

MR. B'S
EMPORIUM of
READING DELIGHTS

2018

CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE



K.J. Mountford

Merry CHRISTMAS BOOK LOVERS!

A festive welcome to the 'Perfect' (!) Mr B's 2018 Christmas Catalogue. Once again, our bookselling elves have rounded up the very best books of 2018 and gathered them together in this spangly brochure to make your Christmas shopping as easy as (a mince) pie!

Each book has been reviewed by the Mr B's team and comes bearing a 10% discount from now until Christmas Eve.

To purchase any of the books in this catalogue (and lots more besides):

- * Pop into Mr B's at 14-15 John Street, Bath to browse our catalogue titles and pick our brains for plenty more recommendations
- * Visit our online shop at www.mrbsemporium.com
- * Email books@mrbsemporium.com, or call 01225 331155

A massive thank you to Karl James Mountford for creating the stunning illustrations on the cover and throughout this catalogue. Karl is the brilliantly talented cover artist for Helena Duggan's 'A Place Called Perfect' Series, so where better to begin...

THE TROUBLE WITH PERFECT BY HELENA DUGGAN PB - £6.99 - USBORNE (CHILDREN'S 9+)



At the dramatic end of 'A Place Called Perfect', we were left in no doubt that the intrigue surrounding this bizarrely idyllic town was far from over. In that first book we followed Violet to 'Perfect' and watched as she teamed up with the illusive "Boy" and slowly pieced together the mysteries, hiding behind a town of contented people (with bad eyesight!). In the sequel Violet and Boy are back and, after an inspired visual recap of book one, the plot twists return. One of the most inventive and exciting new series in children's literature.

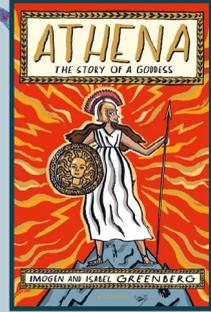




ATHENA: THE STORY OF A GODDESS BY IMOGEN & ISABEL GREENBERG

HB - £14.99 - BLOOMSBURY (CHILDREN'S NON-FICTION 6+)

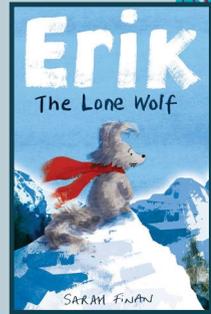
Written and illustrated by the phenomenally talented Greenberg sisters, this fantastic retelling of the life of Athena, Greek goddess of wisdom and war, is simply awesome. Both fair and fearless, anyone who crosses her path will suffer a terrible fate. Watch as she turns her enemy into a spider, competes against her furious uncle, and keeps Odysseus safe on his journey home. There is much to admire and inspire in this captivating book.



ERIK THE LONE WOLF BY SARAH FINAN

PB - £6.99 - FRANCES LINCOLN - (CHILDREN'S 2+)

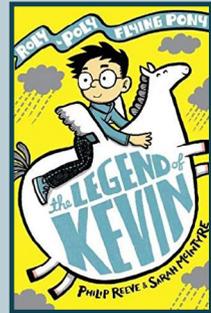
Erik is tired of the rules and how crowded life with the pack can be. Constantly being told what not to do and where not to go. Erik has had enough, and sets off for the first time as a lone wolf. And while it is fun to climb higher, and ski faster, and go further than ever before, it may come at a cost. A funny, original and superbly illustrated picture book, Erik shows us the true value of the pack.



THE LEGEND OF KEVIN BY PHILIP REEVE & SARAH MCINTYRE

HB - £8.99 - OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS (CHILDREN'S 6+)

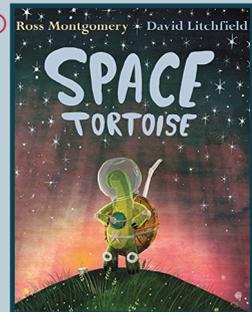
Our new favourite from this brilliant author/illustrator combo! One stormy night Kevin, a biscuit-loving flying pony, is blown out of his tree and fortuitously lands on the balcony of Max who has always longed for his own pet. But danger is nigh and as the flood waters rise, Max and Kevin must somehow dodge the evil sea monkeys, rescue the headmaster and save the day. A must for all lovers of flying ponies, custard creams and the very silly.



SPACE TORTOISE BY ROSS MONTGOMERY & DAVID LITCHFIELD

PB - £6.99 - FABER & FABER - (CHILDREN'S 3+)

Living in a cosy dry playground bin is a fine life for a tortoise. Or at least it is until you get thinking about who else might be out there. The starry night certainly looks full of life – perhaps that's the place to find some companionship! And so begins one tortoise's space race. A tough ask when your booster is a plastic straw and you first have to make it across sandpit deserts and paddling pool oceans. A picture book quest that glows as it celebrates perseverance and new friends.

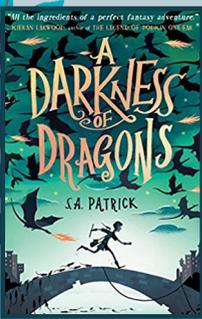


PERFECT YOUNG ADVENTURES



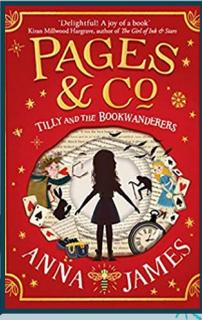
BE PREPARED BY VERA BROSGOL
PB - £9.99 - ROARING BROOK PRESS
(CHILDREN'S GRAPHIC NOVEL, 10+)

An outdoorsy comic caper that sees schoolgirl Vera head to Russian summer camp (in her new American homeland) to crack the art of friendship building. A rollercoaster summer ensues, full of homesickness, new alliances, fireside storytelling, camping fiascos and cross-cultural confusion. This funny and sensitive graphic novel is based on the author's own experiences, bookended by the actual letters that she and her forlorn younger brother wrote to their parents asking to be rescued from camp!



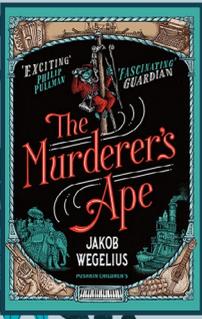
A DARKNESS OF DRAGONS BY S.A. PATRICK
PB - £6.99 - USBORNE (CHILDREN'S 8+)

On a harsh winter's evening, young Patch Brightwater arrives at Tiviscan, a village overrun with rats, in dire need of assistance. As an apprentice piper, Patch is eager to help but plays a forbidden spell song and is quickly thrown in jail. When Patch uncovers a secret about the evil Piper of Hamelyn, it is up to him and his new companions to save the world. In an imaginative and original retelling of this classic tale, Patrick has created an immersive magical world which keeps you on your toes!



PAGES & CO. BY ANNA JAMES
HB - £12.99 - HARPER COLLINS (CHILDREN'S 9+)

For Tilly, school holidays mean bookshop time (hooray!) because she lives with her grandparents in a narrow house connected to the kooky labyrinthine Pages & Co. Behind this booktopian façade though, Tilly's life is becoming peppered with mysteries – who is this Lizzy woman that her grandma keeps chatting to? Where did that red-haired girl called Anne (with an e) spring up from? Who left the marmalade sandwich on the bookshop floor? And might the answers lie within the books themselves?



THE MURDERER'S APE BY JAKOB WEGELIUS
PB - £7.99 - PUSHKIN CHILDREN'S BOOKS (CHILDREN'S 10+)

There is no-one quite like Sally - an extraordinary ape, loyal friend and gifted engineer. When a deal ends badly Sally must do everything she can to clear her beloved Chief of a crime he didn't commit. Join Sally as she sits at her old Underwood typewriter and narrates her madcap adventures, travelling from Lisbon to Bombay, meeting a colourful cast of unique characters along the way. With vibrant maps and gorgeous illustrations, this is a classic in the making!

perFect TeenAge Kicks

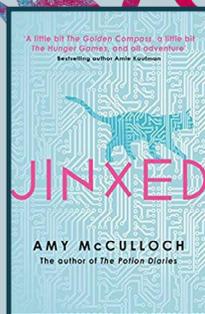
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JINXED BY AMY McCULLOCH

PB - £7.99 - SIMON & SCHUSTER (TEEN 12+)

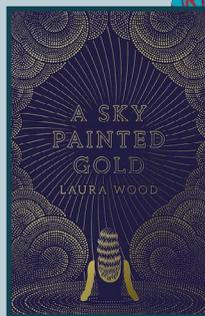
Imagine replacing your sad old iphone with a state of the art animal robot (aka Baku) that kept you technologically connected but also played the part of a loyal companion! This fast-paced, futuristic novel features awesome girl engineer Lacey Chu, who dreams of attending an elite tech academy. When her entry is refused, Lacey almost abandons hope and then she meets Jinx; a super-smart, but battered cat Baku who could be the key to her bright future, if she can only get him to do as he's told...



A SKY PAINTED GOLD BY LAURA WOOD

PB - £7.99 - SCHOLASTIC (TEEN 14+)

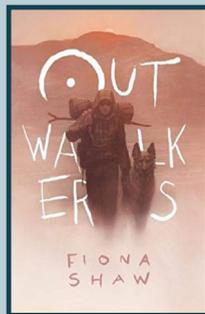
Lou has always dreamed of being a writer and relishes her time spent reading Agatha Christies in the grand Cardew House - which has stood empty for years. Her quiet world changes when the Cardew family return to Cornwall for the summer and Lou is swept up into the glamour of the 1920s with parties, romance and new friendships. Beautifully descriptive, Wood's writing perfectly depicts the contrasting sleepy Cornish village atmosphere with the Gatsby-esque drama.



OUTWALKERS BY FIONA SHAW

HB - £10.99 - DAVID FICKLING (TEEN 13+)

In a frighteningly imaginable future England, borders are in place, free movement is prohibited and the population is tracked by an all-seeing, all-controlling government, through chips implanted at birth. Orphaned Jake in an outwalker: a rebel who has escaped the tracking chip and is now on the run (along with his adorable dog, Jet!) hoping to escape to the safety of Scotland. This dystopian adventure is a nail-biting survival story about friendship against the odds in a post-Brexit future.

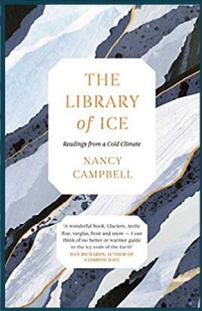


ORPHAN MONSTER SPY BY MATT KILLEEN

PB - £7.99 - USBORNE (TEEN 13+)

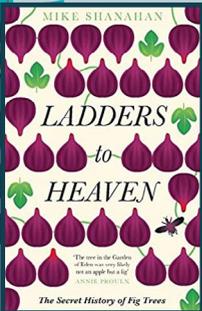
This is a brilliant historical adventure that centres on a 15 year old Jewish girl left stranded in Nazi Europe. A mysterious man, mindful of her innate skills at deception and survival, places her in an elite Nazi girls school to help scupper plans for a devastating new turn in the war effort. This is a novel that doesn't pull its punches and is probably not for the faint hearted but my eldest daughter loved the edginess and action taking place amidst a particularly vivid setting.





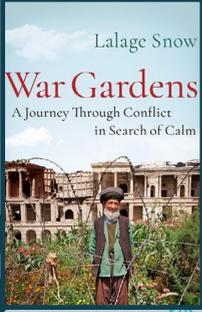
THE LIBRARY OF ICE BY NANCY CAMPBELL HB - £14.99 - SCRIBNER (NATURE/TRAVEL)

Nancy Campbell's clear, intelligent and captivating storytelling transports the reader to the many homes of ice, from remote Arctic settlements to the ice houses of Calcutta. She examines the impact of ice on our lives, at a time when our lives are impacting on the continued existence of polar ice. 'The Library of Ice' combines travel, memoir and science writing, and is a vital and insightful book.



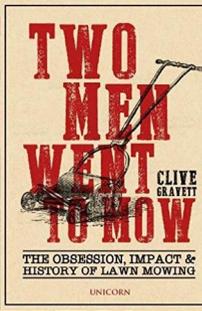
LADDERS TO HEAVEN BY MIKE SHANAHAN PB - £8.99 - UNBOUND (NATURE/HISTORY)

As we enter figgy pudding season, this niche but brilliant book explores the importance of fig trees. Alongside a fascinating look at their cultural influence, symbolism and history, we see how the now 700-odd varieties of this incredible plant have withstood more than 80 million years of planetary upheaval, how wasps help them bear fruit year round to sustain so many other species and how they could yet play a vital role in repairing forests and limiting climate change.



WAR GARDENS BY LALAGE SNOW HB - £20 - QUERCUS (GARDEN)

Gardening seems to be in our DNA – human beings have created gardens throughout history and across the globe. Its impact on our mental and physical wellbeing is no better illustrated than through journalist and photographer Lalage Snow's touching portraits of those striving to grow and tend their gardens in war zones. Whether in Afghanistan, The West Bank, Israel or the Ukraine, peace and beauty is sought through horticulture.



TWO MEN WENT TO MOW BY CLIVE GRAVETT HB - £14.99 - UNICORN (GARDEN)

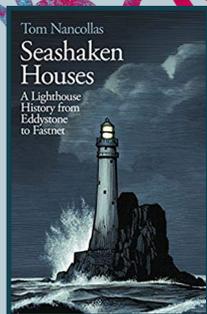
There's nothing like the smell of freshly mown grass to evoke warm summer days, but our ability to cultivate velvety lawns without the need to employ an army of grass cutters was only made possible by the invention of the lawnmower in 1830 by Edwin Beard Budding. Thus our culture of lawn loving was born and Clive Gravett's book is an entertaining celebration of all things turfy – from the smallest front garden to the flawless football pitch.

A Perfect Artistic Blend

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SEASHAKEN HOUSES BY TOM NANCOLLAS HB - £16.99 - PENGUIN (HISTORY)

Lighthouses are a striking, immediately recognisable symbol of our relationship with the sea. They are at once imaginatively romantic and solidly utilitarian. *Seashaken Houses* takes us on an immersive tour of the offshore rock lighthouses of Great Britain and Ireland; a sumptuous book full of beautiful descriptions, celebrating the romance of lighthouses, their history, and the characters who built them and live within them.



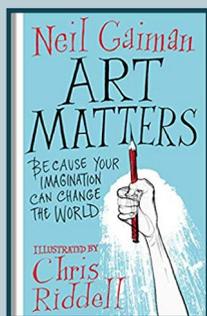
THE UNFINISHED PALAZZO BY JUDITH MACKRELL PB - £9.99 - THAMES & HUDSON (ART/ARCHITECTURE)

On Venice's Grand Canal stands the iconic Palazzo Venier dei Leoni (known as the Palazzo non finito as it remained a single storey building). Judith Mackrell explores its history through the lives of three C20 women who helped shape it. We drift from the eccentric and lavish balls of Luisa Casati, through the salons of Lady Doris Castlerosse to the stewardship of Peggy Guggenheim and the palazzo's reincarnation as a museum of modern art.



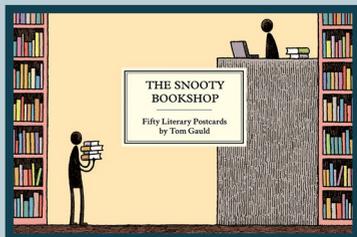
ART MATTERS BY NEIL GAIMAN & CHRIS RIDDELL HB - £9.99 - HEADLINE (ART/CREATIVITY)

Certain voices have the power to truly inspire us to get up and create something of our own – immediately, no excuses. Through his stories, speeches and essays, Neil Gaiman has done this for many, and this wee compilation is an injection of creative elixir in book form. Our own loo-decorating favourite illustrator Chris Riddell makes Gaiman's words explode with pencil-life, making this an essential gift for those longing to defeat self-doubt and find artistic joy on the other side.



THE SNOOTY BOOKSHOP BY TOM GAULD HB - £12.99 - CANONGATE (HUMOUR)

Bookish cartoonist extraordinaire Tom Gauld is back with this book of fifty hilarious literary images that doubles up as a collection of tear-off postcards with which to bombard your book-nut friends. From mice expiring before hibernation time because they just wanted to get *Ulysses* finished, to a library with a bay dedicated to poetry by left-handed Scandinavians, the foibles of the book world and book obsessiveness are celebrated and teased in equal measure.

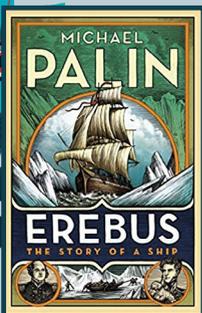




Rooms with a View
The Secret Life of Grand Hotels
 Adrian Mourby

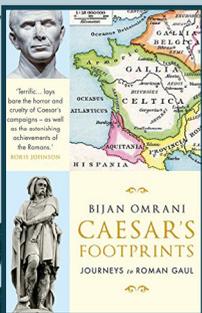
ROOMS WITH A VIEW BY ADRIAN MOURBY
 PB - £8.99 - ICON (TRAVEL WRITING)

Take a trip to the majestic hotels of the world with this bellhop's view of life in legendary residences from Delhi's Imperial Hotel to New York's Plaza. The back stories of fifty grand hotels are crammed with tales of survival amidst conflict as well as glamour and excess. You are entering a world where Salvador Dali might order a flock of sheep as room service in Paris or John Wilkes Booth might practise his pistol skills in his Boston hotel room.



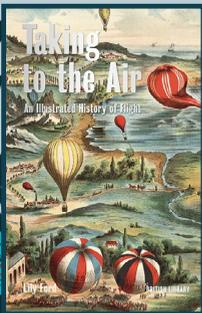
EREBUS: THE STORY OF A SHIP BY MICHAEL PALIN
 HB - £20 - CORNERSTONE (HISTORY)

In the C19, the spirit of exploration in Britain was rampant and so when the Erebus was launched in 1826, her subsequent voyages would take in both the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Her last voyage, however – to navigate the Northwest Passage under John Franklin - was doomed. Michael Palin's engaging book is partly a history of the ship and a biography of those who sailed in her and partly (following her rediscovery in 2014) an account of his own journey to the site of the wreck.



CAESAR'S FOOTPRINTS BY BIJAN OMRANI
 PB - £10 - HEAD OF ZEUS (HISTORY/TRAVEL)

What have the Romans ever done for... the French? Well, they left quite the legacy as anyone who has holidayed in France will have noticed. In this lively and accessible book, Omrani explores the Roman war against Gaul and the cultural overhaul and urbanisation that followed it. Beginning in the old port of Marseilles and roaming (get it?) across France, we are led on a journey of discovery that brings history to life through the towns, buildings and fragments that remain.



TAKING TO THE AIR EDITED BY LILY FORD
 HB - £25 - BRITISH LIBRARY (TRANSPORT)

This stunning, heavily illustrated story of man's obsession with defying gravity is inspired by the British Library's vast archive of prints and photographs on the subject. From the failures to the successes, each innovation has captured the public's imagination and inspired writers and artists. Lily Ford also highlights a shift in our experience of flying: from being spectators marvelling at daredevils, to becoming passengers ourselves.

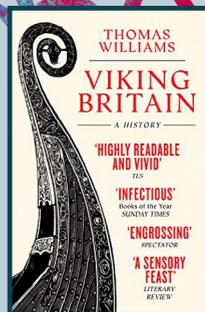
Our Far From Perfect History

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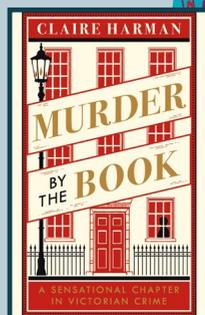
VIKING BRITAIN: A HISTORY BY THOMAS WILLIAMS PB - £9.99 - HARPER COLLINS (HISTORY)

Who were they and why did they come? Call them Old Norse or Vikings, they've had a renaissance in popularity of late, but are often portrayed as either peaceful traders or bloodthirsty raiders. History is far more complex, and Williams' book sets the scene brilliantly. Immerse yourself in a fascinating world of myth, ancient clues and meetings between cultures. Entertaining and hugely enlightening for anyone curious to break through the stereotype, to the exceedingly more exciting truth.



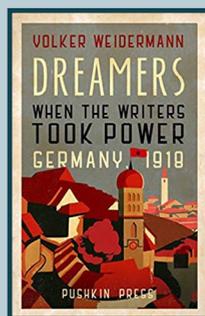
MURDER BY THE BOOK BY CLAIRE HARMAN HB - £14.99 - VIKING (HISTORY)

It was 6 May 1840 when Lord William Russell was found lying on his bed with his head almost severed, an act supposedly inspired by 'Jack Sheppard' a popular novel that was taking London by storm. Harman uncovers this story with enthusiasm and clarity, bringing to light eye-opening detail that has previously been unpublished. Prepare to be thrown right into the heart of one of Victorian London's most gripping murder cases and find out for yourself: can a novel really kill?



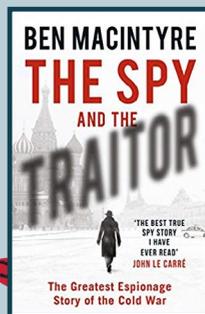
DREAMERS BY VOLKER WEIDERMANN HB - £16.99 - PUSHKIN PRESS (HISTORY)

A zesty entertaining history of the short-lived 'People's State of Bavaria' which emerged amidst the spirit of discontent and revolution in Germany following the end of WW1. Weidermann describes how a group of wordsmiths and cultural figures, including Thomas Mann and Rilke, pushed for change under the leadership of journalist Kurt Eisner. Concentrating on the role of these creatives in this tumultuous six-month slice of history, the author also muses on what might have been, had their new state survived.

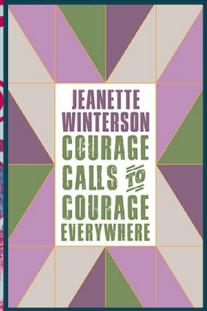


THE SPY AND THE TRAITOR BY BEN MACINTYRE HB - £25 - PENGUIN (HISTORY)

By the day, this book seems to be more and more relevant. Closely following the savvy and sophisticated Oleg Gordievsky, the Soviet Union's top man, as he turns MI6 agent over the course of the Cold War. As thrilling and compelling as any spy fiction novel, Ben Macintyre demonstrates exceptional research with a much-needed human angle and shows us everything we would want to know about spy craft.

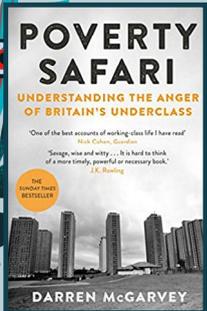


Seeking a Less Imperfect World



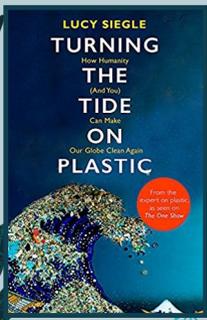
COURAGE CALLS TO COURAGE EVERYWHERE BY JEANETTE WINTERSON HB - £7.99 - CANONGATE (POLITICS)

A century since the first Representation of the People Act to include women was passed, who better to reflect on it than Jeanette Winterson? One of our boldest writers, constantly breaking new storytelling ground. Here she looks at the moment when women (only some, in fact) 'won the vote', moving on to the challenges we face today. Winterson weaves a story of celebration which we're all part of, with trademark gusto and wit.



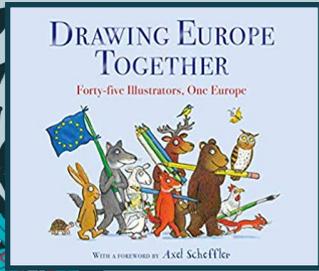
POVERTY SAFARI BY DARREN MCGARVEY PB - £8.99 - MACMILLAN (CURRENT AFFAIRS)

The Brexit referendum highlighted deep class divisions in our society. The Grenfell Tower tragedy sparked interest in the experiences of people made vulnerable by poverty. 'Poverty Safari' takes these two events as its starting point, guides us through the causes and effects of poverty, and examines why the political left and right both consistently fail to tackle the issue with any lasting success. A heart-breaking memoir and a fierce polemic; McGarvey's anger is blistering, his insights captivating, his solutions challenging and robust.



TURNING THE TIDE ON PLASTIC BY LUCY SIEGLE HB - £12.99 - ORION (ENVIRONMENT)

In this vital book for our times, Siegle first introduces our reliance on plastic, how it all began and the dire situation our trash-strewn planet finds itself in (she had me at "enough plastic is thrown away annually to circle the world 4 times"). Then, crucially, she presents her passionate call to arms telling us how we can alter our habits to remove unnecessary plastic, reduce and reuse our "stuff" and recycle more effectively. The most valuable stocking filler ever.



DRAWING EUROPE TOGETHER BY VARIOUS ILLUSTRATORS HB - £12.99 - MACMILLAN (EUROPE)

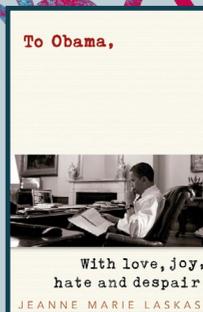
Born as an exhibition for the 2017 Frankfurt Book Fair, this thoughtful and honest little book features 45 images of what Europe is and has been (or could be) for different people, by 45 celebrated illustrators. From Oliver Jeffers' hypothetical Northern-Irish passport, to Kristina Andres' cow happily juggling stars, their drawings express faith in togetherness, as well as uncertainty for the future, welcoming you into each artist's visual world, to share in the conversation.

Many Perfect Forms of Writing

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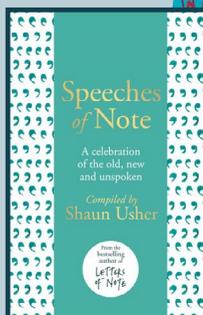
TO OBAMA BY JEANNE MARIE LASKAS HB - £20 - BLOOMSBURY (AMERICAN HISTORY)

At his own request, President Obama read 10 selected letters every day, from the mass sent to him by ordinary American citizens. Their contents ranged from heart-warming stories of legalised gay marriage to Syrian refugees recounting their journeys, covering every facet of American life and giving an exceptional insight into a nation and its leader. 'To Obama' compiles letters and replies with Obama interviews, and tells the story of the staff tasked with reading thousands of missives every day.



SPEECHES OF NOTE COMPILED BY SHAUN USHER HB - £25 - CORNERSTONE (SPEECHES)

How many of your favourite quotes come from speeches? Quite a few, we'd wager, after dipping into Shaun Usher's treasure trove. It's the intriguing (think Tilda Swinton honouring her friend David Bowie) the unexpected (Kermit the Frog's commencement speech) and the censored (Wamsutta Frank B. James denouncing the mistreatment of his people, the Wampanoag), however, which shine brightest and will pull you back in, for years to come. A beautifully assembled smorgasbord of arresting, everlasting moments.



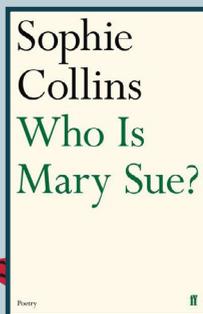
CAN'T STAND UP FOR FALLING DOWN BY ALLAN JONES PB - £9.99 - BLOOMSBURY (MUSIC)

An essay collection that thrusts us into the hedonistic, uncontrollable world of '70s and '80s music. These reminiscences of Jones' life as a young music journalist feature anyone who was rocking, rolling or just behaving badly at the time. A Lemmy interview begins with an offer of speed from a German helmet, a weary Geldof bemoans his 45th consecutive press reception and Lou Reed, Neil Young and countless others blow their own post-show trumpets louder than they've strummed their guitars.



WHO IS MARY SUE? BY SOPHIE COLLINS PB - £10.99 - FABER & FABER (POETRY)

A 'Mary Sue', in the world of fan-fiction, is a poorly disguised version of an author – idealised, one-faced and (surprise!) unequivocally female. These poems and prose-snippets, on the other hand, are raw and sharp-eyed, and they draw our attention to the gendered expectations regarding writing by women which still abound. Playful and original in form, Sophie Collins' collection is also welcoming and accessible – a complex, fun and painful delight for anyone looking for a fresh voice.



Mr B'S Reading Subscriptions

A BESPOKE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE FOR BOOK-LOVERS

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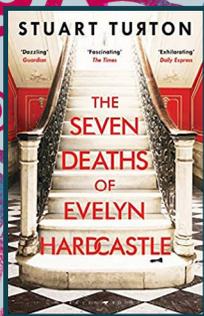
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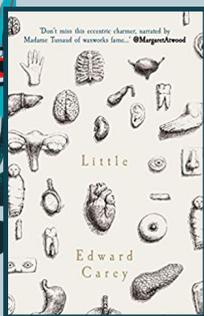




THE SEVEN DEATHS OF EVELYN HARDCASTLE BY STUART TURTON

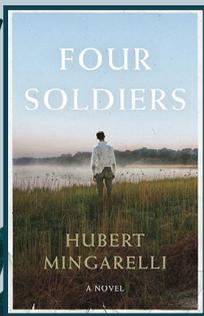
PB - £8.99 - BLOOMSBURY (FICTION)

What do you get if you cross a game of Cluedo with 'Groundhog Day', and then throw in a little body-jumping? We follow Aiden Bishop, a guest at the Hardcastles' soiree who finds himself reliving the day of Evelyn's murder seven times, each time inhabiting a different guest. As Aiden begins piecing the mystery together, his own situation becomes increasingly twisted. Smart, gripping, and wicked fun – you'll need your notebook and pencil for this one!



LITTLE BY EDWARD CAREY PB - £10.99 - GALLIC BOOKS (FICTION)

In 1761 an odd little girl called Marie Grosholtz is born in a village in Switzerland. Orphaned at the age of six, she finds employment with a reclusive and rather eccentric anatomist, from whom she curiously learns the art of wax sculpting. It is a talent which takes her from the filthy gutters of pre-revolutionary Paris, to the luxurious Palace of Versailles, all culminating in her legacy as the great Madame Tussaud! Peppered with Carey's unique illustrations, this macabre tale is simply unforgettable.



FOUR SOLDIERS BY HUBERT MINGARELLI HB - £12.99 - GRANTA (FICTION)

The tail end of winter in the Russian Revolution puts us in the shoes of four men reluctantly counting down the days until the fighting starts again. As the days get longer and warmer these four friends find out the true value of brotherhood and relive the innocence of a time long past. Both beautiful and heart breaking, this new novel from the author of 'A Meal in Winter', will stay with you long after the final page.



THE TOYMAKERS BY ROBERT DINSDALE PB - £8.99 - EBURY (FICTION)

Welcome to Papa Jack's Emporium, open at the first sign of frost each year. Feast your eyes on the wonders of this magical toyshop hidden in the depths of London, where the impossible is made possible, and not everything is quite as it seems. It is 1917 and Cathy Wray is sixteen and pregnant when she seeks refuge in her new-found employment at the toyshop, casting her into the midst of old family feuds and a world of magic she never knew existed. Perfect for fans of 'The Night Circus', and the ultimate Christmas read!

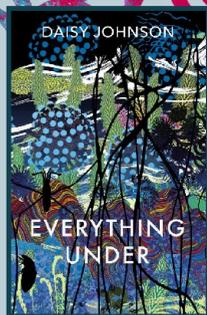
More Perfectly Crafted Fiction

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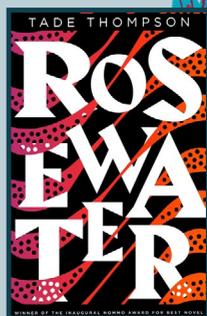
EVERYTHING UNDER BY DAISY JOHNSON HB - £14.99 - JONATHAN CAPE (FICTION)

Gretel is sixteen when her mother abandons her, leaving her with nothing to face the world except an invented language known only by the two of them. When word of her mother's whereabouts resurfaces, it brings with it many half-formed memories of their life on the river together, of the lonely boy who stayed with them one winter, to tales of a creature lurking in the water and getting ever closer. A new take on a very familiar Sophoclean tragedy, and one exceptionally beautiful piece of writing.



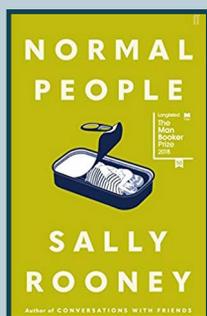
ROSEWATER BY TADE THOMPSON PB - £8.99 - ORBIT (FICTION)

Nigeria, 2066. Rosewater is a town on the edge, a community formed around a mysterious alien biodome. When rumours of its strange healing powers begin to spread, thousands descend, hungry for a glimpse. Kaaro is a government agent with a past. He has seen inside the biodome and has no wish to do so again. He is a 'sensitive', a psychic able to read minds, and when people like him start getting sick and die, he is drawn into a battle he isn't prepared for.



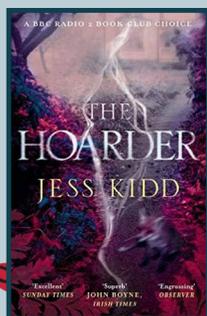
NORMAL PEOPLE BY SALLY ROONEY HB - £14.99 - FABER & FABER (FICTION)

A coming of age story which puts the lives of two teenage characters under the microscope and effortlessly makes their 'ordinary' relationship compelling. Externally, Connell and Marianne seem unlikely soul mates - at school she is a loner and he is the golden boy - but they are both fiercely intelligent and share creative inner lives. As they make their way through university, their crackling dialogue and poignant moments of self-doubt are perfectly observed.



THE HOARDER BY JESS KIDD PB - £8.99 - CANONGATE (FICTION)

Bridlemere is a house of many secrets. That is if you can find them through cantankerous Cathal Flood's mountainous hoard of junk, and the many, many cats. In walks caretaker Maud, taking on an unwanted job that many have tried and failed at before. So what is it that Cathal's son wants from the house? And did Cathal's wife really accidentally fall down the stairs to her death? Littered with Irish humour and folklore, and a litany of foul-mouthed comedic saints, this is a family mystery unlike any other.





Yet More Perfectly Crafted Fiction



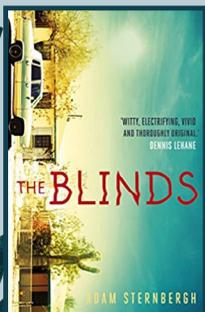
ESTORIL BY DEJAN TIAGO-STANKOVIĆ PB - £8.99 - HEAD OF ZEUS (FICTION)

This glorious novel mixes fact and fiction with aplomb. In the Portuguese Riviera stands the opulent Palácio Estoril Hotel. During the Second World War, it hosted an illustrious group of spies, soldiers and sympathisers from both sides of the conflict, due to Portugal's 'neutral' status. Into this mix of larger than life characters – one of whom was a real inspiration for James Bond – comes a young Jewish boy, who arrives alone and swears that his parents are coming to meet him...soon.



BOTTLED GOODS BY SOPHIE VAN LLEWYN PB - £7.99 - FAIRLIGHT BOOKS (FICTION)

In short chapters that could stand alone as micro-novellas but also combine perfectly to create a smoothly-flowing novel, we are transported to Ceaușescu's Romania. Comedy abounds, speckled with flashes of magical realism, as newly-weds Liviu and Alina struggle with daily life and keeping below the Secret Service radar. A sometimes kooky, sometimes tense reminder of recent Central European history - a time and place where the consequences of overlooking a pupil's possession of a banned magazine can be far-reaching.



THE BLINDS BY ADAM STERNBERGH PB - £7.99 - FABER & FABER (FICTION)

If you're after a belter of a twisty turny thriller then this is your boy. The idea is simple, a town in the desert entirely made up of witness relocation, mostly very bad people with a tiny percentage of innocents. The hook is that they have all had the memory of their crime wiped, they are all effectively innocent again. And then three newcomers arrive who haven't been wiped; they know who everyone is and have a murderous agenda.



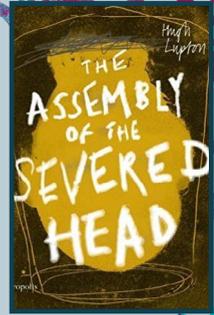
FRIDAY BLACK BY NANA KWAME ADJEI-BRENYAH HB - £12.99 - QUERCUS (SHORT STORIES)

When George Saunders described this collection of short stories as "an excitement and a wonder", I had to devour it immediately – and the man wasn't wrong. The opening story, 'The Finkelstein 5' is a no-holds-barred tale of injustice at its worst, as one white man is acquitted of the murder of five black children. This brutality flows through the rest of the collection, but there's a real tenderness that runs with it and an absurd sense of humour to round it all off. An incredibly diverse collection of stories that are full of humour and cruelty.



THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SEVERED HEAD BY HUGH LUPTON PB - £11 - PROPOLIS (FICTION)

In the quiet of C13 Wales, severed heads roll in with the tide along the rural coast. The Bard's College has been destroyed; headless corpses litter the floor leaving one survivor gravely injured. He is the greatest bard of the age, he alone holds all the branches of the Mabinogion in his head. As time runs out, he recounts these epic Welsh myths to be written down for the first time and save them from being lost forever. This amazing novel is a celebration of ancient mythology and the magic of storytelling and is an absolute joy to read.



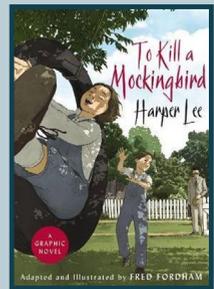
INSIDE THE VILLAINS BY CLOTILDE PERRIN HB - £16.99 - GECKO PRESS (CHILDREN'S NON-FICTION 8+)

In this glorious and inventive interactive picture book, the secrets of some of our favourite fairytale villains are revealed as we delve inside wolves, giants and witches. Discover which unlucky characters the wolf has eaten and what trinkets the witch holds in her pockets. With superb engineering and simply stunning illustration and design. Lift the flaps, pull out various body parts and uncover those characters we all love to hate.



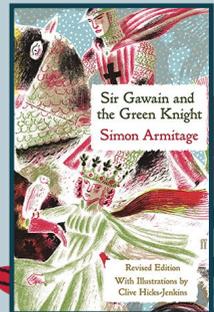
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD BY HARPER LEE *ADAPTED & ILLUSTRATED BY FRED FORDHAM HB - £16.99 - CORNERSTONE (GRAPHIC NOVEL)

If I were to write a wish-list of novels that I'd like to see retold in graphic novel form, 'To Kill a Mockingbird' would be at the summit. And now here it is and, crucially, it pays its dues to the original – adding a new visual angle to the characters without detracting from Harper Lee's story. Fred Fordham's clear illustrations are in tones perfectly recalling the Alabama setting and make for a fitting homage to novel and movie alike.



SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT BY SIMON ARMITAGE. ILLUSTRATED BY CLIVE HICKS-JENKINS HB - £14.99 - FABER & FABER (POETRY)

Simon Armitage's translation of this C14 poem, in which Sir Gawain beheads a mysterious knight, knowing he will face the same fate in a year's time, has in itself become an adored classic. This version allows contemporary readers to experience the atmosphere and drama of a story whose creator we know hardly anything about. In this revised edition though, we're also treated to a series of intensely colourful screen-prints, uncanny and joyful in equal measure, to further feed the imagination.

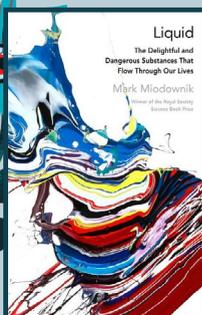




EXACTLY BY SIMON WINCHESTER

HB - £25 - HARPER COLLINS (HISTORY/SCIENCE)

An ode to precision and the scientists whose relentless pursuit of perfect accuracy has such a huge daily impact on our lives. Whether we're travelling, stargazing or just enjoying the gadgetry that surrounds us, we rely constantly on other people's obsession with detail without giving a moment's thought to the fact that our lives and leisure depend on those meticulous nerds. A blend of science and history crammed with tales of invention and reinvention from engineering's unsung heroes.



LIQUID BY MARK MIODOWNIK

HB - £16.99 - PENGUIN (SCIENCE)

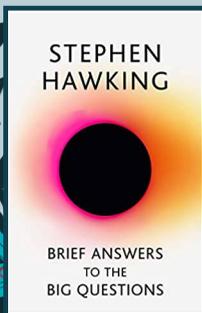
The ever-fascinating Royal Society Prize winner, Mark Miodownik, introduces the dreamy and deadly of the liquid world and explores how liquids have formed a pivotal part of our past and continue to shape our future. With the perfect blend of geeky insight and enthralling narrative, 'Liquid' unravels the mysteries behind peanut butter, the perfect cup of tea, kerosene and nitro-glycerine and the pre-flight safety routine and the impact of palm oil on the environment. Perfect for fireside reading with the festive liquid of your choice!



THE ASTRONAUT SELECTION TEST BOOK BY TIM PEAKE

HB - £20 - CENTURY (SCIENCE)

Do you have what it takes to become an astronaut? Featuring Tim Peake's first-hand-experiences, The Astronaut Selection Test Book pits you against the European Space Agency's notoriously tough application and training programme. Ranging in difficulty from jumping-in-space easy to breathing-in-space hard, featuring logic puzzles, concentration tests, and survival challenges, this quiz book is great fun for prospective astronauts of all ages.



BRIEF ANSWERS TO THE BIG QUESTIONS

BY STEPHEN HAWKING

HB - £14.99 - HODDER & STOUGHTON (SCIENCE)

An enlightening read, in true Hawking fashion, asking some of the big questions we like to ponder and providing concise and easy to understand answers. How did it all begin? Is time travel possible? What is inside a black hole? This book is the ideal gift for the avid physicist or arm-chair astronomer. A fitting finale to the career of one of our most crucial and awe-inspiring thinkers.

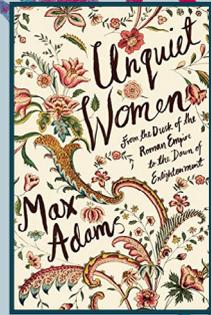
Perfectly Fascinating Lives

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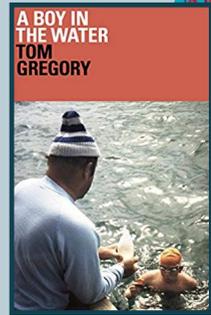
UNQUIET WOMEN BY MAX ADAMS HB - £20 - HEAD OF ZEUS (HISTORY)

An array of extraordinary women are brought to life in Max Adams' exploration of women speaking up for themselves between the fall of Rome and the Enlightenment. With a feminist undertone, Adams has made it his mission to re-address the gender imbalance in historical narrative. 'Unquiet Women' showcases individuals who impacted history in unexpected ways, from Anglo-Saxon noblewoman Wynflaed who owned male slaves, to Mary Astell a philosopher who challenged philosophical thought.



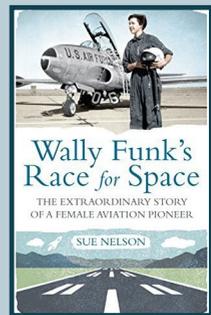
A BOY IN THE WATER BY TOM GREGORY HB - £14.99 - PENGUIN (BIOGRAPHY/SPORT)

Was it an inspirational coach that persuaded an 11 year old boy to attempt to swim the English Channel in 1988 – or a deranged one? Tom remembers the gung-ho training which took him from swimming pool endurance sessions to freezing cold open water in the Lake District. The epic swim that took him almost 12 hours to complete is described in all its mind sapping and stamina challenging detail – and yet there's something about the tomato soup refuelling that's strangely nostalgic.



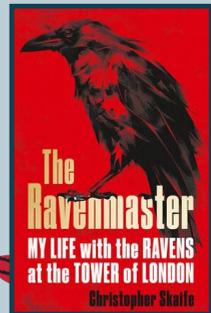
WALLY FUNK'S RACE FOR SPACE BY SUE NELSON HB - £14.99 - WESTBOURNE PRESS (BIOGRAPHY)

Wally Funk should have been amongst America's first female astronauts. She was 1 of 13 pilots to participate in the 1961 Women in Space programme, and she aced it; only for the scheme to be cancelled. In this biography, full of interviews and encounters with the now octogenarian Funk, we get tales of early promise and heart-breaking disappointment, of her later pioneering career in aviation safety and of the ongoing dream as Funk prepares to be amongst the first space tourists.



THE RAVENMASTER BY CHRISTOPHER SKAIFE HB - £14.99 - HARPER COLLINS (NATURE)

Christopher Skaife has some unusual colleagues, feathered and with distinct personalities. He's also a superb storyteller. The result of this combination is a fascinating and hugely readable memoir which allows us to go backstage at the mystery-ridden Tower of London, to experience some unique moments, from the morning Skaife was put in a raven cage, to a bird's sex change. Skaife's obvious passion will make it feel like you're sitting down for an unforgettable chat, to be charmed by these astounding birds and their world.





Practically Perfect in Every Way



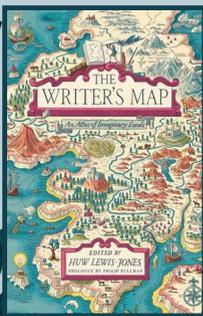
BATH: PAINTINGS BY PETER BROWN HB - £30 - SANSOM & CO (ART)

No-one can have captured more scenes of Bath, its inhabitants and elements in recent decades than Pete Brown. This new collection gives us all access to the work we might see him creating whenever we stroll through town and spot his easel on some windswept corner. From Milsom Street pedestrians gingerly negotiating flagstones that look like tarnished mirrors in the Spring rain, to crescents of rooftops in twilight snow; Bath comes to life in this ultimate Pete the Street collection.



SIMPLE BY YOTAM OTTOLENGHI HB - £25 - EBURY (FOOD)

We love Ottolenghi's recipes because of the complex, wonderful layers of flavour he creates that propel ordinary ingredients towards culinary heaven. Sometimes though, the long lists of ingredients and processes required to create his dishes can be daunting. This new book celebrates 'simple cooking' – whether it means a few well-chosen ingredients, a one-pot approach or taking moments to prepare. Taste is still king though!



THE WRITER'S MAP EDITED BY HUW LEWIS-JONES HB - £29.95 - THAMES & HUDSON (BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS)

Robert Louis Stevenson's treasure map; the Norse maps of the universe; Harry Potter's Marauders' Map: maps start stories and tell their own stories in turn. In 'The Writer's Map', you range over lands real and imagined, from epic fantasy landscapes to medieval conceptions of the world. Your travelling companions are a diverse range of writers and thinkers including Philip Pullman, Robert Macfarlane, Joanne Harris and David Mitchell. A book to be returned to again and again.



THE MOOMIN CRAFT BOOK HB - £25 - MACMILLAN (HOBBIES & CRAFT)

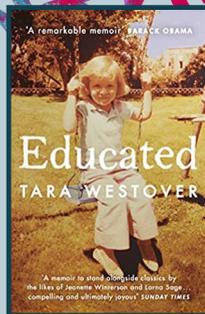
This marvellous crafting compendium will make a good home on any Moomin fanatic's workbench. A crochet Moomin-troll or Moomin themed jewellery and decorations, and enough other projects for beginners and artisans alike, this book is the perfect homage to the work of Tove Jansson. And whether you're a sewer, a knitter, a painter, a felter, a folder, or a beader, you will surely be able to make Moomin presents for the family next year!

Mr B's team Favourites

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NIC'S FAVE: EDUCATED BY TARA WESTOVER PB - £8.99 - CORNERSTONE (MEMOIR)

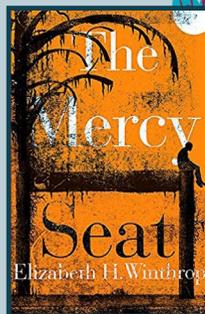
An unflinchingly honest look at a rural Idaho childhood which saw Westover raised by a father who believed both schools and the medical establishment were part of a government conspiracy. She recounts brutal shifts in the family's scrapyard, an attempted "rescue" by her grandparents and encounters with her volatile elder brother. And then comes her flight – to a late education that is at first awkward and then truly impressive. An astonishing and captivating memoir.



JULIETTE'S FAVE: THE MERCY SEAT BY ELIZABETH H. WINTHROP

HB - £14.99 - HODDER & STOUGHTON (FICTION)

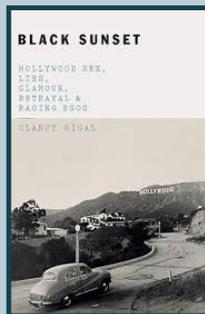
A powerful novel set during a single day as a young black man, falsely accused of rape, awaits the electric chair at midnight. His sentence sends deep ripples through the conscience of the town. What could be a depressing book is actually extraordinarily moving and uplifting as the light of humanity shines through with the use of multiple voices, from the father dragging his son's headstone on an ageing mule, to the Chief Prosecutor's wife preparing the prisoner's final meal.



ED'S FAVE: BLACK SUNSET BY CLANCY SIGAL

PB - £12.99 - ICON (PERFORMING ARTS)

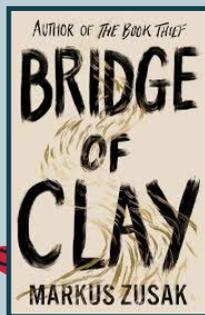
Sigal was a fresh-faced ex GI and son of a notorious union agitator who arrived in 50's Hollywood at the height of the communist witch hunts. This is a whip smart biography of disgraceful superstars and the political kowtowing of the movie elite. It is also a searingly honest account of the author's rebellion, tempered by his cowardice with the glitz/sleaze of L.A. as a perfect backdrop. A book that is told with such panache that it reads like a much improved Kerouac.

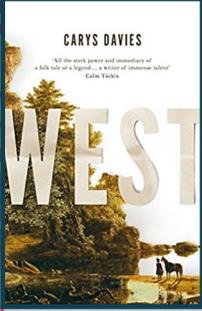


EMMA'S FAVE: BRIDGE OF CLAY BY MARKUS ZUSAK

HB - £18.99 - TRANSWORLD (FICTION)

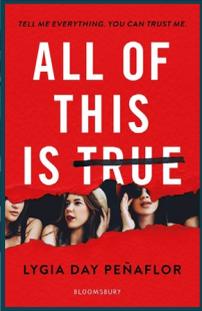
The Dunbar brothers exist in a world of their own, semi-feral, thriving off junk food and bad movies. They have only each other and their menagerie of pets to depend on. So when their father suddenly walks back into their lives, they realise they must each face up to him in their own way and confront a past tragedy that changed their lives forever. From the author of 'The Book Thief', this emotional rollercoaster is a masterpiece in storytelling. From the first page, you'll realise that you are reading something incredibly special, which will stay with you forever.





TOM'S FAVE: WEST BY CARYS DAVIES
HB - £12.99 - GRANTA (FICTION)

Cy Bellman, inspired by the discovery of giant skeletal remains in the Kentucky mud, is determined to head out alone from 19th century Pennsylvania, and discover one of these creatures alive in the unexplored regions to the west. This stunning debut is written with a lightness of touch that lends itself to the tragedy and humour of Davies' writing. While we laugh at Cy's optimism, the young daughter he leaves behind is left to fend for herself. As the tension escalates, we're left to wonder that perhaps the west is empty, and all the devils are here...



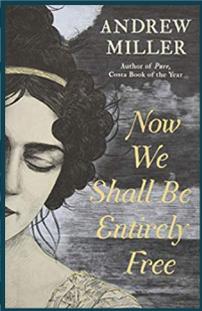
KATE'S FAVE: ALL OF THIS IS TRUE BY LYGIA DAY PEÑAFLO
PB - £7.99 - BLOOMSBURY (TEEN 14+)

'The Secret History' meets the 'Gilmore Girls' in this psychological young adult novel about the blurred lines between fiction and reality. 'All of this is True' features a cast of privileged teen book-lovers, who befriend the enigmatic author of their favourite novel and find themselves embroiled in her dark new narrative. Told through interviews, diaries, emails and book excerpts, this is a ridiculously addictive, tightly plotted tale of tricky characters and mind-boggling metafiction!



LUCINDA'S FAVE: KUDOS BY RACHEL CUSK
HB - £16.99 - FABER & FABER (FICTION)

This final part of Rachel Cusk's loose trilogy (where each book works perfectly as a standalone novel) sees writer Faye attend a literary festival in a city somewhere in southern Europe. The casual conversations she has with the people she encounters over the weekend – be it fellow writers or the man she happens to sit next to on the plane – are written up with such insight that small talk is elevated to philosophy. Imagine being spoon fed wisdom about the human condition – what an amazing reading experience.



LOTTIE'S FAVE: NOW WE SHALL BE ENTIRELY FREE BY ANDREW MILLER
HB - £18.99 - HODDER & STOUGHTON (FICTION)

It is a well-known fact at Mr B's that I am rather enamoured with Andrew Miller, and this book has only made it worse. Oozing with tension and beautiful prose, this novel centres around John Lacroix – a Captain returned from the Napoleonic War with partial deafness and unrecognised PTSD. As Lacroix recovers in the Scottish Isles, aided by members of an isolated community, it becomes clear that he is being hunted by fellow soldiers after being charged with war crimes.

PERFECT BOARD GAMES - VARIOUS PRICES

Our collection of boardgames has been growing in size and popularity since we first introduced them to the shop, and we're thrilled to offer a such a diverse and exciting selection. A firm favourite to play this year has been the small gem of a card game: 'The Lost Expedition'. Players work together to survive the Amazon Rainforest, overcoming the dangerous jungle in search El Dorado. We've also enjoyed recreating the Tour de France with 'Flamme Rouge', endured the stress of real-time battleships with 'Captain Sonar' and explored dangerous labyrinths with 'Dungeons & Dragons'. Come and chat to us for more recommendations and advice! (**THE LOST EXPEDITION - BLOOMSBURY - £21.98**)



A NEW CHAPTER IN THE STORY OF MR B'S

We are thrilled to announce that Mr B's is officially getting bigger and bolder! Thank you to everyone who supported our crowdfunding campaign this Autumn and, as ever, to all of our loyal customers.



Our new spaces - including an inspirational children's room 'The Woods Between the Words', and our 'Imaginarium' for writers and illustrators will open in Spring 2019.

Keep in touch with progress by joining our newsletter mailing list at www.mrbsemporium.com.

WE HOPE THAT YOU'VE ENJOYED READING OUR
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