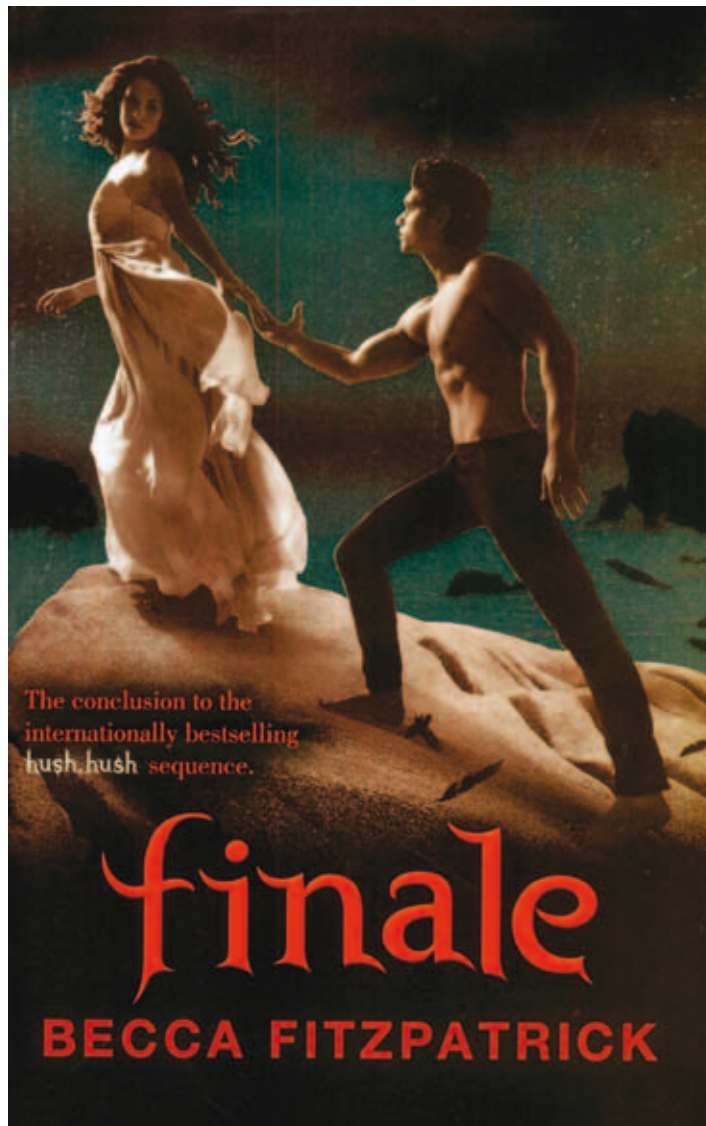
## Inheritance

Series: Inheritance  
Christopher Paolini  
Corgi £7.99 ISBN 9780552560252

**The epic saga which began with our introduction to Eragon, and his dragon Saphira, is now coming to its conclusion. Now they must tackle the evil king, Galbatorix, once and for all.**

*Inheritance* is a really good book but you will need to read the rest of the series before reading this. The battles are fast paced, but there are sections within the book were nothing much happens so you need to stick with it. I would recommend this to people who like fantasy adventures.

**CONNOR DOUGLAS**  
Liberton High



## Finale

Series: Hush, Hush  
Becca Fitzpatrick  
Simon & Schuster  
£10.99  
ISBN 9780857072917

**This is the supernatural conclusion to the Hush, Hush series.**

I've now finished all four books and this is the best series I've ever read! I was hooked throughout and never lost interest. It was great the way that it ended, and although the epilogue didn't have anything to do with the story, it fitted in well. Having made it to the last book it's a shame that there are no more to come as the strength for me was the strongly written relationships. I'd recommend this to any *Twilight* fans.

**CARLY HUNTER**  
Royal High



## The Accidental Time Traveller

Janis Mackay  
Kelpies £5.99 ISBN 9780863159541

**Saul is just walking to the shops for his mum when a strange sobbing girl grabs his ankles and says she's lost. Saul discovers that Agatha Black is lost big-time – she should be in 1812!**



This book was just OK. There wasn't much action and at first it was quite hard to imagine travelling back into the past and forward into the future. Once I got to know the characters better it became easier, but I couldn't see myself as Saul.

**CAMERON TURNER**  
Craigmount High



## Frost

Kathryn James  
Hodder £6.99

ISBN 9781444903072

**This is the sequel to *Mist*. Evan is trying to rescue his family and other Elven friends who are being held in a frozen land, far from their home in the forest. Nell must go into this vicious land to save him and face an ancient enemy.**

At first I thought this was maybe a bit childish, just the way it was written and with the fairies in the forest theme. It reminded me of Rainbow Fairy books or maybe Enid Blyton stories. If you are looking for a fast and easy to follow read you can finish in a day, this is the book for you!

**KIRSTY WATERS**  
Craigmount High



## Revived

Cat Patrick

Electric Monkey £6.99 ISBN 9781405253628

**Daisy dies on a sports field in front of her PE class, but this isn't the first time Daisy has 'died'. Each time she's been brought back to life by a secret drug called Revive, and assumes a new identity in a new place. Will she ever be able to settle and live a life with the people she loves?**

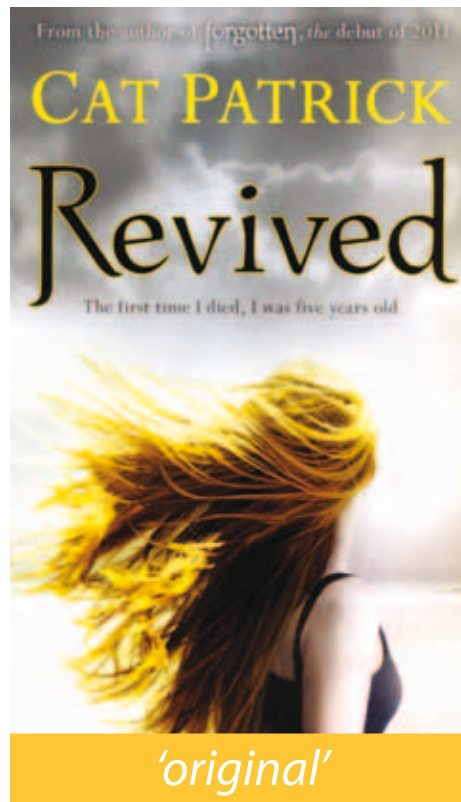
I really liked this quirky read right from the first page! It was quite an abstract concept, but in a good way – I certainly hadn't heard of anything like this before. I particularly enjoyed the fact

the plot was original and that the characters were developed well. Daisy, despite her dying thing, was a believable, likeable teenager. This is an extraordinary book!

**BETHAN GRAY**  
Craigmount High

I like the concept of the story; the book is very well written and keeps you guessing at times. I was unsure about it at first because I felt it moved along slowly in the beginning, but once you get past that it becomes much more interesting. I also like the details that the author has added to make the Revive Program seem more 'real', like the agents being called 'Disciples'; that's clever. I enjoyed not being able to predict what would happen next as some books are too predictable. Overall I would recommend this novel to anyone, but most especially girls as there is some romance in it.

**FAITH ADOGAME**  
Craigmount High



## The Soterion Mission

Stewart Ross

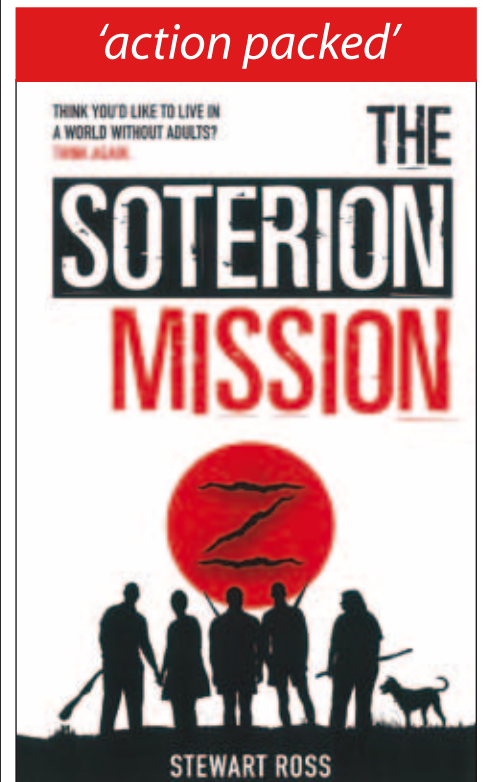
Curious Fox £6.99 ISBN 9781782020141

**An epidemic has altered human DNA and everyone now dies in their 19th year. Societies go into meltdown, but the Soterion vault may hold salvation. Cyrus joins Roxanne in a quest to find the vault, but the barbaric Zeds want to get there first.**

This was certainly an action-packed book! The main character is a girl, but I don't think that

would put off boy readers. It dipped a bit in parts, for example I found the story when they were walking through the desert a bit boring, but it soon picked up again and I couldn't stop reading. I would definitely like to read more books written by this author.

**CAMERON TURNER**  
Craigmount High



## Through the Ever Night

Series: Under the Never Sky

Veronica Rossi

Atom £6.99

ISBN 9781907411069



**Our fantasy Romeo and Juliet, Peregrine and Aria appear to be as far way from becoming close as ever. With Perry now a full Blood Lord he has people to care for and rule, and Aria in their eyes is just one of the despicable Dwellers.**

*'an exciting plot'*

I enjoyed reading this book but it got confusing at times as I haven't read the first book. So I would recommend people

to read the first book before jumping in to this one. Overall, great story and has an exciting plot.

**FILZA NAWAZ**  
Currie Community High

# REVIEWS



## Clockwork Angel

(Graphic Novel)

Series: The Infernal Devices

Cassandra Clare

Yen Press £7.99 ISBN 97803565002250

**Tessa Gray travels to London to start a new life, but when she arrives she is kidnapped by followers of the evil Magister. The London Institute's Shadowhunters rescue Tessa, but there are still malignant forces at work.**

As a big fan of Cassandra Clare, having read all of her novels, I was a little apprehensive when I received this book. Would the artist's vision of the characters match up with my reality? I needn't have worried as this Manga-inspired version was brilliant. At first I thought the Manga would've been better done in a Japanese manaka's hands, but I was wrong. After checking a few of my favourite Japanese Mangas such as *Fairy Tail*, I think no one would have done a better job than Hyekyung Baek. They fitted the whole of the original book – nearly 500 pages – into this volume of half the length without losing any of the essence or spirit of the story. I highly recommend you read this book whether you like cartoons or not.

ALEXANDRA VLADESCU

Craigroyston Community High

## The Evolution of Mara Dyer

Michelle Hodkin

Simon & Schuster £7.99 ISBN 9780857073655

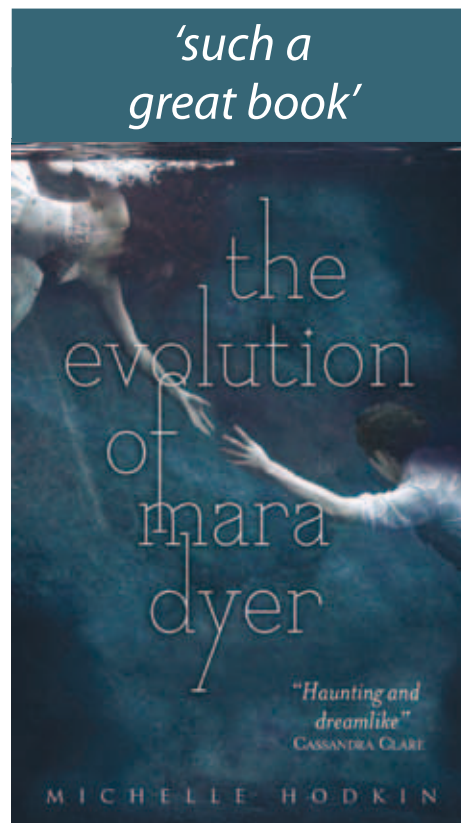
**Mara can kill with her mind and everyone thinks she is crazy, except Noah, who has a special gift of his own. Will they manage to**

**work together to find out what happened when the asylum collapsed, and stop anyone else being killed?**

As I had not read the first book in this series – *The Unbecoming of Mara Dyer* – I wasn't sure if I would be able to connect with the story and its characters. I needn't have worried as I ended up not being able to put the book down. The plot and characterisation were brilliant and I was caught up in the story. The relationship between Mara and Noah was riveting and I kept changing my mind between liking and hating them! This is such a great book and I can't wait until the final title – *The Retribution of Mara Dyer* – comes out. Though in the meantime I will be going back and reading the first book!

ALEXANDRA VLADESCU

Craigroyston Community High



## Fearless

Series: Mirrorworld

Cornelia Funke

Chicken House £6.99 ISBN 9781906427269

**Jacob Reckless is in even more danger than in the first book. With the fairy's curse above his heart his days are truly numbered, and crossing into the Mirrorworld again is his only hope. Yet even with the help of Fox, the beautiful shape shifter girl, Jacob's chance of survival looks slim against a terrible enemy.**

This book is the second in the series, so before reading this one, I advise you to do what I did and read the first one ... if you can. For one

thing, *Fearless* links back to previous events that are in *Reckless* and if you go in trying to read this one first, it might confuse you. Funke's idea of having every single fairytale known to man, placed together in a world behind a mirror, is a fantastic idea and well thought out and clever, but sadly the execution is really sloppy. On the front cover, it says if you read *Inkheart* you would really enjoy this, well sadly I LOVED *Inkheart*, but this was a little mediocre in comparison. For one thing, the characters are not exactly the most memorable. The events in *Reckless* are set around ten or more years before those of *Fearless*, and I felt *Fearless* had an ending that was as rushed as the ending of *Reckless* was (you had a wedding, an invasion and a resolution, all in under 20 pages). Maybe this was to leave it open for more sequels or perhaps it's the translation that let it down, I don't know, but I didn't enjoy it as much as I hoped I would. I would recommend this book, but if you've read *Inkheart* and expect another one, don't bother, is all I'll say.

GORDON HORNE

Currie Community High



## Beautiful Creatures

Series: Beautiful Creatures

Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl

Penguin £7.99 ISBN 9780141326085

**Everyone's 16th birthday is important, but for Lena Duchannes it really will be life changing: Lena is a Caster and when she turns 16 either the Dark or Light Side will own her. Moving to a new school months before this change, she meets Ethan.**

I thought that this book was quite different from other books that I have read because it's about witches becoming either evil or good when they turn 16. The ending is very unexpected and I desperately want to read the next one. I thought that the book was better than the film because it described much more than the film did.

**CANDICE TIRONA**  
Holy Rood High

The book gave more detail than the film but I still preferred the film more! I liked the characters better in the film than in the book and I really didn't like the ending because it was very predictable. Up until about page 300, it was fine, but it got a bit boring after that. I think anyone from the age of 13 up to 100 could read this book.

**WERONIKA TARAJKOWICZ**  
Holy Rood High



## The Prey

Series: The Hunt  
Andrew Fukuda  
Simon & Schuster £9.99 ISBN 9780857075444

**Still chased by the vampire-like creatures of the night, Gene and Sissy are holding things together for the boys who rely on them for their very existence. Still searching for the Land of Milk and Honey promised by The Scientist, they think they may have found it when they come across a haven in the mountains.**

This book is strange, but good strange. It is creepy without being horrific and it just draws

you in. My favourite part is during one of the challenges where they have to decide whether to go in the river, or go through the waterfall. I am off to find the first book in the series.

**VICKY COLARUSSO**  
Gracemount High

This vampire book does what it says on the tin; it really sucked me into the story, making me want to read on. The storyline is dark and mysterious and Gene is a fantastic character. I was sad when I got to the last page. Roll on October, when the third instalment is out.

**BILLIE LONIE**  
Gracemount High



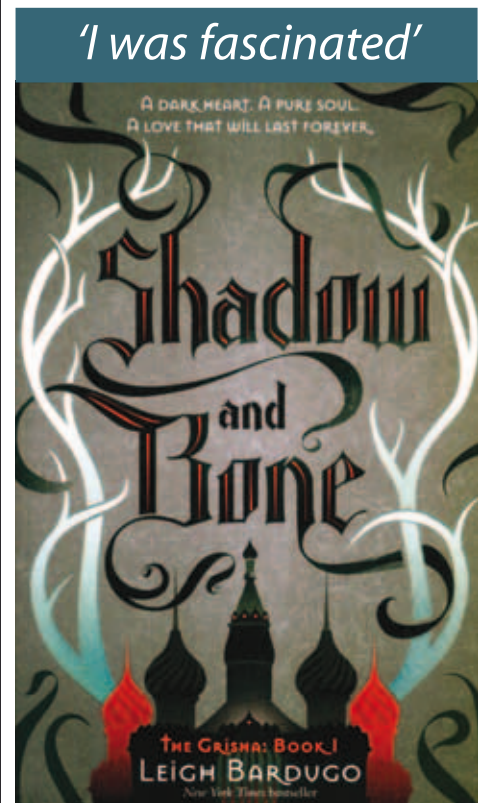
## Shadow and Bone Siege and Storm

Series: The Grisha Trilogy  
Leigh Bardugo  
Indigo £6.99 each  
Shadow and Bone ISBN 9781780621418  
Siege and Storm ISBN 9781780621135

**Alina and Malyen are war orphans who have relied on each other's friendship to get them through some very difficult times. But when they cross The Fold to reach the Ports of Ravka and are set upon by the murderous Volcra, Alina reveals an amazing power that eventually will separate them.**

I really enjoyed these books because they were interesting and because I like magic-type books. They were good books and I was fascinated by the different powers and good versus evil. I liked how the writer made it that Alina was a lonely orphan but, as she grew older, she was recognised for her power. I would recommend these books to all teenagers.

**TABATHA HARRISON**  
Currie Community High



# REVIEWS



*'very enchanting'*

## Everbound

Brodi Ashton  
Simon & Schuster £9.99 ISBN 9780857074614

**When the underworld came to claim Nikki Bennett, her boyfriend Jack sacrificed himself and took her place in the Everneath. Now Jack haunts Nikki's dreams and, determined to save him, she sets off into the tunnels herself. But the only escape from the tunnels is death.**

I thought this book was a very enchanting and exciting read. My favourite part was when Nikki, Cole and Max entered the Everneath because they were very confused and lost. They didn't know which way to go and they had to get Nikki's tether to guide them through the tunnels. I would recommend this book to older readers who like exciting reads. I really enjoyed this book.

**KELSEY WALLACE**  
Castlebrae Community High

## Hidden Among Us

Katy Moran  
Walker Books £6.99 ISBN 9781406324211

**The Hidden are fairies who stole Lissy when she was a baby, but she was returned when her mother promised to give Lissy back when she reached 14. Now that time has come, and Lissy and her brother have to fight to escape a bargain that can never be broken.**

Judging by the cover, this book looks interesting, but it could be brighter (unless that is giving us a clue to what happens in the book?). Lissy is shy and quiet and she gets bullied a lot. It's really good and fascinating.

**KATY MORAN**  
Forrester High

I did not think that the author was very original with her beginning, these types of books are all very clichéd when it comes to plot and even some of the characters' names were clichéd, for example 'Lissy'. I also thought that the first chapter (which is *supposed* to draw you in) dragged on. After the next few chapters I didn't feel as though the plot was going anywhere and that the characters lacked a bit of personality. I gave up.

**RACHEL WALLS**  
Forrester High



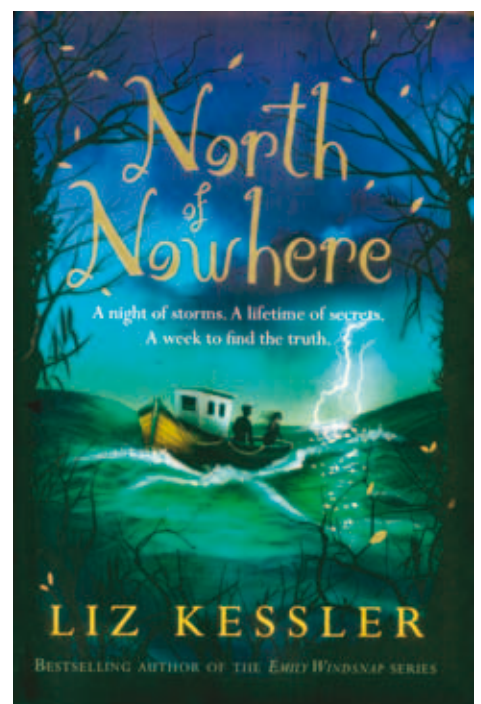
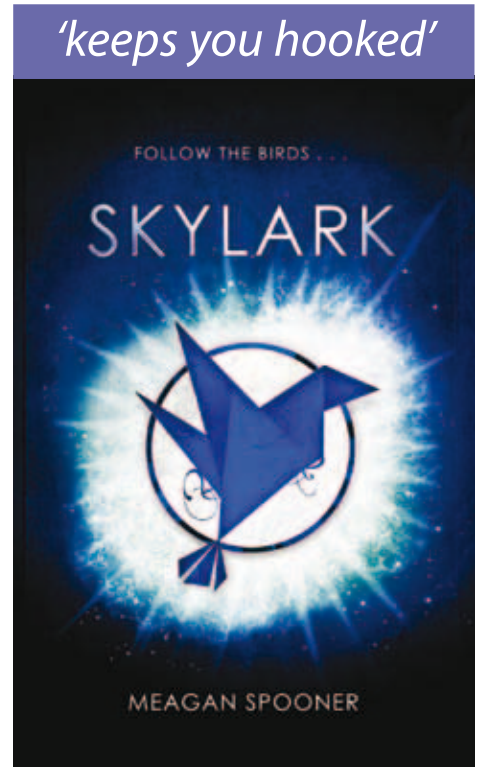
## Skylark

Meagan Spooner  
Corgi £6.99 ISBN 9780552565561

**Join 16-year-old Lark as she tries to make sense of her world – an enclosed city powered by the energy of its teenage citizens. What is her role in society, and what exists beyond the Wall?**

It's the future and there is only one human civilization left. The rest of the world is filled with barbarism. This book is very exciting and always keeps you hooked. I think this book would appeal to readers of sci-fi or adventure, or thrill seekers. Mainly readers of fantasy though. This was an excellent novel which others will enjoy reading.

**JASMIN DORR**  
James Gillespie's High



## North of Nowhere

Liz Kessler  
Orion £9.99 ISBN 9781444001532

**Mia's grandfather has vanished and Mia and her mother have moved to the seaside village of Porthaven. Mia finds village life boring, until she discovers that there is a mystery surrounding the village, which she has to solve in order to find her grandfather.**

I quite enjoyed this book. Some bits struck me as being a bit unlikely, such as the conversation in Dee's diary, but they were well written, which made up for it. I'd worked out who Peter was almost immediately, especially when we found out what the compass does. The explanation at the end was a bit complicated and hard to understand though. Overall I thought it was a good book, but it was hard to find the balance between simply written and really confusing – the writing was easy to understand but the concepts weren't. However I enjoyed reading it and would recommend it to my friends.

**ABI O'BRIEN**  
Queensferry High

## POD

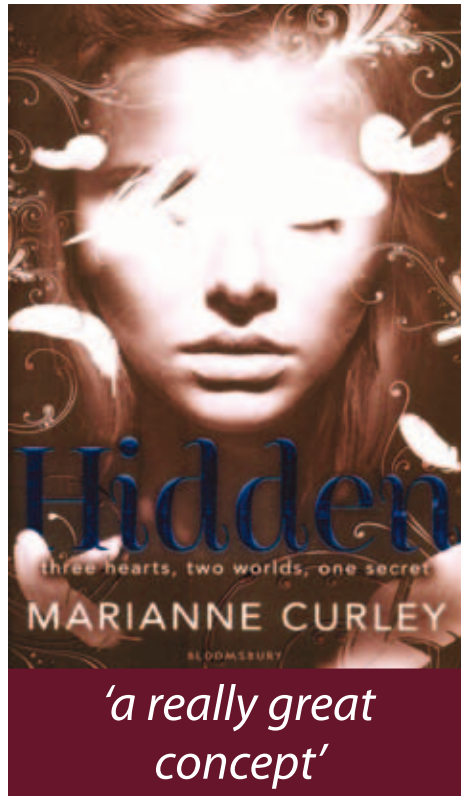
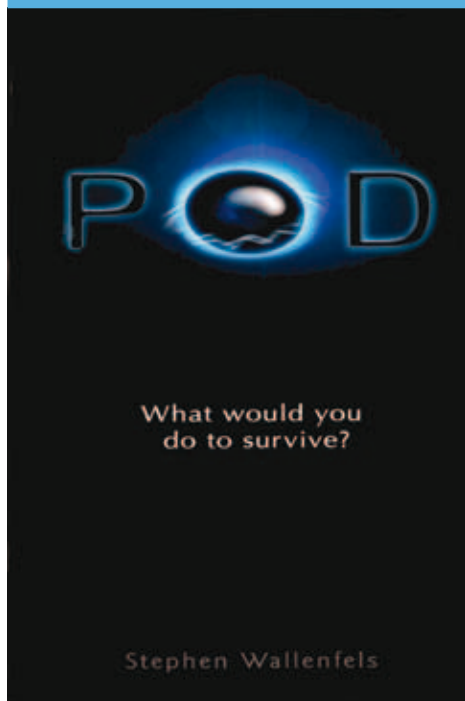
Stephen Wallenfels  
Templar Publishing £8.99 ISBN 9781848773899

**Strange alien spheres appear and hover in the sky, zapping anyone who dares to go outside. Josh is forced to stay in his house with his father and very little food and water, and Megs is trapped in a multi-storey car park. Both have to try to survive in an increasingly strange and dangerous world.**

POD for me was a very entertaining book; if you are a sci-fi fan you'll enjoy it. But even if you are not a sci-fi fan it was also a survival story. I would recommend POD to anybody who would like an exciting read.

**CALLUM GARRIOCK**  
Castlebrae Community High

*'a very entertaining book'*



## Hidden

Marianne Curley  
Bloomsbury £6.99 ISBN 9781408822623

**Ebony has been protected by her overprotective parents her whole life, but even so, disturbing things keep happening to her. When she sneaks out one night to go clubbing, she meets a boy called Jordan and both of them are shocked by the strange connection they have.**

For me, *Hidden* was a really great concept with a good story and had characters that I liked, but the book does drag on a bit! I thought the characters were interesting and some were quite funny, and my favourite bit was when Ebony was found by her worst enemy. Although the book did drag in some parts I really enjoyed it and didn't get bored in the 'slower' bits.

**EMMA KELLY**  
Boroughmuir High

I've read this type of story and seen it all before loads of times! The love triangle between Ebony, Jordan and Nathanael, an angel who protects Ebony, was completely clichéd. One boy is gorgeous and enthralling, while the other is cute and troublesome. It just reminds me of a hundred other YA novels. Maybe you'll find something I have missed, or are looking for a quick read to flick through during your spare time, if so this might be the book for you. However, if you are looking for a book with at least some originality in its characters and plotline, look elsewhere.

**ALISA MATYUNINA**  
Boroughmuir High

## The Fire Chronicle

Series: The Books of Beginning  
John Stephens  
Random House £11.99 ISBN 9780857530875

**Kate, Emma and Michael are three children on a daring quest to try to find their parents. However dangerous the path ahead may be, they will do what it takes even if that means having to face the evil Dire Magnus. Once again, they will have to find the Book of Beginning and harness its power.**

My favourite character was Michael because he had this crazy twist about him, but in a good way. I liked the way he reacted to unexpected things happening. I liked all the characters except for the hairy animals called Imps that kidnapped Katherine. I thought Hugo the wizard was quite weird. I felt the characters' emotions very strongly. Although it was a fantasy book it had some believable elements, like for example when climbing up a mountain you could fall down and get killed. The book was very similar to some of Alan Blade's books. The fantasy plot was two stories together interlocking to become one great story. It was very interesting and I couldn't stop reading it and I would definitely recommend this to a friend. It made me feel adventurous and excited. The thing I remember most is how Michael loves dwarfs. Switching between stories, each chapter was a bit annoying and messed my head up. I hope there is a sequel. I would describe this book in three words – twisted, spooky and cool!

**AWAIS AKRAM**  
Drummond Community High

*'twisted, spooky and cool'*



# REVIEWS



*'builds in intensity'*

## The Gathering Dark

Christine Johnson  
Simon & Schuster £7.99 ISBN 9781471116209

**Keira is utterly focused on studying music at the best college in New York – she doesn't date and doesn't allow herself to get distracted in any way. When she starts having crazy hallucinations, and meets mysterious Walker at the music shop, her doubts begin to increase.**

I really liked this book. It was a slow start but it builds in intensity towards the end when Keira finds herself and her true path. The way the author wrote the book was extraordinary because I like to read books where I can picture it in my head, and I didn't have to think up little parts of each scene in this book, the author did it for me. I would gladly read any more in this series or even read this book again, and it encouraged my own love of music even more. I could relate to Keira because she has strict parents and all she is doing is striving for some freedom in her music, and she uses her piano to do that.

**CHARLEY SPEIRS**  
Broughton High

## On the Day I Died

Candace Fleming  
Random House £7.99 ISBN 9780552566346

**After a strange girl hitchhiker leaves her shoes in his car, Mike finds out that she is dead and is asked by her elderly mother to leave the shoes on the girl's grave. He finds a group of other teenage ghosts in**

**the cemetery, who over the night ahead will each tell him how they came to their often terrifying deaths.**

I liked that it was a collection of short stories. They're not horrific horror stories at all but they did make me think and feel for the teenage characters. You get attached to their story and the sadness of their deaths, and it's a bit like in a TV thriller when you get to a part where you know something bad is going to happen and you don't want it to! Mike's story does start out as an adventure, but when he meets the ghosts, their stories are all individual.

**BRADLEY SCOTT**  
Wester Hailes Education Centre

This book was both scary and exciting. My favourite character is Gina who becomes involved with someone she shouldn't have and dies because of it. I liked this book a lot and would recommend it to all of my friends. I thought that it was an awesome read!

**EMAAN JAFFERY**  
Trinity Academy

*'an awesome read'*



## Rise of the Dark One

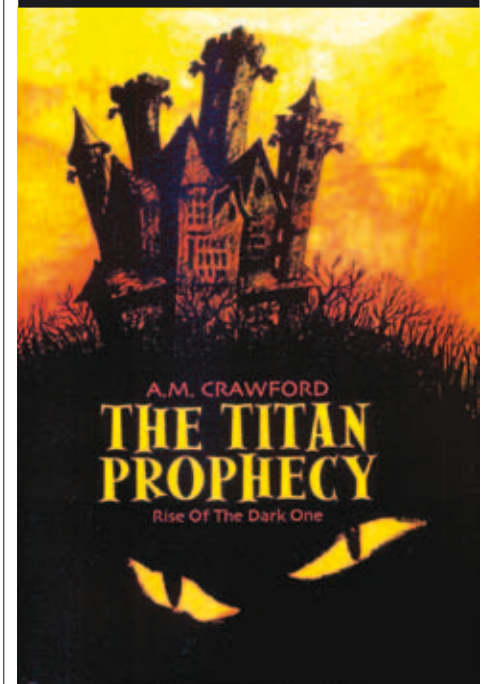
Series: The Titan Prophecy  
A M Crawford  
Murray McLellan £7.99 ISBN 9780957009103

**The Titans once ruled the universe, but since a great war they have remained imprisoned. Now the Titans could escape, fulfilling the Titan Prophecy of a greater war to come. The only salvation is with the Destined One, a schoolboy called Charlie who finds himself on a horrifying journey.**

I really enjoyed reading this book. The author described the book so well that I actually felt like I was in the story. I also liked the way that the author included Greek gods like Zeus in it, as it taught me some facts about Greek mythology. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys fantasy and adventure stories.

**RUAIRIDH GILCHRIST**  
Trinity Academy

*'felt like I was in the story'*



*'captivating'*

## Black Spring

Alison Croggon  
Walker Books £7.99 ISBN 9781406339581

**The doomed love of Damek and Lina is a retelling of *Wuthering Heights* in fantasy form.**

This novel is narrated through two characters, Hammel and Anna. I found Hammel's narration rather dull, but when the narration changed to Anna, the story took a fascinating turn and became much more interesting. When Anna tells the story, it felt as though she was talking to me and her maturity and enlightenment shone through the pages, making the book captivating to read. The characters in the book were really well developed, particularly Lina, a spoilt woman with a fiery temper, who misuses her position against Anna. The ongoing dread of the vendetta was fantastically portrayed, not to mention the citizens' fear of the wizards, whose authority is never questioned and the people are like lambs to the slaughter. I would recommend it to all my friends, as it is flawless in style, characters and plot.

**ALISA MATYUNINA**  
Boroughmuir High

I quite like fantasy, but found this book unappealing and didn't like how the author pinched someone else's story. She should have come up with something original.

**JOSH DUNN**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

## Charmfall

Series: The Dark Elite  
Chloe Neill  
Orion £6.99 ISBN 9781780620633

**This is a paranormal adventure in which Lily and her friends face a magical 'blackout', depriving them of their powers to ward off demons and vampires.**

This was quite a girly book about vampires; I liked the storyline.

**HEATHER BYRNE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

An interesting story about a young girl mixed up in magic!

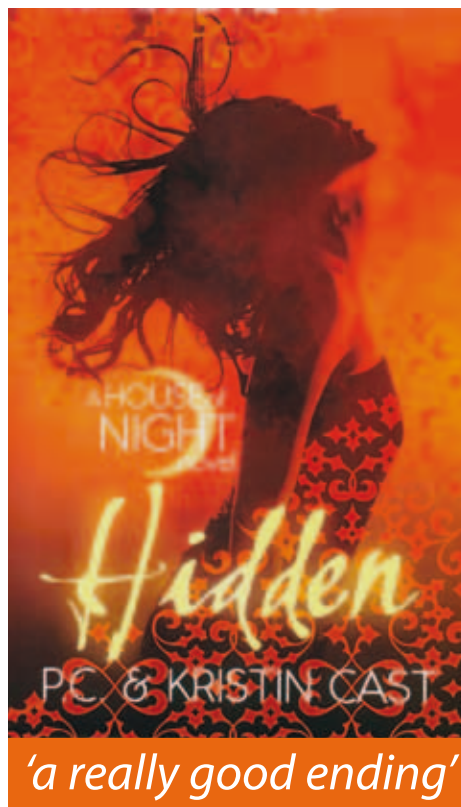
**SHARMEEN JALIL**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

The fact that this was a book about a teenage girl, set in a school, were the only things I could relate to. I prefer hardship stories to fantasy and didn't get the point of this one.

**MIA BURNS**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

This started off well, but got a bit confusing. Fantasy tends to bore me, I prefer realistic stories.

**REBECCA PATRICK**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



## Hidden

Series: House of Night  
P C and Kristin Cast  
Atom £12.99 ISBN 9781905654888

**This is the tenth book in the *House of Night* series. Zoey has at last exposed Neferet to the High Council, but Neferet is still all powerful and continues to unleash havoc in the vampyre world.**

This is an amazing book that I didn't want to put down. It is the last in a series of ten and it has a really good ending (which I won't spoil). I would recommend this to all teenagers, but unfortunately it doesn't make sense unless you have read the rest of the series first.

**CATHERINE MCGUIRE**  
Balerno Community High

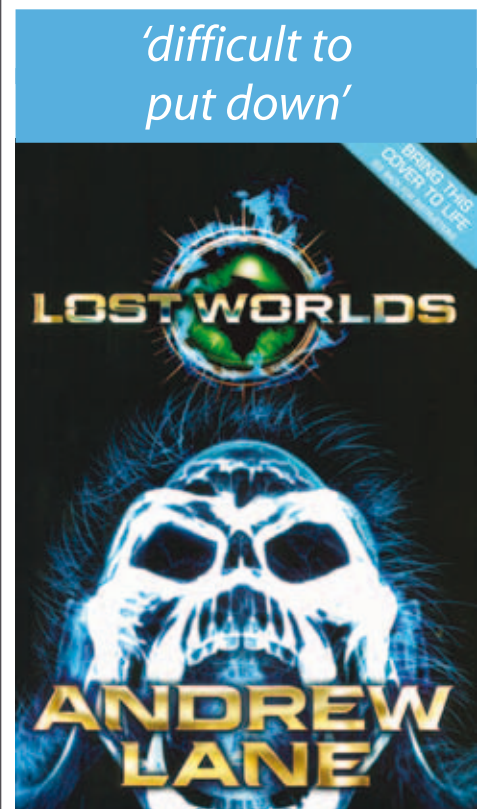
## Lost Worlds

Series: Calum Challenger  
Andrew Lane  
Macmillan £5.99 ISBN 9781447227991

**After being paralysed in the crash that killed his parents, Calum Challenger searches for the Almasti, whose DNA could undo his paralysis. When he locates one in Russia, a group of his misfit friends cross the globe searching for it, but have to battle a sinister organisation, Nemor, that wants to destroy the Almasti.**

This book was great fun to read and I think that it would be a good read for any teenager. It has a strong plot which is full of unexpected twists, turns and developments. I would recommend this book to boys of my age but some girls might enjoy it as well. This book is difficult to put down as the author Andrew Lane uses all sorts of ways to grab your attention. There are lots of sophisticated words but none so challenging that the reader becomes confused. On finishing the book you wish there was a sequel but that is the only time whilst reading it that you feel let down.

**ARRAN MCLEAN**  
Trinity Academy



# AUTHOR FACTFILE

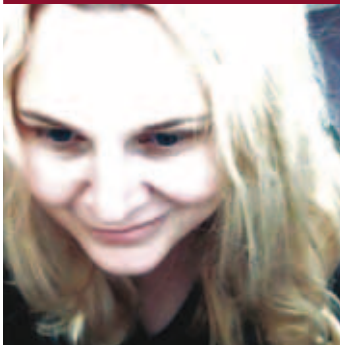
## Andrew Fukuda

Born in Manhattan and raised in Hong Kong, Andrew Fukuda is half Chinese, half Japanese. After earning a bachelor's degree in history, Fukuda, whose novel *The Prey* is reviewed on page 27, worked in Manhattan's Chinatown with the immigrant teen community. After that, he was a criminal prosecutor for seven years, before turning his hand to writing full time. He currently lives on Long Island, New York with his family.

## Rae Earl

Rae worked in radio for 15 years, and once managed to get on Westlife's private jet for an entire weekend. After nicking Brian McFadden's Mars bar, Rae knew she had peaked professionally and turned back to her first love – writing. She currently lives in Hobart, Tasmania with her husband and son. She thought she was going to go all *River Cottage* and self-sufficient. Unfortunately, carrots take work, and there's a magnificent chippy just round the corner. You can read a review of *OMG! Is This Actually My Life?* on page 4.

Rae Earl



Sangu Mandanna

Andrew Fukuda



## Sangu Mandanna

Sangu Mandanna was four years old when she was chased by an elephant and wrote her first story about it – and decided that this was what she wanted to do with her life. Seventeen years later, she read *Frankenstein*. It sent her into a writing frenzy that became *The Lost Girl* (reviewed on page 21), a novel about death and love and the tie that binds the two together. Sangu now lives in England with her husband and son.

## Chris Bradford

The author of *Gamer*, reviewed on page 19, says that his love of throwing people over his shoulder, punching the air and bowing lots began at age seven, when he first joined a Judo club. Since then he has trained in karate, kickboxing and samurai swordsmanship and has earned his black belt in Kyo Shin Tai-jutsu, the secret fighting art of the ninja. He also found time to become a best-selling author with *Young Samurai*, and was nominated for a slew of awards, including the Red House Award and the Carnegie Medal. In 2013 he launches a new teen bodyguard series, and, in inimitable Bradford fashion, has been busy training as a real-life bodyguard!

Chris Bradford







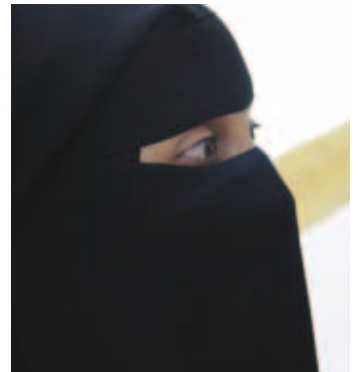
Kevin Brooks

## Kevin Brooks

Kevin was born in Exeter and studied in Birmingham and London. He has had a varied working life, with jobs in a crematorium, a zoo, a garage and a post office, before – happily – giving it all up to write books. You can read a review of his latest book, *The Bunker Diary*, on page 19.

## Na'ima B Robert

Na'ima B Robert is descended from Scottish Highlanders on her father's side and the Zulu people on her mother's side. She was born in Leeds and grew up in Zimbabwe. *Black Sheep* (reviewed on page 5) was inspired by her experiences of living in Brixton as a new Muslim in the early 2000s. Na'ima divides her time between London and Cairo and dreams of living on a farm with her own horses. Until then, she is happy to be a mum to her five children and keep reading and writing books that take her to a different world each time.



Na'ima B Robert

## Siobhan Curham

As well as being an editor and an author of several adult novels, Siobhan Curham is a life coach and has worked extensively as a writing coach for young people – as a writer in residence at a high school, and in partnership with many councils, libraries, theatres, youth groups and charities. She is currently running a writing project for homeless people at London's Centrepoint, and she is an ambassador for Cardiff Women's Aid, a charity helping the victims of domestic abuse. *Finding Cherokee Brown*, reviewed on page 13, is her second novel for young adult readers.



Siobhan Curham

## S D Crockett

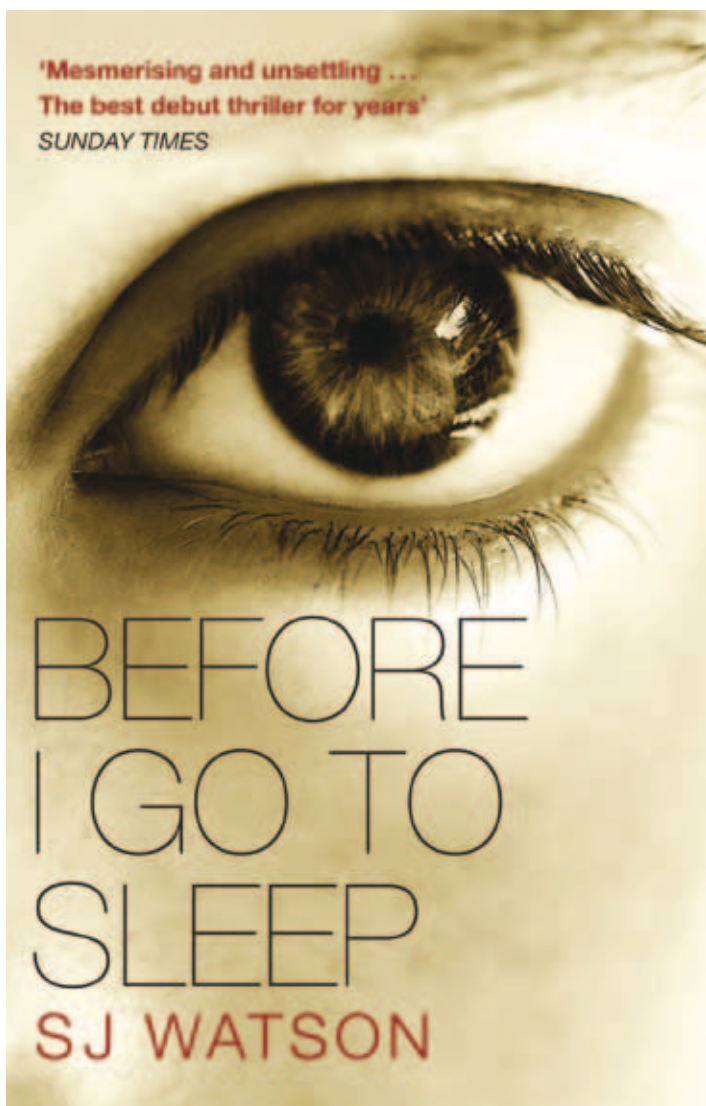
Sophie Crockett was brought up in a yacht as her parents circumnavigated the globe. After graduating with a degree in Drama and Theatre studies, she travelled to Russia as a timber buyer in the Caucasus Mountains. After the birth of her first son in 1996, she returned to the east coast of Suffolk, where she spent five years restoring a derelict Ancient Scheduled Monument. Other jobs have included trainee car mechanic, landscape gardener and portrait painter. She speaks Russian and French, and currently divides her time between the beech forests of the Montagne Noire in southern France and Notting Hill, and still travels to Armenia to buy timber. See her novel *One Crow Alone* reviewed on page 9.



S D Crockett

# READERS WRITE

In this issue, we're delighted to publish reviews from **Kilmarnock Academy, Davison CE High School for Girls, West Sussex and Stockport Grammar School.** Many thanks to all those who sent reviews in ... keep them coming!



Rosie Scordoulis, Davison CE High School rates ...

## Before I Go to Sleep

S J Watson

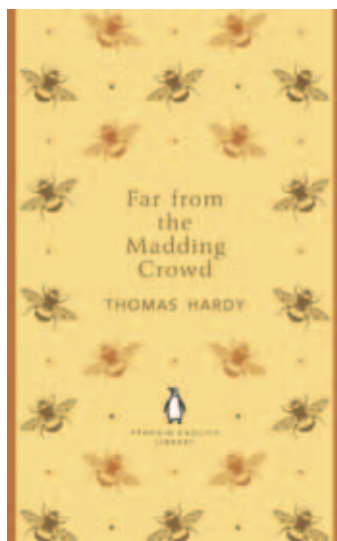
Genuinely one of the most captivating books I have read, it had me rapt in the intricate plot for hours on end. Pronounced as 'the best debut thriller for five years', this book is entirely unsettling and unnerving.

Ellie Tosey, Davison CE High School rates ...

## Far From the Madding Crowd

Thomas Hardy

For me, this is the type of book that it is necessary to have in order to survive a long journey! Whilst being rather engrossing, the book offers a challenge to readers as a result of the perpetual use of extended vocabulary through the duration of the book. I would greatly recommend it to any budding readers, and I'm sure it would be beneficial for anyone studying the works of Thomas Hardy!



Eleanor Holroyd, Davison CE High School rates ...

## Gallagher Girls (series)

ALLY CARTER

A series of teenage love, confusion

and spies in training; this certainly has a few surprises. It is an excellent series and I recommend these books to those who desire some light reading or those who are willing to read something new.



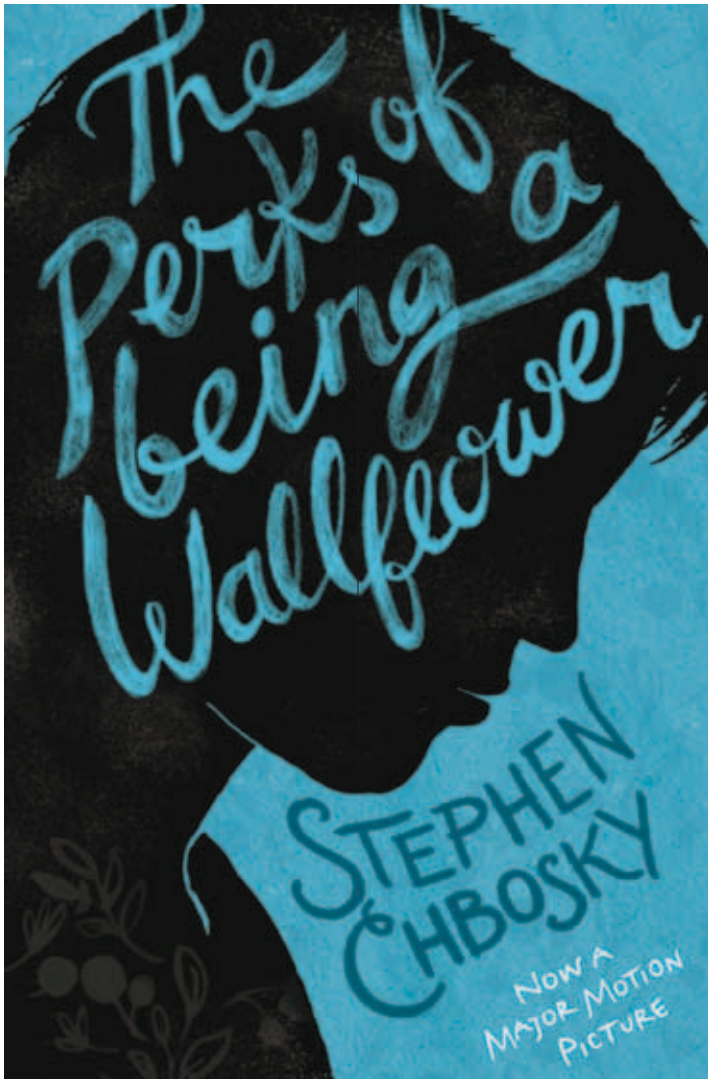
Rebecca Lloyd, Davison CE High School rates ...

## Sister, Missing

Sophie McKenzie

It is a brilliant read, and if you like your stories fast paced, full of dangers and conflicts and impossible situations, then you will love this book. Characters turn out to be not what they seemed, and you never know from one chapter to the next who will suddenly change sides and betray or help. If you loved *Girl, Missing* and want to see what happened next for Lauren, Jam and co, you should read *Sister, Missing*.





Emily Stubberfield, Davison CE High School rates ...

## The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Stephen Chbosky

This is one of my favourite books because of how realistic it is. Also, it has humour and some serious topics within it. It is a great coming of age novel.

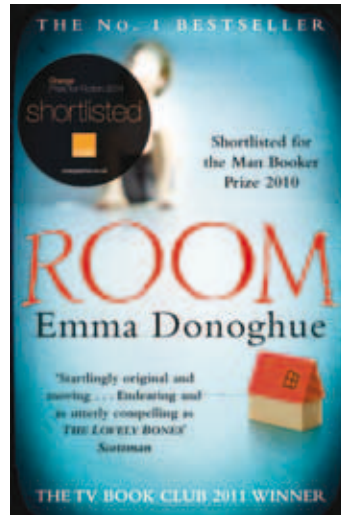
Zahra Abbasali, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## A Boy and a Bear in a Boat

Dave Shelton

Dave Shelton puts a sweet and simple idea into a fabulous book. The very first chapter will bring you

to the edge of your seat. The book explores friendship and loyalty and that these things are not given but things you must earn. Funny and memorable, the drawings of the buddies will keep you breathless. This brilliantly styled novel will leave you with laughter and tears, and with a smile and a memory of a friendship that will never die.



Zizi Abraheem, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## Room

Emma Donoghue

This book, told through the eyes of an innocent five-year-old boy, evokes empathy, sympathy and a fresh and startling approach to looking at the world from an 'outside' perspective. The relationship between Jack and his mum is beautifully expressed,

as are her attempts to educate him and keep him fit and well. I would strongly recommend this book to anyone. It is easy to read in just a few sittings and the characterisation really makes you care about what happens to these characters.

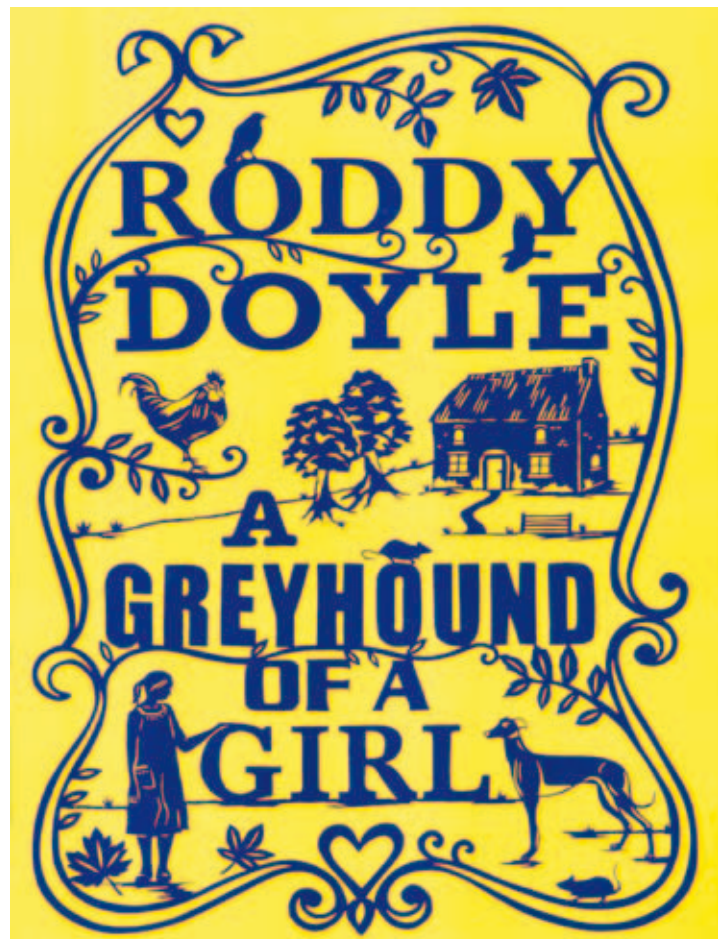
Zahra Abbasali, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## A Greyhound of a Girl

Roddy Doyle

This is a short and sweet story that goes much further than the words written on the page. It is a book with a perfect blend about love and friendship, cheerfulness and seriousness. From the first sentence I was enthralled.

The book is set out well and each chapter concentrates on the four main characters. It talks about their thoughts and feelings, and at certain points you feel like laughing or crying. The book is very effective and gives you an impression of life.



# READERS WRITE

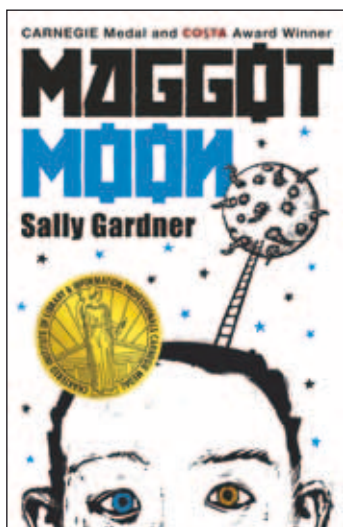


Zizi Abraheem, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## Where Mermaids Sing

Brian Keaney

The story documents a graphic, modern tale of friendships pushed to the edge and back again. The book proved thought provoking, introducing a variety of hot topics including teenage romance, group disputes and drug use, whilst also having very relatable characters – a book suited to all ages and genders, it is definitely worth a read!



Zizi Abraheem, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## Maggot Moon

Sally Gardner

I chose this book as I heard it had just won the Costa Children's

Book Award and that the author, Sally Gardner, was dyslexic, as was the main character in this book, Standish. This book is easy to read and thought-provoking – a bit on the lines of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or Collins's *The Hunger Games* in my opinion.



Jessica Thomson, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging

Louise Rennison

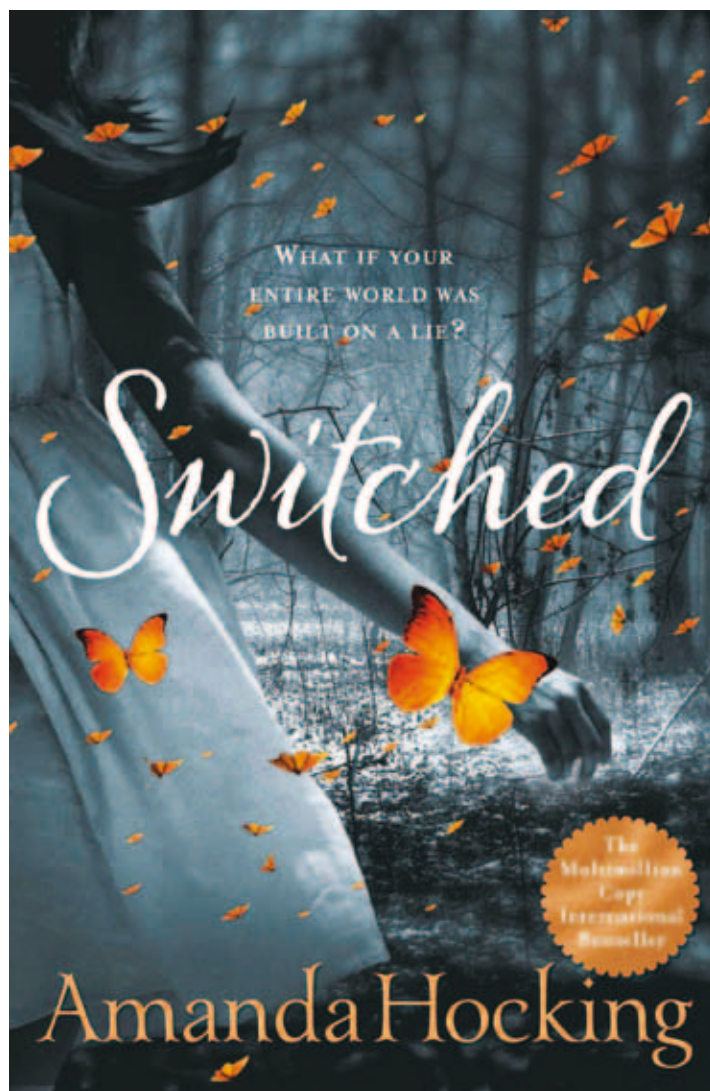
It's very funny and makes me want to read more. Louise Rennison is one of my favourite authors now. I would recommend it to girls who love a bit of a laugh.

Sairah Naseer, Stockport Grammar School rates ...

## Switched

Amanda Hocking

I loved this book and I thoroughly enjoyed the rest of the trilogy. This book made me smile quite a bit because of the cute romance the characters share, and it had an



element of humour in it in the form of witty comebacks. Have fun.

Leah Irving, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## Secret of the Shadows

Cathy MacPhail

Cathy MacPhail's books are great! I couldn't put this one down. It was full of scary and thrilling chapters and had a lot of cliff-hangers which kept me waiting for more. It's set in Scotland so I felt it quite easy to relate to the book.



Sara Irvine, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## Diary of a Wimpy Kid

Jeff Kinney

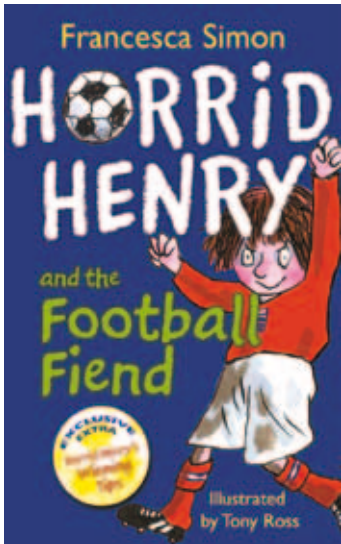
My favourite book is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. It is amazing and I think you should read it, but sometimes it can be so annoying. It is a really good book for children to read.

Daniel Black, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## Horrid Henry (series)

Francesca Simon

You should read this because it is really good and very interesting. It makes me laugh – I think the best one is *Horrid Henry and the Football Fiend*.



Reece Miller, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## Scream Street (series)

Tommy Donbavand

It is brilliant and I really like it. *Scream Street* is about these little boys in a street and they turn into vampires.

Laityn Blair, Kilmarnock Academy rates ...

## The Book of Doom

Barry Hutchison

This is my favourite book because it's very detailed and very interesting. I enjoyed reading it because I never got bored of it and I loved it. I have seen Barry Hutchison.



### Quiz answers

Our 'Name that cover!' quiz in *Teen Titles 56* must have been too difficult, as no-one managed to guess the answers!

Here are the answers:

- Number 1:** *Spook's* series by Joseph Delaney
- Number 2:** *Trust Me* by Malorie Blackman
- Number 3:** *Nicholas Dane* by Melvin Burgess

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Jessica Adams  
Vicky Colarusso  
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Pamela Arugu  
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Ruairidh Gilchrist  
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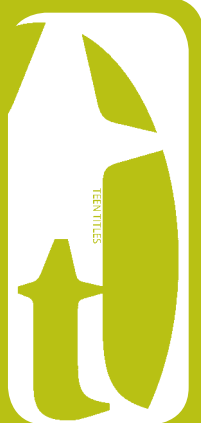
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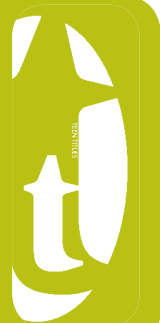
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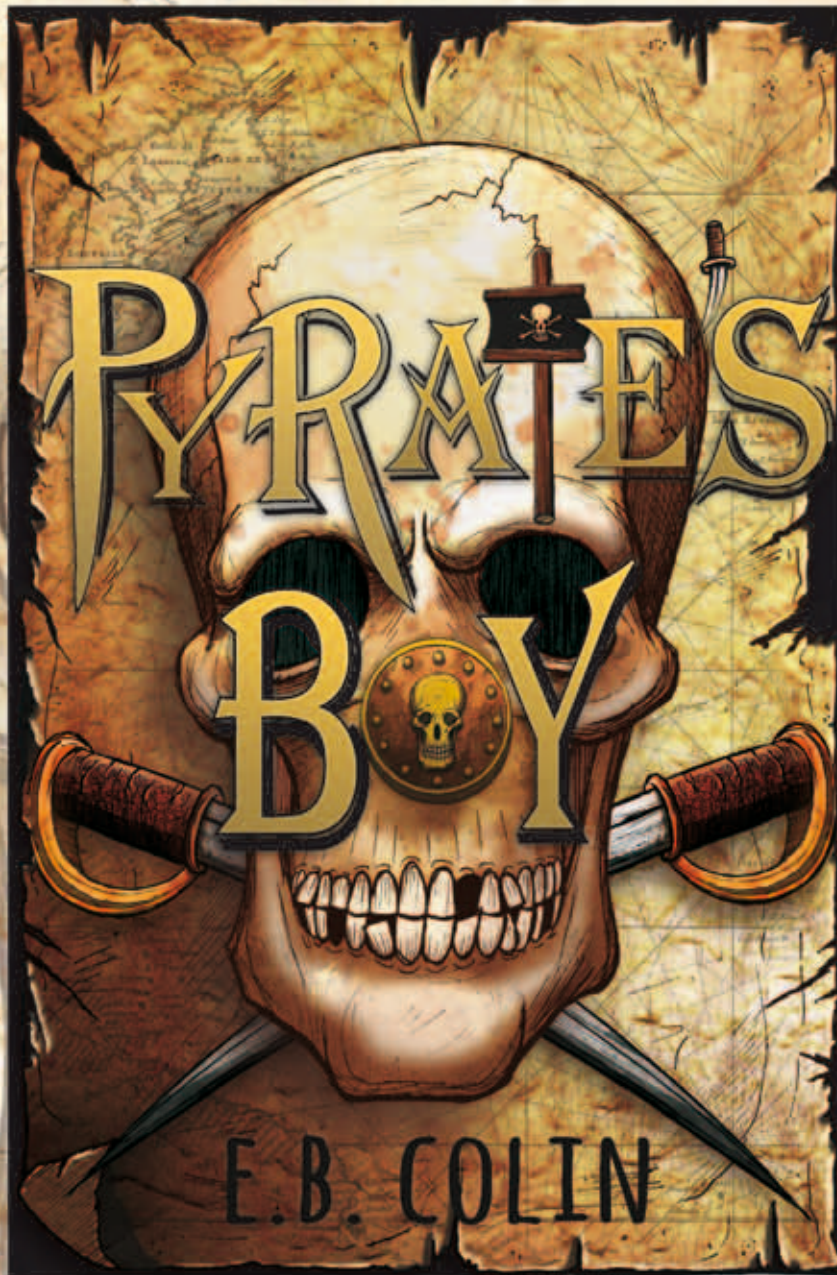
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