



FAIRLIGHT BOOKS

SPRING 2021

WELCOME

...to our spring 2021 catalogue. After the upheaval of last year, we're excited to be getting back to what we love – championing and celebrating talented new and emerging writers and, wherever we can, supporting physical bookshops.

For 2021, we have a host of new authors to introduce to you, four more *Fairlight Moderns* for the summer, and a further addition to our new *HowTo...* series.

We hope that you will love these titles as much as we do.

Fairlight Books was established in 2017 to publish new and emerging writers of quality and literary fiction. Since then, our authors have been listed for several prizes, including longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction, shortlisted for the Paul Torday Prize and BBC Short Story Award, and featured on the The Walter Scott Prize Academy Recommends List.

SPRING 2021

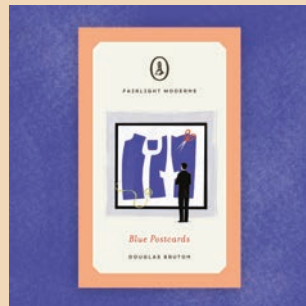
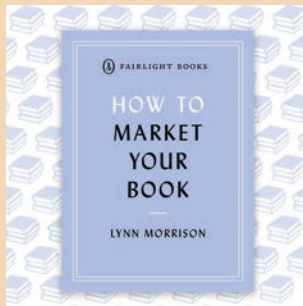


'I SIT DOWN, START TO READ. THE WORDS ARE LIKE NECTAR, LIKE HONEY. THEY TEMPT, CAPTURE, BEGUILLE, EXCITE. LIKE FIRE, LIKE WATER, LIKE FRESH AIR. THEY ARE OUR ELEMENT.'

—Alice Jolly, *A SAINT IN SWINDON*

Spring and Summer Reading: Beautiful Books

Quality fiction writing and a selection of non-fiction titles on subjects that inspire and intrigue us, or that we care about.



NEW NON-FICTION

HOW TO MEND A BROKEN HEART

Ziella Bryars

Lessons from the world of neuroscience

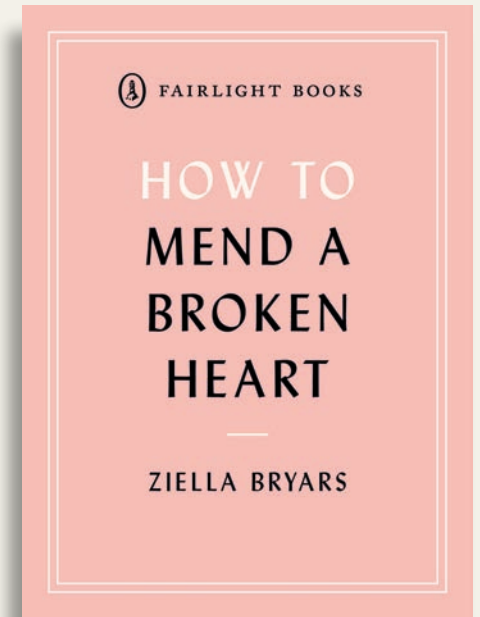
When Ziella Bryars was in the midst of heartbreak, a conversation with her neuroscientist best friend changed everything. Frustrated by unhelpful advice from magazines and rom-coms, Ziella began diving deep into the latest scientific research to help her understand the pain of heartbreak and find a route to recovery.

This warm and witty self-help book outlines the impact a relationship break-up has on our brains and bodies, and explores how a science-based approach can help us heal.

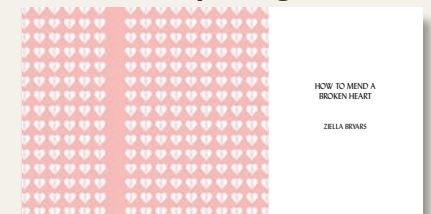
About the Author

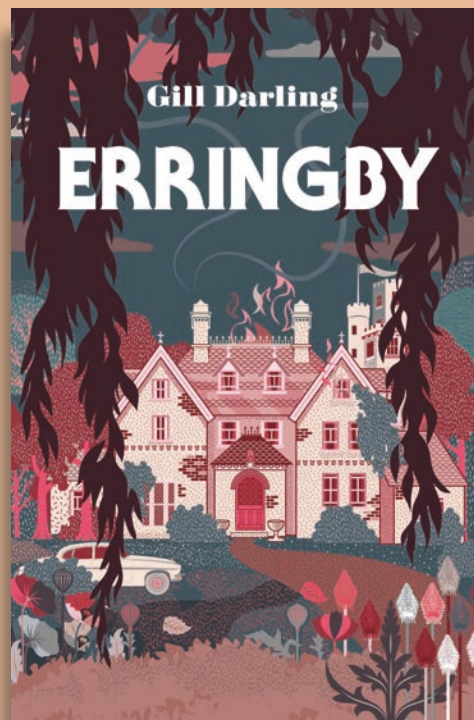
Ziella Bryars is a writer and producer. She founded the new writing theatre show *Love Bites* in 2008. Her plays include *Blind Date*, *True Love*, *A Room on Greek Street* and *Down in One*. Her work has been performed at Southwark Playhouse, the Live Theatre Newcastle and the Red Room New York, as well as the various London venues to host *Love Bites* over the years. Her love of romantic comedies and the chaos of modern dating have led Ziella to write extensively about love and relationships. She is currently working on her first novel and a limited television series. She lives in London.

ISBN: 9781912054329
PAPERBACK with flaps
£7.99 | 96pp
6 May '21
#MendaBrokenHeart



Flap design:





'A complex human drama, a beautifully written novel of exquisite poignancy.'

—Anna South, consultant editor

'Gill Darling is a writer with a tender touch and a wicked turn of phrase.'

—Ross Raisin, author of *A Natural*

ERRINGBY

Gill Darling

A captivating coming-of-age novel with echoes of Great Expectations

Kit is waiting expectantly for life to begin. Orphaned as a young child, he recoils from his adoptive parents' mundane existence, drawn instead to the bohemian world of his Uncle Col and Col's charismatic wife Marianne. At Erringby, Marianne's rambling family mansion, he becomes increasingly obsessed with his aunt until one debauched summer, the eighteen-year-old Kit wakes to find himself in bed with Marianne. But what happened? And who is his sudden mysterious benefactor?

As Kit grapples with the ramifications of that night, he, Marianne and Col find their lives spiralling out of control.

About the Author

Gill Darling grew up in Hinckley, Leicestershire, and currently lives in Manchester where she works as a chartered accountant in the charity sector. In 2015 she was selected for the Jerwood-Arvon mentoring scheme and was published in their anthology, *Whisper the Wrong Name*. *Erringby* is her debut novel.



We Asked Gill...

Erringby is partly set in a run-down old country house – is it inspired by anywhere in particular?

A real place, yes, but situated in the Lakes and not in Herefordshire. I spent ages trawling through country house listings on very upmarket websites until I found the model for Erringby. Because it was for sale there were lots of pictures of it online, which I referred to while I was writing. I've driven a couple of times to look at it but haven't dared knock on the door!

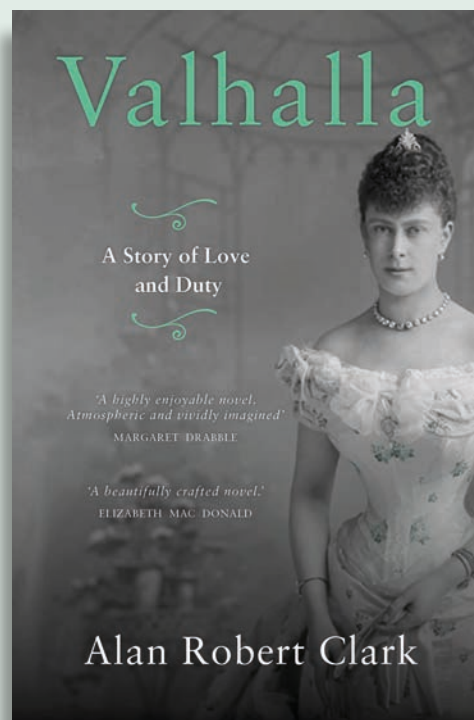
As a writer based in Manchester, what do you like best about your local literary scene?

I love that England's first free public library was here, and that you can trace a line of radical writers from Engels onwards. There are some really supportive groups, such as the Manchester Women Writers, and world-class university writing schools. The International Anthony Burgess Centre is a mile or two from where I live – I love the specificity of it. And that's before getting on to the John Rylands Library and the Manchester Literature Festival...

What is your favourite bookshop?

Chorlton Bookshop. It's a family-owned business that's been going for nearly forty years. As well as a good range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books, it stocks cards and gifts. They do mail order and they're really supportive of local authors too.

ISBN: 9781912054350
B Format PAPERBACK
£8.99 | 384pp
17 June '21
#Erringby



'Atmospheric and vividly imagined.'

— Margaret Drabble

'Clark takes an iconic and forbidding figure and transforms her into a passionate, loving and damaged woman.'

— Simon Russell Beale

'A beautiful and lyrical tale told with deft brilliance.'

— John Sessions

VALHALLA

Alan Robert Clark

A gripping fictional account of the early life of Queen Mary

May of Teck, only daughter of a noble family fallen from grace, has been selected to marry the troublesome Prince Eddy, heir to the British throne. Submitting to the wishes of Queen Victoria and under pressure from her family, young May agrees. But just as a spark of love and devotion arises between the young couple, Prince Eddy dies of influenza. To her horror, May discovers she is to be married to the brother, Georgie, instead, a cold and domineering man. But what can she do?

Sequel to Clark's Walter Scott Prize 2019 Academy Recommended *The Prince of Mirrors*

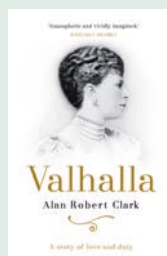
More titles:



9781912054107



9781912054121



9781912054169

About the Author

Alan Robert Clark was born and educated in Scotland, and briefly attended King's College in London, before opting for a career as a copywriter and creative director in London. He has worked as a freelance journalist and, most recently, has ghost-written and co-authored a number of biographies. His novel *The Prince of Mirrors* was included in The Walter Scott Prize Academy Recommends List.



We Asked Alan...

What challenges have you faced in researching the true lives of historical royals?

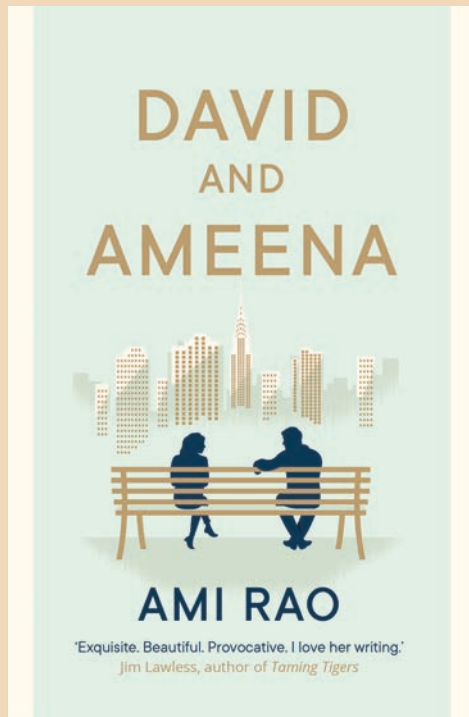
Obviously, the main challenge in writing a historical novel, and an enjoyable one, is to interweave the known facts with one's own fictional threads. Both my novels contain actual historical figures so it's vital to make the imagined elements as plausible as possible, based on the recorded facts of their lives and what is known of their characters.

In your writing you bring to life the Victorian and early twentieth-century royals Prince Albert Victor (known as Eddy) and May of Teck (later Queen Mary). Why did you choose them?

I chose to write about naughty Prince Eddy because, despite the vast gulf between our situations in life, I strongly related to certain aspects of his personality and to the challenges he faced. The young Princess May of Teck, to whom Eddy was briefly engaged, interested me in regard to how this young girl was ruthlessly manipulated by a highly patriarchal Victorian society, eventually transforming into the chilly Queen Mary, icon of monarchical duty. So I ended up writing what I suppose could be called a feminist novel.

What is your favourite bookshop?

My favourite local bookshop used to be the beautiful branch of Daunts in Fulham Road, Chelsea, where I had my first book launch. Last year it closed due to soaring rents and is now an ugly and unloved branch of Easy Money. Such a loss to the community. Now I go instead to The Open Book in Richmond, a gem of a bookshop with limitless charm run by its equally charming owner.



'Rao debuts with an accomplished contemporary love story that shifts the focus from the external beats that drive a typical romance to concentrate on how the emotional, psychological, and cultural upbringings of a couple can shape their relationship.'

— Publishers Weekly

DAVID AND AMEENA

Ami Rao

An 'accomplished' New York love story

Modern-day New York, a subway train. David, an American-Jewish jazz musician, torn between his dreams and his parents' expectations, sees a woman across the carriage. Ameena, a British-Pakistani artist, who left Manchester to escape the pressure from her conservative family, sees David.

When a moment of sublime beauty occurs unexpectedly, the two connect, moved by their shared experience. From this flows a love that it appears will triumph above all. But as David and Ameena navigate their relationship, their ambitions and the city they love, they discover the external world is not so easy to keep at bay.

'Ami Rao intricately weaves threads of love, family, politics and identity to create a beautiful, and very real, modern love story that sparkles beneath a New York skyline.'

— Huma Qureshi, author of *How We Met*

About the Author

Ami Rao is a British-American writer, born in Calcutta, India. In 2017 she co-authored the sports memoir *Centaur* with Declan Murphy, which was awarded the General Outstanding Sports Book of the Year Award and shortlisted for the William Hill Sports Book of the Year 2017. Ami has mentored girls of colour for the past twelve years, with a keen emphasis on the merits of reading and education. *David and Ameena* is her debut novel.



We Asked Ami...

You weave the music of Aaron Goldberg into your novel. Why did you choose him?

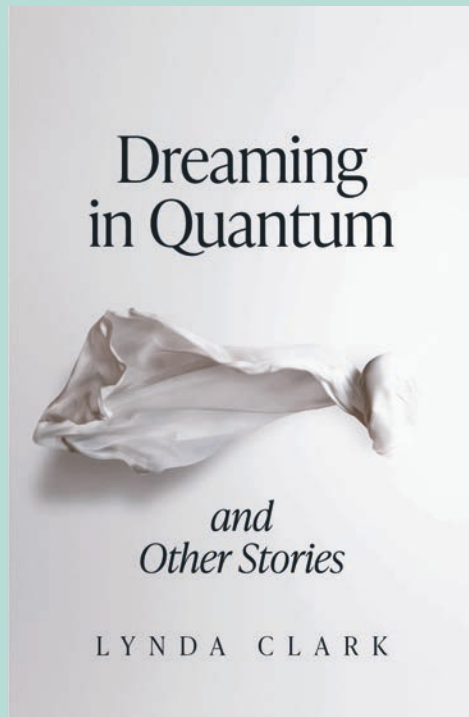
This is very difficult to explain – it's to do with how someone else's artistic sensibility moves one's own. His musicianship is sensational and it pushed me over the edge.

Was it important to you to represent characters from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds when writing *David and Ameena*?

Yes and no. Multiculturalism is not a rhetorical device in my work; it's simply the way I grew up and the way the world looks to me. Stylistically, I guess my kind of writing is what one would call 'realism', so it's important only to the extent that I am representing the truth, the way I see it – you want to be accurate at least to your own conception of reality. I wasn't trying to make some kind of statement – I don't view the novel as representative in that way.

You lived in New York for a number of years – when you are next able to go back, where's the first place you will head?

Mezzrow Jazz Club.



DREAMING IN QUANTUM (AND OTHER STORIES)

Lynda Clark

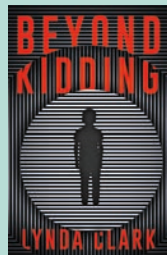
Debut collection of darkly humorous short stories

From award-winning author Lynda Clark come sixteen engrossing stories weaving together elements of folklore, fantasy and speculative fiction, all of them in Clark's darkly humorous style.

In 'Ghillie's Mum', shortlisted for the BBC Short Story Award, a shape-shifting mother needs to decide whether to compromise and stay in her human form, or lose her son. In 'Total Transparency', the protagonist is learning how to live with a gradually disappearing wife. In 'Blanks', people are paying to create clones of themselves so they will never die. And in 'Dreaming in Quantum', there's a murder to be solved which echoes through dimensions only accessible in dreams.

'In these high-concept horrors, even the strangest perversions of science and biology can feel sadly familiar, hinting at the fantasies we tell ourselves to explain, or run away from, the darkest moments of our lives.'
— Nick Mulgrew, author of *A Hibiscus Coast*, poet and novelist

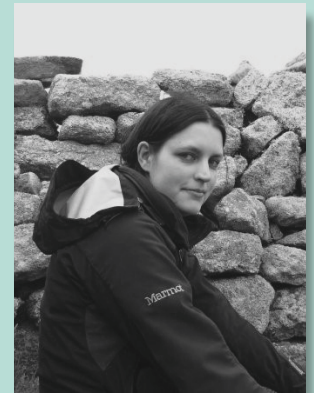
'Lynda Clark's stories are thought-provoking, very funny, sometimes poignant, and always entertaining, with a whole Buffyverse-worth of plotlines and nice, fat, satisfying endings.'
— Jo Lloyd, winner of the BBC National Short Story Award 2019



More titles: 9781912054848

About the Author

An award-winning short fiction writer, Lynda Clark has been widely published in anthologies. Her debut novel *Beyond Kidding* was published by Fairlight Books in 2019 and is in development for a feature with Film4. She has completed a PhD in Creative and Critical Writing and is currently a Research Fellow in Narrative and Play at the University of Dundee. *Dreaming in Quantum and Other Stories* is her first collection of short stories.



We Asked Lynda...

Your books always contain a lot of humour. Do you think it's harder for a woman writing humorous fiction to succeed?

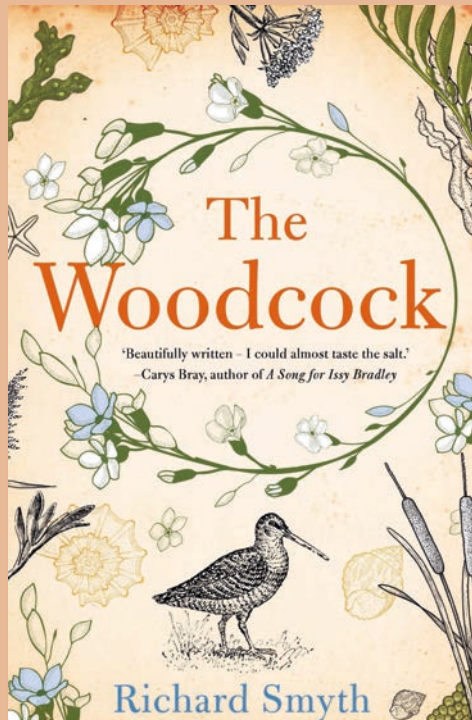
In some ways, no – there are already women out there writing great humorous fiction – although I do think there's a tendency for them to get dismissed as 'women's humour' and if you don't write stuff that fits within that genre it can be even tougher. But it's starting to change with some fantastic new writers shifting perceptions about the type of humour women are 'permitted' to write.

What is your favourite bookshop?

I'm a big fan of graphic novels and board games so I love Big Dog Books in Dundee. They always give great recommendations and are so friendly and welcoming.

You used to work as a bookseller – what are your best memories of working in a bookshop?

Some things were incredibly frustrating at the time but funny to look back on. Usually these were relating to extreme customer requests – a woman demanding to see our 'resident fridge magnets expert' or the man who asked furiously why we didn't have a better range of books on Victorian safes. The best were probably when I worked in the children's department – just kids discovering their love of reading and getting incredibly excited about new books.



THE WOODCOCK

Richard Smyth

Love, fear, sex, ambition and limpets...

It's 1920s England, and the coastal town of Gravely is finally enjoying a fragile peace after the Great War. Jon Lowell, a naturalist who writes articles on the flora and fauna of the shoreline, and his wife Harriet lead a simple life, basking in their love for each other and enjoying the company of Jon's visiting old school friend David. But when an American whaler arrives in town with his beautiful red-haired daughters, boasting of his plans to build a pier and pleasure-grounds a half-mile out to sea, unexpected tensions and temptations arise.

As secrets multiply, Harriet, Jon and David must each ask themselves, what price is to be paid for pleasure?

'A novel of shifting, silted landscapes and relationships laid bare, with quiet urgency The Woodcock reveals the complexities of desire, instinct and faith.'

— Eley Williams, author of *The Liar's Dictionary*

'This is a funny and thoughtful novel. Sardonic sometimes, mordant at others, it is always witty, fast, and smart.'

— Tim Dee, author of *Greenery*

'Beautifully written – I could almost taste the salt.'

— Carys Bray, author of *A Song for Issy Bradley*

About the Author

Richard Smyth is a writer and critic. His work has appeared in *The Guardian*, the *New Statesman* and *The Times Literary Supplement*, and he is the author of five books of non-fiction. In between books he compiles crosswords and writes questions for television quizzes. He lives in Bradford, West Yorkshire, with his family. *The Woodcock* is his first historical fiction novel.



© Catherine Bale

We Asked Richard...

You're a successful nature writer and we found *The Woodcock*, though fiction, rich with natural wildlife. Was this a deliberate choice or does nature just seep into your writing?

Wildlife, someone has said, is very good for thinking with. Nature inevitably finds its way into my fiction because, first, it finds its way into everywhere, and, second, I think it can bring context, depth and texture, and really enrich a novel.

***The Woodcock* is set in the fictional north-eastern seaside town Gravely. Is it inspired by anywhere in particular?**

It's really an impressionistic amalgam of every seaside town I know – all the way up the east coast, from Bridlington and Filey, through Scarborough, Whitby, Runswick Bay, Robin Hood's Bay, Saltburn, then Whitley Bay, North Shields, Tynemouth, Blyth, Beadnell, Seahouses, North Berwick... And there are elements of the south-west, Welsh and Cumbrian coasts thrown in there too. Anywhere where you can loaf around staring out at the sea.

What is your favourite bookshop?

The huge and wonderful Salt's Mill bookshop, which is right on my doorstep.



BOOKSHOP TOURS OF BRITAIN

Louise Boland

To travel by bookshop is to see the best of Britain

Based on her touring of bookshops, which she did over the three years since starting Fairlight, Louise Boland's *Bookshop Tours of Britain* is a slow-travel guide to Britain, navigating bookshop to bookshop.

Across eighteen bookshop tours, the reader journeys from the Jurassic Coast of south-west England, over the mountains of Wales, through England's industrial heartland, up to the Scottish Highlands and back via Whitby, the Norfolk Broads, central London, the South Downs and Hardy's Wessex. On their way, the tours visit beaches, castles, head down coal mines, go to whisky distilleries, birdwatching, hiking, canoeing, to stately homes and the houses of some of Britain's best-loved historic writers – and last but not least, a host of fantastic bookshops.

'The bibliophile's answer to a slow-travel cultural guide.'

— Forum Books

@forumbookscorbridge

'A great and timely reminder of how important bookshops are within communities.'

— Booka Bookshop

@bookabookshop

Sample spreads



Bookshop visitors who are on a bookshop tour can share news and pictures of their bookshop tours and 'bookshop bagging' on social media with the tag: #BookshopTours

Signed Bookplates Available

ISBN: 9781912054473
PAPERBACK with flaps
£16.99 | 272pp
22 Oct '20
#BookshopToursofBritain

To send new photos, updates or news for future editions or to let us know of any bookshops that might not yet be included or that have recently opened, email us on hubquery@fairlightbooks.com



RELATIVE SECRETS

Helen Stancey

A beautifully told drama of family secrets, in which Helen Stancey once again picks through the everyday of life to uncover poetry, pain and ultimately love

Mary has a secret that she mustn't tell. But in a care home, with her mind wandering, she's starting to slip up. Clearing out her grandmother's old room, Lucy finds something hidden that wasn't supposed to be found – a locket sheltering a shameful family secret.

She can't tell her mother. Not with their father gone, one brother absent and another acting up. Her mother was struggling with her mental health just a few years ago. Lucy will have to make sense of it all herself.

'A tender and uplifting exploration of the mysteries and meaning of family, for three generations of women striving to fulfil their destinies.'

— Rebecca Fraser, author of *The Mayflower Generation*

'A real gem. Clever and compelling.'

— On: Yorkshire Magazine

More titles:



9781912054008

About the Author

Helen Stancey was born and brought up in Yorkshire but moved to London as a student. She taught Psychology at various London colleges and wrote her first two novels, *Words* and *Common Ground*. After focusing on academic and educational writing, she returned to literature in 2017 with a collection of short stories, *The Madonna of the Pool*, the first of her works to be published by Fairlight Books. *Relative Secrets* is her new novel after a gap of over thirty years.



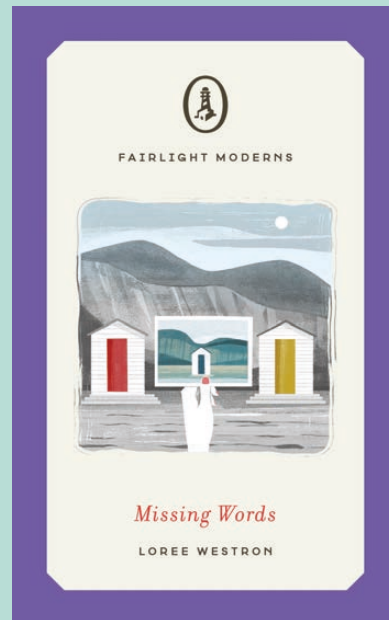
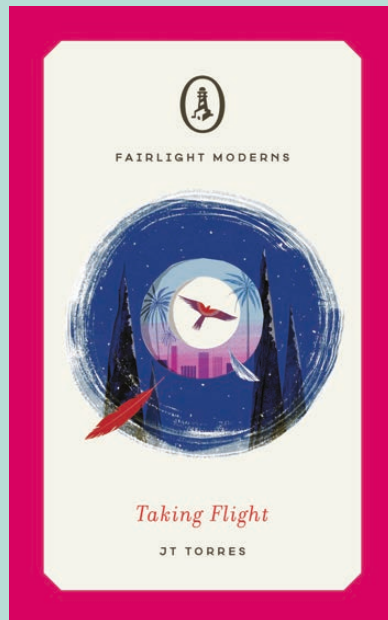
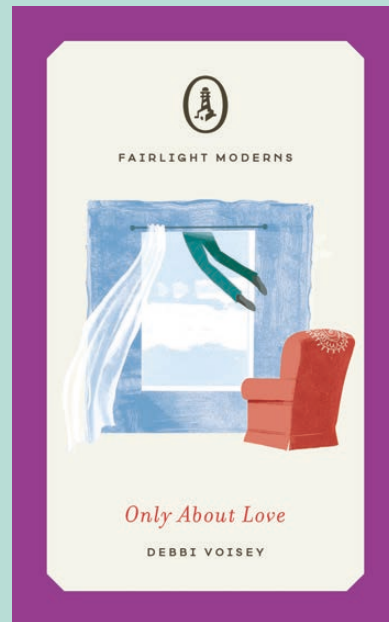
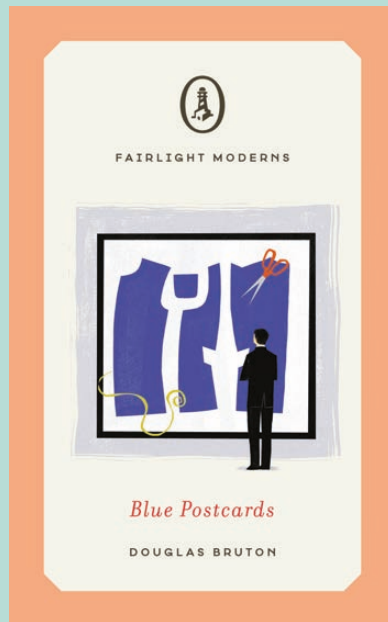
We Asked Helen...

Your book includes a moving portrayal of dementia. Why did you choose to write about this topic?

Relative Secrets isn't intended to be a novel about dementia per se. It's more that a main character has dementia in what is the novel's present time (1999). She'd had a lot of life before then, as had other characters. But it goes without saying that developing dementia has a devastating effect on an individual and on their entire family. It also hits different people in different ways. Mary is still a gentle and sweet person as she fades, but not everyone is. My first experiences of people with dementia were in my late teens when I did summer holiday jobs in a hospital. I was put on what was termed a geriatric 'ward', but none of the women there were ever going back home. At university, I was a member of Community Service Volunteers, visiting an elderly lady weekly in her flat and when she was subsequently moved into a care home. Like many people, I have also known dementia several times much closer to home, still ongoing. It's a cruel condition, and I can only hope that the solution is found soon.

The Fairlight Moderns

A collection of beautiful, pocket-sized new fiction books set around the world



@bookishsteph1



@thecosyreader



@sparklesoflight



@thenobblylife



@between.bookends



@rossiter_books



@bookswithjane



@excusemyreading



@stefiereads

NEW EDITIONS FOR SUMMER 2021

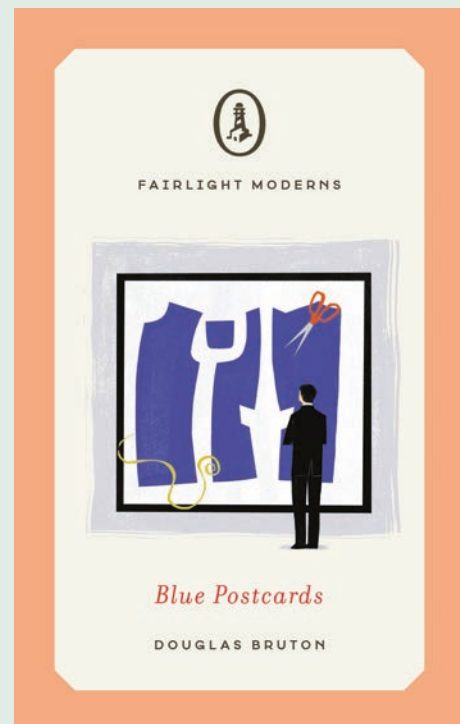
BLUE POSTCARDS

Douglas Bruton

Once there was a street in Paris and it was called the Street of Tailors. This was years back, in the blue mists of memory.

Now it's the 1950s and Henri is the last tailor on the street. With meticulous precision he takes the measurements of men and notes them down in his leather-bound ledger. He draws on the cloth with a blue chalk, cuts the pieces and sews them together. When the suit is done, Henri adds a finishing touch: a blue Tekhelet thread hidden in the trousers somewhere, for luck. One day, the renowned French artist Yves Klein walks into the shop, and orders a suit.

Set in Paris, this atmospheric tale delicately intertwines three connected narratives and timelines, interspersed with observations of the colour blue. It is a meditation on truth and lies, memory and time and thought. It is a leap of the imagination, a leap into the void.



'I savoured every word of this beautiful novella.'

— Julie Corbin, author of *A Lie For A Lie*

'It is a story, unlike our ability to see colour, that haunts and intensifies rather than diminishes with time.'

— Carmen Marcus, author of *How Saints Die*

'Seductively original, linguistically daring, almost dangerously immersive.'

— Stephen May, author of the Costa shortlisted *Life! Death! Prizes!*

About the Author

Born in Edinburgh and now based in the Scottish Borders, Douglas Bruton has been published in various publications including *Northwords Now*, *New Writing Scotland*, *Aesthetica* and *The Irish Literary Review*. His short stories have won competitions including Fish and the Neil Gunn Prize. He has had two novels published, *The Chess Piece Magician* and *Mrs Winchester's Gun Club*.



We Asked Douglas...

What made you want to write about Yves Klein?

I already knew about IKB (International Klein Blue). Then, one day, researching something else, I bumped into Klein's 'Leap into the Void' and I read about the fantastic lie of that photograph. Klein was clearly a master showman and a wonderful self-promoter. I was interested in the audacity of his lies and in everything blue and in the lies that fiction can get away with.

Why did you choose to set your book in Paris?

One of the subjects of *Blue Postcards*, Yves Klein, dictated where the story should be set.

What is your favourite bookshop?

I love both The Golden Hare Bookshop and Topping and Company, both of which are in Edinburgh.

TAKING FLIGHT

JT Torres

When Tito is a child, his grandmother teaches him how to weave magic around the ones you love in order to keep them close. She is the master and he is the pupil, exasperating Tito's put-upon mother who, although exhausted from working long hours, is usually the focus of their mischief.

As Tito grows older and his grandmother's mind becomes less sound, their games take a dangerous turn. They both struggle with a particular spell, one that creates an illusion of illness to draw in love. But as the lines between magic and childish tales blur, so too do those between fantasy and reality.

In this beautifully told drama of the bond between grandson and grandmother, JT Torres delicately explores the complexities of family bonds – in which love is need, and need becomes manipulation, along with the pain and difficulties of dementia and mental ill health.

About the Author

Born in Miami, Florida, JT Torres is of Cuban-American descent. He is an assistant professor of English at Quinnipiac University. Torres combines an MFA in Creative Writing with a PhD in Educational Psychology to understand how storytelling often frames the construction of a self. *Taking Flight* is his debut longer fiction.



We Asked JT...

What is your favourite bookshop?

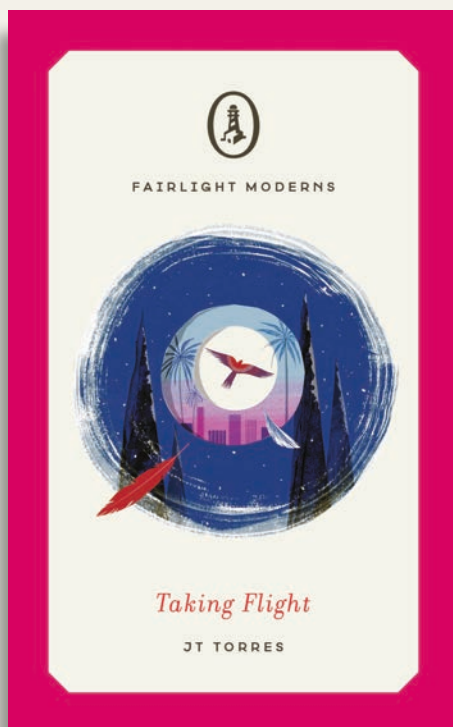
Atticus Bookstore in New Haven, CT.

How much is the grandmother in the book based on memories of your own grandmother?

The novella began as a 'magical memoir', in which I would tell the factually true story of how Nana taught me storytelling as a means of holding on to home (in her case, Cuba). As I got lost in the storytelling, as I am prone to do, the work became more fiction than non-fiction, even as the character, Nana, remained the home I held on to.

You have a PhD in Educational Psychology. Can you tell us how this fed into the creation of your story?

My PhD in Educational Psychology focused on the relationship between storytelling and identity. Specifically, I explored how we learn an identity through the stories we tell and the stories told about us. For instance, when teachers and parents constantly tell a particular child that they are 'at risk', or that they 'don't like school', that child is more likely to become a character in that narrative. Stories have real material effects on our lives, and this understanding helped me translate the ways my grandmother's stories of immigration and her mental health shaped her identity as an immigrant wanting – needing – to belong.



'The exquisite writing of JT Torres is on full display in this deftly told and spellbinding tale.'

— Don Rearden, author of *The Raven's Gift*

'Torres's inspired confrontation with grief and alienation will linger in my mind for a long time.'

— Amy Kurzweil, author of *Flying Couch: A Graphic Memoir*

'JT Torres' story is a masterful work.'

— Jill Flanders Crosby, Professor of Theatre and Dance, University of Alaska Anchorage

ISBN: 9781912054091

A Format PAPERBACK

£7.99 | 160pp

8 July '21

#TakingFlightNovella

MISSING WORDS

Loree Westron

Postal worker Jenny's life is in the doldrums. Her daughter is all grown up and ready to face the world, her marriage is falling apart, and now her best friend and colleague tells her he plans to retire. So, when a postcard from Australia, begging the recipient for forgiveness but marked 'insufficient address', lands on her sorting table, she does the unthinkable – she slips it up her sleeve, with the intention of delivering it herself.

Jenny sets off on a journey around the Isle of Wight, determined to find the recipient, and with the help of the locals she hopes to reunite the long-lost lovers. Will she be able to give them the happy ending she didn't allow herself to have?

Set against the backdrop of the strikes in the 1980s, *Missing Words* is a heart-warming journey about self-discovery, the power of family ties, and the strength needed to face whatever life throws your way.

About the Author

Loree Westron grew up in North Central Idaho and now lives on the south coast of the UK. Her short stories and literary criticism have been published in journals and anthologies, including *The London Magazine* and *The Los Angeles Review of Books*. She has a PhD in Creative Writing. *Missing Words* is her debut longer fiction.



We Asked Loree...

What made you choose the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth as the setting for *Missing Words*?

I spend a lot of time gazing at the Isle of Wight from my living room window in Portsmouth. The view is constantly changing, depending on the weather. When it's bright and clear, the sun glints off the rooftops in Ryde and the shape of the landscape is very distinct. But on days when there's a heavy mist the island vanishes altogether. It's familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, and that fascinates me.

How did your own experience of working in a Royal Mail sorting office inspire your narrative?

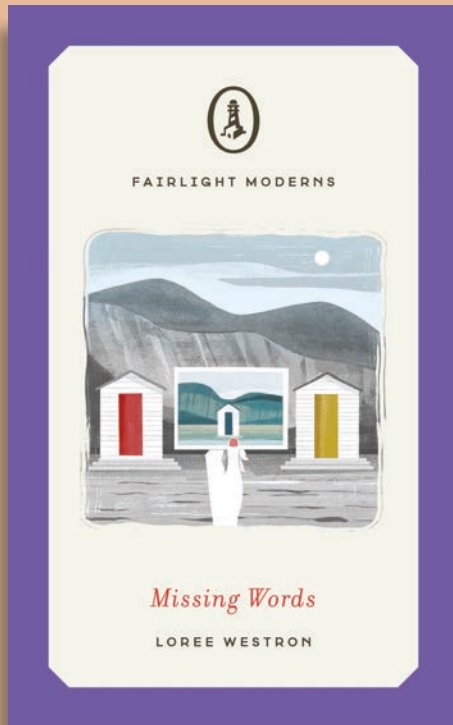
I loved working as a mail sorter because it didn't take a lot of mental energy. Once I memorised the sorting frame, I found I could switch into automatic pilot and let my mind think about other things. Now and then I'd come across an envelope with an incomplete address and I'd wonder about the message inside. That was how *Missing Words* came about – just me making up stories to keep myself entertained.

You also once worked as a bookseller – what are your best memories of that time?

I worked in the travel department of a large bookshop in Kensington, and went on to manage bookshops in Chichester and Portsmouth. I love being surrounded by books – and by all the worlds they contain – literal and imaginary. And there's something very special about booksellers, too. They don't go to work because of the paycheque but because they love books and want to share that passion with others. I felt a real connection with my colleagues.

What is your favourite bookshop?

Pigeon Books in Southsea – it's a lovely little independent with a personal touch.



'Loree Westron writes with a subtle beauty that made me catch my breath.'

— Laura Pearson, author of *I Wanted You To Know*

'Missing Words is an utterly human and moving family drama in which we watch one woman double back into her past to find the future.'

— Alison MacLeod, author of *Unexploded 'A little gem.'*

— Gabrielle Kimm, author of *His Last Duchess*

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5 Aug '21
#MissingWordsNovella

ONLY ABOUT LOVE

Debbi Voisey

There's no such thing as a perfect family.
A perfect life. A perfect man.

Frank is proof of this. He's everyman and yet as unique as a fingerprint. With a wonderful wife and children who are the loves of his life, he couldn't ask for anything more. But time and time again he keeps risking it all.

In snapshots through time, *Only About Love* takes a sweeping loop around Frank's life as he navigates courtship, marriage, fatherhood and illness. Told through the perspective of Frank and his family, this story is one of intense honesty about the things we do to those closest to us.

'Only About Love explores some of the most important questions about love, loyalty and ageing that we ever have to face.'

— Michael Loveday, author of *Three Men on the Edge*

'Debbi Voisey's writing is breathless, red-raw and brutally honest.'

— Tracy Fells, 2017 Regional Winner (Canada & Europe) of the Commonwealth Short Story Prize

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#OnlyAboutLoveNovella

About the Author

Debbi Voisey has had short stories published in *Ad Hoc*, *The Bath Short Story Award*, *Ellipsis*, *Reflex*, *Litro* and others. She has been longlisted and shortlisted in several competitions, including the Bath Short Story Award, Flash 500 and Reflex Fiction. *The 10:25* was shortlisted in the Bath Novella-in-Flash Award in 2018, and she has another novella-in-flash forthcoming later in 2021.



We Asked Debbi...

Can you tell us about the process of writing a novella-in-flash?

If you can find, amongst your written flashes, similar themes or characters that keep popping up, you'll have the bones of a novella-in-flash. I took all the potential flashes or chapters I already had, and swapped their order around a little until there was some sense of a bigger story. It helped me to have an end point in mind, and some idea of the narrative arc and the journey I wanted my characters to take.

Your flash fiction has been widely published – what do you think makes a good flash fiction piece?

It's about the things you don't see, and having your reader fill in the blanks. Start when the action is underway, show the reader a memorable or emotional moment, and waste no words on details they don't need. Imagine walking through a train carriage where something has kicked off. You didn't see it start, you leave the carriage before it ends, but if that drama was good enough, you'll think about it for a long time.

What is your favourite bookshop?

My go-to is Waterstones in Hanley, Stoke on Trent.

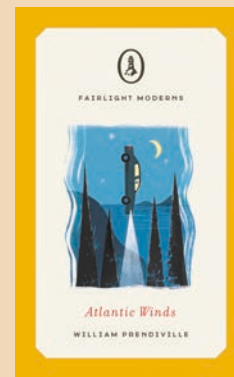


BOTTLED GOODS

Sophie Van Llewyn

Longlisted for **The Women's Prize for Fiction 2019**,
The Republic of Consciousness Prize 2019 and
The People's Book Prize 2018

1970s Socialist Republic of Romania. When Alina's brother-in-law defects to the West, her and her husband's careers come grinding to a halt. Alina turns to her aunt for help – the wife of a communist leader and a secret practitioner of the old folk ways.



ATLANTIC WINDS

William Prendiville

It's 1970s Canada. The small island community of Bear Lake is awash with rumours of layoffs and wildcat strikes at the mill. But for young Tom, nothing is more important than hanging out with his best friend, Cormic, except perhaps catching a glimpse of Sasha Donovanovitch, the foreman's daughter. When a tragic accident occurs at the mill, the whole community unites – but in a small town, pointed fingers and hushed gossip can only stir further trouble...



THE DRIVEWAY HAS TWO SIDES

Sara Marchant

On an East Coast island, full of tall pine moaning with sea gusts, Delilah moves into a cottage by the shore. The locals gossip as they watch her. They don't like it when she plants a garden out front – orange-red *Carpinus caroliniana* and silvery-blue hosta... Across the driveway lives a man who never goes out. Delilah knows he's watching her and she likes the look of him, but perhaps life is too complicated already...

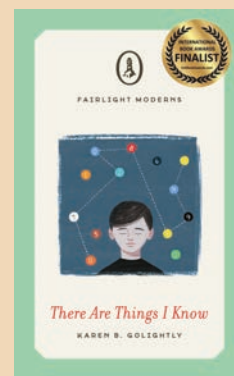


TRAVELLING IN THE DARK

Emma Timpany

Winner of **The Hall & Woodhouse DLF Writing Prize 2019**

Sarah is travelling with her young son back to her hometown in the south of New Zealand. But when debris from an earthquake closes the road before her, she is forced to extend her journey, and divert through the places from her youth that she had hoped never to return to. As the memories of her childhood resurface, Sarah knows that for the sake of her son, she must face up to them now or be lost forever.



THERE ARE THINGS I KNOW

Karen B. Golightly

International Book Awards finalist

Eight-year-old Pepper sees the world a little differently from most people. One day, during a school field trip, Pepper is kidnapped by a stranger and driven to rural Arkansas. The man, who calls himself 'Uncle Dan', claims that Pepper's mother has died and they are to live together from now on – but the boy isn't convinced. Pepper always found it hard to figure out when people are lying, but he's absolutely certain his mother is alive, and he's going to find her...

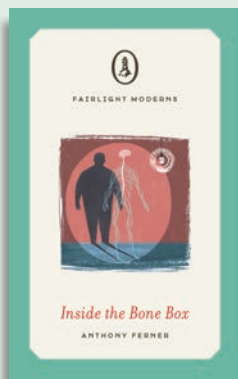
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INSIDE THE BONE BOX

Anthony Ferner

Nicholas Anderton is a highly respected neurosurgeon at the top of his field. But behind the successful façade all is not well. Tormented by a toxic marriage and haunted by past mistakes, Anderton has been eating to forget. His wife, meanwhile, has turned to drink. There are sniggers behind closed doors – how can a surgeon be fat? When mistakes are made and his old adversary steps in to take advantage, Anderton knows things are coming to a head...



MINUTES FROM THE MIRACLE CITY

Omar Sabbagh

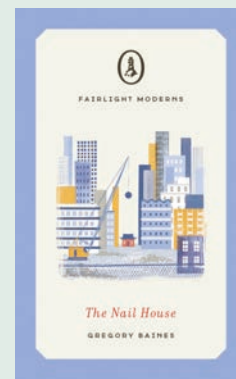
Hakim, a Pakistani taxi driver whizzing through the streets. Patrick, a Ugandan security guard with aspirations of becoming a writer. Farida, a Moroccan beautician hoping for a fresh start. Saeed, a respected Emirati journalist just back from London. Taking place across the last few days of Ramadan, *Minutes from the Miracle City* is a unique retelling of the virtuoso project that is Dubai.



THE THERAPIST

Nial Giacomelli

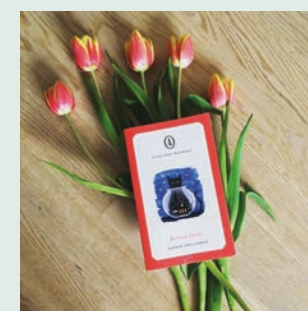
In this hauntingly surreal tale, a couple finds the distance between them mirrored in a strange epidemic sweeping the globe. Little by little, each victim becomes transparent, their heart beating behind a visible ribcage, an intricate network of nerves left hanging in mid-air. Finally, the victims disappear entirely, never to be seen again.



THE NAIL HOUSE

Gregory Baines

Lindon, an Australian project manager with a failed marriage behind him, is lured to China with the promise of a lucrative salary. His task: to solve the problem of a 'Nail House', the home of a stubborn old man who refuses to relocate, even as the bulldozers move in and the skyscrapers grow around him. But as Lindon negotiates with the old man's family, he finds sense where there is none. And love where there is war.



MILTON IN PURGATORY

Edward Vass

Milton Pitt leads an uneventful life, with a dull job and a secret longing for adventure. One morning, after he is hit by a speeding car, he suffers an out-of-body experience and awakens back in his bedroom. Everything is just the same – that is, except for the bloody footprints leading to the chimney...

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Draft cover

About the Author

Clio Velentza was born and lives in Athens, Greece. Her writing has frequently been published in anthologies and literary journals, most recently in *Popshot Quarterly*, in both English and her native Greek. Her short fiction has won several prizes including Best Microfiction 2020, The Wigleaf Top 50 Very Short Fictions 2019 and The Best Small Fictions 2016. She was also a nominee for the Pushcart Prize. *The Piano Room* is her debut novel.

THE PIANO ROOM

Clio Velentza

Gothic modern retelling of the German myth of Faust with LGBTQ+ themes

Rich and entitled Hungarian Sandor Esterhazy is descended from a long line of talented pianists, but has no desire to follow in their footsteps. One snowy afternoon, he calls up the devil and offers to exchange his soul for a life of his own choosing.

Afterwards, he laughs it off as a joke, but that night, the devil arrives at the Esterhazy house, dragging someone – or something – behind him through the snow. Sandor locks the poor bewildered creature in the basement, allowing it out once a night and only to visit the piano room. As Sandor slips into his new role of captor, the creature, which he names Ferdi, begins to learn what it is to be human. Tensions grow and boil over into violence and Ferdi escapes into the world. But will either one of Ferdi or Sandor truly be allowed to choose his own destiny?

**SEPTEMBER
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#ThePianoRoomNovel

THE SECOND PERSON FROM PORLOCK

Dennis Hamley

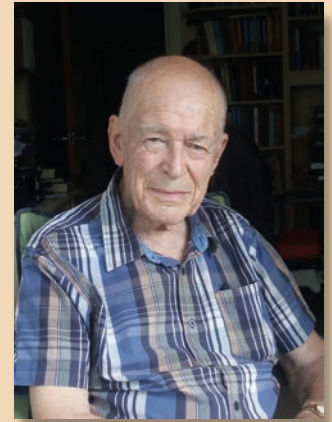
A fictional account of the life of Coleridge and those closest to him

Highgate, London, 1824. Samuel Taylor Coleridge is a washed-up opium addict, estranged from his friends and from his neglected wife. His grip on reality is starting to slip; his past and present mingle in laudanum-induced dreams.

In a Cambridge college library, Scrivener, a bullied undergraduate, finds a strange annotation in a book of Coleridge's poems. Intrigued by this mystery marginalia and captivated by Romantic poetry, he resolves to become a poet himself, with Coleridge as his guiding light. Across the sea, Samuele, a young Sicilian, discovers that his mother once had a liaison with Coleridge. He sets out for England to learn all he can about the man who may be his father. It isn't long before Samuele and Scrivener cross paths – but will their journeys take them to the real Samuel Taylor Coleridge?

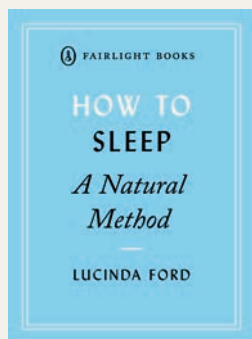
About the Author

Dennis Hamley was born in Kent and attended the Royal Latin School in Buckingham (1946-1954), and then the RAF National Service. After a career in education (teacher, lecturer) he retired early in 1992 to write full-time. His first novel was published in 1974 and he has written over sixty books, many for children. The idea for *The Second Person from Porlock* came from the discovery of a comment inserted in the text of 'Kubla Khan' in the Old Library, Jesus College, Cambridge. Its provenance is still unknown.



**NOVEMBER
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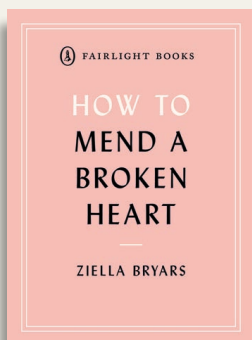
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HOW TO SLEEP

Lucinda Ford

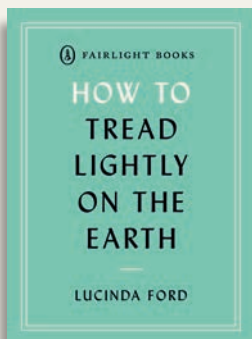
Eight simple sleep techniques, along with accompanying notes, designed to calm the mind and allow sleep to come naturally. They are distilled from the best of thinking from the East and the West, including cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness and meditation, taking lessons from each of these methods on how best to quiet your mind and find a calm place from which to fall asleep.



HOW TO MEND A BROKEN HEART

Ziella Bryars

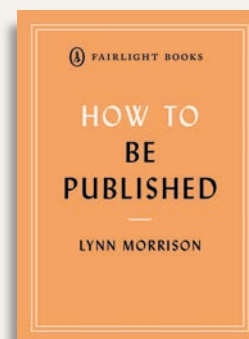
When Ziella was in the midst of heartbreak, a conversation with her neuroscientist best friend changed everything. This warm and witty self-help book outlines the impact a relationship break-up has on our brains and bodies, and explores how a science-based approach can help us heal. Includes how rejection is represented in the brain in the same way as physical pain, how the brain processes loss and how a break-up can trigger addiction-like withdrawal symptoms.



HOW TO TREAD LIGHTLY ON THE EARTH

Lucinda Ford

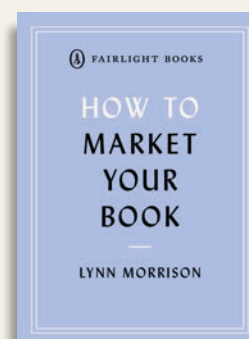
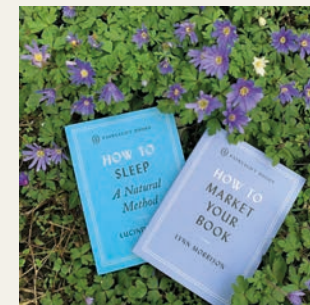
Every day our news feeds offer up new horror stories of impending climate disaster – global warming, plastics in the oceans and a collapse in biodiversity. Many of us want to do something, but where to begin? In her concise and pithy style, Lucinda sorts wild prophecy from scientific fact, political agendas from truth and offers specific, practical and easy-to-follow advice about what we can do, right now, to really make a difference.



HOW TO BE PUBLISHED

Lynn Morrison

For the first time, an unbiased guide to the pros and cons of self-publishing versus traditional publishing, along with all the myriad options in between. This little guide can help a new author navigate the complex world of publishing and find the best path for them, their book and their writing aspirations.



HOW TO MARKET YOUR BOOK

Lynn Morrison

From developing social media tactics and arranging promotional events to handling press and trying to start viral campaigns, in this pocket guide, marketing expert Lynn offers practical advice designed to help an author find a book marketing strategy that best works for them, based on their personal strengths and budget.

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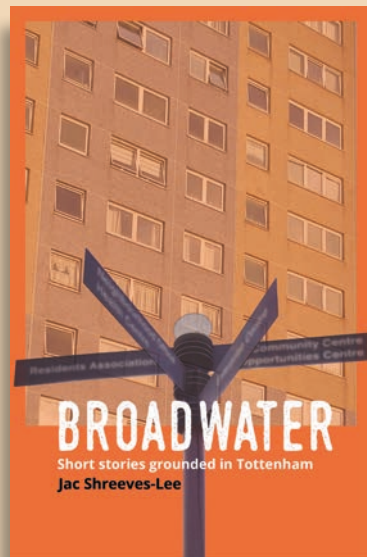
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RECENT FICTION



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A collection of stories by Tottenham-born resident, giving voice to the people of Broadwater Farm, a community generations old.

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A SAINT IN SWINDON

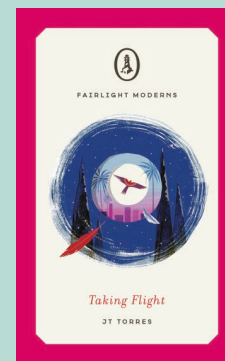
Alice Jolly

'An entertaining, comedic yet profound meditation on the replenishment and complications of reading in dystopia.'

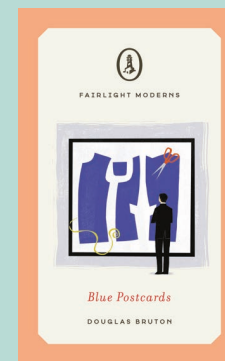
— Diana Evans, author of *Ordinary People*

Written by award-winning author Alice Jolly, and based on an idea by the book lovers of Swindon town, this funny and, ultimately, dystopian tale, reminds us of the importance of literature in an increasingly dark world.

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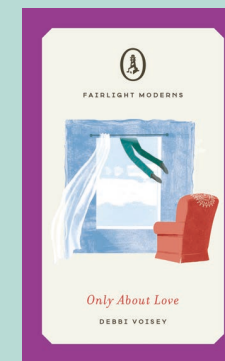
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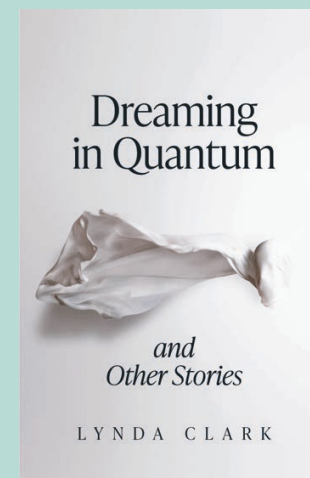
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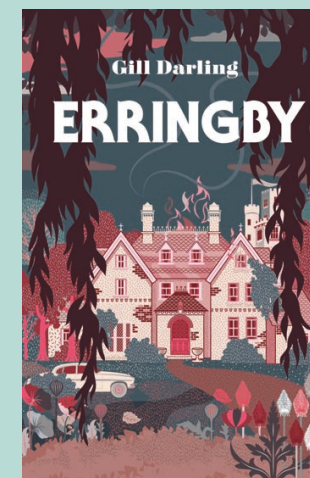
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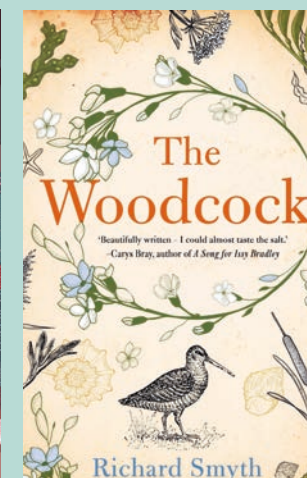
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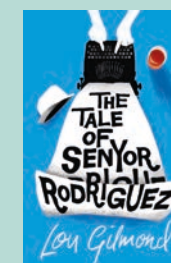
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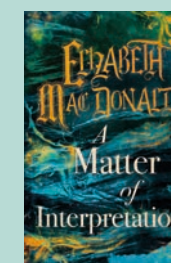
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