

TEEN TITLES

OUR COVER BOOK

# Proud

by Juno Dawson is reviewed on page 21 by Savannah Moar from Broughton High School

# TEEN TITLES 75

## Inside

Thrillers & Chillers	2
Past Times	7
Sci-Fi & Fantasy	11
Teen Issues	19
Focus on Family	27
Just for Laughs	30
Author Factfile	31
Readers Write	33
Thank You	35

## FEATURES

<i>One Shot</i> , eight questions	5
Into the forest with <i>She Wolf</i>	9
Anyone can write fiction – Bethany Rutter	17
I always tend to write from the heart – Natalia Gomes	25

*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 75*, our second issue of 2019/20. In this issue Tanya Landman answers questions about her novel *One Shot*, and we track down *She Wolf* with author Dan Smith. Elsewhere, we found out why Bethany Rutter wrote *No Big Deal* and talk to Natalia Gomes about the issues behind *We Are Not Okay*.

Cover: From Proud, compiled by Juno Dawson, reproduced by kind permission of Stripes Publishing.

## Escape, Connect, Relate



Reading is something you can do for empathy and to support your own mental health and wellbeing. It is a way to explore issues that might be affecting you or someone you know, issues like depression, anxiety, body image, bullying or bereavement. So, we have decided to flag up some of the books we have reviewed that we think do just that. If you look on the inside back page you'll see a list of them.

## THRILLERS & CHILLERS



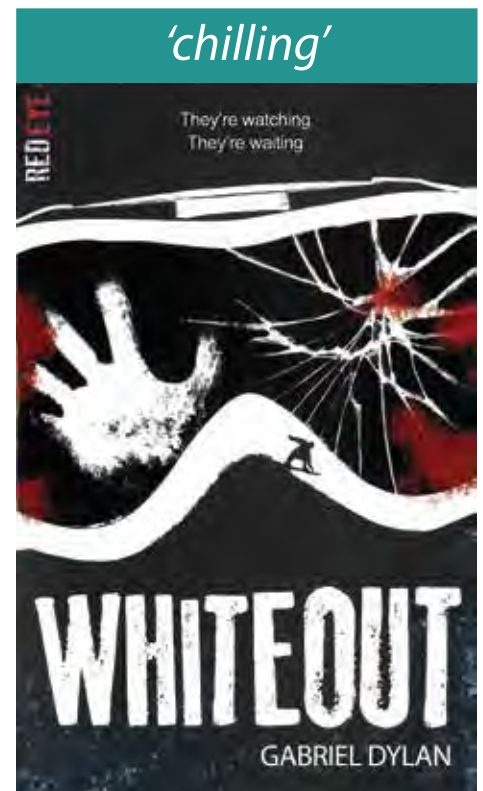
### Whiteout

Gabriel Dylan  
Stripes £7.99

ISBN 9781788950725

**Charlie and a group of classmates are on a school skiing trip when a blizzard cuts the resort off from the rest of the world. Then the ancient secrets of the town surface and they are attacked by a group of bloodthirsty vampires.**

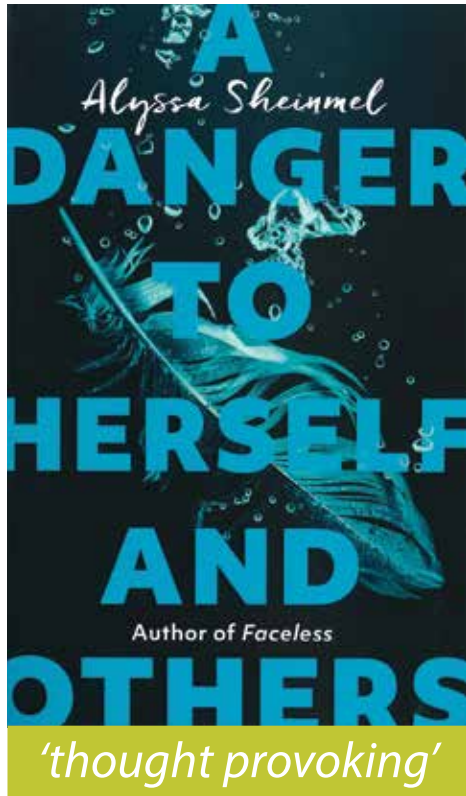
In this chilling thriller, Charlie is desperate to escape his unhappy home life, but hopes that a school ski trip will help him escape his reality. But there's something horribly wrong. The setting of the book creates a sense of isolation and builds tensions, as you anxiously read more and hope the situation for the characters improves. You also learn a lot about the characters, which builds a sense of understanding and makes you build emotional connections and strong opinions on



# THRILLERS & CHILLERS

each individual. The book cover suggests that the book may not be suitable for young readers, which may be because it deals with hard-hitting topics such as death, relationships and suicidal feelings. It, however, also offers a sense of hope at the end of the book. *Whiteout* is perfect for people who enjoy books that keep you on the edge of your seat. There are never-ending, anxiety-provoking cliff-hangers which make it impossible to stop reading until you reach the end.

**SOPHIE ALLEN**  
ASL Service



## A Danger to Herself and Others

Alyssa Sheinmel  
Atom £7.99 ISBN 9780349003283

**Trapped in a treatment facility, Hannah knows there's been a mistake. As soon as the doctors and judge figure out that what happened to her roommate was an accident, she can go home. Then Lucy arrives. She may be the only person who can get Hannah to confront the dangerous games and secrets that landed her in confinement.**

I absolutely loved reading this book! Every chapter was another piece of the puzzle and the book itself is very thought provoking. I lost myself in the mind of Hannah Gold. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a book which opens their mind and emotions.

**AVA RICHMOND**  
James Gillespie's High

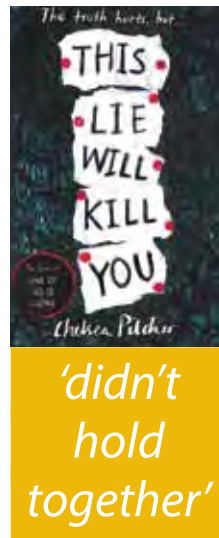
## This Lie Will Kill You

Chelsea Pitcher  
Simon & Schuster £7.99 ISBN 9781471181368

**A group of teenagers, lured to a mansion in the hope of winning \$50,000, discover that they have been gathered together to unveil a murderer. One year ago, someone died at a party, and people have been keeping secrets ever since.**

The storyline of this book was interesting but not compelling. All the characters were stereotypes that I didn't believe in. I didn't feel moved by their emotions nor did I care about their backstories. The various issues were handled well, and, although it's a contemporary story (with filming things on mobile phones), I don't think it will date. I usually read fantasy, so this was something different for me. The writing was good but the plot just didn't hold together.

**RUDY WALKER**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



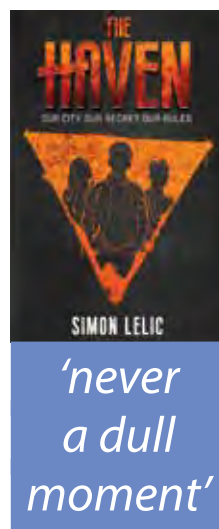
## The Haven

Simon Lelic  
Hodder £7.99 ISBN 9781444947601

**Ollie Turner is living an ordinary life when one night everything changes, and men kidnap him and his guardian Nancy. Thanks to her, Ollie escapes and is saved by a boy who calls himself Dodge. He is part of a secret organisation, the Haven, and he wants to recruit Ollie.**

A fun kids-versus-adults story. Good characters with a high-stakes finale. I'd recommend this book if you're looking for a good action story. I was engrossed in the book from beginning to end. Never a dull moment.

**TORIN FRANKLIN**  
Broughton High



## Outside

Sarah Ann Juckes  
Penguin £7.99 ISBN 9780241330753

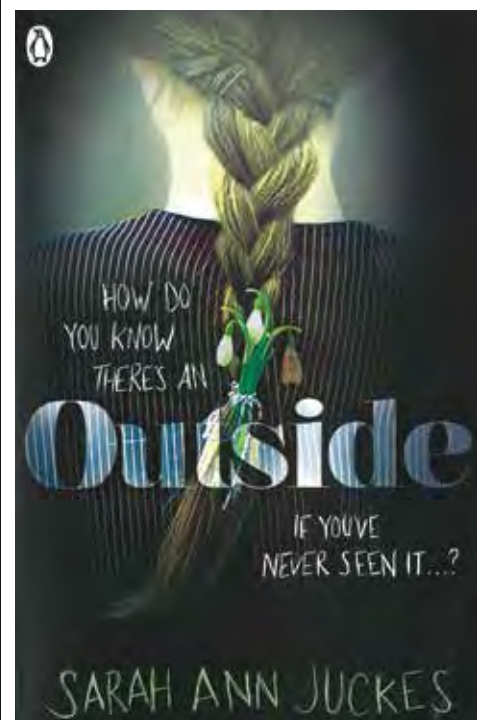
**Ele has been held captive her whole life, and knows nothing about the outside world. Her captor, Him, provides food and water and a few books, but little else. Despite knowing nothing about it, she is desperate to escape, to get out and experience Outside.**

I really liked this because I liked how you could see what was happening through Ele's eyes, instead of a nameless narrator. I liked how when Ele was confused, you were confused. What made it believable was that the author stuck to this strategy the whole way through – when Ele learned things, we learned things. I think this is a book that will stay with me because of how horrifying and disturbing the ending is! Gripping and terrifying in equal measures!

**ELODIE BERRILL**  
Broughton High

I think this is a deeply moving novel that explores the horrors of child abuse and neglect. Told through the eyes of a traumatised young girl, *Outside* highlights the importance of speaking out about these issues. Reading the book makes you feel how lucky we all are to have what we do. It is slightly confusing at the start but that is because it is told exactly as the girl sees it. I think this approach is a good thing because it makes you realise just how horrible, in harsh reality, these matters are. It really made me think. I definitely recommend this book to more mature readers. This book is amazing.

**ROSIE BRETT**  
Broughton High



# THRILLERS & CHILLERS



## Good Boy

Mal Peet

Barrington Stoke £7.99 ISBN 9781781128527

**As a child, Sandi was plagued with horrific nightmares about a menacing black dog. Nightmares that only stopped when Sandi became the owner of a lovable mongrel called Rabbie. But when Rabbie dies, her only protection from these nightmares vanishes, and the terror begins again in earnest.**

*Good Boy* is a really good book. You don't really find many other books like it. It's the kind of book that younger people will read even though the description is kind of grim. It can make you feel quite tense, but I just found it really exciting. It made me want to keep reading. It's impressive how the author can fit a really big story into such a short book.

It seemed like at the end the main character was hallucinating, then the dog came to save her. It was really strange, but I liked it.

**CAITLIN BRADFORD**  
Firrhill High

This book is terrifically well written. It is short, sweet and to the point, but still manages to be very effective. The author toys with a new and innovative genre of writing, and puts a unique twist on, in my opinion, the slightly overused style of the nightmare. In some instances Mal Peet shows you the nightmare from several different points of view and focuses specifically on you as a reader, continuously saying things like 'you are walking down the garden path', 'you are wearing strange and heavy clothes', and 'you walk through it', creating more suspense and making the reader feel part of it. The second

person is a very under-used technique and I think the author pulls off a very difficult style to create tension. Not being a terribly enthusiastic or regular reader, I found certain aspects of the book harder to grasp, and, although I think it's amazing that the hound in the novel is referred to as a metaphor for depression, I found a lot of the book rather vague. Despite the fact that I do like that it can be interpreted in many ways, I thought that there are a lot of grey areas and reading between the lines in order to fully understand things. In conclusion, I think this is a fabulous quick read for people who enjoy this sort of book, and are perhaps more confident readers, but I wouldn't recommend it to someone who wasn't a confident reader.

**KIRSTIE HASWELL**  
Firrhill High



## Genuine Fraud

E Lockhart

Hot Key £7.99

ISBN 9781471407123

**When Imogen and Jule meet they become inseparable. This is the friend that Jule has longed for all her life. However they come from totally different worlds: Imogen is privileged and wealthy and Jule is, well, Jule is white trash. When Imogen disappears, could it be that Jule is somehow involved?**

This book was written backwards! At first, I thought that it was confusing because it appeared as if Imogen had committed suicide but, as you go further and further backwards,

you understand it more and it becomes really good. The characters are occasionally the kind that you understand immediately and occasionally a bit muddled. This is a great book with fabulous plot twists.

**EVELYN MARINO**  
Holy Rood High

## Mortal Danger

Series: The Demon Headmaster, no 8

Gillian Cross

OUP £6.99

ISBN 9780192766069

**The Demon Headmaster is back! Ethan and Lizzie have a new headmistress at their school who is simply amazing and organises a joint school trip to an island. With their great friends Tyler and Blake coming along too, what could go wrong?**

I enjoyed this adventure story set in a school. The cliff-hangers were good and made me want to read more! I would recommend this book to S1/S2 pupils.

**ROSS REILLY**  
Currie Community High

I liked the tension in it. It's good for people who like mysteries. I'm going to read the other books in the series.

**DANIEL RYRIE**  
Currie Community High

I thought the book was good. I loved the story. Pupils aged 12-15 will like *Mortal Danger*.

**HISHAM ALTOWAIRQI**  
Currie Community High



## One Shot, eight questions

Eilidh Shiels, Amy Henderson and Caitlin Donaldson from Forrester High interviewed Tanya Landman about her novel *One Shot*.

**Q** What inspired you to write about Annie Oakley?

**A** I came across Annie Oakley when I was researching my book *Buffalo Soldier* which is set in the America's Wild West. I read a LOT of history books about the period and became fascinated by some of the larger-than-life characters I came across. I was particularly struck by Annie's character and life story. The more I found out about her, the more I liked and respected her. She became a global superstar, and yet – coming from such a desperately poverty-stricken background – she never let it go to her head. I love a story of triumph over tragedy, so I found her irresistible.

**Q** Why was Maggie so passive at the start of the story, but not so much at the end?

**A** I think 99.9999999% of stories involve a character going on a journey of some kind – emotional and/or geographical – and Maggie's is no exception to that rule. So she's very young at the beginning, stunned with grief, and, therefore, relatively powerless. But gradually as she gets older she grows both physically and mentally. When she decides to use her rare and special talent she begins to find her own voice.

**Q** Why did Maggie's father go out into the storm even though he knew he could die?

**A** Well, back in those days there wouldn't have been any accurate weather forecasts. So although he thinks a little bit of snow might possibly be on the way he feels sure he can get home before it starts to fall. He has no way of knowing that a freak blizzard is going to engulf him.



**Q** Why did you introduce the father's death so quickly?

**A** Because it was his death that really starts Maggie's story: if he hadn't died, things would have been very different.

**Q** What was it in Maggie's mother's past that made her think that Maggie played a part in her father's death?

**A** I think it was just the fact that he wouldn't have gone into town that day if hadn't been

for Maggie's forthcoming birthday. She blames Maggie for his decision to make the journey. It's not a logical or sensible thing for her mother to think, but people very often look for someone to blame when tragedy strikes. She never liked or understood Maggie's personality, so poor old Maggie becomes the fall guy.

**Q** Why was Maggie's mum such a horrible person to Maggie?

# TANYA LANDMAN

**A** She was very ill after Maggie was born and probably suffering from some sort of depression (which she wouldn't have got any help or treatment for). As a result she never bonded with Maggie as a baby. Things went wrong between the two of them right at the beginning, and the more Maggie develops as a person in her own right, the more difficult her mother finds it. I don't think she's a bad person though – just a sad one.

**Q** How long did it take you to write?

**A** It was really quick, actually. Once I sat down Maggie's voice started flowing through my head almost faster than I could type. I did the first (very rough) draft in about two weeks.

**Q** Are you planning to make *One Shot* into a more in-depth book?

**A** I hadn't got any plans to extend it, but I do love the characters so much that now I'm wondering about it ...

## One Shot

Tanya Landman

Barrington Stoke £7.99 ISBN 9781781128510

**When Maggie's father dies, her family is destitute. Neglected and misunderstood by her remaining family, she escapes to find employment, but must survive terrible abuse. An opportunity allows her to use her shooting skills to change her life and become America's first female celebrity.**

I liked this book because it had a good plot and I liked reading about it. I found it quite exciting because there was never a boring part and I always wanted to read more of it. I felt bad for Maggie who was going through a lot. What I liked most about the book was when Maggie went to the competition and fell in love with a man, then started writing letters to his dog. The only thing I think could be improved is its length. It's a good book but very short. I think that both boys and girls could read this book and enjoy it.

**EILIDH SHIELS**

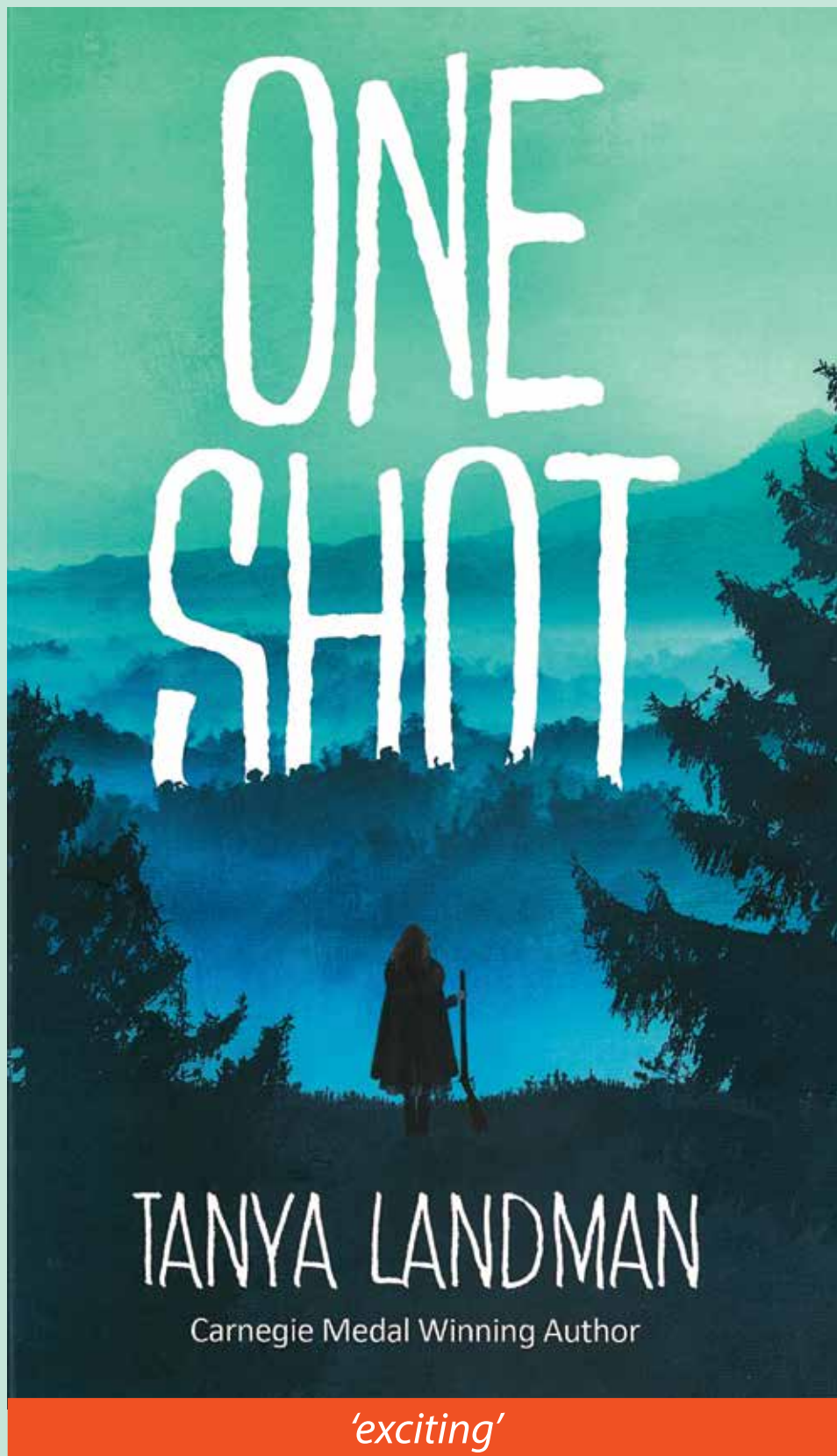
**Forrester High**

I really enjoyed the characters in this book, because even though they were family they acted differently with different family members. I also liked how they spoke to each other. It was very realistic. I didn't like how when you started reading the story the father died almost instantly, I felt that there could have been more about how it was when the dad was still there. I liked that this book was about a real person. The ending was great, I liked imagining what was going to happen to Maggie later.

**AMY HENDERSON**

**Forrester High**

I liked the part when Maggie stood up to her mum and showed courage to continue what she loved doing even though everybody around her



disapproved of it. I didn't like the part when her mother sent her away so suddenly, but I liked Maggie's character because she was so brave.

**CAITLIN DONALDSON**

**Forrester High**

I found this book really interesting from start to finish. I really had sympathy for Maggie in the

book because of all the unfortunate events in her life. I would have liked the story to carry on longer so readers could find out what happened to Maggie next.

**CLAIRE GRAHAM**

**Craigroyston Community High**

## PAST TIMES

### The Raven's Tale

Cat Winters  
Amulet £12.99 ISBN 9781419733628

The early life of Edgar Allan Poe is the focus of this book, which centres on the relationship between him and his muse, Lenore. Told from their two points of view, it covers his struggles with his adopted family, his love for Elmira and his financial hardships.

This was a creepy book, full of atmosphere. It didn't really engage us as some of the language was quite difficult. We thought the artistic features were good.

**LIVI TAGUE AND ANJALI BHAI**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

This book had a really eye-catching cover but the storyline didn't interest us that much. How



'creepy'

many people our age have heard of Edgar Allan Poe? Older readers or fans of fantasy fiction might enjoy it more.

**HEATHER MCCUDDEN AND RHONA SPENCER**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



'posh names'

### Courting Darkness

Series: His Fair Assassin, no 4  
Robin Lafevers  
Andersen Press £8.99 ISBN 978178448265

This is the story of Sybella, a female assassin who travels abroad as Anne of Brittany prepares to marry Charles VIII of France. Her story is entwined with that of Genevieve, a fellow 'daughter of death' already ensconced in the royal court. Set during medieval times, this is a story full of adventure, political intrigue and romance.

The cover of this book is quite scary. We liked the artistic features such as the bordered pages at the start of each chapter. These added to the atmosphere of the book and tied in to its theme. We think the book is best suited to history lovers who are keen to learn more about France in the 15th century, but we enjoyed the posh names in it!

**LIVI TAGUE AND ANJALI BHAI**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

The cover of this book linked in to the 'death' theme really well and the dark pages inside were cool. It didn't really keep our interest though, because the characters' lifestyles were too different to ours and it was set in a time period too far back. The characters names – Jorn, Tephania etc – were also weird, but fitting

for the setting. We think the book would appeal to older readers who want to know more about medieval life.

**HEATHER MCCUDDEN AND VANISHKA KUMAR**  
ST THOMAS OF AQUIN'S HIGH

### The Queen's Resistance

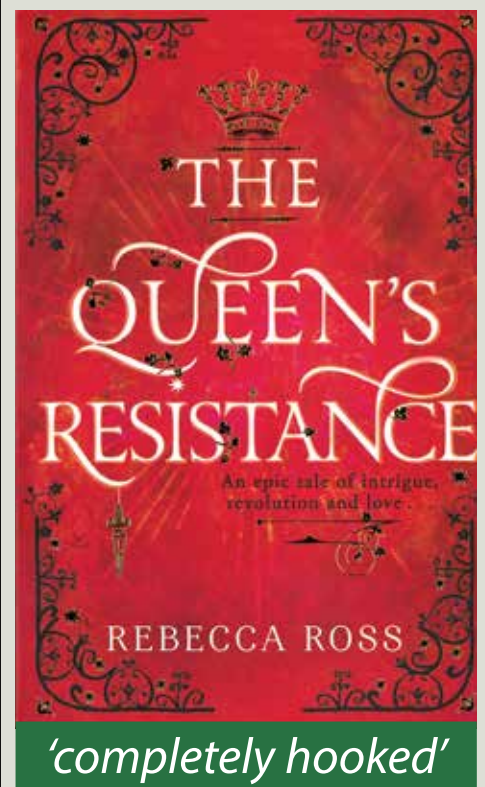
Rebecca Ross  
HarperCollins £7.99 ISBN 9780008246013

The sequel to *The Queen's Rising* sees Brienna needing to prove herself trustworthy as the adopted daughter to the house of MacQuinn. She forges an alliance with Cartier, but do their feelings for each other make them vulnerable? And will the coronation of the new queen run smoothly?



I absolutely adored this book. I was completely hooked by the second page, although the many family trees baffled me. Even though it's written as a sequel, *The Queen's Resistance* can easily be read as a stand-alone, without making you go to too much effort to catch up. As the plot is pretty much explained throughout with secrets and twists around every corner, you are able to understand the characters and connect with them. I would definitely recommend this book to many people as it covers a wide variety of genres (including fantasy, historical fiction, romance) without being too predictable.

**ROSE OVERTON**  
Drummond Community High



'completely hooked'

## Monsters

Sharon Dogar  
Andersen Press £12.99 ISBN 9781783448029

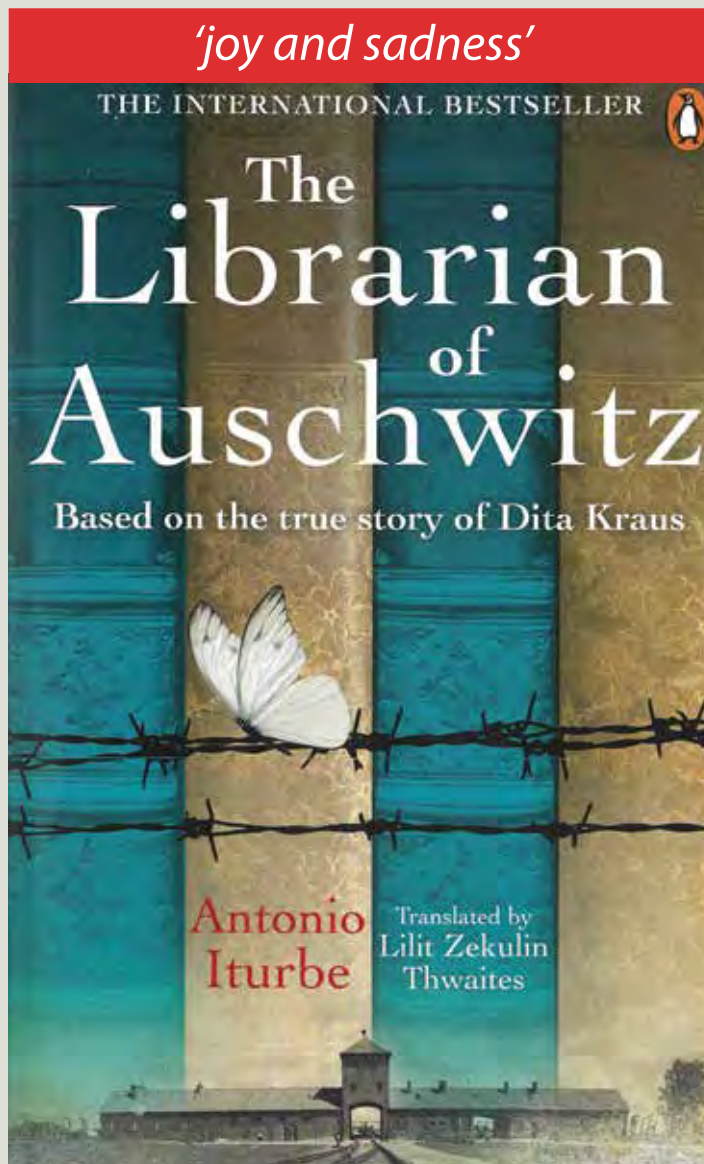
**What prompted Mary Shelley, who would become the famous creator of Frankenstein, to run away with her step-sister Jane and into the arms of a married man? In 1814 this was scandalous behaviour, Mary is only 16 years old, and her decision to abandon her family and society's rules leads to a passionate romance and to tragedy.**



I both love and hate this book. It made me want to keep reading and at the same time chuck it at the wall. There are mixed messages when it comes to the actions of the characters in the story that left me happy, sad, angry and confused. What I liked was how Mary, Percy and Claire lived a very different life from the one that was planned for them by society's rules and expectations. What I hated was the way that their relationship progressed throughout the story. It was a quite unusual idea and the idea of 'free love' is not one that I'm used to. I loved Mary's character because she is a very intelligent girl, very stubborn and ambitious to live her own life and be her own person. Overall, it was a different book to read and I would recommend it to anyone interested in Mary Shelley and her history.

**BROGAN DRYSDALE**  
Forrester High

*'I love and hate this book'*



## The Librarian of Auschwitz

Antonio Iturbe  
Penguin £8.99 ISBN 9781529104776

**Dita Kraus was only 14 when she was taken from a ghetto in Poland to Auschwitz. There in the children's block she becomes the guardian of the eight books that people have managed to smuggle into the camp. She may only be 14 but she knows just how important the librarian is, and risks death to keep those books safe.**

This is a complicated read because it's full of history and sadness. I had no idea that there was a librarian in Auschwitz and her story was full of heartbreak, loneliness, memories and finally happiness. Near the end it is a mixture of joy and sadness. I think that people who like history and have a strong stomach and a vivid imagination will love this book.

**EVELYN MARINO**  
Holy Rood High

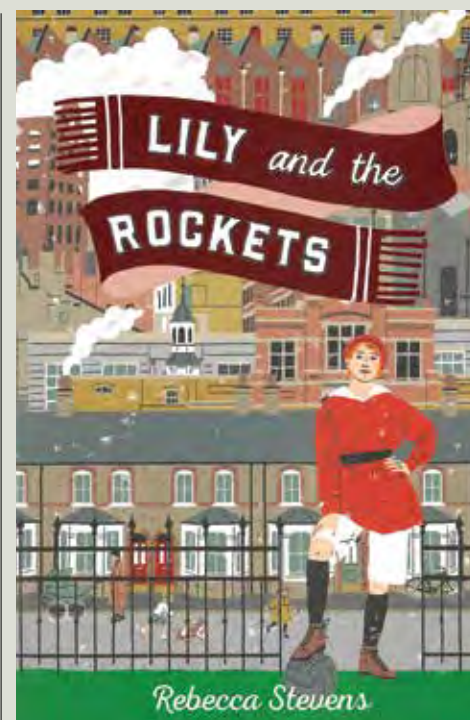
## Lily and the Rockets

Rebecca Stevens  
Chicken House £6.99  
ISBN 9781912626120

**It's 1917 and the war is on. Lily spends her days working in a munitions factory and her lunchtimes kicking a ball with her workmates. They form a football team – the Rockets. When the war ends, Lily's job ends too. But Lily is determined she will do whatever it takes to keep playing football.**

I think this is a brilliant book. I would recommend this book to people aged 10–14 because it is based around a teen. I think the author did a good job of pulling you into the book. Overall I really enjoyed this book.

**MICHAELA SPARKS**  
James Gillespie's High





# Into the forest with *She Wolf*

Dan Smith spoke to Charisma Cannon, Noor Fatimah, and Daniel Ferry from Wester Hailes Education Centre about his novel *She Wolf*.



**Q** What was your goal in writing *She Wolf*, and what inspired the idea?

**A** When I start writing a story, my goal is always to write something I'd want to read. This particular idea came to me when watching a film in which two children are abandoned outside a trading post in 1880s America. It was a sad and troubling moment, but just a minor scene and the viewer never sees the children again. I couldn't get them out of my mind so I decided to write their story. Of course, the setting changed to England AD 866.

**Q** How much research into Norse history and mythology did you have to do?

**A** The short answer is 'LOADS!' I hardly knew anything about the people we now call 'Vikings', but I had an immense amount of fun finding out. It was an excellent excuse to immerse myself in Norse history, culture, mythology and sagas.

**Q** What do you do when you get writer's block?

**A** I'm not sure I'd call it writer's block but there are times when the writing won't flow. When that happens I either try to push through it and write something, or I put it out of my mind and do something that will let my mind wander. Often the best ideas come when we're not trying to think of them.

**Q** How long did it take you to write *She Wolf*?

**A** It usually takes a few months to write a first draft, and then it's edit, edit, edit. All in all, from the first word to seeing the book in covers, it usually takes a year.

**Q** Why did you decide to become a writer?

**A** I didn't always want to be a writer, but we had lots of books in the house when I was growing up, and I enjoyed reading them. Seeing *Star Wars* for the first time in 1978, though, blew my little seven-year-old mind. After that I was obsessed with stories – books, films, comic books, anything I could get my hands on! Writing is my way of telling my own stories.

**Q** If you could meet any character from *She Wolf* in real life, which would you choose?

**A** Great question! I think it would have to be Yiva. I would probably find her a bit annoying because she's so direct, single-minded and fierce, but I really love her.

**Q** Did you draw on real life landscapes for the settings in the book?

**A** Well, I did take a few liberties. The area where the story takes place isn't forested as heavily as it is in the book, but I figured that a thousand years ago things would have been different. I spent time in the very spooky Harwood Forest to get a sense of how it would feel. I also added mountains where there aren't any, but Yiva's story is a journey in the geographical sense as well as the emotional sense, and I felt it was important to have recognisable landmarks and changes in the landscape.

# DAN SMITH

**Q** Do you have plans to write a second book in the *She Wolf* universe and make it a series?

**A** I've already written a large part of a second book in Yiva's saga, but I'm not sure when (if ever) it will be published. I have recently signed with my publisher to write another two books, and I'm currently working on a very different story in a very different historical setting ... if I told you any more than that, though, I'd have to send Yiva after you with her axe.

**Q** Without spoiling anything, did you always know about the twist involving Geri, or did you decide it while writing the book?

**A** No, I didn't always know about the twist, but I think that's when things work best. It was a 'lightbulb moment' and I knew instantly that it was the right thing to do. However, I'll let you in on a little secret; in an earlier draft of the book, Geri wasn't a dog, he was Yiva's little brother. After chatting with my publisher, we decided that the story would work better if Geri was a dog – and it was definitely the right decision.

## She Wolf

Dan Smith

Chicken House £6.99 ISBN 9781910655931

**Viking girl Yiva seeks revenge for the murder of her mother. Accompanied only by her dog, Yiva crosses the wolf-filled landscape of England in 866 as she hunts for the three-fingered man who she believes killed her mother.**

This book captures the image of a strong Viking inside your head. It is bursting with description. If you like adventure, Vikings and revenge in your stories, this is the book for you.

**NOOR FATIMAH**

Wester Hailes Education Centre

I enjoyed this book because it had new words for me. My favourite character was Yiva. I would recommend this book to people who are interested in history.

**GEORGINA RENWICK**

Wester Hailes Education Centre

I thought this book was really good because I liked how Yiva can turn into a wolf and that lots of other characters gradually come into it.

**CHARISMA CANNON**

Wester Hailes Education Centre



*'bursting with description'*

The main character is quite lovely. The ending made this book for me.

**ZHIYING FENG**

Currie Community High

I would recommend this book to people with

an interest in Vikings and Norse mythology. Its main strength was the way the story was set up. Overall, *She Wolf* was a good story with an interesting twist.

**CALLUM SCOBIE**

Currie Community High

## SCI-FI & FANTASY

### The Wicked King

Series: The Folk of the Air  
 Holly Black  
 Hot Key £12.99 ISBN 9781471407352

**Jude schemes to put her younger brother Oak onto the Faerie throne using her hold over Cardan, the new High King. Up to her sword in Fey politics, she must keep control of this perilous situation as rival courts push for power and war looms.**

Oh my God! I absolutely love Holly Black's writing! I'd say that this book was better than the first book in the series, *The Cruel Prince*, because Jude, who is my favourite out of all the characters, has to be on her guard all the time. She helps the King with his subjects, even though most of them want her dead, and I so admired her strength, her cleverness and her determination throughout the book that I couldn't stop reading. I hope that the next book *The Queen of Nothing* is even better than the first two. I can't wait! If you liked *The Cruel Prince*, then I highly recommend *The Wicked King*.

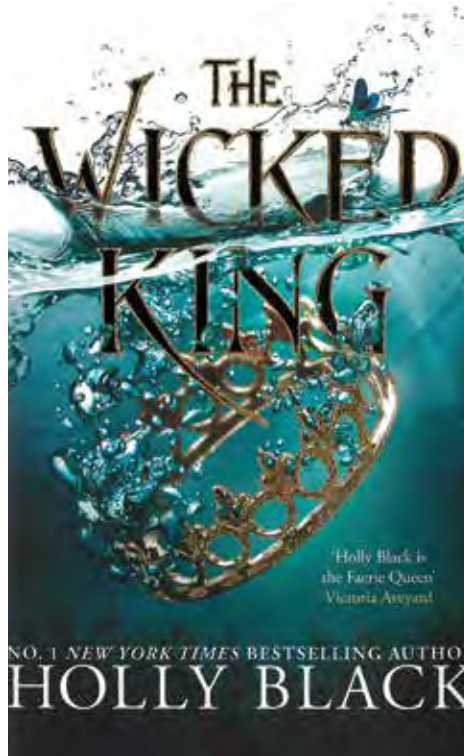
**BROGAN DRYSDALE**  
 Forrester High

When I read *The Wicked King* I felt it was a bit boring. I didn't really understand where they were or what was happening. I didn't mind the characters, but I didn't find the plot very interesting. I hadn't read the first book in the series.

**JESSICA GRANT**  
 Forrester High

I loved this book as it had some unexpected twists in it. I really liked the main character Jude. I thought she was a powerful character and was a strong female role model. I enjoyed the plot, and after finishing it I have thought a lot about the different characters' motives and the choices they made. I think this book is aimed at young teenagers and would suggest it to people who like fantasy with a bit of romance. Holly Black has created a masterpiece. I liked how she said 'life was a game you have to play.' I think that you need to read *The Cruel Prince* to understand what has happened to the characters already.

**EVE YELL**  
 Forrester High



*'unexpected twists'*

The beginning of the story was actually quite boring. It was tempting to shut the book there and then. But I was determined to keep on reading and then the story burst into life. All of it hits you at once and makes the book unable to be put down. Anyone who loves schemes and plots will love this book. The characters are amazing, each one having a secret plan. I loved it. The author made something, which was supposed to be bubbly and fun, scary and true.

**PHOENIX NELSON**  
 Royal High

### The Graces

Series: The Graces, no 1  
 Laure Eve  
 Faber and Faber £7.99 ISBN 9780571352913

**River, the new girl in town, becomes obsessed with the Graces, an influential and mysterious family. They are enigmatic and beautiful and known by all to be powerful witches. River desperately seeks their approval, becoming friends with Summer Grace and her family.**

I liked *The Graces*! River, the protagonist, looks vulnerable and weak at the start. But she has an amazing development by the end of the book! Nonetheless I did not like her very much because she was obsessed by the Graces. She wanted to be part of the family and, therefore, she studied them in a very intense way and she pretended to be one of them. I loved the way it was written with lots of mystery and suspense,

and the fact that it is a story that makes sense, even if only towards the end.

**SAFIYAH LAWTHER**  
 Boroughmuir High

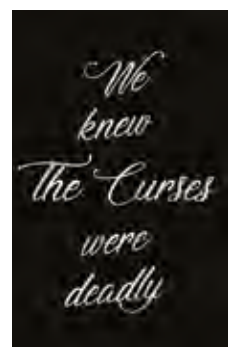


*'mystery and suspense'*

### The Curses

Series: The Graces, no 2  
 Laure Eve  
 Faber and Faber £7.99 ISBN 9780571328048

**The Grace family are cursed to lose those they love like Wolf. Summer, Thalia and Fenrir have joined magical forces with another local witch to resurrect their friend. But he doesn't seem like his old self. Now they have to figure out why. And then decide what to do about it.**



This is a sequel to *The Graces*, continuing the story a few months after the end of the last novel. The entire book is about power, selfishness and insecurity. It is narrated by Summer, one of three sisters – in fact it's a story about siblings and how their hearts are bound together, but equally how they know the best way to hurt each other. I felt really gutted by the final chapters.

**NIKOLA HANKUS**  
 St Augustine's High

# SCI-FI & FANTASY



## The Fork, The Witch and the Worm

Series: The Inheritance Cycle  
Christopher Paolini  
Penguin £12.99 ISBN 9780241392362

**Eragon has found a home for the Dragon Academy, a safe place for future dragons to hatch and for the Dragon Riders to train. In order to understand the different races he has welcomed to this new community, Eragon listens to their legends in this short story collection.**

I really like Eragon, the main character in this book, because I can understand how he feels and why. I really enjoyed reading *The Fork, The Witch and The Worm*. You can read it as a standalone book, but it would be easier to understand if you read the other books first. I liked how, even though it was Eragon being told the stories, it felt like it was you being told. I thought it was really good that through the stories Eragon learned new lessons. I wouldn't change anything about the book as I really liked it. My favourite part was when Eragon found out news about his half-brother.

**EVE YELL**  
Forrester High

I liked *The Fork, The Witch and The Worm* because of the characters and the style in which Christopher Paolini has written it. I enjoyed learning what had happened to the characters because I've read the previous books in the series and thoroughly enjoyed the storyline.

Learning what had happened to Eragon after he left Alagaësia and started raising dragons is an amazing continuation of the previous books, and this book would intrigue the reader into wanting to know more, even if you haven't already read the others.

**JASMINE VETTRAINO**  
Forrester High

This is a majestic book! I liked the start, where we see how Eragon is setting up the academy and has so much paperwork to do. I also liked reading the stories from different parts of Alagaësia that Eragon was being told. They flowed really well into the main story and you felt that you were there, listening. I have read the first book in the *Inheritance Cycle* series and I think that this helped, as I knew a little bit about him and his adventures and had a clear picture in my head. I think that you really need to have read at least one of the previous books to enjoy the story more.

**AIDAN LYON**  
Forrester High

## 'made me very angry'



## Internment

Samira Ahmed  
Atom £7.99 ISBN 9780349003344

**In the near-future Layla and her family are among hundreds who have been interred in an American camp as Enemies of the State because they are Muslim. Desperate to get her story out to the media, she risks everything so the world can see what is really happening.**

I really like the way that this story is described. The plot is gripping, and the emotions of the characters are very realistic. I found this book to be suitable for most readers although it was a little bit too long for me as I don't like long stories. The story made me intrigued then angry, that people were interned in a camp because they were Muslim and that they only got to take one suitcase each. I was keen to read this book because of the way my school librarian described it to me.

**ABDALLAH ALDAKER**  
Forrester High

I really liked *Internment* because it really played with my emotions. It made me very angry when Layla was imprisoned, and it made me very sad at the end. It's quite inspirational to read about all the amazing things people in the internment camp do to attempt to get out. I thought the book was really good and I would like a sequel so I can read about what happens to Layla next. Loved it!

**EVE YELL**  
Forrester High

As a person who doesn't follow a religion, this book was really eye-opening for me. It's heartbreaking to think that in however many years this could happen. I really loved the story and would recommend it to those who do not belong to a minority group as it will absolutely change your world view.

**MILLY WHITE**  
Craigmount High

## Two Dark Reigns

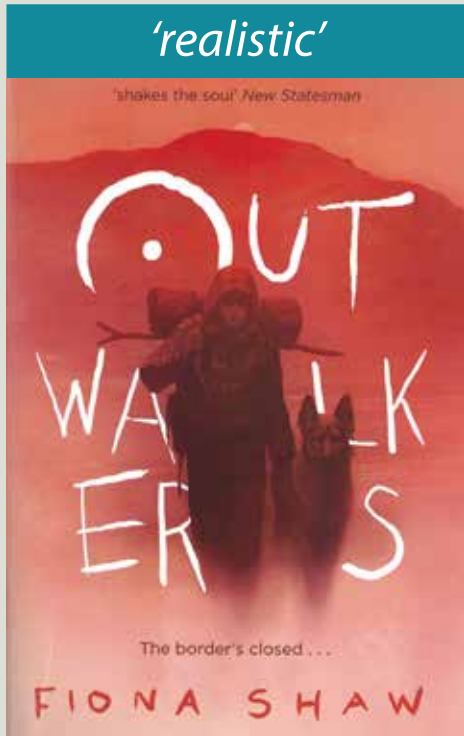
Series: Three Dark Crowns  
Kendare Blake  
Macmillan £7.99 ISBN 9781509876495

**Third in the series. Queen Katharine sits on the throne after a very bloody battle. Her sister queens Mirabella and Arsinoe have escaped with their lives, exiled to the mainland. Rumours against the Queen increase as news of a new leader emerges and a revolution against the crown begins.**



It was complicated. I did not understand when events were happening in different places, and it got me confused. I managed to finish it though! I liked Katharine, the Poison Queen. She was a very complex character, with a fascinating relationship with her husband.

**MIRAI CAIRNS**  
Boroughmuir High



'realistic'

## Outwalkers

Fiona Shaw  
David Fickling £10.99 ISBN 9781788450003

**Outwalkers survive off-grid, having first removed the tracking chip that was implanted at birth. Society has been brainwashed into acceptance of the government's control, believing it is in their best interest, but others know that this is not the truth and will risk everything to prove it.**

I loved that *Outwalkers* was set in our time period but with futuristic technology. My favourite part was the ending because Jake thought that he didn't fit in until everything came together in the end. My favourite character was Jet (the dog) because no matter what happened he was always there to protect Jake. The only thing that I would improve is that I would make the story shorter because it got a little boring in the middle part of the story. I would recommend this book to 13–16 year olds because all the characters are in that age group, so the readers could maybe relate to some of their emotions.

**KASEY REEVES**  
Forrester High

I enjoyed learning about the gang of children who had to work together to stay safe and to, ultimately, escape; they felt a realistic group. I got annoyed that so many children were being killed! I was, however, slightly confused at the beginning of the story and also felt the story began to drag along, so I was unable to finish it. Maybe the problem was that I just didn't connect with any of the characters. They were too annoying.

**KEIRA CARNIE**  
Forrester High

## Mike

Andrew Norriss  
David Fickling £7.99 ISBN 9781788450102

**At 15, Floyd is well on the way to becoming the next Andy Murray and his parents are delighted that their son can fulfil the dreams that were so cruelly taken from his father. Then, however, Mike appears: a figure all dressed in black that no-one can see apart from Floyd. And he clearly doesn't want Floyd to carry on playing tennis.**



'hard to put down'

This was such a good book. I found it hard to put down at times because of the brilliant writing and the relatable story. It's actually quite a hard book to describe; the best thing to do is just read it.

**LAURENCE PHILPOT**  
Holy Rood High

## The Polarshield Project

Series: Super Sons, no 1  
Ridley Pearson and Ile Gonzalez  
DC Zoom £6.99 ISBN 9781401286392

**The world as we know it is facing a catastrophe: melting ice caps, rising sea levels and huge swathes of the population forced to move away from coastal areas. Who can help save humanity? Superman and Batman both have teenage sons – maybe these two unlikely heroes could be the answer?**



'a great story'

I am a great fan of DC Comics and, although this was aimed at younger readers, I thought it was a great story, with an environmental twist on evil. It was left on a cliff-hanger, so I am keen to read the next instalment.

**RYAN DJIKENG**  
Gracemount High

I loved everything about this book.

**CINAED ROBINSON**  
Gracemount High

## The Secret Runners of New York

Matthew Reilly  
Hot Key £7.99 ISBN 9781471407956

**Part *Gossip Girl*, part dystopian horror, *The Secret Runners of New York* is about what happens when some of Manhattan's most privileged (or possibly spoiled and psychopathic) students find a time tunnel through Central Park to the future. A future in which they really don't want to see what has happened to their families.**

This was a very fast-paced read and every chapter had something interesting in it, so that you needed to read on. I like dystopian novels normally and I thought that this one was especially good. The ending was fantastic!

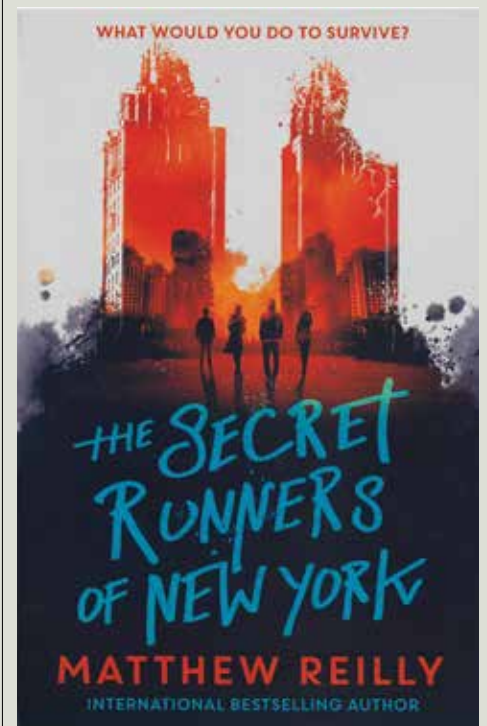
**JOSHUA JOSE**  
Holy Rood High

I thought that this book was really good and I loved the Manhattan setting. Even though the setting was just one place, it actually felt much bigger because of the whole time travel into the future thing. The characters were very well written. I felt that they were kind of lost and that they were definitely looking for something. I think that a sequel would be a great idea.

**BRIAN LAMB**  
Holy Rood High

I was really interested in this book, which was centred around young, rich, self-centred teenagers. The story was captivating, horrifying and breathtaking.

**NIKOLA HANKUS**  
St Augustine's High



# SCI-FI & FANTASY



*'ticks all the boxes'*

## The Winter of the Witch

Series: The Winternight Trilogy, no 3  
Katherine Arden  
Del Rey £12.99 ISBN 9781785039713

**All of Moscow believes that Vasya is a witch, and should be punished for setting the city aflame. But she is a witch, and with magical help she escapes. With Moscow being torn asunder by demons, Vasya must now rally men and magic folk to work together to save the city that tried to kill her.**

I couldn't have loved this book more. There is the perfect amount of fantasy, yet still some reality which made the plot very well developed. My favourite aspect of this book is definitely the Russian folklore. Before reading this book I didn't really know much about it, but now I have learned about a really fascinating topic. So, if you enjoy an element of witches, devils, and even horses, this book ticks all the boxes. This is one of those novels that truly stays in your heart and we could all learn a thing or two from Vasya. Great if you are just new to fantasy books.

**ALEXSANDRA FEDEROWSKA**  
St Augustine's High

## Aurora Rising

Series: The Aurora Cycle, no 1  
Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff  
Rock the Boat £12.00 ISBN 9781786075338

**Meet Squad 312: a top-of-the-class leader, a fearless pilot, a sarcastic diplomat, a class**

**clown of an engineer, a fearsome combat specialist and a socially inept scientist. Give them a seemingly easy mission, but neglect to tell them that their cargo is Aurora. The girl that time forgot. The girl whom all of our fates depend on.**

I really loved this book for all its themes – the action, the friendship and the heartbreak that it caused me. Like all good books, this one started off slowly to give the reader a sense of setting and a basic introduction to the characters. As the story went on the characters became so developed it was like they were real people and you were there fighting and carrying out the mission with them. I loved this book because of the world that was created, with the other languages and people from different races to our main characters. Overall, I recommend this book to everyone – everybody will enjoy it for lots of different reasons and no matter which genre is your favourite.

**MANON MAURAGE**  
Castlebrae Community High



*'everybody will enjoy it'*

## Star of Hope

Series: The Sun Trilogy, no 3  
Moira McPartlin  
Fledgling Press £8.99 ISBN 9781912280247

**The Prince sends Sorlie to the Star of Hope, and Ishbel is instructed to make her way**

**there too. Only when they both get there do they realise why the Star is so important to the Prince. But does he still have the best interests of his people in mind? If not, what can Sorlie and Ishbel do about it?**

I really enjoyed this book. The plot revolves around parallel but linked quests being pursued by 16-year-old Sorlie and his aunt Ishbel, while Sorlie's grandmother has been forced out by revolutionary forces. This book is a completely different type of book to the ones I usually read. But I really liked it and would recommend it.

**ADRIANA FLUDER**  
St Augustine's High



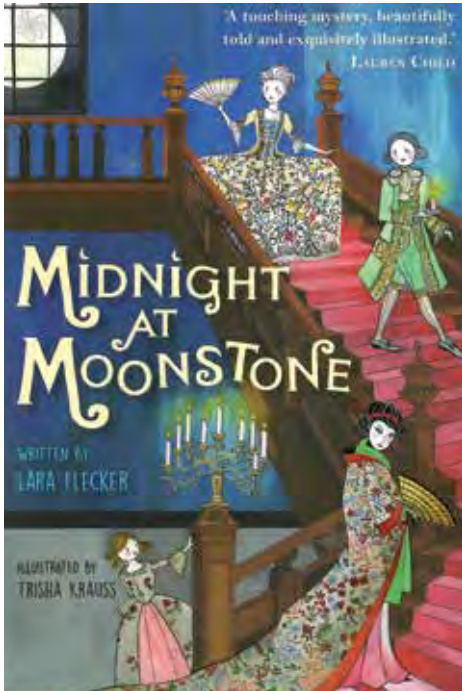
*'completely different'*

## Midnight at Moonstone

Lara Flecker  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192768896

**When Kit's father goes away, Kit is left to stay with her sister and brother, but she sneaks away to her grandfather at the Moonstone Costume Museum. The building is decrepit and the costumes old, but there's magic in the walls. When Kit discovers this, she begins to explore ways to prevent the museum closing!**

This is a heart-warming novel. As Kit wanders the long halls in the museum close to midnight, she realises things are not what they first seemed. The mannequins on which the old,



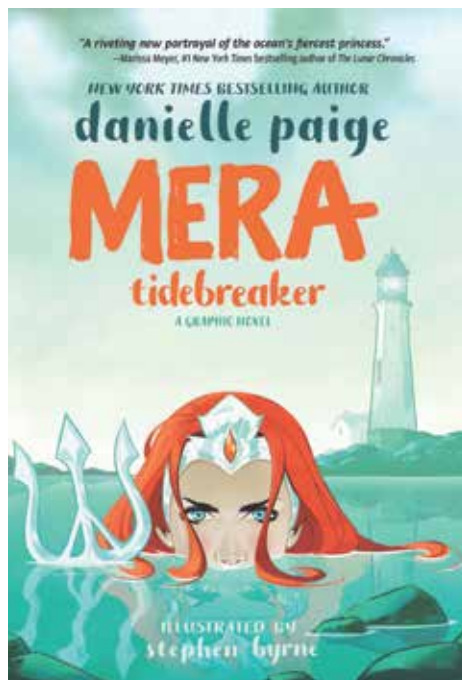
## Tidebreaker

Series: Mera  
Danielle Paige  
DC Ink £12.99 ISBN 9781401283391

**Mera, a female warrior, must prove herself a worthy leader of the Xebellian people by slaying the long-lost heir of Atlantis. But when she meets him they fall in love, and things don't go quite as planned.**

This was a really good, exciting book. It was like *Wonder Woman* in the ocean! It was well-paced. There was a depth to the story and really detailed drawings. I got absorbed in the drama of it all and liked the heartwarming message of Mera's mum always being there for her. I thought it was original and thrilling and the visuals told as much of the story as the words. I highly recommend it to both boy and girl comic book fans.

**LIVI TAGUE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



*'original and thrilling'*

## Wizarding for Beginners

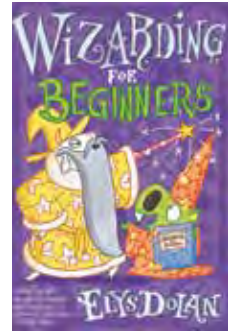
Elys Dolan  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192763969

**Dave and Albrecht, armed only with a guide book on wizardry, go undercover to rescue their friends from the clutches of Terrence The Terrible.**

This book is really weird, full of animals who act and speak strangely. I like wizards, so the cover got my attention, but the one in this book –

Albrecht – was just crazy! The book had lots of good features – the drawings, the different writing styles – but overall it was too chaotic for me with too much going on. Some of it seemed babyish but other ideas – like a 'support group' for animals – were clever. I did enjoy it, but the main thing I will remember is WEIRD!

**DAVID MOCHAN**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



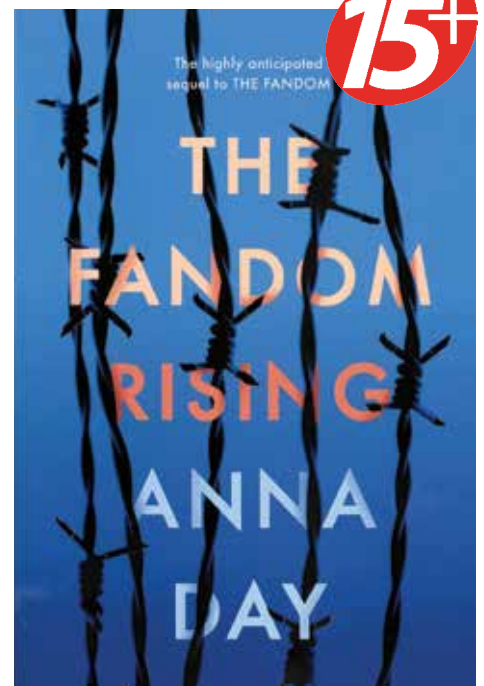
## The Fandom Rising

Series: The Fandom  
Anna Day  
Chicken House £7.99 ISBN 9781911490081

**In this sequel to *The Fandom*, Violet enters a world where books come alive in order to bring her brother Nate safely home.**

We enjoy dystopian and apocalyptic fiction. We hadn't read *The Fandom*, and, although we prefer to read things in their proper order, we were able to work the characters and storyline out with a bit of hard work. We liked that the futuristic setting had links to how things are now – it mentioned things like the Kardashians – so we could easily relate to it (and didn't have to put up with zombies!). The story was quite edgy at times, with an easy writing style, and the book cover, though simple, was really cool.

**HEATHER MCCUDDEN AND RHONA SPENCER**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



elaborate costumes are displayed have minds of their own. They all must try to pull together before it's too late for Moonstone. I loved this book far more than I had expected to. I loved reading about the costumes and the gallery with its unexpected inhabitants. I stayed up late reading to find out the end. I think it's especially good for reluctant readers as it's very fast paced.

**KATE HARROLD**  
James Gillespie's High

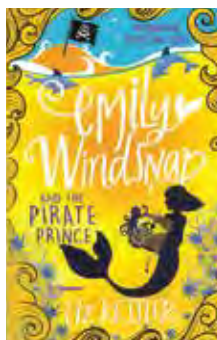
## Emily Windsnap and the Pirate Prince

Series: Emily Windsnap, no 8  
Liz Kessler  
Orion £6.99 ISBN 9781510104228

**When Emily Windsnap's boyfriend Aaron is captured by pirates, she decides to join a rival pirate crew and persuade them to help rescue him.**

At first I thought this book would be a relaxing read, but towards the end I became quite interested in it and couldn't put it down.

**MORWENNA WILLIAMS**  
James Gillespie's High



*'couldn't put it down'*

# SCI-FI & FANTASY

*'it took a twist'*



## Once and Future

Amy Rose Capetta and Cori McCarthy  
Rock the Boat £8.99 ISBN 9781786076540

When Ari's spaceship crashes on Old Earth and she pulls a magic sword from an ancient tree, she finds that she is the 42nd and only female reincarnation of King Arthur, and must save humanity from tearing itself apart. With only teenage wizard Merlin to help her, will she succeed?

This book has an amazing storyline. I recommend it to teens who love sci-fi and romances. My first thoughts were that it was boring and confusing, but it took a twist!

**DANICA SKINNER**  
Wester Hailes Education Centre

## Queen of Air and Darkness

Series: The Dark Artifices, no 3  
Cassandra Clare  
Simon & Schuster £12.99 ISBN 9781471116704

Emma and Julian put their forbidden love aside and undertake a dangerous mission to Faerie. What is the deadly secret they find in the Courts?

They are racing against time to save the Shadowhunters, before the power of the parabatai curse destroys them all.



Having read the other two in the trilogy, it was easier for me to understand what was going on. If you really wanted to, you could, however, read this book by itself. The story goes between different character viewpoints, many of whom are couples, giving you greater understanding of the issues and emotions they face. What I love about this series is that the characters are a diverse group many with characteristics that some people find hard to accept, such as autism, sexuality, gender and disability. I felt like I could connect with the book as a teenager in today's society with friends and family who face these challenges in life. For me, this has been a life-changing read which will remain in my heart.

**REBECCA BOWMAKER-MEES**  
Drummond Community High

I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Queen of Air and Darkness*. Even though I have not read the previous two books, I found the plot easy to follow and very captivating. There were also several characters I recognised from Clare's previous series, *Mortal Instruments*, and a set of even more unique characters from this book. I would recommend *Queen of Air and Darkness* to others who love Cassandra Clare's books.

**MINDY LEE**  
Liberton High



## Stepsister

Jennifer Donnelly  
Hot Key £7.99 ISBN 9781471407970

This story starts where the tale of *Cinderella* ends. It is all about the bully, Isabelle, but it is not that straightforward. This story presents

a different take on the ugly, cruel stepsister.

Being a lover of twisted fairytales, this book appealed from the start. It's so gruesome, but I enjoyed reading this story based on the original Grimm's tale. Reading from the perspective of Isabelle, the bullying stepsister, has changed my perception of the tale of *Cinderella*. Throughout the book I felt sorry for Isabelle even though she's done horrible things to others. I really enjoyed the author's writing style and would like to read more books by this author.

**REBECCA BOWMAKER-MEES**  
Drummond Community High

## Rebel

Series: The Extinction Trials, no 3  
S M Wilson  
Usborne £7.99 ISBN 9781474954860

Storm and Lincoln return to Poloria, the land of the monsters. Along with others fleeing from Earthasia they are trying to set up a new home living alongside the dinosaurs. But will it be the dinosaurs or the humans that threaten their survival?

I couldn't stop reading! I was reluctant to start reading this book since dinosaurs aren't really my thing. But once I started reading, it felt as if I was being drawn inside the new world of Poloria. After reading this book I felt a real connection with the main characters who took me on emotional rides of happiness and sadness, making me want to cry and smile. I recommend this book to anyone who is a fan of Philip Reeves' *Mortal Engines* series as it quite reminds me of the whole ruined earth and people fighting to survive concept. It's also like a mix of *Jurassic World* and *Hunger Games*, so it will appeal to people who are big fans of those. But this book isn't just about running away from dinosaurs. If you would like to find out what really happens due to Silas's dumb plans and the emotional struggles the characters face, you have to read the book!

**JULIA WIEHCINSKA**  
Drummond Community High





## Anyone can write fiction – Bethany Rutter

Craigroyston Community High School students Mahira Sattar and Amber Beetge interviewed Bethany about her novel *No Big Deal*.



- Q** What inspired you to write *No Big Deal*?
- A** I thought, if I'm only ever going to write one book in my life, what is the one story I would like to tell? I thought back over my life and thought about things I wish I'd known and things I maybe would have done differently, and tried to turn that into a story that people would enjoy and get something out of.
- Q** What would you like readers to get out of this book?
- A** To make someone say 'This book made me feel less alone.'
- Q** How did you get into writing?
- A** I've always been writing, but mostly non-fiction. When I was in university I got involved in the university magazine. From there I did a blog, then an MA in Journalism and from there I started getting freelance work in the fashion industry. I think writing,

- especially novels or poetry, is seen as this mystical thing that is for tortured artists and serious people, and I never felt like I could achieve it. As I got more experienced I started thinking 'I'm going to write a novel,' and I'm glad I did because anyone can write fiction. It's not only for cool, arty people.
- Q** In what ways do you think that you and Emily are similar people?
- A** There are a lot of similarities between me and Emily! I don't want people to read it and think 'Oh, Emily is you,' but it would be silly of me to pretend there aren't a lot of crossovers between me and her. I think that's natural because I'm not very confident writing fiction yet, so I write how I see the world.
- Q** In the book Emily struggles with her appearance. In school did you struggle with your appearance?



# BETHANY RUTTER

**A** When you are younger, I think it is easy to feel abnormal, or that things that are happening for other people will never happen for you because of your appearance. I definitely felt different to my friends and I think that was because I was the only fat one (well, with one exception). But over time that has mattered less and less. It's nice to think about it from my position, ten years older than Emily is now.

**Q** Could you share any incidents where you felt pressure, or experiences that you felt were negative because of your weight?

**A** There are things that Emily's mum says to her that are word-for-word things that my mum said to me. What I've realised is how to balance the reality of how horrible the world is against how I see myself. There are things I told myself, say with romance stuff, 'Obviously that would never happen to me because I'm fat,' but that wasn't how it turned out! A lot of the experiences I denied myself I think I could have actually had if I thought differently about my body.

**Q** How does the experience of writing fiction and non-fiction differ?

**A** While writing *No Big Deal* I was also editing a non-fiction book called *Plus*. The experiences were so different! I wrote the novel on my own with my laptop. It just came from my brain, through my fingers, and that was the book. But I think good non-fiction should be a collaborative process, you should be out talking to people and doing research and maybe there's a degree of admin involved that doesn't exist when you're writing fiction. Writing fiction is more self-reliant, whereas non-fiction takes its cues from the outside world.

## No Big Deal

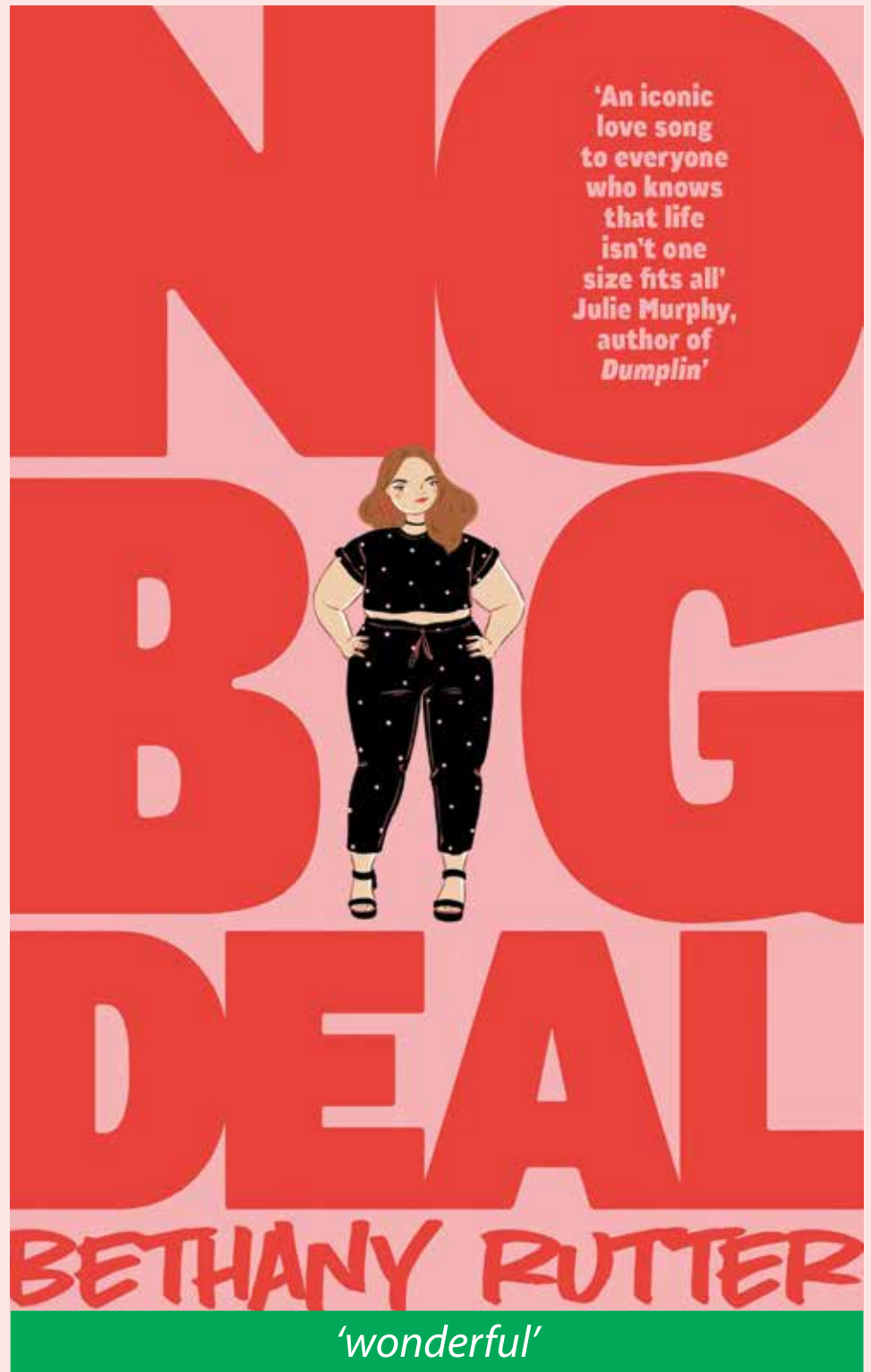
Bethany Rutter

Macmillan £7.99

ISBN 9781509870059

**Emily is fat and she doesn't care. And why should she? She has killer fashion sense, great taste in music, jaw-dropping make-up and razor-sharp wit. Unfortunately, everyone around her seems to think 'fat' is unattractive and a problem. As Emily enters her final year of high school, her body confidence begins to wither away.**

This book was wonderful to read. I found myself empathising with Emily's hardships. I really related to her issue of having people around her who treat her differently because of her weight – her mum especially. I come from a culture where relatives don't hesitate to call you out for gaining weight or wearing an outfit they don't approve of, so reading scenes where Emily's mum viciously nags at her to 'fix herself' really resonated with me. This book accurately depicts the lifestyles, actions, and personality traits of



teenagers in 2019. Overall, I adored this book. It effectively showed Emily's elusive journey to self-acceptance, yet it is still fun and very relatable for teenage girls.

**MAHIRA SATTAR**

**Craigroyston Community High**

I don't like YA fiction, much less that which includes a cliched protagonist with overly obvious flaws used to create a stereotypical *Ugly Duckling* storyline. However, *No Big Deal* has scored a place on my 'to read again' list.

Emily is awesome! She's beautiful inside and out, resilient and funny and is one of the most authentic YA narrators I've read in a while. Although her confidence wavers, she stands her ground, knows her own mind and never, ever accepts fat shaming. This book's goal is to remind us to love ourselves even when we don't know what to do. Heart-warming, funny, true and relatable.

**AMBER BEETGE**

**Craigroyston Community High**

## TEEN ISSUES

### Happy Girl Lucky

Series: The Valentines, no 1  
 Holly Smale  
 HarperCollins £7.99 ISBN 9780008254148

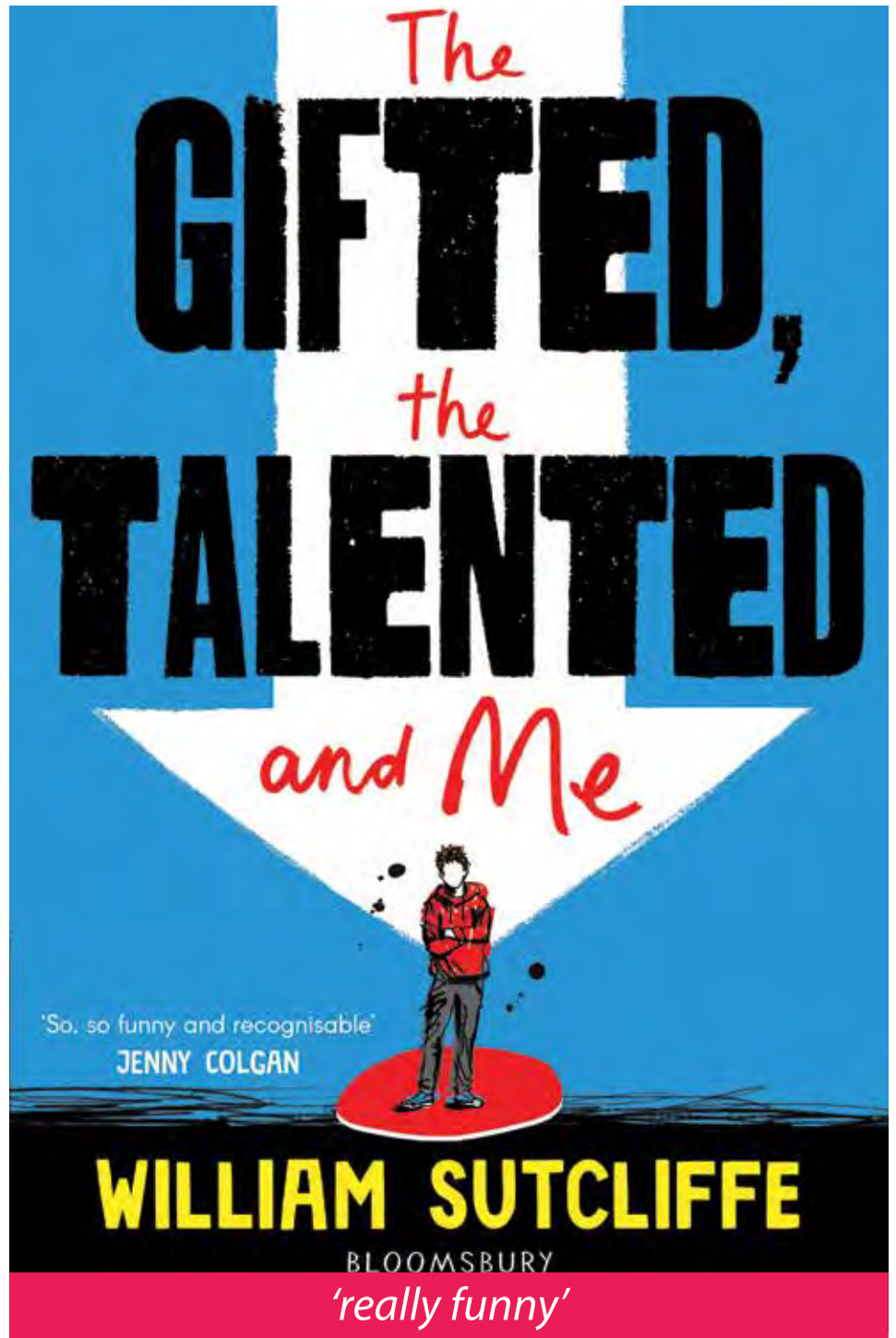
**The Valentines are possibly the most famous teenage siblings ever, with both parents Hollywood stars. But their mother is in rehab and their father away filming. This doesn't stop the youngest sister, Hope, from trying to sort out everyone's problems while looking for her first proper romance.**

I liked this novel. The main character is quite lovely. Her siblings don't talk much to her and she has an imaginary dialogue going on in her head. The ending made this book for me.

**ZHIYING FENG**  
 Currie Community High



*'imaginary dialogue'*



### The Gifted, the Talented and Me

William Sutcliffe  
 Bloomsbury £7.99 ISBN 9781526610973

**Ethan, Freya and Sam's dad has sold his company, and suddenly the whole family has money. They leave the school that Sam had been perfectly happy in and move to a school specially designed for the gifted and talented. His siblings seem to settle in right away, but for Sam it's not so easy. He just wants to be ordinary!**

I thought that this book was really funny, but it was also believable and at the same time quite exciting. The characters were very realistic, and I liked Sam the most because once he started at the new school, even though he didn't think that he was gifted and talented, he still tried to make friends. The funniest bit was the part at the bike shed when the two loners just kick a football to each other ... but it was also quite sad too. I think that people who are 13 and above and like funny books would enjoy reading this.

**SARAH SMILES**  
 Holy Rood High

# TEEN ISSUES

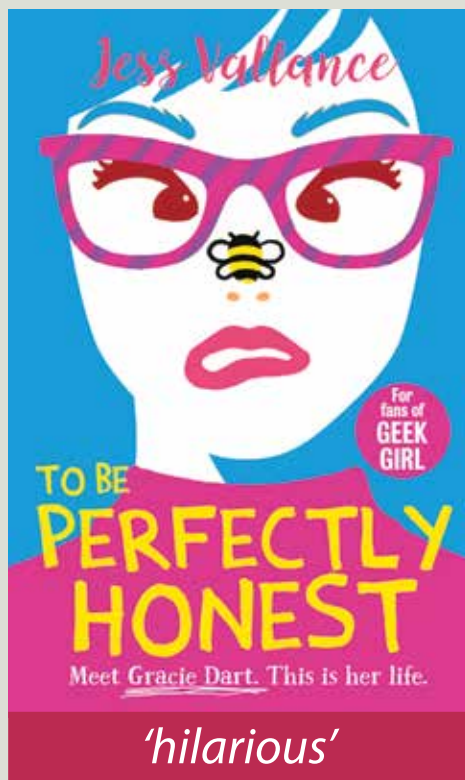
## To Be Perfectly Honest

Series: Gracie Dart, no 2  
Jess Vallance  
Hot Key £6.99 ISBN 9781471407673

**Gracie decides that she is going to be totally truthful about everything for 50 days. Her father has just lost his job and Sarah, her new girlfriend, seems more obsessed with learning new BMX tricks than their fledgling love affair. How difficult is this going to turn out to be?**

A really funny read. Grace gets herself into some hilarious situations. I like the concept of telling the truth all the time, but I am sure I would fold on the first day, if only to save someone's feelings or to protect myself. I have not read the first book in the series, but will certainly seek it out. If you like *Geek Girl*, Gracie Dart is for you.

**MARYAM KHADIM**  
Gracemount High School

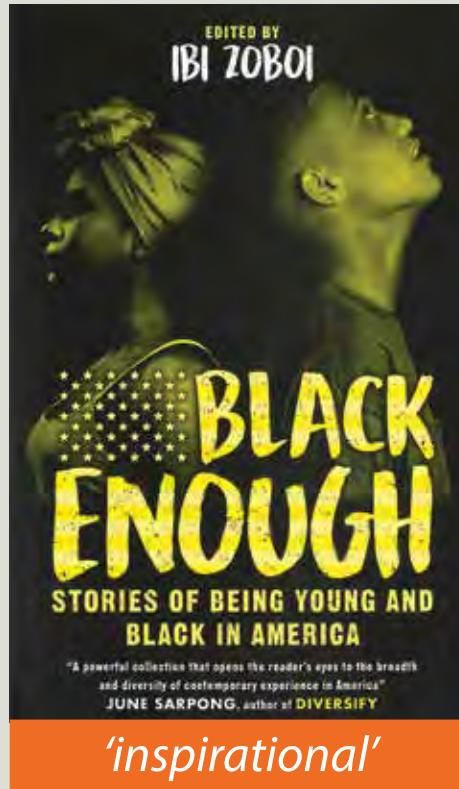


*'hilarious'*

## Black Enough

Ibi Zoboi (ed)  
HarperCollins £7.99 ISBN 9780008326555

**Black Enough is a collection of stories about the experiences of black teens across America from a spectrum of backgrounds—urban and rural, wealthy and not so, mixed race, immigrants, and more. The stories are individual but they all reflect what it's like to be young and black in America.**



*'inspirational'*

Every story is relevant and inspirational. Each story of a black teenager's life is individual. Different feelings crawl over the book, from crying to laughing. The book was un-droppable and extremely shocking at parts. It is a powerful book to read and I was left wanting more. I think the age rating should be 12 to 100! There is some bad language and violence but you will take in some powerful messages from this book.

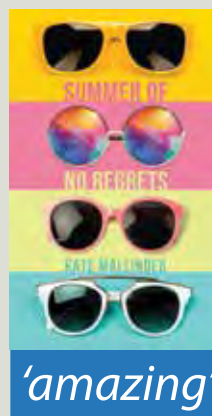
**LAYLA ROZELLE**  
James Gillespie's High

## Summer of No Regrets

Kate Mallinder  
Firefly Press £7.99 ISBN 9781910080948

**Four girls decide to 'seize the day' and try new things. They put themselves out of their comfort zones at home and in work situations, testing their relationships with family and friends along the way.**

This was an amazing book. The different personalities of the girls drew me in and what happened to them was very realistic. There were moments of drama – like Sasha meeting up with her dad – which I didn't want to end. The storyline kept me interested and the ending



*'amazing'*

was very strong. You feel emotionally involved and I would definitely recommend it.

**LIVI TAGUE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

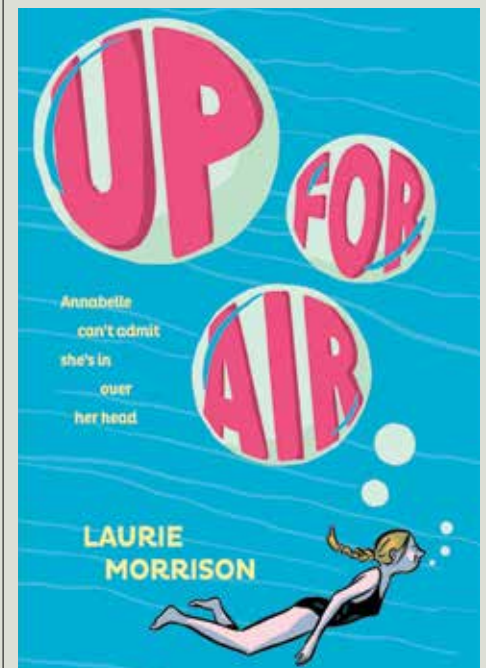
## Up for Air

Laurie Morrison  
Amulet £11.99 ISBN 9781419733666

**This book follows a transition period in Annabelle's life. Struggling with friendships, school and the sudden re-appearance of her father in her life, the only thing that gives her any sense of achievement is her swimming. How will she cope when things start to go wrong there too?**

This was an intense read. It was quite detailed, which made it seem to drag a bit, and I think the author tried to deal with too many issues. She could have had less focus on Annabelle's father and concentrated more on her friendships. It was a good story though – I'm a swimmer myself, so I liked the sports aspect and the fact that Annabelle was an ambitious and vocal girl.

**LIVI TAGUE**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High



## The Incredible True Story of the Making of the Eve of Destruction

Amy Brashear  
Soho Teen £12.99 ISBN 9781616959034

**In 1984 in rural Arkansas, Laura has won, in a radio competition, a walk-on role in a film about a nuclear holocaust. Her absent father,**

**who works for the military, has been phoning home, hinting of impending disaster. When the scripted nuclear explosion takes place, nobody seems to know if a real nuclear bomb has been detonated or not.**

*The Incredible True Story of the Making of the Eve of Destruction* is an amazing book. It put me through nearly every emotion. I was laughing, crying and always wondering what would happen next. With a good use of similes, metaphors and characterisation, the book was so realistic. It left me wondering whether or not it was a real incident. A great read!

**EMILY TELFORD**  
Balerno High



*'a great read'*

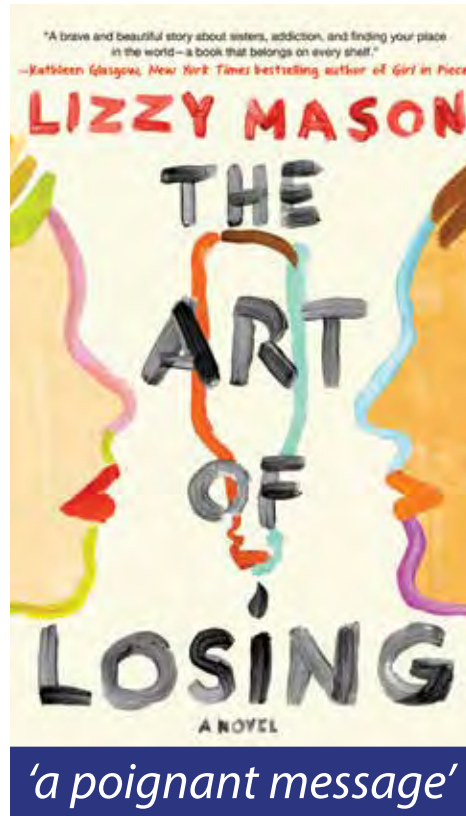
## The Art of Losing

Lizzy Mason  
Soho Teen £8.99 ISBN 9781616959876

**Harley's boyfriend Mike and her younger sister Audrey are involved in car crash on the same night that she finds them kissing. With Audrey in a coma and the alcoholic Mike being charged with drink-driving, Harley faces feelings of guilt, pain and anger. Her childhood friend Raf, who is recently out of rehab, offers her the hope of forgiveness.**



A fantastic read that shows people do have the ability to change. This is demonstrated by Mike – Harley's boyfriend. It also shows you cannot judge people for their past choices as they do mature and grow up, as shown by Raf. The book is an easy



*'a poignant message'*

read but conveys a poignant message that if you hold on to things you won't change, but if you are willing to let things go sometimes, doors will open for you that were once previously closed.

**ARWEN RICHARDS**  
Craigmount High

## The Deepest Breath

Meg Grehan  
Little Island £6.99 ISBN 9781912417209

**Stevie is 11 years old. She is a happy child, and loves spending her weekend with her mum at home. She also has a best friend, Andrew. But no, she does not have a crush on him. Everyone seems to think that she needs to have a crush on a boy. Every time she looks at Chloe, on the other hand, there is a funny feeling in her stomach.**



*'excellent'*

*The Deepest Breath* by Meg Grehan is an excellent short book. I would recommend this book to people who like short, interesting reads. Overall, this is a great book to read.

**ISABEL OPAT**  
Broughton High

I really enjoyed this book because it is really well written and I like the word choice and how the characters sound. I also thought the concept of the book was good because it is not literal what she is going through. The character is struggling with something that is more figurative. I also liked the facts about ocean life.

**KIRSTEN HEDLEY**  
Broughton High

## Proud

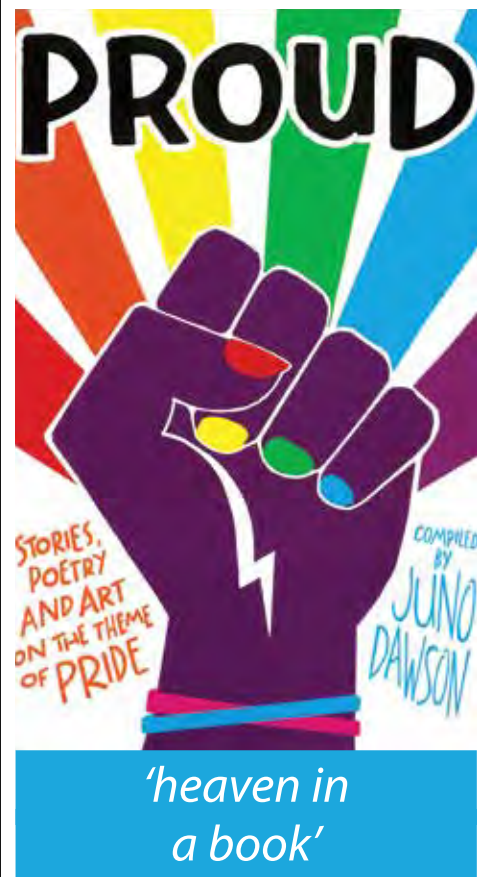
Juno Dawson (ed)  
Stripes £7.99 ISBN 9781788950602

**From being mesmerised by gay penguins to being on the run with your boyfriend Bonnie and Clyde style, hiding out in a Travelodge, Proud is a compilation of stories, poems and art on the theme of pride from a range of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer+ writers and artists.**

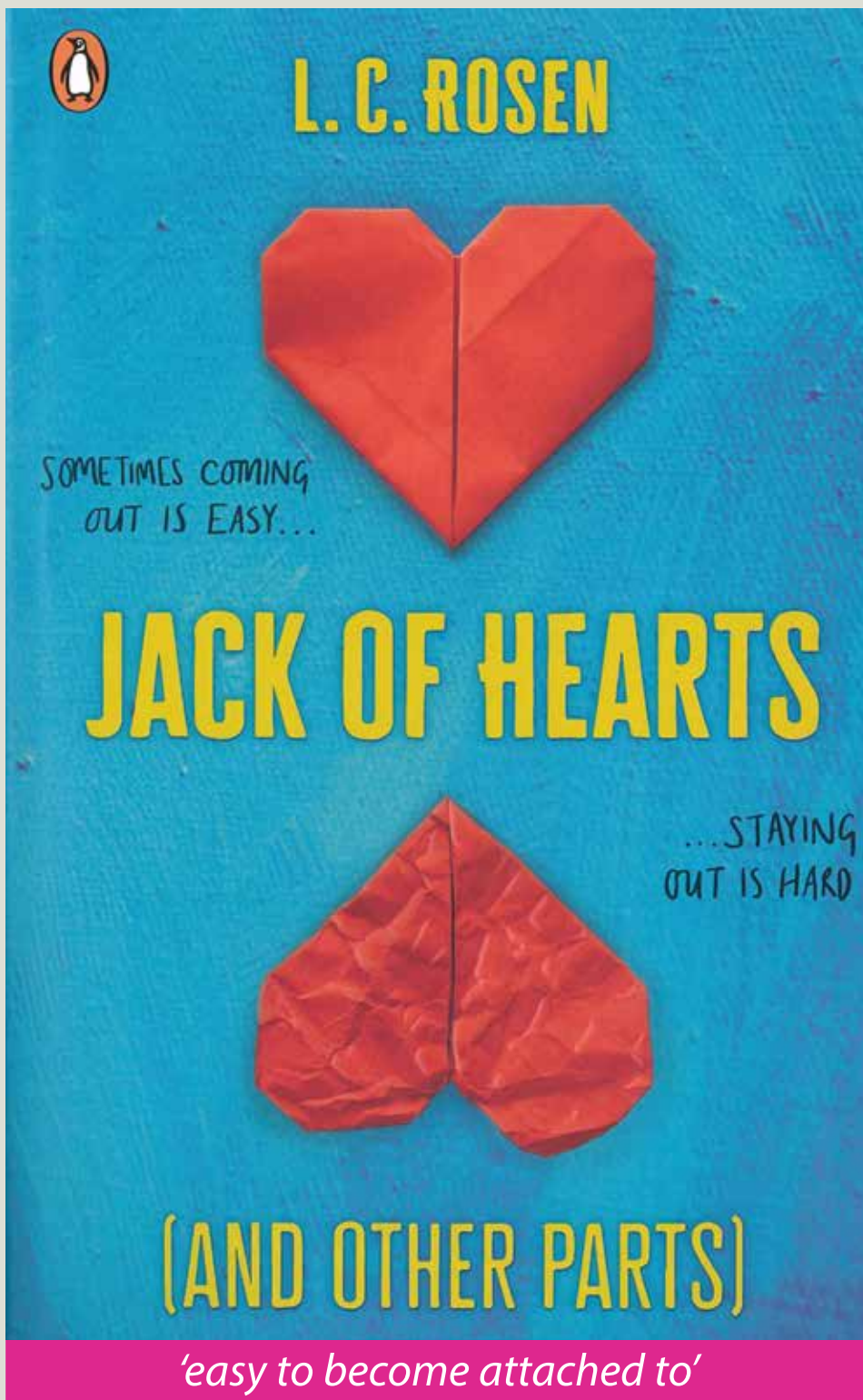


This is heaven in a book! I liked all the stories and I would recommend this to other people because it is such a good book to read. I can't pick out a favourite story because they are all amazing. I think school libraries should stock this book because there aren't a lot of LGBT books around and this is a good example!

**SAVANNAH MOAR**  
Broughton High



*'heaven in a book'*



*'easy to become attached to'*

## Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)

L C Rosen  
Penguin £7.99

ISBN 9780241365014

**Jack is no stranger to being the centre of attention and if people are gossiping at school, it is usually about**



**him. When Jack starts writing an online sex advice column, he starts to receive increasingly creepy and obsessive love letters from an anonymous stalker who seems determined to make Jack change his ways.**

The book is an excellent portrayal of the effects of manipulation, as Jack's personality deteriorates as he is stalked and harassed by a 'secret admirer'. Jack himself is an incredible character with more to his personality than just his sexuality. Overall the book covers a lot

of important subjects regarding sexuality and experimentation, LGBT people not being taken seriously when they are in danger and the psychological effects of abuse and torment. I think the book perfectly shows the many ways teenagers are exploring their sexualities. Each character has different outlets, preferences and back stories. The inclusion of two POC characters meant the book had a diverse cast of characters representing various communities but unique to themselves and not drawn from stereotypes. I would recommend this book to anyone as the storyline and characters are easy to become attached to and highlight many topics that might be considered taboo in a lighthearted journey of self-discovery.

**ELLIE LAIDLAW**  
Craigroyston Community High



*'a book that will empower'*

## Tulip Taylor

Anna Mainwaring  
Firefly Press £7.99

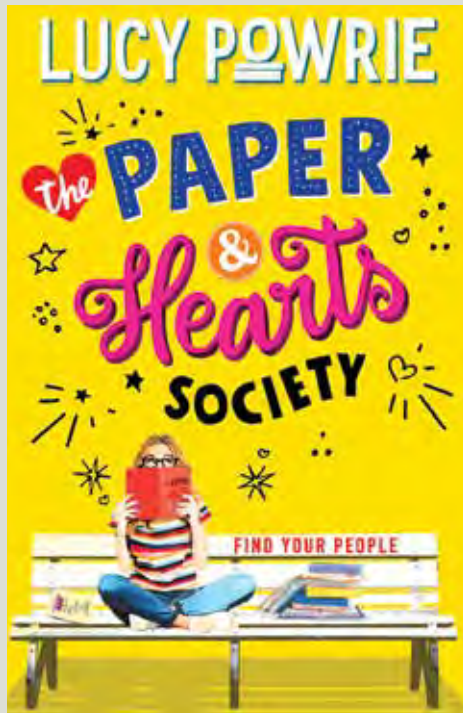
ISBN 9781910080979

**Tulip may be a make-up vlogger with thousands of followers but she is fiercely intelligent and her vocabulary is awe-inspiring. When she is pushed into signing up for a reality TV survival show, she is determined to show that she's more than just a plastic.**

A really good book. It showed the struggles of growing up and how many people, especially

girls, struggle with body image. I think it's a book that will empower young people and encourage them to be happy with themselves, and be confident when going out and speaking to new people, making new friends, just in life overall. It shows how well people can hide behind a mask. How easy it is to hide behind a camera with a smile on your face.

**FREYA RICHARDS**  
Firrhill High



*'uplifting and touching'*

## The Paper and Hearts Society

Lucy Powrie  
Hodder £7.99 ISBN 9781444949230

**When Tabby moves in with her gran, she is sure of one thing: she needs to start over. But how can she when she is a geek who loves books? The answer is soon given to her: by joining The Paper and Hearts Society, a local book club that organises Harry Potter marathons and re-enacts The Hunger Games. But her past is sure to catch up with her.**

I really enjoyed this book because it is quite relatable. More specifically I felt that the idea of feeling safe in a group is something that a lot of people can understand. I particularly enjoyed learning about all the characters, and liked all the places they travelled to. I also liked learning about what their similarities and differences were and the movie marathons. I think people should

read it because it is quite uplifting and touching, especially the fact the friends all accept each other.

**KIRSTEN HEDLEY**  
Broughton High

*The Paper and Hearts Society* is great for the bookworm. Lucy Powrie is planning to make this a series, releasing the second book in 2020 and the third and final book in 2021! I really enjoyed this book because it was extremely relatable in my case. I've been to plenty of weird book groups in my life (one of which I'm in right now). In conclusion, I would highly recommend this book to all readers.

**ISABEL OPAT**  
Broughton High

## As Far As the Stars

Virginia MacGregor  
HarperCollins £8.99 ISBN 9780008217327

**Flight 0217 from London has vanished mid-flight and all its passengers are missing without trace. Christopher and Air meet because of this tragedy; Christopher's dad is the pilot and Air's beloved brother Blake a passenger. Or was he? Air is convinced that her ridiculously disorganised brother was not on the flight after all.**

I really enjoyed reading this book mainly because the plot was a new one to me. Also it seemed very realistic. The characters and the descriptions made everything a bit more relatable. The author did a really good job of not making the journey part boring but making it last so that we can capture the feelings of the characters and the author. The ending of the book was quite emotional but it reminds us that

*'emotional'*



there will be times when it is difficult, and that is when everyone has to stick together. A really good book and I would recommend it to all ages.

**CAROLINE KANNAMPUZHA**  
Broughton High

## Colour Me In

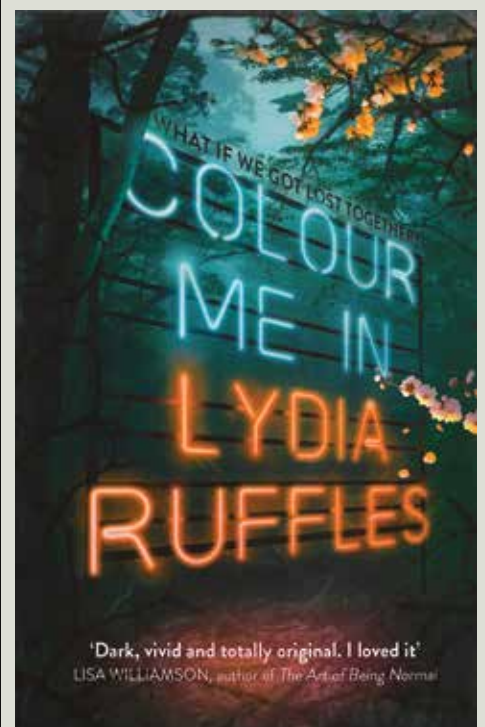
Lydia Ruffles  
Hodder £7.99 ISBN 9781444937688

**Devastated by events surrounding his best friend Luke, Arlo flees to the other side of the world as he feels himself falling apart. He meets Mizuki on his travels, and they decide to get lost together searching out abandoned places and beautiful beaches, hoping to find themselves again. But what is Mizuki searching for?**

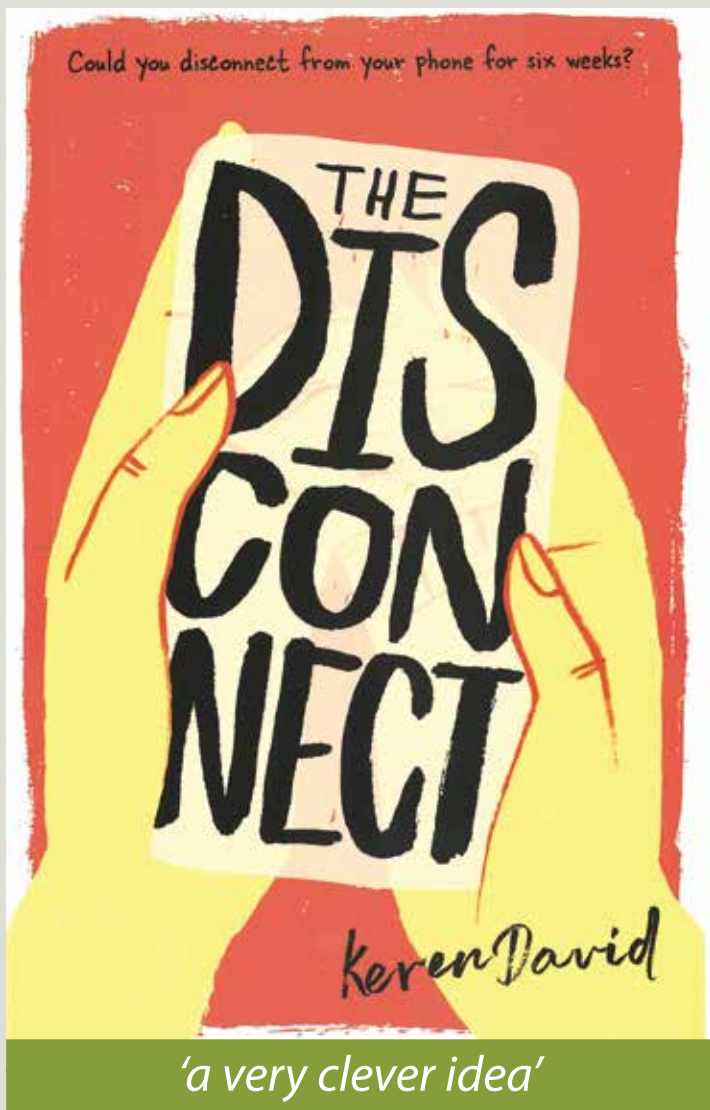


I enjoyed reading *Colour Me In*, although I found the story difficult to follow at times because it switches narrators' opinions and seemed to go down different paths. The characters are fun and lovable. You want to keep on reading to see what happens next to them. Arlo is an actor whose life gets turned upside down. It is very interesting to see his journey and see him make new friends. The plot had me surprised and made me want to keep on reading. I would describe this book as dark and mysterious and recommend it to teens aged between 11 and 16.

**SAM PARKERSON**  
Liberton High



*'dark and mysterious'*



*'a very clever idea'*

## The Disconnect

Keren David  
Barrington Stoke £7.99 ISBN 9781781128558

**Esther's year group have been challenged by a local entrepreneur to go without their phones for six weeks, and everyone who succeeds will win £1000. It is going to be six long weeks, but if it means that she will have the money to finally visit her dad, sister and baby nephew in New York, the agony is worth it ... isn't it?**

The subject of *The Disconnect* is a very clever idea both for a book and to try in real life. It was interesting to see how the characters develop and Esther's view of her 'friends' as the book goes on. I felt happy for Esther in the last scene but would have liked more detail at the end. Overall I really enjoyed the book.

**YASMIN THORNTON**  
Broughton High

I have mixed feelings about this book: on one hand I thought the concept was really good and it was entertaining, but on the other hand I did have a few problems. My wide problem was that

it felt like it was an adult writing about teenagers. Some of the things they said were not what teenagers say. I don't know anyone who says social media! Too fancy, we talk about Instagram! I also have one slight issue with the ending – I felt it was too convenient and 'we all lived happily ever after'. The characters wouldn't do that just because of a school challenge!

**ELODIE BERRILL**  
Broughton High

I liked that Dame Irvine sort of bribed the students into doing the Disconnect, giving students a reason to ditch their phones, because in reality not many students would be willing to do this. The main thing this book touches upon is the hidden addiction to not only phones, but technology in general. While phones are incredibly useful and handy there might be

times where we are on them too long. Addiction is a very powerful thing and we do see the struggles and temptations the characters go through. I enjoyed the story; it had a variety of colourful characters who felt very real.

**LEWIS MCLENNAN**  
Lossiemouth High School

## Resisters

Lauren Sharkey and Manjit Thapp  
Wren & Rook £8.99 ISBN 9781526361844

**Resisters briefly details the activism of 52 female leaders, aged from 9 to 22 years. These young women are equality, mental health, peace and diversity campaigners. They are environmentalists and filmmakers, inventors and coders who have each seen the need for change in society and have decided to make a difference and do something about it.**

I didn't find this book very interesting because it was very repetitive, and it just felt like I was reading the same thing over and over again. I did flip through the chapters, but it was the same throughout the book. I have read other

biographies and really enjoyed them. This one just didn't really draw me in and give enough information. I feel like it would have been better if there were less stories and more detail. It didn't really show the struggles that went into each story. The things in this book are very important but they could have been presented differently.

**LEYA BEVIS**  
Forrester High

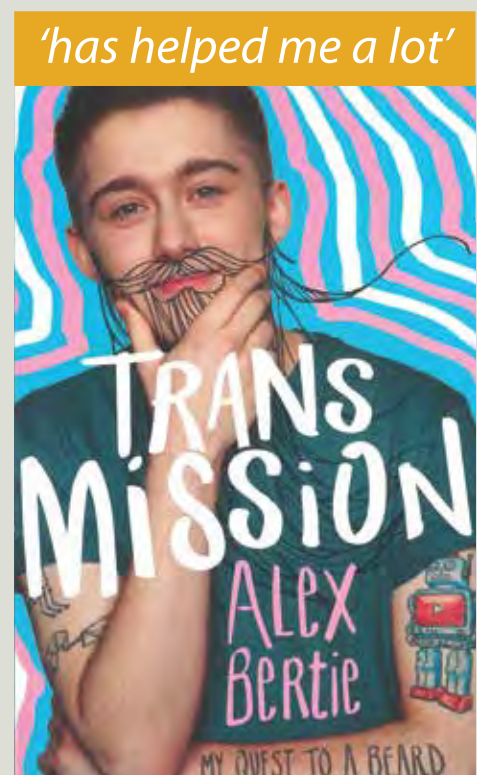
## Trans Mission: My Quest to a Beard

Alex Bertie  
Wren & Rook £9.99 ISBN 9781526360687

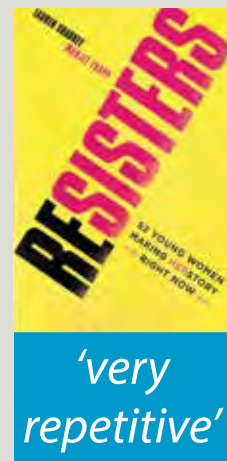
**Alex Bertie's honest, funny and often unbearably moving autobiography tells both of how he came out as a transgender man at the age of 15 and his attempts to grow a beard.**

This is a book about the journey of being transgender. It has helped me a lot being trans myself. I recommend this book to young teens that are part of the LGBT+ community.

**CALEB WILSON**  
Wester Hailes Education Centre



*'has helped me a lot'*



*'very repetitive'*





## I always tend to write from the heart – Natalia Gomes

Ellie Dowie from *Boroughmuir High* spoke to Natalia Gomes about her debut novel *We Are Not Okay*.

**Q** Social media, gossip and the importance of reputation: young people face so many difficult situations and find it hard to cope with the stress. How do you think these things are related?

**A** *We Are Not Okay* tackles issues that were occurring when I went to high school that young adults are still facing now – anxieties, stress, bullying, sexual exploitation, teen pregnancy, discrimination and self-harm, including negative attitudes towards body image. But now we live in a digital world where comments can be put online for all to see. A digital platform presents more opportunities to bully and exploit, and because of it we're seeing a rise in cyber-bullying and stress-related teen suicides.

**Q** Islamophobia in schools is becoming an

increasing issue in Scottish schools. What is your take on this issue?

**A** I think we need to be educated more in schools about tolerance and social acceptance. We do live in a contemporary society and that includes different ethnicities and religions and we need to be mindful of that, especially at the school level.

**Q** Body image is present in the book. There are some hidden references to anorexia. How do you think the descriptions in your book correspond to young adults' real life in our schools?

**A** I do lightly reference unhealthy attitudes towards eating and body image, which I think most females deal with at some point in their lives. I know I did, and still do at

times. We live in an age where body image is inaccurately represented on the TV, on social media, in magazines. We're inundated with images of the 'perfect body' when in reality that doesn't exist. I did gently touch on this but didn't dive too deep due to the other social issues I wanted to spotlight. However a recent conference on eating disorders indicates they are on the rise, and this is something to take into consideration when talking about mental health in schools.

**Q** A lot of people will relate with the depiction of friendship you describe in the book.

What kind of teenager were you when you were young, and did you use your personal experience to create some of the traits of each character? Who do you identify with the most?

# NATALIA GOMES

**A** I was quite a sensitive teenager. I was very aware of the social dynamics of a high school from a very early age. So I consider myself a combination of all four characters. I always tend to write from the heart when creating characters, using traits and experiences of my own.

**Q** I liked the different styles you used in the story, especially Trina's diarised entries, with the scored out parts. What made you choose this style? What did you want to convey to the reader?

**A** I wanted to represent Trina's individual style and also show her inability to show her emotions. She has a hard time expressing herself. She feels trapped by her own reputation and then by what happens to her, so pouring her emotions out on the page of a diary is her way of telling her story.

**Q** Bullying and cyber-bullying are a big issue in all schools. Can you give us a tip on how young people can cope with it? I think reading your book is a good start to empathise with the issue, but can you tell us something more?

**A** We need to do more to support young people as bullying and cyber-bullying continues to rise and poison our schools. I hope *We Are Not Okay* sends the message that it's okay to not feel okay. Accepting that we need help doesn't make us weak. It makes us strong. There are a lot of great organisations out there that are sending this message too and can offer support if it's not being given at the school level, including respectme.org.uk and Family Lives (bullying.co.uk). Wearing the blue Anti-Bullying UK wristband shows support for the cause and can be a great way to start a conversation and raise awareness when someone asks about it. And you can use the hashtag #choosekindness when posting a positive image on social media, whether it be a picture of you and your friends, or a post about a positive experience you had at school or with someone else.

## We Are Not Okay

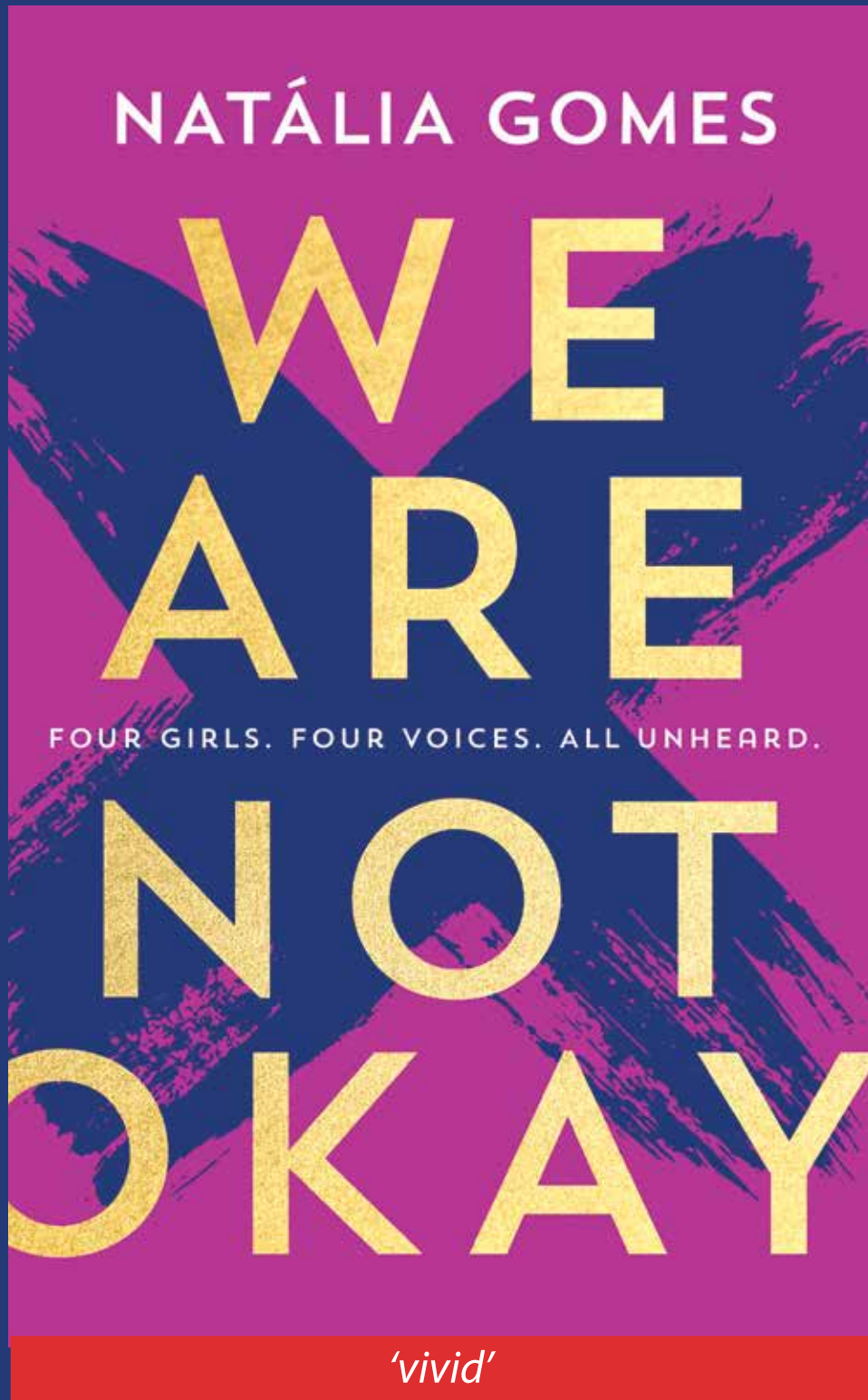
Natalia Gomes  
HQ £7.99

ISBN 9780008291846

**Trina, Ulana, Lucy and Sophia are very different. However they are all going through something tragic. This is a story of what happens when girls are silenced, when they are not given the opportunity to protect themselves and speak up. Until they finally can. And that is when change is possible.**



It is a great book. It introduces the characters well. I enjoyed that we get to learn all the



thoughts of the various protagonists and it helped me understand better all their behaviours. I changed the perception I had of all of them while I read it and I got to like all the protagonists by the end of the book. Every story has its particular writing style which keeps it interesting. I also enjoyed the emotional connections between the protagonists, their highs and lows and how they come together as friends. Some bits are really intense, and I almost cried at certain points. I ended up hating

some of the boys, but all the girls are fabulous. Difficult relationships and their consequences on mental health are very well depicted and make you think about the importance of emotional support from people close to you. I also naturally pictured the events taking place in my school: the imagery was very vivid, and I felt I could engage and was actually part of the story.

**ELLIE DOWIE**  
Boroughmuir High

## FOCUS ON FAMILY

### The Closest Thing to Flying

Gill Lewis  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192749482

**Semira dreams of freedom for herself and her mum. Then she discovers a Victorian diary. Reading the diary entries of 12-year-old Hen gives her the courage to stand up for what she believes in. But what is it about a green Abyssinian Lovebird and bicycles that connects Semira with Hen?**

I thought this book was a calm and relaxing read that subtly highlighted some issues in modern day society, like discrimination.

**ANNIE SCHOFIELD**  
Drummond Community High



'kept my interest'

I enjoyed the book although I found it a wee bit sad because Semira goes through so much. The way the author used different writing styles, with personal letters and diary entries written by Hen, kept my interest! I loved how Semira used Hen's diary to relate to her own issues as she couldn't talk to her own family. I would totally recommend this book if you like reading about characters who have a lot to deal with in their lives.

**NICOLE WILLIS**  
Drummond Community High

I really enjoyed reading *The Closest Thing to Flying* because you could relate to the characters and the plot was gripping. I loved Aunt Kitty – she was cool and fought for what she thought was right. She wasn't afraid of anything. I would recommend this book to 13+ as the word choices made it feel that it was written for someone older.

**ABBIE NIMMO**  
Liberton High



'entertaining and fun'

### Girl at Sea

Lucy Courtenay  
Hodder £7.99 ISBN 9781444930757

**Precious finds herself chased across Portugal by sinister men in suits. Raised as a spoilt 'princess', Precious needs Harry's street smarts to survive. Then Nathan turns up. He doesn't seem to like Precious too much, so why is he suddenly keen to spend time with her?**

This book was not what I expected. Romance is involved but it's not the main thing. It's

not amazing but it's not bad either. It was entertaining and fun even if not particularly meaty.

**ANNA WADDELL**  
Boroughmuir High

### How to Make Friends With the Dark

Kathleen Glasgow  
Oneworld £7.99 ISBN 9781786075642

**When her overprotective mum dies unexpectedly, Tiger is ripped from her only family and home and placed into the care system. Grieving and bewildered, she finds a way to 'make friends with the dark' and take the first steps towards accepting her loss and forgiving herself for their final petty words.**

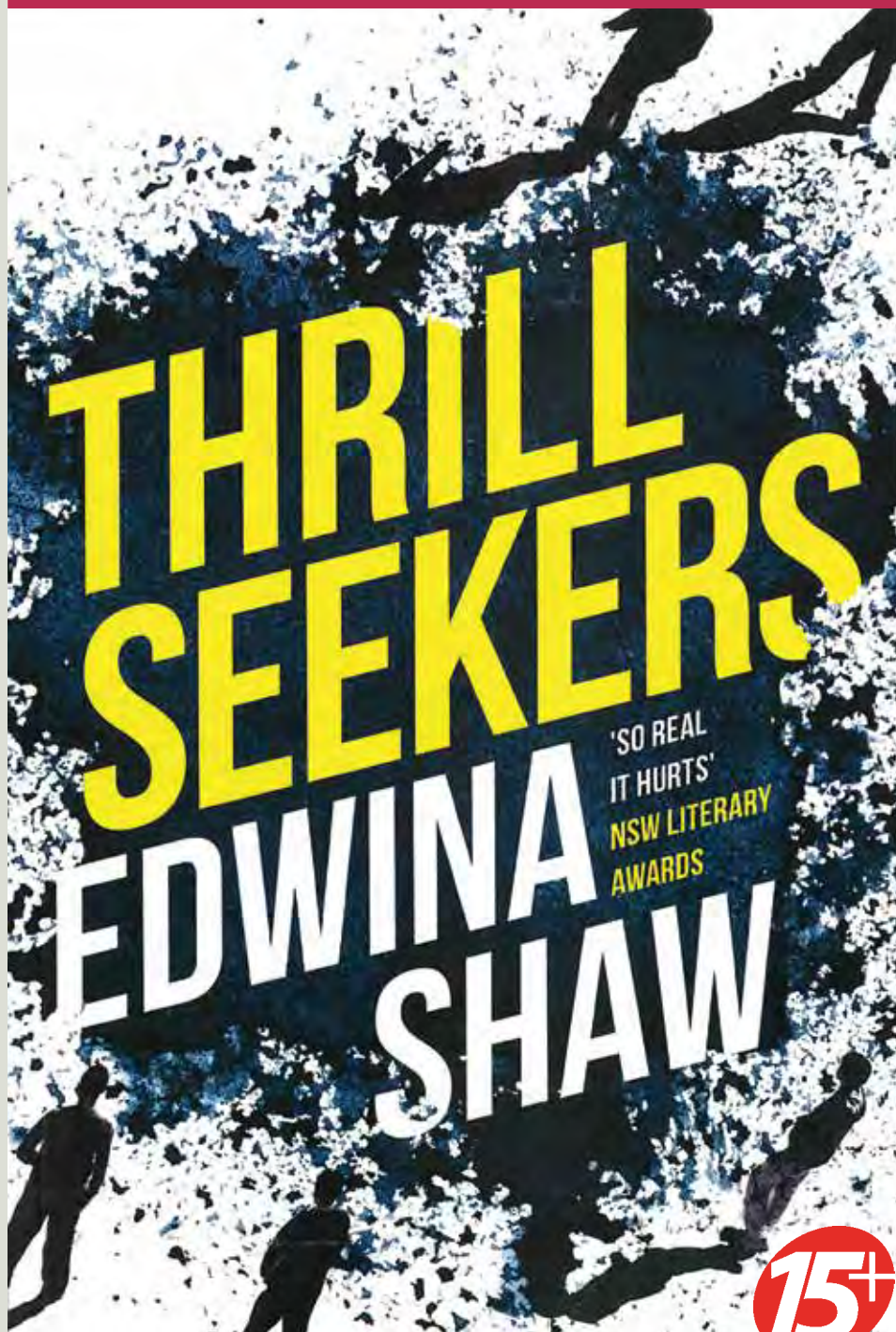
This wasn't the best book that I have read. At the start, after her mum dies, you are left wondering what's going to happen to her, but at the end it becomes a bit predictable. My favourite character was most likely Cake because she was always such a loving friend and looked after Tiger. There is a speech bit at the end of the book which I found really touching, in which she says that before her mum died she was a different person, and how when she died she became another person. I would recommend this book to older readers because of its harrowing storyline, and possibly people will have had similar experiences.

**JOANNE REEVES**  
Forrester High



'harrowing'

*'hard hitting'*



## Thrill Seekers

Edwina Shaw  
Ransom Publishing £7.99 ISBN 9781785916755

**A hard-hitting tale of two brothers, Brian and Dougie, who turn to drink and drugs and whose lives spiral out of control following the death of their dad.**

A lot of teenagers will be able to relate to the issues in this book such as losing a family member and addiction. It's a gritty read, but the events and bad language are realistic. The fact

that it is bleak and depressing makes it more effective and highlights its message – drink and drugs are not to be treated lightly.

**MICHAEL FERGUSON**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

This book is best suited to older pupils as it's quite hard-hitting. I usually read to escape from reality, but I admire the author for tackling issues like crime, poverty and drugs. The book cover is really striking – it is almost like it has special effects.

**BREAGH SHAW**  
St Thomas of Aquin's High

## Auntie Robbo

Ann Scott-Moncrieff  
Scotland Street Press £9.99 ISBN 9781910895146

**Hector lives with his great-grand-auntie Robbo, a peculiar 80-something lady. Their life is perfect, and Hector doesn't even have to go to school! Then a woman calling herself his stepmother shows up, and wants to take him away from Auntie Robbo. So, the two decide to run away through the Highlands, adopting three homeless kids on the way.**

This book is a funny adventure story. I read it very quickly because I enjoyed it, and since it was fast paced it was not hard to get through. Parts made me laugh, such as how Auntie Robbo is so spontaneous and breaks social rules. I thought it was very nice how she decided to adopt the orphan children, and I enjoyed the friendship that they had together. I would recommend this book to people who like funny adventure books, because it is a light read that's easy to get through and it will make you feel better if you're feeling down.

**YASMIN THORNTON**  
Broughton High

Auntie Robbo is an excellent book and I really enjoyed it. Most of the setting took place in Scotland. The scenes painted with the words are amazing. I would target this book for age ranges 11+. I don't think it would appeal to younger readers for the fact that it is quite old-fashioned, but I think all people looking for some good old-fashioned writing should read this book!

**ISABEL OPAT**  
Broughton High

*'made me laugh'*

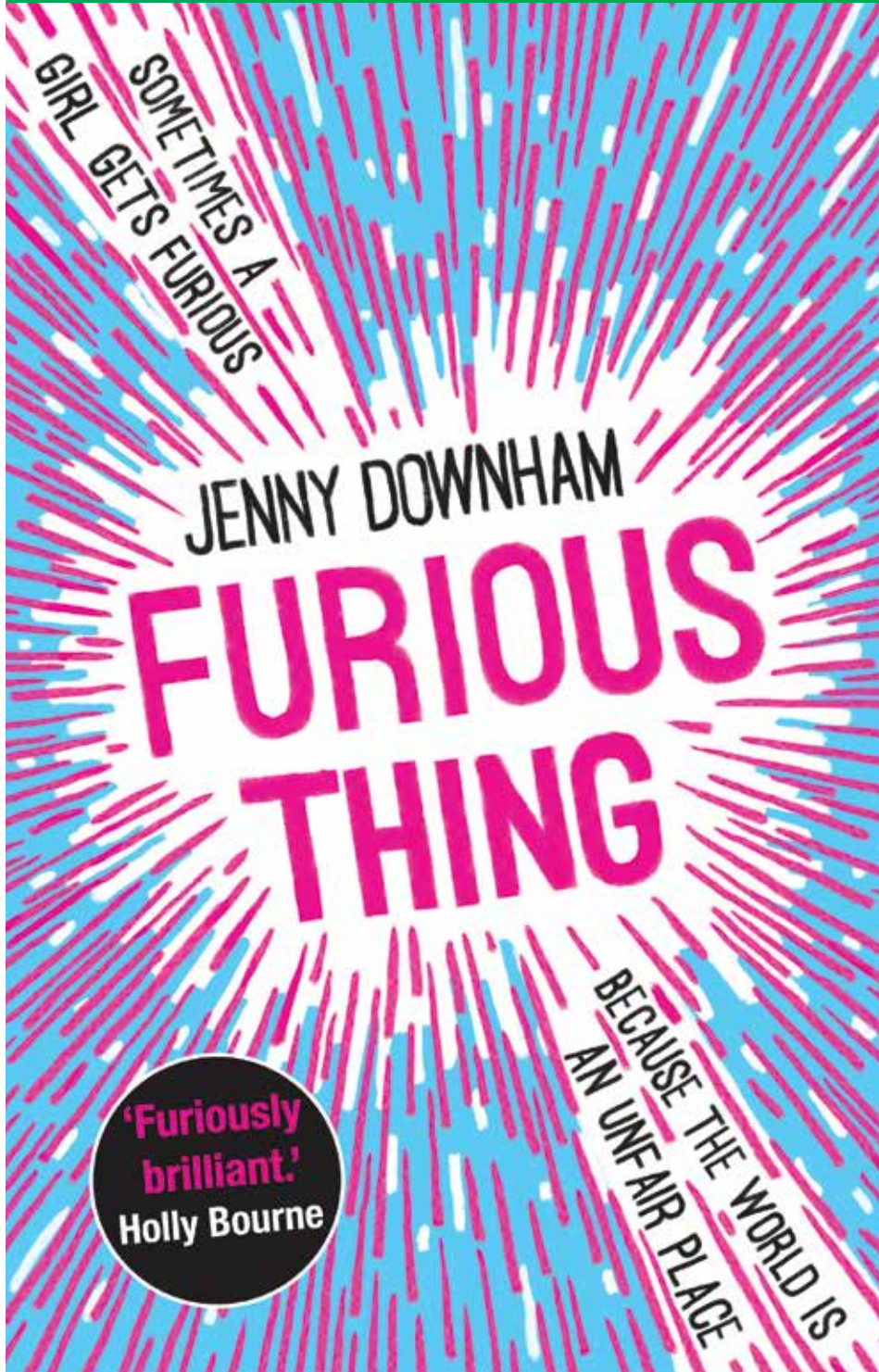
## AUNTIE ROBBO



**ANN SCOTT-MONCRIEFF**

*Illustrated by Christopher Brookler*

*'leaves you in surprise'*



## Furious Thing

Jenny Downham  
David Fickling £10.99 ISBN 9781788450980

**Lexi is furious: furious because her mum never stands up for her, furious because she longs for her stepbrother to tell her he loves her, and**



**furious because of her bullying, abusive and controlling stepfather. Friends and family tell her to swallow her anger, but does repressing rage ever really work? Will she simply erupt with even more fury?**

Furious Thing is a book that leaves you in surprise and even when you've finished it you still have questions that you would like answered. My favourite character is Lexi and she is also the main character. Her stepfather

is questionable as you don't know what he is doing to Lexi, but you strongly feel that he is a big reason why she is getting angry. Overall I enjoyed this book because the story is a hard topic to cover. I think the author wrote it amazingly and the story was easy to understand.

**ABIGAIL STRACHAN**  
Broughton High

## Devoted

Jennifer Mathieu  
Hodder £7.99

ISBN 9781444945256

**Rachel and her family belong to a controlling cult that dictates everything from what should be worn to what should be read. The church expects their women to marry and obey their future husbands with no thoughts of their own needs. But Rachel is beginning to have niggles about whether this is the right life for her.**

*'harsh and unique'*



I can frankly relate to this because I am from the same place in Texas that Rachel is, I understand what she is going through. I went to a church very similar, it had a correction programme very much like Journey of Faith. You didn't get sent away from your parents. It was just perhaps more like three people who had maybe done something like shoplifting, and when they came back their faces were red from crying. I sympathise with Rachel and many situations that arise in this book. To sum this up I would recommend this book to young adults and the only thing I don't like is the fact it ends on a cliff-hanger.

**ISABEL OPAT**  
Broughton High

Devoted was a harsh and unique book that exposed the sexist views of a strict Christian church. I like that the story was narrated by a 17-year-old girl, Rachel, whose life is dictated by her church which tells her to obey her husband, marry and have a child. Rachel wants more though. I was extremely intrigued by the plot of this story. As the story moved on to the end however, the book was less engaging and, personally, I found the end quite boring. A unique and intriguing book though.

**EILIDH CLARKE**  
Broughton High

## JUST FOR LAUGHS

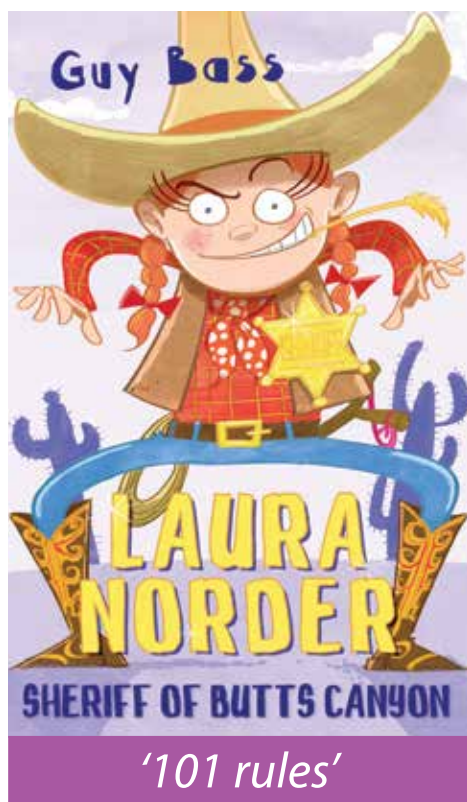
### Laura Norder

Guy Bass  
Barrington Stoke £6.99 ISBN 9781781128459

**Laura Norder is the self-appointed sheriff of Butts Canyon with a 100% success rate of sorting out crime and nonsense ... until the dastardly Duncan Disorderly rolls into town and starts making mischief! Will Laura succeed in bringing him to justice, or will he be the one who got away?**

This book is funny and easy to read. I enjoyed it because it had really funny names and weird things were happening around Butts Canyon. My favourite character was Laura Norder because even though she wasn't too kind to people she was still funny, smart and had a good memory to remember all her 101 rules for the town. I would really recommend this book.

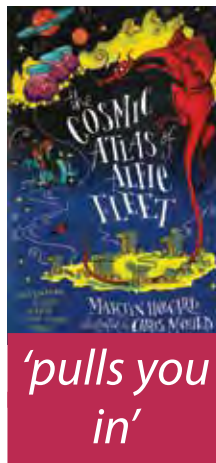
**MIGUEL CAPOTE**  
Craigroyston Community High



### The Cosmic Atlas of Alfie Fleet

Martin Howard  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192767509

**Join Alfie and the Professor on a fantastic adventure; travelling to weird planets, being chased by warriors and attacking dragons. Visit exotic places like Disaster-on-Sea and Planet Maureen and meet the annoying Chicken of Kentarn in this cosmic comic caper.**



I really liked the book. It pulls you in and makes you want to read more and more of it. It is sad and happy at times. It has an element of sci-fi but is also kind of real, and I think that if you find books boring this would be great for you.

**CASPIAN LIS GORCZEWSKI**  
Royal High

The cover of this book is quite odd (in a good way). The blurb is weird and funny. The names of the places they visit are fun. The story does not disappoint either, and has some good pictures to help you understand the story.

**OWEN HARROWER**  
Forrester High

### The Penguins of Igloo City

Series: Night Zoo Keeper  
Joshua Davidson  
OUP £6.99 ISBN 9780192764072

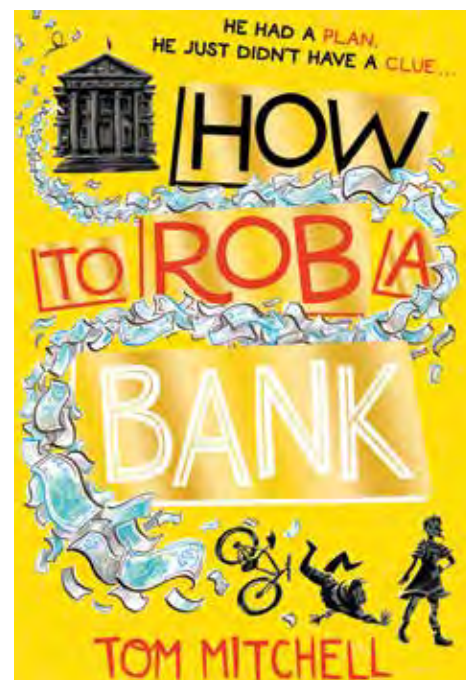
**Will has been transported into the world of the Night Zoo where he has taken a vow to look after its animals. He travels to Igloo City which is run by the owl, Circles. The controlling Circles wants Will to track down a group of rebelling animals. Should Will obey Circles or join the rebels?**



The two things I enjoyed most about this book were the really bad jokes and the characters, especially Eek the mouse with his puffy orange

jacket. There is a really, really bad joke on page 6 and a very funny picture on page 3, which made me laugh so much that I was hooked from then on and wanted to read more. Sam, the spying giraffe, told the most depressing bad jokes – so much so that I am still laughing and groaning. Professor Penguin and his hot chocolate song was very good too. This is the second book in the series, and it would definitely be better to read the books in the right order to understand some of the characters better. I still enjoyed it though, and definitely want to read more in the series. Hopefully I've managed to persuade my librarian to buy the next book in the series, *The Lioness of Fire Desert*.

**LOGAN WILSON**  
Balerno High



### How to Rob a Bank

Tom Mitchell  
HarperCollins £6.99 ISBN 9780008276508

**When Dylan accidentally burns down the house of Beth, whom he is trying to impress, she has to live in a high-rise flat. Overcome with guilt, he plans to rob a bank to find her somewhere better to live. With problems at home and school, Dylan finds planning the heist of the century more difficult than he thought.**

*How to Rob a Bank* is an hilarious action comedy. The humour is indirect and it makes this book a lot better than other comedies. I love how real everything seems. I felt that there could have been a bit more description of the places in it and a clearer picture of Dylan, but I love the wacky and ridiculous situations he gets into. If you're looking for a great comedy, pick this up.

**GABRIEL CREWE**  
Craigmount High

# AUTHOR FACTFILE



Gabriel Dylan

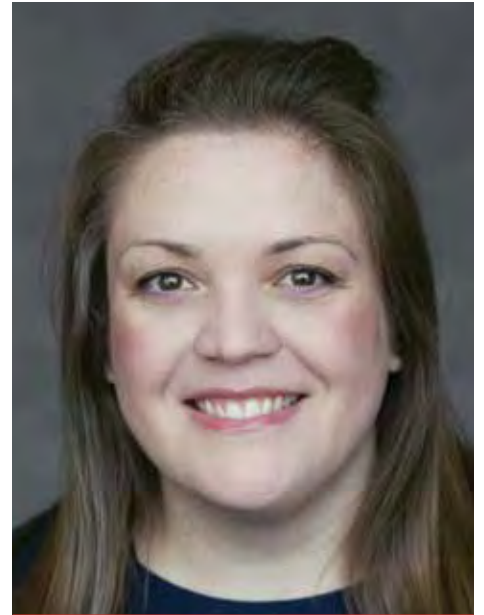
## Gabriel Dylan

Gabriel is not only the author of *Whiteout*, reviewed on page 2, he is also a surfer, snowboarder and secondary-school teacher. The inspiration for *Whiteout* came from leading a school skiing trip to a remote village in the Austrian Alps.

## Tom Mitchell

Tom Mitchell is mostly father, partly writer. *How to Rob a Bank*, reviewed on page 30, is his first novel and was written during the school holidays of his teaching job.

Tom Mitchell



Lydia Ruffles

## Lydia Ruffles

Lydia Ruffles was educated at seven schools, three universities, three drama schools, three language schools, two professional institutes, two online schools, one creative writing academy, and in countless corners of the internet. She writes and speaks on creativity, mental health, synaesthesia and migraine, and you can see her latest novel *Colour Me In* reviewed on page 23.

Amy Brashear



Photo: Alexander Brashear

## Amy Brashear

Amy grew up with family near Damascus, Arkansas, scene of the infamous 1980 'Damascus Incident', when an accidental explosion in a Titan II missile silo almost triggered a nuclear war. *The Incredible True Story of the Making of the Eve of Destruction* was inspired by this event and is reviewed on page 20.

# AUTHOR FACTFILE



Samira Ahmed

## Samira Ahmed

Samira was born in Bombay and grew up in Batavia, Illinois, in a house that smelled like fried onions, spices and potpourri. She once spent a year searching for the perfect mango, eventually learning that the quest was always about the journey and not merely the destination. You can read reviews of *Internment* on page 12.

Martin Howard



## Martin Howard

Martin was a booky kid who worked in advertising and publishing for a while but, in a Disneyesque fit of following his dream/reaching for the stars, he decided to become a full-time writer. See his book *The Cosmic Atlas of Alfie Fleet* reviewed on page 30. Martin lives with his wife, three children, a dog called Licky and a poltergeist who keeps hiding his car keys.



Lara Flecker

## Lara Flecker

The author of *Midnight at Moonstone* (see page 14 for a review) has always loved creating things, whether it is knitting a jumper or writing a story. She originally trained as a costume maker and, after a brief period working in the theatre and film industry, she moved sideways into the museum world. She is in the picture with Trisha Krauss who illustrated the book (Lara is the one on the right).

## Rebecca Stevens

Rebecca Stevens has worked as an actor, a stand-up comedian and a script writer for children's television, writing for shows such as *Mr Bean* and *Postman Pat*. Her latest book *Lily and the Rocketts* is reviewed on page 8.

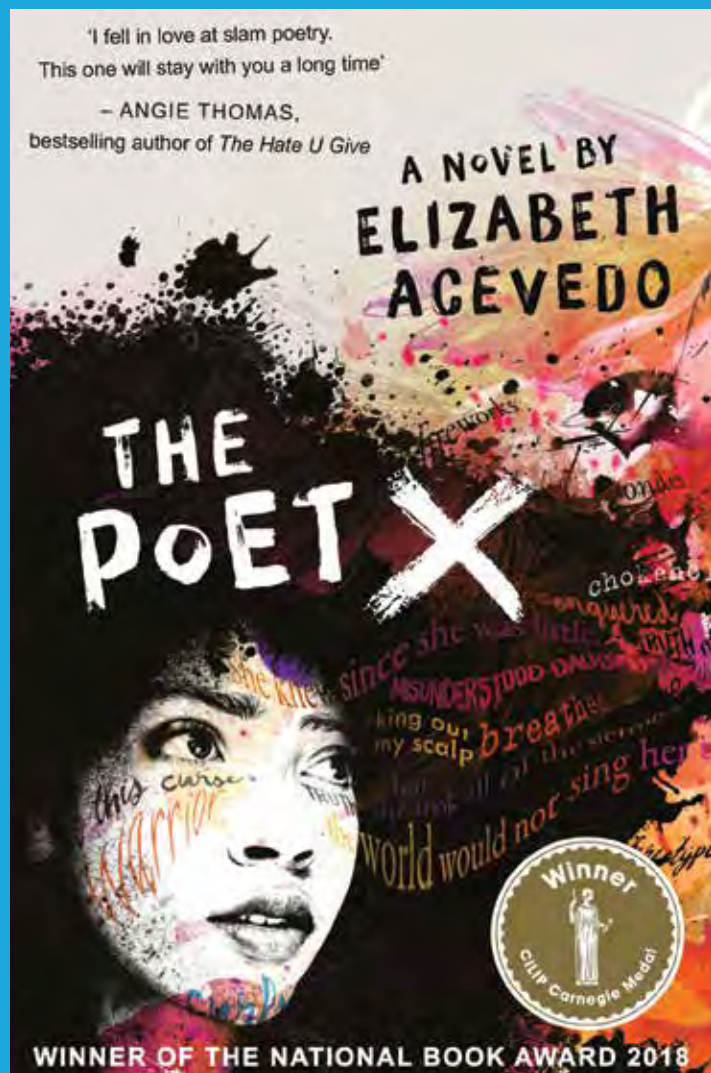
Rebecca Stevens





# READERS WRITE

We are delighted to publish reviews from Brooke Weston Academy in Corby, AKS in Lytham, Le Collège des Hauts Grillets in St-Germain-en-Laye and Lossiemouth High School – see page 24 for a review of *The Disconnect* by Keren David written by Lewis McLennan from Lossiemouth High School. Many thanks to all those who sent reviews in. If you would like to see your reviews in print, please send them to us!



Dylan Smith, Brooke Weston Academy rates ...

## The Poet X

Elizabeth Acevedo

I couldn't put this down. Its style of writing is very unique compared to anything I have read before, as it is written in verse. I think the author wanted to make Xiomara a teenage rebel as she couldn't have a boyfriend or go out with boys. I think it was trying to say "You can be who you want to be even if your life has already been planned out for you!" *The Poet X* is an amazing

book for people who like poetry and true stories.

Megan Walton, Brooke Weston Academy also rates ...

## The Poet X

Elizabeth Acevedo

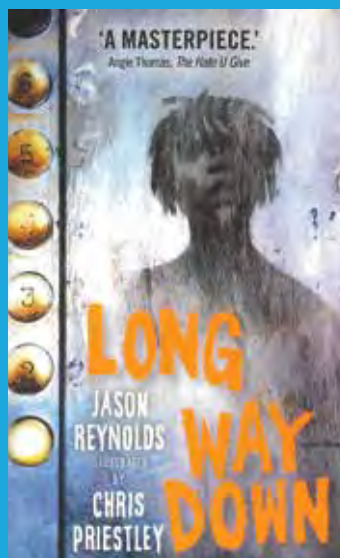
I really enjoyed this book and loved how it relates to reality and the troubles faced in life. I like they way the book is written in free verse and how it looks on the page. I believe this book is for a slightly older age group due to language and other themes.

Melissa Broomfield, Brooke Weston Academy rates ...

## Long Way Down

Jason Reynolds

This book was amazing, definitely the best book I have read so far. I love the free verse writing style used and how it ends on such a cliff-hanger. I also loved how he was only in the lift for a minute but every second was in so much detail. I think this book is well worth a read and will 100% read it again. I would recommend this to anyone who likes thrilling, quick books to read through.



Mollie Cameron, Brooke Weston Academy also rates ...

## Long Way Down

Jason Reynolds

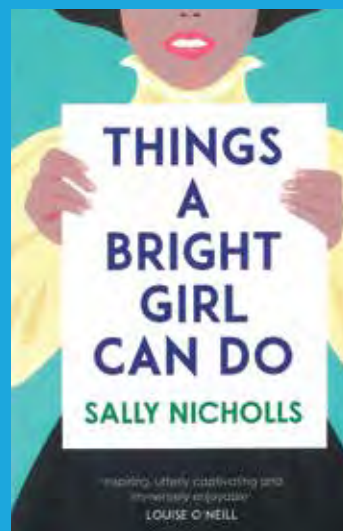
This is a smartly written book and yet an easy fast read. It is the perfect blend of plot twists and emphasises gang culture and how the main character was brought up. I would recommend this book to anyone because of how easy yet intriguing it is, due to the unusual ghostly characters and the verse style of writing.

Isabella-Anne Brown, Brooke Weston Academy rates ...

## Things a Bright Girl Can Do

Sally Nicholls

This book is one of the best and has definitely wriggled its way into my heart. With war, love, loss and realistic representations of all that happened in the fight for the vote, this a must-read for any feminists or others out there.



Dylan Smith, Brooke Weston Academy rates ...

## The Lost Words

Jackie Morris and Robert Macfarlane

The book was amazing! It shows you how everything would look if important things in the natural world weren't there. Then it shows you what it should look like when they are there, with all the creatures and plants in their natural habitat. It has given me ideas for drawing natural woodland scenes. I would recommend it for people who love art, or who just love picture books and nature.



Ayushi Modi, AKS rates ...

## The House With Chicken Legs

Sophie Anderson

This book shows that anything is possible if you do it right. The story itself was at times quite sad (such as what happened with Baba) but at other times it was very happy, such as when Marinka found a new destiny. I didn't know what to expect from the book because the story is one I have never imagined and I never expected to read a story like this. The storyline was so beautiful and inspiring. I love the way every chapter leaves you in suspense. The characters are so friendly that they feel like your

friends, and are so real it felt like they actually existed. The book put me into Marinka's shoes and I honestly felt that I had the house with chicken legs and that I was in the story. Then, when I put the book down I would think what would happen next and my worries about reality and school would all go away. I would start reading the book and it was very hard to put the book down and go to sleep. The book hooked me at the very first chapter because I felt that I could relate with Marinka. This book inspired me to make right decisions that I won't regret in the future. Overall, it was a very good book and I absolutely adored the adventure, love, friendship and stubbornness of Marinka.

Freya Mollart, AKS rates ...

## Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

J K Rowling

The cover had a mystery to it like something that had to be solved. The blurb helped, with the storyline not giving away too much information but giving you enough to start reading it. The genre is quite mysterious because you think they are going to find out something but then there is a plot twist, like something goes wrong. The content was long and detailed. It described everything that needed to be described to help you picture the story and the events that are happening. There is a lot of suspense that keeps you on the edge of your seat, and there are a lot of plot twists and paths that lead the wrong way.



Vaani Varia, AKS rates ....

## Snowglobe

Amy Wilson

Clem has set out to save Dylan, who has a very changeable personality. He is a very likeable person when he is talking to Clem at the bus stop, but, however when the bus arrives his personality instantly changes because of one person. Jago. Jago is the school bully that only plays with the 'cool kids' and Dylan is one of these. Whatever opinions you had of Dylan before



this instantaneous change. Dylan suddenly becomes a child who is horrible and he and Jago make Clem's life as bad as possible. I found the pace of this book varied: at times it was a real page-turner but at other times I felt like it was long and it sometimes lost my interest. The invisible house was described the same way more than once. There were plenty of thrilling, tense moments but also lots of heartfelt and beautiful moments. All in all, I found *Snowglobe* a gripping fantasy book, although you had to concentrate at times.

Isabel T, Le Collège des Hauts Grillets rates ...

## The Glory

Lauren St John

This is a great book to read! I really enjoyed it because it was extremely intriguing and because it's got horses in it. I would recommend this book to those who love horses and horse racing.



# THANK YOU

Teen Titles would like to thank the following students from City of Edinburgh Council high schools who contributed to this issue:

## ASL Service

Sophie Allen

## Balerno

Emily Telford  
Logan Wilson

## Boroughmuir

Mirai Cairns  
Ellie Dowie  
Safiyah Lawther  
Anna Waddell

## Broughton

Elodie Berrill  
Rosie Brett  
Eilidh Clarke  
Torin Franklin  
Kirsten Hedley  
Caroline  
Kannampuzha  
Savannah Moar  
Isabel Opat  
Abigail Strachan  
Yasmin Thornton

## Castlebrae

Manon Maurage

## Craigmount

Gabriel Crewe  
Arwen Richards  
Milly White

## Craigroyston

Amber Beetge  
Miguel Capote  
Claire Graham  
Ellie Laidlaw  
Mahira Sattar

## Currie

Hisham Altowairqi  
ZhiYing Feng  
Ross Reilly  
Daniel Ryrie  
Callum Scobie

## Drummond

Rebecca Bowmaker-Rees

Rose Overton

Annie Schofield  
Julia Wiechcinska  
Nicole Willis

## Firrhill

Caitlin Bradford  
Kirstie Haswell  
Freya Richards

## Forrester

Abdallah Aldaker  
Leya Bevis  
Keira Carnie  
Caitlin Donaldson  
Brogan Drysdale  
Jessica Grant  
Owen Harrower  
Amy Henderson  
Aidan Lyon  
Joanne Reeves  
Kasey Reeves  
Eilidh Shields  
Jasmine Vettraino  
Eve Yell

## Gracemount

Ryan Djikeng  
Maryam Khadim  
Cinaed Robinson

## Holy Rood

Joshua Jose  
Brian Lamb  
Evelyn Marino  
Laurence Philpot  
Sarah Smiles

## James Gillespie's

Kate Harrold  
Ava Richmond  
Layla Rozelle  
Michaela Sparks  
Morwenna Williams

## Liberton

Mindy Lee  
Abbie Nimmo  
Sam Parkerson

## Royal High

Caspian Lis  
Gorzewski  
Phoenix Nelson

## St Augustine's

Nikola Hankus  
Aleksandra  
Federowska  
Adriana Fluder

## St Thomas of Aquin's

Anjali Bhai  
Michael Ferguson  
Vanishka Kumar  
Heather McCudden  
David Mochan  
Breagh Shaw  
Rhona Spencer  
Livi Tague  
Rudy Walker

## WHEC

Charisma Cannon  
Noor Fatimah  
Daniel Ferry  
Georgina Renwick  
Danica Skinner  
Caleb Wilson

## Escape, Connect, Relate



Internment	12
No Big Deal	18
The Art of Losing	21
The Deepest Breath	21
Proud	21
Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)	22
Tulip Taylor	22
Colour Me In	23
Resisters	24
Trans Mission: My Quest to a Beard	24
We Are Not Okay	26
The Closest Thing to Flying	27
Thrill Seekers	28
Furious Thing	29
Devoted	29

## GET IN TOUCH

Teen Titles would love to hear from you. Send us your book news, reviews and views. We welcome all contributions, although because of space constraints we cannot guarantee to print everything we receive.

## OUR ADDRESS

Teen Titles, Publications Team, City of Edinburgh Council, Central Library, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EG



## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Teen Titles costs only £12 per year for three issues a year. And there are discounted rates for more than one copy of each issue: £20 per year for two copies of each issue, £30 for five copies and £52 for ten copies.

To purchase an annual subscription to Teen Titles, phone 0131 469 3328 or

## e-mail:

learning.publications@ea.edin.sch.uk

## website:

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/learningpublications



## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

A special thank you to the members of the tt team for their vital involvement:

Tomi Adenekan, James Gillespie's High  
John Clarkson, Co-chair, Trinity Academy  
Lucrezia Gaion, Broughton High  
Rachel McCabe, Holy Rood High  
Lindsay Nealon, St Thomas of Aquin's High  
Moira Paton, Co-chair, Broughton High  
Kelly Smith, Castlebrae Community High  
Julie Sutherland, Forrester High  
Andrea Wallace, Drummond Community High

Teen Titles would like to thank the following publishers for supplying all books, photos and biographies of authors: Amulet, Andersen Press, Atom, Barrington Stoke, Bloomsbury, Chicken House, David Fickling, DC Ink, DC Zoom, Del Rey, Electric Monkey, Faber and Faber, Firefly Press, Fledgling Press, HarperCollins, Hodder, Hot Key, HQ, Little Island, Macmillan, Oneworld, Orion, OUP, Penguin, Ransom Publishing, Rock the Boat, Scotland Street Press, Simon & Schuster, Soho Teen, Stripes, Usborne, Wren & Book.

