

Mr B's  
Christmas Catalogue  
2017



# MERRY CHRISTMAS BOOK LOVERS!

WELCOME TO THE MR B'S CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE FOR 2017!

Amongst these festively decorated pages you'll find the very best books of the year, curated and reviewed by our discerning team of jolly booksellers.

In the spirit of good cheer, all of our catalogue books come bearing a **10% discount** from now until Christmas Eve to make your Christmas shopping experience extra merry!

TO PURCHASE ANY OF THE BOOKS FEATURED IN THIS CATALOGUE (AND MANY MORE) YOU CAN:

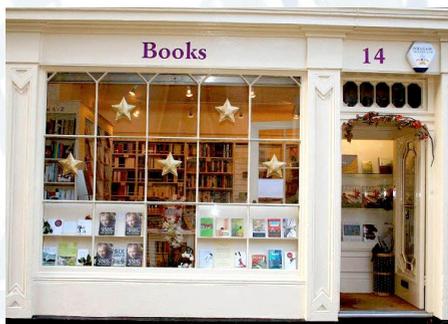
★ Pop into Mr B's at 14-15 John Street, Bath, browse our display of the Christmas catalogue titles and pick our brains for a few more recommendations besides.

★ Buy online at [www.mrbsemporium.com](http://www.mrbsemporium.com)

★ Send an email to [books@mrbsemporium.com](mailto:books@mrbsemporium.com), or call us on 01225 331155.

A huge thanks to the very talented Pam Smy, author of Thornhill, who has created the stunning cover and illustrations that we've used to spruce up this catalogue.

ENJOY THE CATALOGUE AND MAY YOUR BOOK-SHAPED CHRISTMAS PRESENTS BE PLENTIFUL!



## THORNHILL by PAM SMY

HB - £14.99 - David Fickling Books (Graphic Novel, 12+)

There is something to be said for a book that is so captivating that you stay up late until the last page is done. Thornhill was special from the very first glance, Smy's stunning illustrations and gothic setting drew me in. Ella moves to a new home and finds herself drawn to the derelict house next door: Thornhill, Institute for Children. Something isn't right, lights turn on at night, figures appear in the window and Ella slowly finds herself unable to stay away.

# BOOKS ENGAGE THE YOUNGEST MINDS

## DON'T LEAP LARRY by NICOLA SLATER & JOHN BRIGGS

PB - £6.99 - Pavilion Children's Books (Children's 2+)

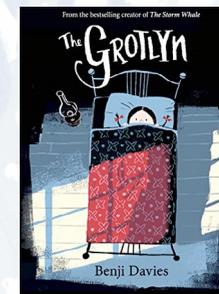
Larry is the odd-lemming-out. While all his lemming buddies make winter burrows, Larry sledges with puffins, wears hoola skirts, plays the bongos and eats pepperoni pizza. Shunned, Larry takes his unique style elsewhere. But no place is like home. In a daring superhero act of courage Larry saves his fellow lemmings from certain death - but will he ever get them to think for themselves? A terrifically funny look at what makes us all different!



## THE GROTYLN by BENJI DAVIES

HB - £12.99 - HarperCollins (Children's 3+)

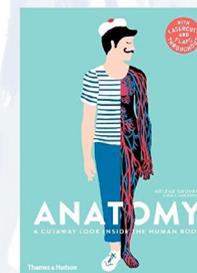
It is quite unusual to find such a cleverly atmospheric picture book that also has humour, brilliant rhyming text AND an uplifting end (in more ways than one). The author of the hugely successful 'The Storm Whale' has created here a suspense-filled tale of a mysterious creature that scuttles through the dead of night, taking things, hurrying away... but to what end? Set on Victorian streets and with almost cinematic illustrations, this is something very special for a wintry night.



## ANATOMY by JEAN-CLAUDE DRUVERT

HB - £18.95 - Thames & Hudson (Children's Non-Fiction)

The human body is a very clever and intricate thing. So is this wonderfully illustrated guide to human anatomy, which has (in addition to pages dedicated to particular organs) detailed papercuts and layers to show how the skeleton, muscles, blood flow, digestive system and nervous system fit together. The illustrations are clear, stylish and easy to follow, whilst the accompanying text is nicely balanced: the correct medical terminology is explained in simple terms.

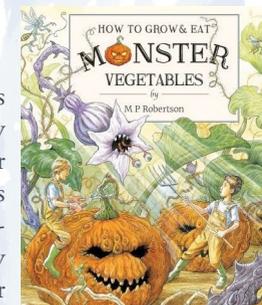


## HOW TO GROW AND EAT MONSTER VEGETABLES

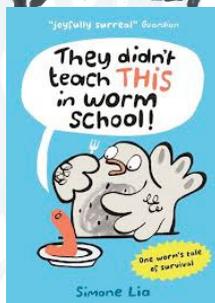
by M.P. ROBERTSON

HB - £12.99 - From Me to You Ltd (Children's Non-Fiction)

We all know that to inspire kids, books should be silly, gorey, bonkers or scary - or in this case, all of the above! An hilarious and surprisingly informative look at all aspects of gardening with, and eating, monster vegetables. With intricate, highly amusing illustrations, here are tips on handling the nasty Turn'N'Nips, coping with noxious Farty-Chokes fumes, searching for troll poo and dealing with the very angry Not-So-Sweetcorn. The moral - eat your greens before your greens eat you!



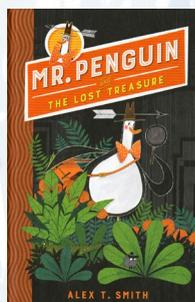
## BOOKS ALLOW IMAGINATIONS TO ROAM



THEY DIDN'T TEACH THIS IN WORM SCHOOL by SIMONE LIA

PB - £6.99 - Walker Books (Children's 6+)

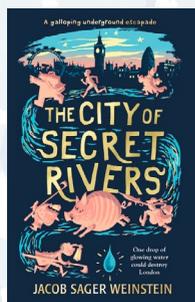
Marcus the worm, faced with imminent slurping by a pigeon who looks like a chicken, stalls for time brilliantly with the line "What is your name and do you have a hobby, please, sir?" And so being eaten is avoided (or just delayed?) and an unlikely friendship begins. Soon Marcus becomes pigeon Laurence's navigator on his mission to Kenya to take up a new life as a flamingo. Utterly bonkers and full of comic refrains that reduced my kids to tears of laughter.



MR PENGUIN AND THE LOST TREASURE by ALEX T. SMITH

HB - £9.99 - Hodder Children's Books (Children's 6+)

A flapping brilliant new adventure in a seriously stylish, terribly grown-up looking book. Boudica Bones desperately needs someone to help her find long-ago-buried family treasure to save her crumbling Museum. Step in Mr Penguin, Adventurer and Penguin, donning his bowtie, trademark hat with an arrow through it, oversized magnifying glass and sidekick Colin the spider. Silliness, danger, adventure and side-splitting illustrations in ice-bucket loads, Mr Penguin is another triumph from the creator of Claude.



THE CITY OF SECRET RIVERS by JACOB SAGER WEINSTEIN

HB - £9.99 - Walker Books (Children's 8+)

Hyacinth Hayward has a new home and nothing makes sense. As if moving from America to London with her agitated mum weren't enough to deal with, their host Aunt Polly seems to have disappeared. And then there are the taps – how can mixer taps not exist in England? The answer becomes clear when Hyacinth's efforts to mix hot and cold releases a rogue water drop into London's sewers and sets in motion a chain of hilarious and catastrophic magical events.



THE WIZARDS OF ONCE by CRESSIDA COWELL

HB - £12.99 - Hodder Children's Books (Children's 8+)

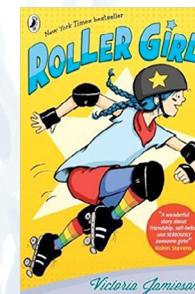
Having trained all the dragons, Cressida Cowell is back! In ancient woods where Wizards and magical creatures clash with Warriors and their iron swords, a young, reckless Wizard, Xar happens upon Wish, a curious Warrior princess, her pet spoon (that's not a typo) and a stolen sword with unimaginable powers. Unbeknownst to them, an evil magic is awakening within the forest. With her trademark humour, scratchy illustrations and superb characters, Cowell cements place atop the storyteller's league.

## BOOKS FUEL THE POWER OF DREAMS

ROLLER GIRL by VICTORIA JAMIESON

PB - £7.99 - Penguin (Children's Graphic Novel 9+)

This has been the surprise hit of the year with all three of my girls. It tells the story of a vaguely misfit girl who rejects ballet and other distractions in favour of an obsessive love of Roller Derby, a full contact ruff-and-tumble all-female all-inclusive sport. This has just the right amount of coming of age, understanding of self and true friendship all topped off with humour and great heart.



DRAGON'S GREEN by SCARLETT THOMAS

PB - £7.99 - Canongate Books (Children's 9+)

A dazzling, dystopian, magical adventure. After the Worldquake, which wipes out much of modern technology, Effie learns of secret magic from Griffin Truelove, her grandfather. But when he is attacked and his magic books stolen, Effie must embark on a dangerous mission with her closest friends through a portal to the Otherworld and face a terrifying organisation intent on world destruction. The first in a new fantasy series from the author of the brilliant 'The End of Mr Y'.



THE DISAPPEARANCES by EMILY BAIN MURPHY

PB - £7.99 - Pushkin Children's Books (Children's 12+)

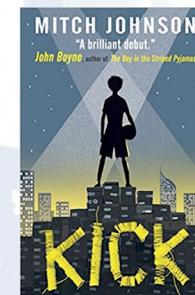
Something strange is going on in Sterling. The people are missing their reflections, they remain bone dry in the pouring rain and they seem to have lost the ability to dream. Every seven years something else will disappear unless Alia and Miles can unravel how their mother's story is woven into this town's curse. With gorgeous rich writing and truly loveable characters, 'The Disappearances' is an irresistible magical mystery, full of spells, remedies, romance and intrigue.



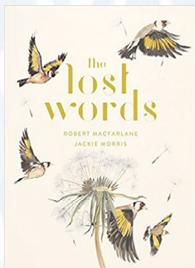
KICK by MITCH JOHNSON

PB - £6.99 - Usborne Publishing (Children's 11+)

A terrific modern-day tale of tenacity, hope, football dreams and how real life can seriously get in the way. Hugely pacy and tense but peppered with lots of humour, we meet Budi, a young Indonesian kid with footballing aspirations far beyond his grinding, daily job sewing together football boots in the sweltering heat. A chance encounter with the much-feared gangster man Dragon, leads to terrifying consequences as he finds himself fighting for his very survival. It's in a league of its own!



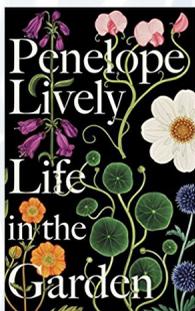
## BOOKS CELEBRATE THE NATURAL WORLD



### THE LOST WORDS by ROBERT MACFARLANE & JACKIE MORRIS

HB - £20 - Penguin Books (Nature/Poetry)

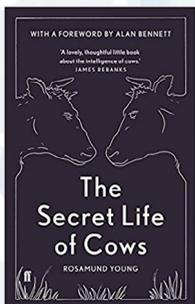
In 2007, the Oxford Junior Dictionary controversially culled definitions for words like 'acorn', 'chestnut', and 'kingfisher', in favour of 'cut and paste', 'chatroom', and 'attachment'. 'The Lost Words', a book both poetic and political, powerfully redresses the balance between the natural and the virtual. Macfarlane and Morris restore this vocabulary, elevate it with beautiful illustrations, and argue for the necessity of retaining the language with which we conjure up and connect with the natural world.



### LIFE IN THE GARDEN by PENELOPE LIVELY

HB - £14.99 - Penguin Books (Memoir/Garden Writing)

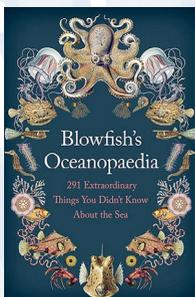
A gardening memoir that is a cut above. Not only is Penelope Lively a wonderful writer, she has also got 80+ years of gardening experience to draw upon. From the challenges of her grandmother's garden in Cairo, to the slopes of Somerset and the challenges of gardening in older age, her own stories are interwoven with gardens in literature. The thoughtful prose is punctuated with levels of detail and observation that will satisfy horticulturalists and delight garden lovers.



### THE SECRET LIFE OF COWS by ROSAMUND YOUNG

HB - £9.99 - Faber & Faber (Nature)

At Kite's Nest Farm on the edge of The Cotswolds, nature is left to itself as much as possible and animals are allowed to develop surprising and unique characters. Rosamund Young affectionately records their unseen lives: we discover that cows can be highly intelligent or slow to understand, inventive, narcissistic, or shy; they form deep and lasting relationships, they play and they change. One of those rare books that delights and enthral, and alters the way you look at the world.



### BLOWFISH'S OCEANOPAEDIA

HB - £17.99 - Atlantic Books (Nature)

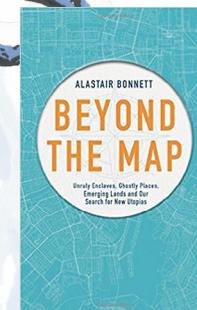
The Sea. A place of wonders, mysteries and creatures with names as appropriate as 'the vampire squid from hell'. Explorer and marine biologist Blowfish has compiled '295 Extraordinary Things You Didn't Know About The Sea' into a wonderful compendium of facts, revealing what lurks beneath the surface. Excellent for the budding biologist or just the curious, 'Blowfish's Oceanopaedia' is the must have guide to fill the Blue Planet 2 sized space in our lives.

## BOOKS TAKE YOU FAR AWAY

### BEYOND THE MAP by ALISTAIR BONNETT

HB - £16.99 - Aurum Press (Travel)

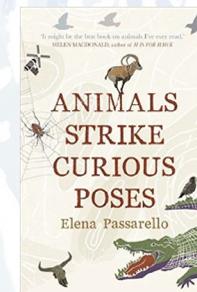
An entertaining work of avant-garde geography. Alastair Bonnett takes us to places that don't feature in tourist brochures: abandoned places, repurposed places, limbos and edges and places with no fixed location. He takes us to inhabited graveyards, islands of garbage and an abandoned WWII gun platform which was declared an independent state in 1967 and has since attempted to annex Felixstowe. On the way, he examines the fundamental human love of place, and its contribution to identity and memory.



### ANIMALS STRIKE CURIOUS POSES by ELENA PASSARELLO

HB - £12.99 - Vintage Books (Nature/Essays)

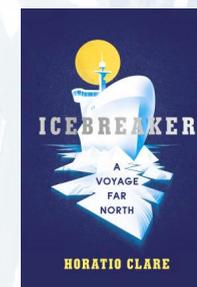
A collection of essays on nature, and human nature, by a writer with a zesty alternative style that injects humour and intrigue into everything she describes. Each piece features an animal from history named, and usually manipulated, by humans, but the voice and style changes frequently. There's a tortoise-eye view of Darwin's Galapagos expedition, accounts of various incredible and much-abused elephants and performing bears from history and even her own decidedly mixed childhood memories of watching a circus "live unicorn".



### ICEBREAKER by HORATIO CLARE

HB - £14.99 - Vintage Books (Travel)

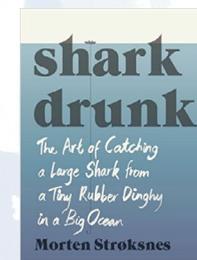
What better way to celebrate a hundred years of Finnish independence, than a stint as writer-in-residence upon an icebreaker? Natural history writer, memoirist, and perennial favourite Horatio Clare follows up his fantastic 'Down to the Sea in Ships' with another ocean-bound adventure, around an extraordinary country and through the unearthly frozen Bay of Bothnia, discovering Finland's character, her mariners and her skirts of ice along the way.



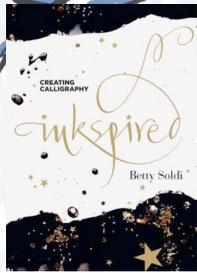
### SHARK DRUNK by MORTEN STRØKSNES

HB - £12.99 - Vintage Books (Nature/Travel)

One journalist, one artist, one enigmatic, inedible, centuries-old shark... and one small rubber dingy. In this tale of dangerous obsession and farcical adventure, two friends set out to catch a legendary creature lurking in the uncharted depths surrounding the remote Lofoten Islands in Norway. What follows is by turns hilarious, soothing, and fascinating: a treasure chest of oceanic knowledge, and a love letter to the mystery and hardship of the sea.



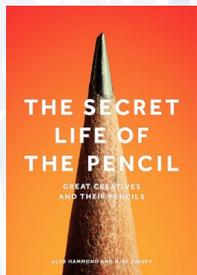
## BOOKS INSPIRE CREATIVITY



### INKSPIRED: CREATING CALLIGRAPHY by BETTY SOLDI

PB - £16.99 - Kyle Books (Creativity)

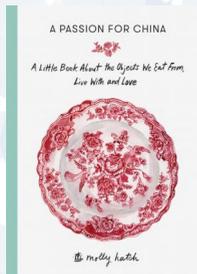
Typography geeks unite! This ode to the humble hand-drawn letter will have you itching to pick up your quill. Stashed full of colourful and friendly “inkspiration”, ‘Inkspired’ introduces simple tasks to help you discover your inner scribbler, master a calligraphic alphabet and embark on a range of fun calligraphy projects. The glory of this stylish book is that it never takes itself too seriously – try keeping a straight face whilst swapping your calligraphy nib for a floppy asparagus!



### THE SECRET LIFE OF THE PENCIL by ALEX HAMMOND

HB - £12.99 - Laurence King (Creativity)

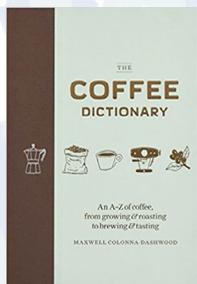
Like many of the authors we sell, at Mr B's we are obsessive about good pencils and so this is our new bible. The first half is largely photographic and feels like being led (get it?) through an eclectic museum of influential writing instruments - close-ups of James Dyson's skyscraper style metallic propeller rubs erasers with Nick Park's battered Berol. Twenty short interviews follow with novelists, designers, artists and others, each shedding light on their pencil habits at work and at doodle.



### A PASSION FOR CHINA by MOLLY HATCH

HB - £14.99 - September Publishing (Art/History)

This highly illustrated book by a celebrated designer considers the ceramic objects that we surround ourselves with, cleverly combining history, art, memoir and stylish nostalgia. She begins with a homage to items that graced her grandmother's table, from Portuguese scalloped bowls to blue willow plates, before considering pieces from museums and studios she has worked in. The short descriptions touch on the beautifully drawn objects themselves, but also on the memories and emotions such possessions can spark.



### THE COFFEE DICTIONARY by MAXWELL COLONNA-DASHWOOD

HB - £15 - Octopus Publishing (Food/Drink)

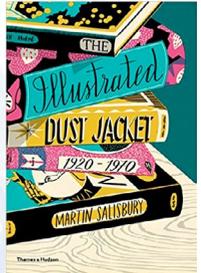
There are few places in Bath we recommend more often than coffee paradise Colonna & Smalls. Its owner, Maxwell, travelled the world in search of ever-increasing coffee knowledge, and his enthusiasm is as contagious on the page as in person. This is no run-of-the-mill encyclopaedia of brewing methods, however. Read about everything from the ‘silver skin’ (the layer which separates coffee cherries), to Nordic coffee culture and the World Barista Championship (in which, incidentally, Maxwell was a finalist).

## BOOKS LEAD YOU TO OTHER BOOKS

### THE ILLUSTRATED DUST JACKET by MARTIN SALISBURY

HB - £24.95 - Thames & Hudson (Design)

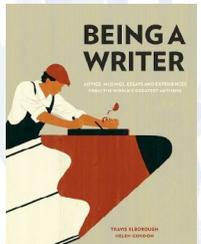
Containing the work of more than 50 artists and illustrators from both sides of the Atlantic, this beautiful book traces the development of the dust-jacket from the earliest plain covers through to the brightly covered illustrations of the latter half of the 20th Century. Many of the covers shown are instantly recognisable, if no longer quite so easily found in charity and second hand bookshops. This book could mark the beginning of a quest to find them all...



### BEING A WRITER by TRAVIS ELBOROUGH & HELEN GORDON

HB - £15 - Frances Lincoln (Writing)

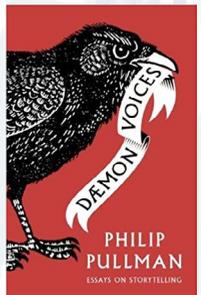
Ever suspected that you might be the next J. K. Rowling? This gorgeously-presented guide collects pearls of wisdom, writerly techniques and candid tips from some of literature's most accomplished names. From Roald Dahl's meditative comparisons of writing and taking long walks to Richard Ford's more forthright advice (i.e. “Don't have children”, “Don't drink and write at the same time”); here you'll find wise words and inspiration aplenty to carry you that bit closer to penning your own bestseller.



### DAEMON VOICES by PHILIP PULLMAN

HB - £20 - David Fickling Books (Essays)

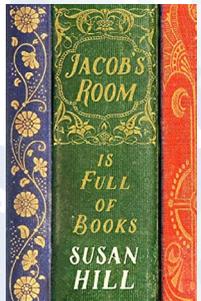
The brilliant creator of ‘His Dark Materials’ trilogy brings us a marvellously energetic, endlessly curious exploration of the art of storytelling. Written over a period of twenty years, ‘Daemon Voices’ collects Pullman's thoughts on some of his favourite storytellers, writing practices and the pleasures and power of stories, as well as reflecting on some of his own amazing tales. Imbued with oodles of insight, knowledge and enthusiasm, this stunning tome celebrates how essential and joyous stories are to us today.



### JACOB'S ROOM IS FULL OF BOOKS by SUSAN HILL

HB - £12.99 - Profile Books (Books about Books)

Susan Hill invites us to perch on her shoulder through a very personal year of reading experiences. To join her is to be reminded of books we've loved and be introduced to books we really should read. Hill's observations of her reading places and her accounts of the serendipitous way she settles on a given book, make us focus anew on the cathartic pleasure of the process of settling down for a read and the endless seams of reading that await our attention.



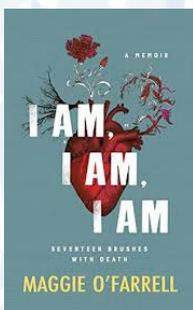
## BOOKS REVEAL INCREDIBLE LIVES



### MR LEAR by JENNY UGLOW

HB - £25 - Faber & Faber (Art/Biography)

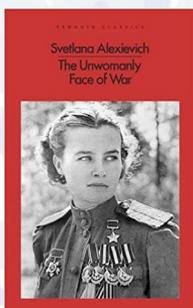
Edward Lear was a force of nature. Rapacious with both pen and paintbrush, he wanted to experience as much as he could in a single lifetime. The Victorian age was a perfect one in which to satisfy his yearning for adventure but Lear's frantic creativity and celebrated humour was tempered by illness and self-doubt. With extensive reference to Lear's words and pictures, Jenny Uglow's beautifully illustrated biography celebrates his work but gives an insight into the more troubled source of his clever 'nonsense'.



### I AM, I AM, I AM by MAGGIE O'FARRELL

HB - £18.99 - Headline (Memoir)

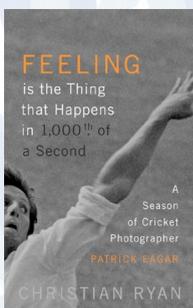
The only word I could muster after reading this was *incredible*. From the very first page I was captivated by O'Farrell's lyrical writing, and drawn in by the dark stories from her life. Bravery, luck and vulnerability are perfectly balanced as we are taken through, via parts of the body, all the times Maggie has defied death and come out the other side. I found myself contemplating my existence throughout, and being astounded by the remarkable, and fragile, human body.



### THE UNWOMANLY FACE OF WAR by SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH

PB - £12.99 - Penguin Books (History)

This sparkling new translation of Alexievich's first book shows off her uniquely immersive and immediate form of narrative history writing. She recounts the testimony of her innumerable interviewees in order to describe history as it was actually experienced. Her subjects here are the Soviet women who fought World War 2 on the front line and at home, but whose voices were almost entirely omitted from the official histories. The resulting patchwork of memories is emotional and compelling.



### FEELING IS THE THING THAT HAPPENS IN 1000TH OF A SECOND

by CHRISTIAN RYAN

HB - £20 - Quercus (Photography/Sport)

In the baking hot 1975 cricketing summer England hosted both an Ashes tour and a World Cup. Photographer Patrick Eagar brought it to exuberant life with some of the most insightful and intimate photographs of sporting action ever taken. This unique book is at once a piece of dramatic cricket writing, a biography of Eagar through his landmark summer and a consideration of the art of action photography. Stunning colour and black and white images pepper the text throughout.

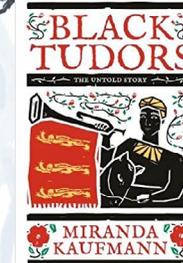
## BOOKS ILLUMINATE THE PAST



### BLACK TUDORS by MIRANDA KAUFMANN

HB - £18.99 - Oneworld Publications (History)

The author of this fascinating and pacy history studies the lives of ten black Tudors in 16th Century Britain as lively examples of more colourful populace than one might have imagined. Prior to the slave trade it is easy to imagine that ours was an almost exclusively white society. But with massively expanding international trade and our ever-practical alliances with foreign courts our contact with other races seems to have been far more common place.



### THE BUTCHERING ART by LINDSEY FITZHARRIS

HB - £16.99 - Penguin Books (History)

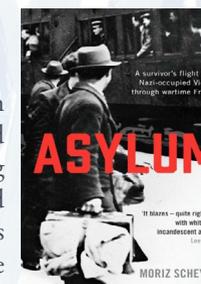
A visceral and absorbing account of the shocking transformation of surgical procedures, 'The Butchering Art' digs deep into Victorian medicine, focusing on the career of Dr Joseph Lister as he desperately tried to convince colleagues of the importance of germs and infection. Part biography, part medical history Fitzharris keeps the story gripping throughout and creates a vivid picture of the cramped operating theatres, and appalling surgical methods. Macabre, but fascinating to see how far we have come.



### ASYLUM by MORIZ SCHEYER

PB - £8.99 - Profile Books (History)

This is an intense first-hand account of one man's torturous escape from the Nazis at a time when the world seemed to be turning a collective blind eye to what was happening. Painful to read at times, it's also compelling and almost thriller-like as the author is forced to flee through occupied France. What sets this account apart from other similarly traumatic stories though is the quality of the insight into the times he lived through and the people he rubbed shoulders with.



### FIFTY THINGS THAT MADE THE MODERN ECONOMY by TIM HARFORD

HB - £18.99 - Little, Brown (Economics/History)

Tim Harford has been making the study of economics and statistics accessible and - dare I say it - fun, for years. Each of Tim's 50 chosen key 'inventions' - whether physical objects, or ideological systems - are discussed in relation to their impact on economic growth and their contribution to society (good or bad). There are some obvious examples, like the ubiquitous plastic, and more obscure ones: air conditioning is proven to improve the productivity of workers in hot weather!



**FIFTY THINGS THAT MADE THE MODERN ECONOMY**  
Every Tim Harford book is cause for celebration! MARK COOK, GUARDIAN  
**Tim Harford**  
AUTHOR OF THE UNDERCOVER ECONOMIST

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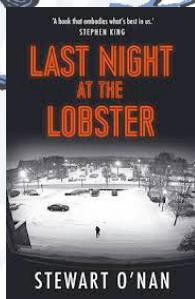
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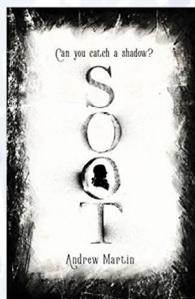
## BOOKS TELL STORIES OLD AND NEW



### LAST NIGHT AT THE LOBSTER by STEWART O'NAN

PB - £7.99 - Allen & Unwin (Fiction)

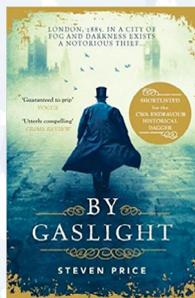
A funny wistful nugget of a novel looking at one man's efforts to do the right thing by all around him whilst coping with his own chaotic life. The action takes place over the last trading day of The Red Lobster managed by the diligent but beleaguered Manny. As the day progresses, Manny seeks to navigate one last set of dramas - dysfunctional office parties, sugar-high kids, an absent snowplough – and keep control of his embittered and disengaged team.



### SOOT by ANDREW MARTIN

HB - £14.99 - Little, Brown (Fiction)

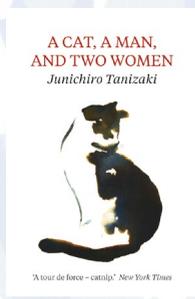
Snow covered Georgian York provides the perfect atmospheric setting for this unique historical murder mystery. Told through a variety of letter and diary entries we follow the mysterious Fletcher Rigge as he tries to uncover the death of painter Matthew Harvey, with only the last six silhouettes he painted for evidence. Martin has created a diverse group of characters that fascinate for their mixed personalities and humour. As the story progresses you realise you never know who you can trust. If you enjoy a clever puzzle, this literary mystery won't disappoint!



### BY GASLIGHT by STEVEN PRICE

PB - £8.99 - Oneworld Publications (Fiction)

Pinkerton's son arrives in Victorian London to solve the case that had obsessed and ultimately defeated his father. Despite a nagging suspicion that he is chasing a non-existent Moriarty figure and the death of his only lead, found in various bags around the capital, he doggedly sets off on the hunt. This is a far above average historical crime novel with vivid characters and real attention to detail, especially in bringing to life the atmosphere of a fog bound and brutal London.



### A CAT, A MAN, AND TWO WOMEN by JUNICHIRO TANIZAKI

PB - £9.99 - Daunt Books (Fiction)

It takes one of the finest Japanese authors of the twentieth century to make a novella about a cat at the centre of a love triangle into something fizzing with wit rather than something twee. When his second wife becomes jealous of his affection for Lily the tortoiseshell, pliable Shozo is forced to despatch his beloved cat into his ex-wife's care. As the grown-ups manoeuvre, Lily's behaviour is perfectly observed and it's clear she's the one in control.

## BOOKS EVOKE LAUGHTER & TEARS

### HOMEGOING by YAA GYASI

PB - £8.99 - Penguin Books (Fiction)

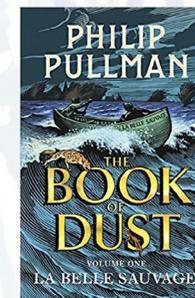
This novel doesn't pull any punches when dealing with the devastating impact of slavery, racial divides and the effects of British colonialism. Spanning from the Gold Coast of Africa, to modern-day America we follow the timelines of two half-sisters, Effia and Esi as their descendants struggle through experiences beyond their control. Gyasi paints a vivid, rich array of characters, and has created such a gripping story with a powerful message of both sorrow and hope that lingered with me long after finishing.



### THE BOOK OF DUST by PHILIP PULLMAN

HB - £20 - Penguin Random House (Fiction)

Shhh, we have a secret...oh bother, so everyone knows, but we couldn't NOT shout about it! Delving into this was both thrilling and nostalgic, vividly transporting me back to when Lyra's story had first entranced me, many moons ago. Musty Oxford rooms, shape-shifting daemons, strangers in the shadows and dark forces at work. Malcolm, young innkeeper's son, witnesses a peculiar event from his boat, a baby is smuggled into a convent and the rain is coming. A lot of rain.



### THE WHITE BOOK by HAN KANG

HB - £10 - Granta (Fiction)

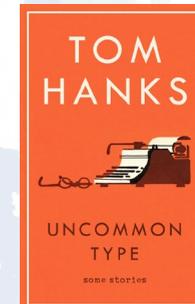
I read this in one hypnotised afternoon, and it continues to simmer and resonate. Its narrator, having grown up with the memory of an older sister who died only hours after birth, finds her way around a foreign city, where her own voice becomes inseparable from that which her sister never had. Lyrical yet simple, the new story by the Booker International winning author of 'The Vegetarian' is a meditative joy which feels like nothing else you'll encounter this year.



### UNCOMMON TYPE by TOM HANKS

HB - £16.99 - Cornerstone (Short Stories)

The master of visual storytelling has crafted his first written work of fiction, and oh how charming it is. These short stories have a variety of settings, from 1950s suburban America to a private space craft in the not-too-distant future. Each tale features a type-writer, as Tom Hanks is (of course) a leading expert on them. Hanks' writing style is delightful, and this book delivers a sprinkling of humour with a few moments to tug at your heart-strings.



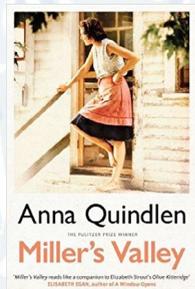
## BOOKS MAKE OUR WORLD BIGGER



### WAR AND TURPENTINE by STEFAN HERTMANS

PB - £8.99 - Vintage Books (Fiction)

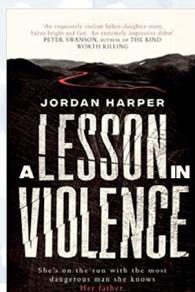
An intense, thoughtful fictional memoir blending art, war, love and grief based on notebooks given to the author by his artist grandfather, Urbain detailing his early life in Flanders and in the WWI trenches. The more he learns about Urbain, his love of painting, his proud mother, his grief, the more he makes sense of his own boyhood memories of his black-suited grandfather. A contemplative portrait of a bygone era and a raw insight into the insanity of trench warfare.



### MILLER'S VALLEY by ANNA QUINDLEN

PB - £8.99 - Simon & Schuster (Fiction)

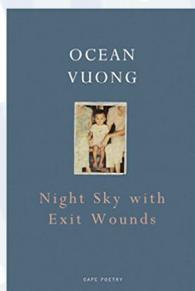
A brilliant small town, family drama set in a Pennsylvanian valley at risk of being flooded to create a dam. Generations of the Miller family have lived there but as huge changes loom, Mimi Miller unearths some disturbing truths about her family's past - betrayals, loss and secrets. Nothing is as it seems. With superbly drawn characters and a strong sense of place it made me think so much about what "home" means, of what it is to belong.



### A LESSON IN VIOLENCE by JORDAN HARPER

HB - £12.99 - Simon & Schuster (Fiction)

Having made a terrible enemy of the most powerful neo-nazi in the US prison system, an ex-con father is forced to abduct the daughter he has never met and take her on the road to protect her, as every gang member in the area is set on murdering his family. The little girl is such a great protagonist for this pulsating thriller, reluctantly being dragged into a violent and desperate adult world that she barely understands supported only by her surprisingly savvy teddy bear.



### NIGHT SKY WITH EXIT WOUNDS by OCEAN VUONG

PB - £10 - Jonathan Cape (Poetry)

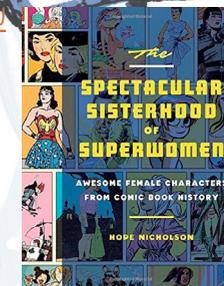
Ocean Vuong arrived in the US as a two-year-old, when his family fled Vietnam. His debut collection's unflinching eye and unsentimental tenderness, however, are just as memorable as his remarkable life-story. These poems carve out a unique space between history and lived experience, love and violence. From images of intimacy in a burning Saigon to playground memories, via the most vital questions about gender and belonging, this is a collection to be experienced in full, and experienced again.

## BOOKS MAKE THE PERFECT GIFT

### THE SPECTACULAR SISTERHOOD OF SUPERWOMEN by HOPE NICHOLSON

HB - £19.99 - Quirk Books (Graphic Novel)

We've all heard of Wonder Woman, but until you've cowered at the fangs of Vampirella (a karate-kicking vampiric alien), taken inspiration from bally business woman Amanda Waller (who is "technically" super-power free), or been confronted with the charm and cuteness of Squirrel Girl, you can hardly call yourself a superheroine aficionado! This decade by decade breakdown of heroic female comic book characters will have you donning your leotard (over tights of course) and heading off on a mission to prove your own super power!



### THESE ISLANDS edited by ROSA PARK

HB - £45 - Cereal (Photography)

This is a quite stunning and pleasantly unusual book that combines great printing and design with text, giving a fascinating perspective on our islands, including the occasional painting and poem. They focus on a few key sites around Britain, including Bath, that are beautifully photographed, ranging from straight landscape vistas to tantalising close ups of the natural and manmade. As a package this makes for a very satisfying coffee-table book and love poem to our strange and varied home.



### CHARLES TUNNICLIFFE by ROBERT MEYRICK & HARRY HEUSER

HB - £35 - Royal Academy of Arts (Art)

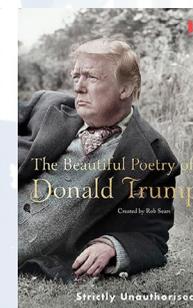
A stunning overdue catalogue of the prints of a sometimes overlooked nature artist who during his twentieth century career produced an incredible portfolio of wood engravings and etchings depicting animals and their habitats. Scenes of arduous farm labour sit alongside many book illustrations, including his celebrated work on Tarka the Otter. But the show is consistently stolen by the portraits of birds, bulls, shire horses and countryside fauna, with the tone set by the cover's noble barn owl.



### THE BEAUTIFUL POETRY OF DONALD TRUMP by ROBERT SEARS

HB - £9.99 - Canongate (Humour)

Whether it makes you laugh out loud or sigh with despair, this strictly unauthorised collection of well referenced tweets and quotes, whilst not deserving a space on our poetry shelves, definitely fits alongside our other humour titles. In a time of alternative facts, aggressive handshakes and armed with a limited vocabulary Rob Sears provides us with much needed satirical relief. And I think we can all appreciate the photoshopping of the dust jacket, even down to the small hands.



## BOOKS HELP US UNDERSTAND THE WORLD

### TALKING TO MY DAUGHTER ABOUT THE ECONOMY

by YANIS VAROUFAKIS

HB - £14.99 - Vintage (Economics)

YANIS  
VAROUFAKIS

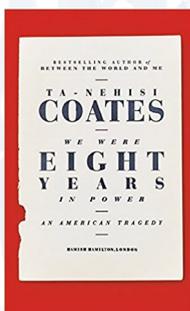
Talking to  
My Daughter  
About the  
Economy

A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF CAPITALISM

A wonderfully accessible two-hundred page response to a daughter's gut-punching question, "Why is there so much inequality?" The former Greek finance minister who has become a crucial commentator on the economic and political crises of the last two years, considers what the economy is and how it can wield such power over us. En route he covers "the black magic of banking", the incompatibility of monetary and environmental concerns and the turbulent economy's myriad of other problems.

### WE WERE EIGHT YEARS IN POWER by TA-NEHISI COATES

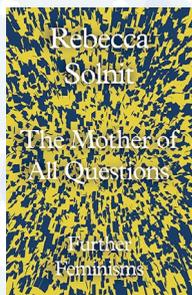
HB - £16.99 - Penguin Books (Politics)



With "Between the World and Me" Coates delivered one of the most impactful commentaries ever written on race and American society. He follows it up by writing a brutally honest assessment of an eight-year black presidency and the backlash election that ended it. As Obama's presidency progressed Coates went from unemployment to lauded "black public intellectual" and through this changing filter he provides a thought-provoking and personal look at the dangers facing black Americans.

### THE MOTHER OF ALL QUESTIONS by REBECCA SOLNIT

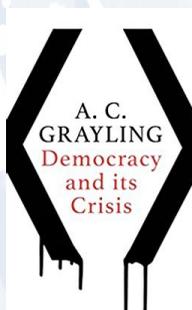
HB - £12.99 - Granta (Feminism)



Once more, Rebecca Solnit manages to transform complicated reality into beautiful, accessible and empowering writing. This is a book for readers who become angry when we see inequality manifest, and jump for joy when we witness changes for the better. Whether astounded at the questions women are asked (and men aren't), exploring the politics of silence, or celebrating feminism across the world, Solnit is a hugely intelligent and caring presence, and this book is an essential one this year.

### DEMOCRACY AND ITS CRISIS by A. C. GRAYLING

HB - £14.99 - Oneworld Publications (Politics/Philosophy)

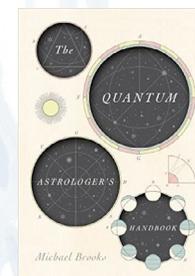


With the election of Donald Trump and Britain's decision to leave the European Union confounding notions of stability, this is a timely, yet considered look at how representative democracy will have to adapt if it is to survive. Grayling takes us right back to Ancient Greece - the foundation of modern democracy - as well as examining seismic events through time where societies have challenged their governing body. He points to the lessons we must learn from history and suggests ways in which our political system could improve.

## BOOKS SHOW US WHAT'S POSSIBLE

### THE QUANTUM ASTROLOGER'S HANDBOOK by MICHAEL BROOKS

HB - £16.99 - Scribe (Science)



Part biography, part fiction, part science, Michael Brooks tells us everything he knows (and some things that he doesn't) about the life, work and legacy of Jerome Cardano. A sixteenth century Italian physician, astrologer, inventor and maverick, Cardano was the first person to set down probability theory (he was also a keen gambler). Amazingly, his mathematical findings are at the root of quantum physics. What kind of a man could be so ahead of his time? Michael Brooks endeavours to find out.

### APOLLO by ZACK SCOTT

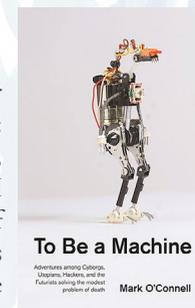
HB - £20 - Headline (Science)



In Space, no one can hear you read... This wonderfully crafted book, based on recently released NASA data, takes us on a journey through the facts, figures and lesser known details of the iconic space programme. Spanning eleven years, seventeen missions and shedding light into the twelve humans that touched down on our solitary satellite, this is a must have for any space enthusiasts. Ex RAF technician, Zack Scott has done a superb job of presenting this topic in an aesthetically stunning way.

### TO BE A MACHINE by MARK O'CONNELL

PB - £12.99 - Granta Books (Science)



Mark O'Connell probably thinks the new film Bladerunner 2049 is rather timely. Our obsession with replicant human stories is perhaps understandable: the future might be closer than we think. Mark has been travelling the world, meeting up with proponents of the 'transhumanism' movement (where AI and robotics begin to merge with human beings to create a 'superior' race of people). From technologists working on US military projects to individuals seeking immortality through cryonics, Mark's interviewees provide fascination, entertainment and uneasiness in equal measure.

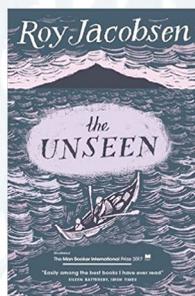
### GRIT by ANGELA DUCKWORTH

PB - £9.99 - Ebury (Psychology)



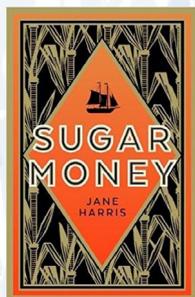
A battery of inspiration for anyone feeling they lack natural talent or for whom the chips never seem to fall right. It turns out that "grit" can get you through when luck and instinct have abandoned ship. Through the study of everyone from army cadets to competitive child spellers (not to mention her own experience of a father perpetually reinforcing her lack of genius) Duckworth reveals how far determination and the ability to bounce back can take you in life.

## THESE ARE OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS

NIC: THE UNSEEN by ROY JACOBSEN

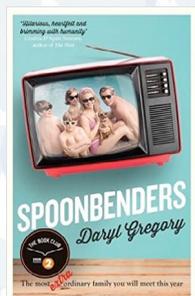
PB - £8.99 - Quercus (Fiction)

A story of subsistence survival with a location that is the very definition of isolation. Barroy is a harsh barren island off the Norwegian coast consisting of five fields and one weather-beaten house. The young and endlessly resilient Ingrid struggles to cope with her father's long absences during fishing season, the unpredictability of her sister Barbro and her fragile mother. An exploration of a tough, salty and sometimes exhilarating childhood during which Ingrid somehow never loses her love of home.

JULIETTE: SUGAR MONEY by JANE HARRIS

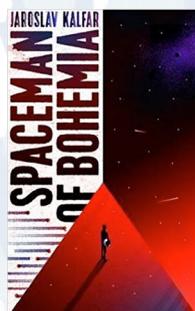
HB - £14.99 - Faber and Faber (Fiction)

This hugely tense, moving story throws you deep into the 18C rustling plantations of a moonlit Caribbean island as two young slave brothers are given the near impossible mission of crossing to a neighbouring island to smuggle out fellow slaves. The beauty lies in the unusual vernacular, the incredible feeling of suspense and the brilliantly drawn evolving relationship between the brothers – young, naïve, excitable Lucien and world-weary Emile, who knows a rock and a hard place when he sees them.

ED: SPOONBENDERS by DARYL GREGORY

HB - £14.99 - Quercus (Fiction)

This is a novel about an extraordinary family that branches out from a perfect conman and his uniquely gifted wife. Their kids and grandkids have inherited from both, in differing ways, and the family has been blasted apart. Circumstance and shared history give the family an opportunity to make a better rehash of things. A gloriously nutty, unapologetically fun novel that is equal parts Royal Tannenbaums, Sopranos, and Arrested Development with a dash of X-Men for good measure.

LUCINDA: SPACEMAN OF BOHEMIA by JAROSLAV KALFAR

HB - £12.99 - Sceptre (Fiction)

In a near future, Jakub Procházka becomes torch bearer for the Czech nation as he blasts off into space on a dangerous mission to analyse the composition of a distant dust cloud. The four-month-long solo mission gives Jakub plenty of time to consider his life on earth. Memories of childhood, the Velvet Revolution and his marriage, mingle with the uncomfortable, mundane existence inside the space capsule. One thought keeps recurring, however: is he really alone? Original, unpredictable and great fun.

## THESE ARE OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS

KATE: EVA SLEEPS by FRANCESCA MELANDRI

PB - £11.99 - Europa Editions (Fiction)

In a hotel in the conflict-ridden South Tyrolean region of Italy, baby Eva sleeps in an apple crate while her mother cooks sumptuous dishes for tourists. The chapters flick between the dramas of Eva's unmarried mother, Gerda and adult Eva's train journey to see Vito, the man who is the closest thing to a father she has ever known. At once historical and relevant, domestic and political, romantic and literary, I was mesmerised by this powerful story and its complex, compassionate characters.

TOM: HUMMINGBIRD by TRISTAN HUGHES

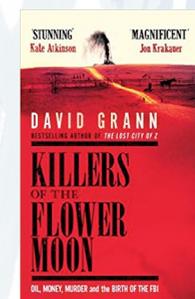
HB - £10 - Parthian (Fiction)

Set in the icy Canadian wilderness, this brilliant novel follows the path of young Zachary as he and his father move to a cabin at the edge of Sitting Down Lake. The landscape is harsh and seemingly unforgiving but somehow offers the small, kooky community that inhabits it both solace and hope. The writing is wonderfully understated, and this coming-of-age tale isn't just about Zachary, but the other lost folk at the edge of society. Simultaneously pensive and warming, this is hands down the best I've read this year.

EMMA: KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON by DAVID GRANN

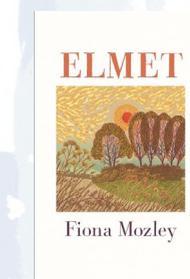
HB - £20 - Simon &amp; Schuster (History)

A true crime tale which reads like a thriller novel but is all the more devastating for the fact that it actually happened. When the white man cornered the Osage nation into a dusty Oklahoma patch they didn't count on the discovery of oil in the 1920s. Amidst this brief boom came multiple unexplained killings making, on paper, a perfect first landmark investigation for the FBI. But as the bureau botches its job, it takes a retired Texas Ranger to reveal the astonishing conspiracy.

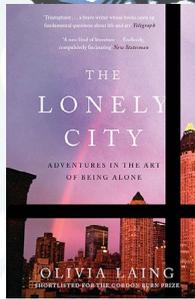
DANIELLE: ELMET by FIONA MOZLEY

PB - £10.99 - Headline (Fiction)

Lost in the landscape and lyrical language of this book, the lead up to a breathtaking ending had me losing sense of time and place. In Yorkshire, Elmet, a family lives an isolated but happy life. Having built their home in a copse they consider their own, tensions build when the community question their right to continue this lifestyle. A look at how one person can hold both violence and a gentle nature within, and how this affects those they love.



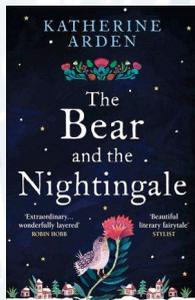
## THESE ARE OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS



### JESS: THE LONELY CITY by OLIVIA LAING

PB - £9.99 - Canongate (Art/Travel)

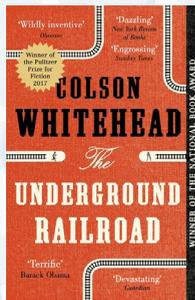
I picked up 'The Lonely City' expecting to read about loneliness in a hyper-connected world, then fell in love with it for a hundred other reasons. It's a city-stroll which seems to last several life-times. The people you'll meet are marvellous artists at the periphery, who made the city what it is. Laing's story of her own isolation amongst these echoing voices is a celebration of art and solidarity, but also a fantastic path to new discoveries.



### AMY: THE BEAR AND THE NIGHTINGALE by KATHERINE ARDEN

PB - £7.99 - Ebury (Fiction)

Katherine Arden has created a beautiful, enchanting tale brimming with Russian folklore and stories; when you delve deeper there is so much darkness and menace. We follow Vasya - wild and headstrong she lives for nature and freedom. From the beginning she is unlike everyone around her, she can see the spirits that guard her village. Each character is unravelled slowly and perfectly and as the dark magic in the forest threatens their existence, we are thrown into this bleak, icy world.



### SAM: THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD by COLSON WHITEHEAD

PB - £8.99 - Little, Brown (Fiction)

A woman's escape from bondage and a country's reckoning with history; a sizzling thriller and furious examination of slavery in the USA. Cora escapes from a Georgia plantation on the inventively-reimagined underground railroad, only to arrive in a South Carolina whose calm surface masks an infernal scheme for its 'free' black inhabitants. Meanwhile, Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, snaps at her heels. In genre-defying prose, Whitehead recreates the unique terrors facing black people in the pre-Civil War era.



### HENRY: BLACKWING by ED McDONALD

HB - £12.99 - Gollancz (Fiction)

Welcome to the twisted, corrupted frontier between the Republic and the deep kings known as the Misery. A place of fractured, wailing skies and shifting polluted sands. A place where only traitors, thieves and spies are desperate enough to travel through, at the risk of madness, death or things much worse. Enter Captain Ryhalt Halharrow, the man responsible for catching these runaways and bringing them to heel. This debut is the perfect gift for fans of Abercrombie, Lynch and Sanderson!

## THESE ARE OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS

### LOTTIE: SUCH SMALL HANDS by ANDRES BARBA

HB - £9.99 - Granta (Fiction)

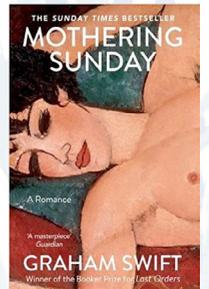
This chilling little book is narrated by a cast of young girls in a Spanish orphanage, telling their story as a collective voice, like a Greek chorus of creepy children. Marina, the newest addition to the group, is left outcast by the others, and desperately seeks to be included by any means necessary. Barba here gives us an unnerving window into the psyche of children, which becomes increasingly sinister when you realise that this is in fact a true story.



### ELLI: MOTHERING SUNDAY by GRAHAM SWIFT

PB - £8.99 - Simon & Schuster (Fiction)

Small but perfectly formed, Swift's novella is set between the two World Wars, and tells the story of Jane Fairchild, a housemaid to the Niven family. With no mother to visit, her plans to spend her free afternoon with a book are altered by a phone-call and she sets off instead on a romantic liaison, unaware of the pivotal nature of the events that lie ahead. One to read, and re-read.



### NIC & JU'S KIDS: THIS IS HOW WE DO IT by MATT LAMOTHE

HB - £12.99 - Chronicle Books (Children's Non-Fiction)

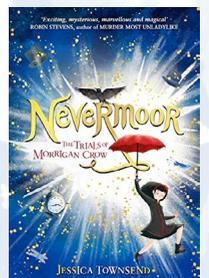
A terrific book for curious minds, this beautifully illustrated book answers the everyday questions kids want to know about life in other countries – what do the children wear? What do they eat? What does their classroom look like? What kind of house do they live in? Taking the life of seven real kids in countries from Japan and Russia to Uganda and Iran, this is a stylish and thought-provoking way to open up a window onto the world.



### ED & ELI'S KIDS: NEVERMOOR by JESSICA TOWNSEND

HB - £12.99 - Orion Children's Books (Children's 10+)

This is the story of a girl cursed and feared in her home city who on the eve of her much-predicted death is whisked to safety by a deeply eccentric man who snaffles her away to a bizarre world of huge talking cats, umbrella-based civic transport and a living, breathing hotel. An amazing exercise in world-building and a breathless adventure, with fairly sinister flashes that looks set to become a classic in the vein of Joan Aiken and Diana Wynne-Jones.





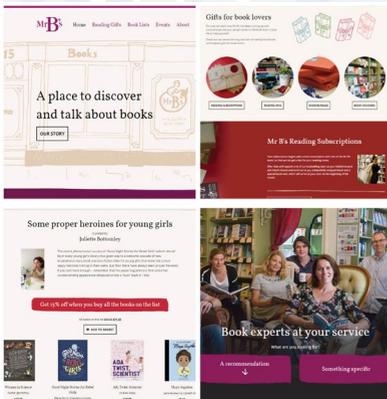
## HOW'S THE PAIN by PASCAL GARNIER

HB - £12 - Mr B's/Gallic (Fiction)

The perfect introduction to the novellas of French noir master, Pascal Garnier – which is why we are celebrating it with our very own Mr B's exclusive limited edition, with a Stanley Donwood designed cover. Young Bernard embarks on a life changing road trip across France, with Simon, his new employer. Simon hasn't been completely honest about what he does for a living – but over the course of the journey, Bernard will find out the truth. A cast of memorable characters (including Bernard's tragicomic mother); a generous helping of black humour and a touch of romance can be found amongst the inevitable death or two.

## INTRODUCING THE SPECTACULAR NEW

[www.mrbsemporium.com](http://www.mrbsemporium.com)



This year Father Christmas (aka Storm Consultancy, Bath) came early to the Mr B's household and delivered a shiny new website!

Featuring bespoke, quirky book lists (think “Hedgerow Noir” or “When Farm Animals Go Bad”), all of the details on our unique Reading Gifts, events programme and book-loving team AND a Recommendation Station where you can ask us to find your next great read - our website offers plenty of ways to discover the perfect gift for the book lover in your life (or for yourself!).

You'll also find an online version of THIS catalogue where you can browse and buy all of the books inside. Happy web surfing one and all!

**We hope that you've enjoyed reading our 2017 Christmas catalogue. Don't forget there's 10% off all these titles from now until Christmas Eve.**

This catalogue is brought to you by the team at Mr B's. The reviews were written by Amy, Danielle, Ed, Eli, Emma, Henry, Jess, Juliette, Kate, Lottie, Lucinda, Nic, Sam and Tom. The catalogue was designed and produced by Kate and the illustrations and front cover artwork were kindly provided by Pam Smy.

*Come visit us: Monday - Friday: 9am - 6pm, Saturday 9:30am - 6:30pm, Sunday: 11am - 5pm*

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