



SERPENT'S TAIL

Rights Guide London Book Fair 2020

VIPER
TUSKAR ROCK



DEBUT FICTION

Before the Ruins

Two titles under contract

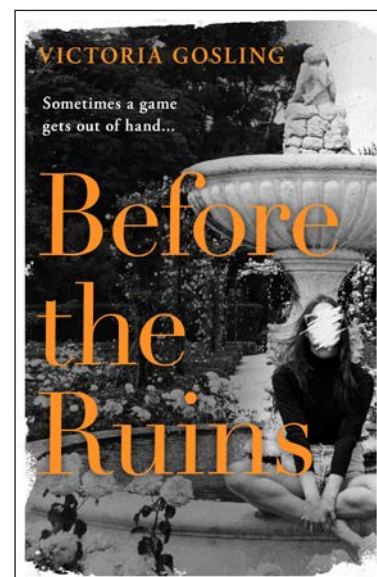
Victoria Gosling

One long, hot summer, Andy and her friends began a game that will take their whole lives to play out

Andy believes that she has left her past far behind her. But when she gets a call from Peter's mother to say he's gone missing, she finds herself pulled into a search for answers.

Bored and restless after their final school exams, Andy, Peter, Em and Marcus broke into a ruined manor house nearby and quickly became friends with the boy living there. Blond, charming and on the run, David's presence was as dangerous as it was exciting. The story of a diamond necklace, stolen from the house fifty years earlier and perhaps still lost somewhere in the grounds inspired the group to buy a replica and play at hiding it, hoping to turn up the real thing along the way. But the game grew to encompass decades of resentment, lies and a terrible betrayal. Now, Andy's search for Peter will unearth unimaginable secrets – and take her back to the people who still keep them.

An insightful and poignant novel about lost love, the power of friendship and whether missed chances are really gone forever



Rights sold: Holt (USA)

July 2020

ISBN 978 178816 379 8

Demy Hardback

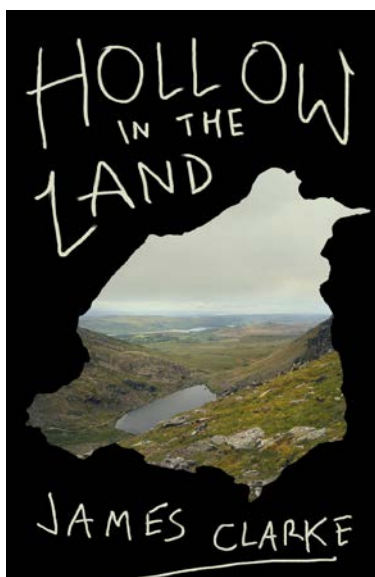
320pp £12.99

Imprint: Serpent's Tail

Editor: Leonora Craig Cohen and Rebecca Gray

Victoria Gosling grew up in Wiltshire and studied English Literature at Manchester University and the University of Amsterdam. She has lived in London, Australia, Brazil and the Czech Republic. Victoria is the founder of The Reader Berlin, hosting Berlin salon nights and writers' retreats in Greece and Italy. She also organises The Berlin Writing Prize.





Finished copies

April 2020
 ISBN 978 1 78816 294 4
 Demy Octavo Hardback
 272pp £12.99
 Imprint: Serpent's Tail
 Editor: Hannah Westland

Hollow in the Land

James Clarke

'A magic portrayal of modern life in the peripheries' Amy Liptrot, author of *The Outrun*

Out walking Ada Robinson's dog while his wife drinks herself into a forgetful fug, Harry Maiden discovers an intricate system of caves beneath the wind turbines. Over at the Woolpack one night, Rosco re-encounters friendships he thought he'd left behind at the Stubbins paper mill. Mad old Goss leads a mysterious treasure hunt to the Bronze Age burial site at Whitelow Cairn.

This is the *Hollow in the Land*: a corner of England teeming with mystery and intrigue and filled with real, flesh-and-blood characters, each of them at a different point along life's journey through childhood hopefulness, faded first love and middle-aged disillusionment. *Hollow in the Land* uncovers the small everyday mysteries of their lives – and ours.

'A beautifully melancholy and worldly book. Clarke's characters may lead quiet, thwarted lives but his prose is generous and electrifying, unjudgmental and assured. A brilliant new talent' Colin Barrett, author of *Young Skins*



James Clarke grew up in the Rossendale Valley in Lancashire. He studied English at Manchester Metropolitan University and graduated with an MA in Creative Writing at The Manchester Writing School in 2017. He currently lives in Manchester and is writing a novel with the working title Sanderson's Folly. His debut novel *The Litten Path* won the 2019 Betty Trask Prize.

FICTION

The Warlow Experiment

Alix Nathan

What kind of person keeps a man underground for seven years?

And who would agree to be part of such an experiment?

'She is an original, with a virtuoso touch.' Hilary Mantel

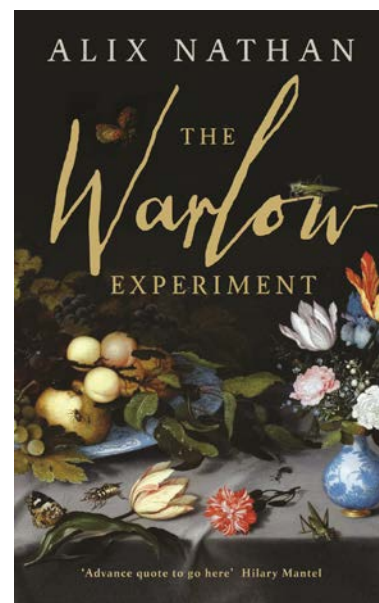
'An extraordinary, quite brilliant book.' C. J. Sansom

'Original and gripping ... builds to a satisfying and fittingly macabre climax.' *The Times*

'A meaty, gripping novel of obsession gone sour.' *Daily Mail*

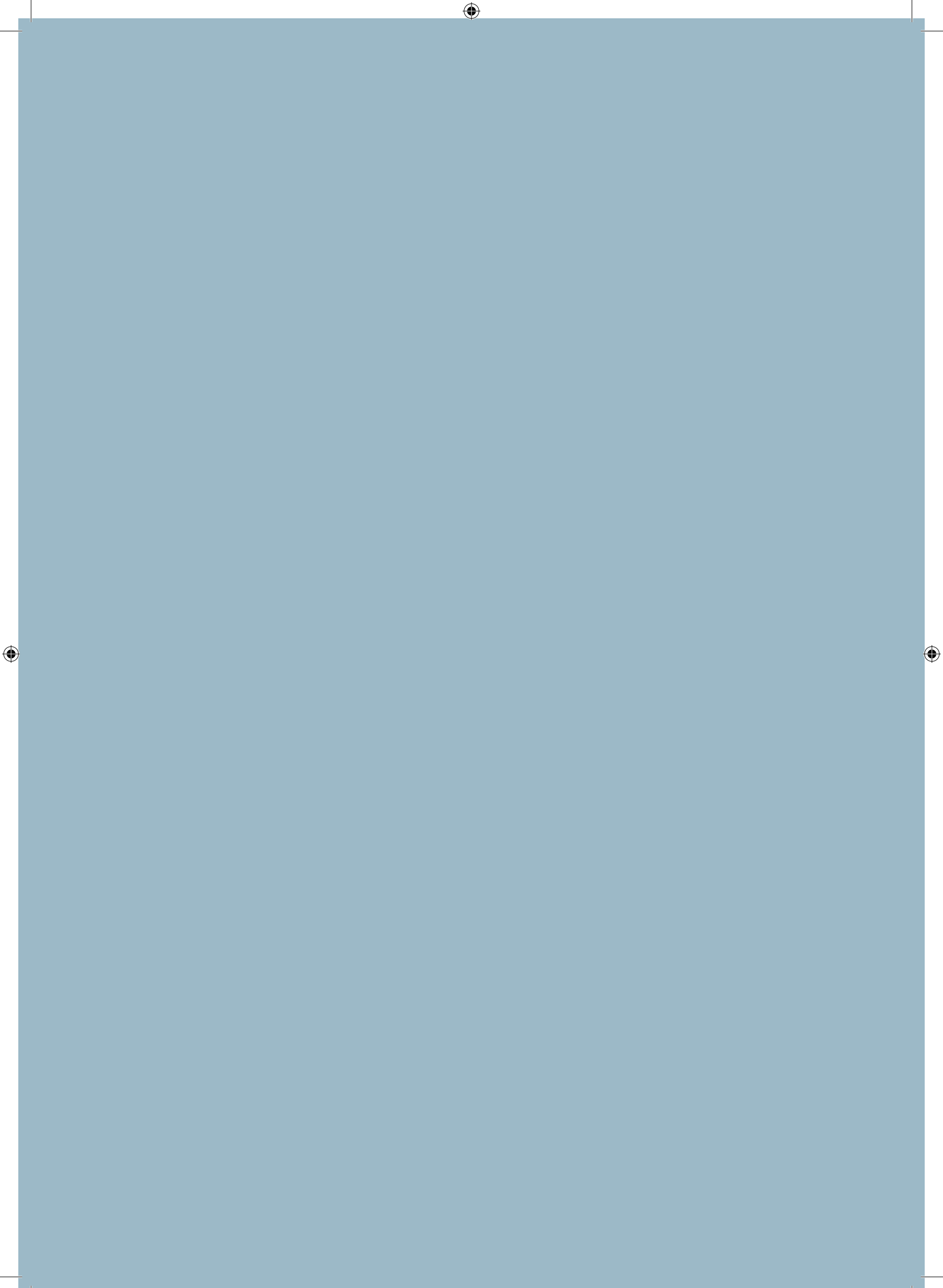
'A gripping drama, fueled by the attraction of repulsion ... unique and chilling' *The New York Times*

Alix Nathan read English and Music at York University. She lives in the Welsh Marches where she owns some ancient woodland with her husband. Her short stories have been published in *Ambit*, *The London Magazine*, *New Welsh Review* and read on BBC Radio 4. Her last two books were published by Parthian Press.



Rights sold: Prozrets (Bulgaria); Doubleday (USA)

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320pp £12.99
Imprint: Serpent's Tail
Editor: Hannah Westland



VIPER

THRILLER

Call Me Mummy

Tina Baker



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US via David Higham
Manuscript available

Feb 2021
ISBN 978 1 78816 522 8
Royal Hardback
384pp £14.99
Imprint: Viper
Editor: Miranda Jewess

She wanted a child ... so she took one.

I have waited all my life to be a mummy. What sort of woman does that make me? I need to prove myself worthy.

Glamorous, beautiful Mummy has everything a woman could want ... except for a little daughter of her very own.

So when she sees Kim - heavily pregnant, glued to her phone and ignoring her eldest child in a busy shop - she does what anyone would do. She takes her. But little foul-mouthed Tonya is not the daughter that Mummy was hoping for. Meanwhile Kim is demonised by social media as a 'scummy mummy', who deserved to lose Tonya and ought to have her other children taken too.

Though they are worlds apart, Mummy and Kim have more in common than they could possibly imagine. But it is five-year-old Tonya who is caught in the middle ...

Perfect for readers of C. L. Taylor, Harriet Tyce and Fiona Barton, *Call Me Mummy* is the dark antidote to *Mother's Day*. This emotionally charged psychological thriller takes the abducted-child plotline to a whole new level, challenging readers to decide who really deserves to be a mummy ...

Tina Baker was brought up in a caravan after her mother, a fairground traveller, fell pregnant by a window cleaner. When not busy writing, she works as a fitness instructor, and rescues cats, whether they want to be rescued or not. *Call Me Mummy* is her first novel. A second novel is under contract.

MYSTERY, THRILLER

Five Minds

Guy Morpuss

One body. Five minds. And one of them is a murderer.

Alex wakes up. Alex brushes his teeth. Alex has breakfast. Three hours left until Sierra takes over the body. He hopes she doesn't damage it. And where has Mike gone?

The Earth's population explosion has finally been controlled. At the age of seventeen, every child must choose how to live the rest of their life – as a worker, an android, a hedonist or a commune – each with different, limited lifespans.

Alex, Kate, Sierra, Ben and Mike are a commune: five minds sharing one body, living for four hours each per day. Time has become a commodity, to be traded and spent. In the death parks simulated games are played in which time can be gambled and won to increase lifespans. Toward the end of their first life, the commune are in a death park playing for time. But one of them is trying to kill off the others. As they play games to win, and survive, they must find out from whom – and why – they are all under threat.

The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle meets *Westworld* in this stunning high-concept crime thriller of multiple minds, changing allegiances and revenge. Perfect for readers of Stuart Turnton, Christina Dalcher, Lauren Beukes and China Mieville, this murder mystery wrapped in a dystopian future is a must-read of 2021.



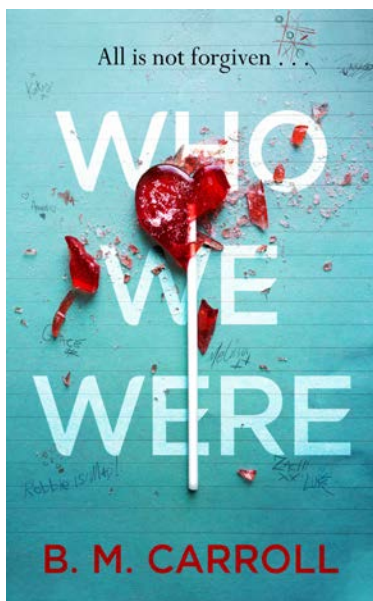
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Rights Sold: Hayakawa (Japan)
Sample chapters available

September 2021
ISBN 978 1 78816 567 9
Trade Paperback
384pp £12.99
Imprint: Viper
Editor: Miranda Jewess

Guy Morpuss is a barrister and QC at a commercial law firm in London, specialising in financial and sports law. To the surprise of everyone, including himself, he suddenly found time to write a novel about five people stuck in one body, trying to kill one another. He lives in Surrey with his wife and two children. A second novel is under contract.

CRIME THRILLER



Proofs available

May 2020
ISBN 978 1 78816 418 4
Royal Octavo Hardback
416pp £12.99
Imprint: Viper
Editor: Miranda Jewess

Who We Were

B. M. Carroll

If you looked the other way, should you be punished?

A book, sickeningly familiar. Yearbook of Macquarie High, Class of 2000. It's happening. Their shallow lives will be blown apart. And they'll be sorry. Finally.

Twenty years after they went their separate ways, friends and enemies are coming together for their school reunion. Katy, who is desperate to show that she's no longer the shy wallflower. Annabel, who ruled the school until a spectacular fall from grace. Zach, popular and cruel, but who says he's a changed man. And Robbie, always the victim, who never stood a chance.

As the reunion nears, a terrible event that binds the group together will resurface. Because someone is still holding a grudge, and will stop at nothing to reveal their darkest secrets ...

For readers of Liane Moriarty, Lisa Jewell and Lucy Foley, *Big Little Lies* meets *The Dry* in this ensemble thriller that packs an emotional punch.

'Ber Carroll is a wonderful writer of addictive, authentic Australian stories' Liane Moriarty, *Sunday Times* bestselling author of *Nine Perfect Strangers*

'A thrilling and moving read that deserves to be a bestseller' Lisa Ballantyne, Richard & Judy bestselling author of *The Guilty One*

'A perfect example of how toxic friendships can leak poison years after events. Twisty, compelling and terrifyingly realistic' Lisa Hall, bestselling author of *Between You and Me*

'This bittersweet unravelling of friendships had me hooked from the start, guessing and absorbed to the end' Caroline England, bestselling author of *My Husband's Lies*

B. M. Carroll was born in Ireland, and spent her early career working in finance. She is the author of eight novels, her most recent being *The Missing Pieces of Sophie McCarthy*, which was described as 'irresistibly good' by Liane Moriarty. She lives in Sydney. A second novel is under contract.

CRIME FICTION

A Famished Heart

The first in a powerful new crime trilogy set in 1980s Dublin

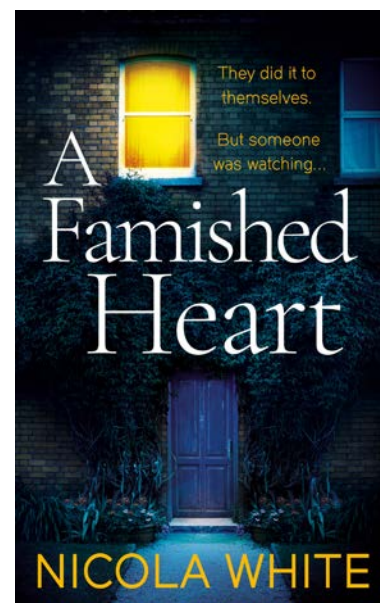
Nicola White

They did it to themselves; but someone was watching.

'Fabulous Dublin-based crime' Jo Spain, bestselling author of *The Confession*

'Intriguing, compelling and highly entertaining ... formidably impressive' Liz Nugent, award-winning author of *Unravelling Oliver*

Francesca MacNamara returns to Dublin after decades in the US, to find her family in ruins. Both her sisters, it seems, have starved to death. Meanwhile, Detectives Vincent Swan and Gina Considine are convinced that there is more to the deaths than suicide. Because what little evidence there is, shows that someone was watching the sisters die ...



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Proofs available

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B format Trade pb
384pp £8.99
Imprint: Viper
Editor: Miranda Jewess

CRIME FICTION

The Rosary Garden

Winner of the Dundee International Book Prize

Nicola White

'Mesmerising tale of secrets and lies' Val McDermid

'Dazzling. Exceptional.' Brian Cox, Dundee International Book Prize judge

When a murdered new born is found in the garden of a convent, Detectives Vincent Swan and Gina Considine find that the pressure to discover the identity of the dead child is little help against a community with secrets to protect.

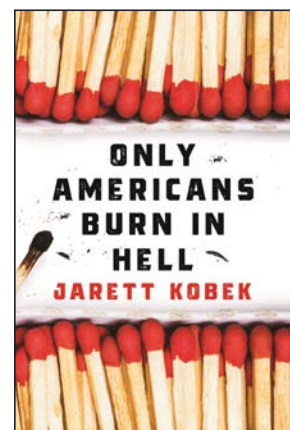
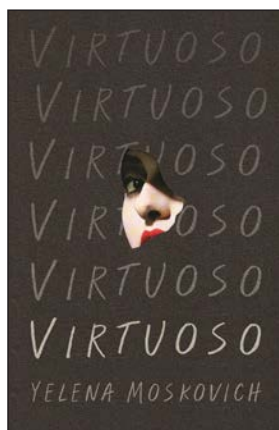
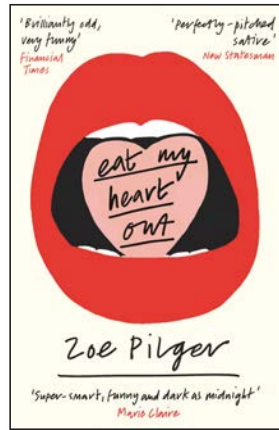
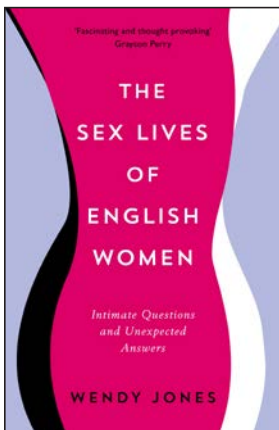
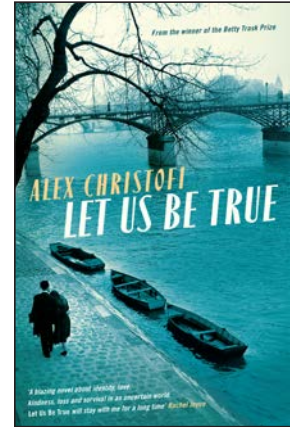
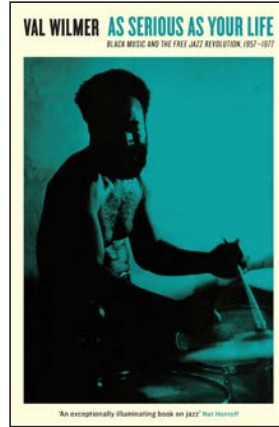
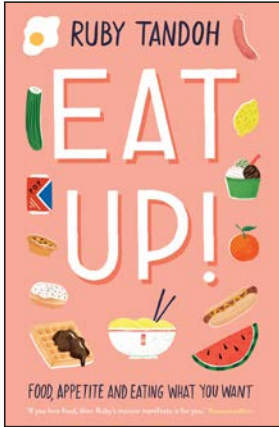


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Nicola White won the Scottish Book Trust New Writer Award in 2008 and in 2012 was Leverhulme Writer in Residence at Edinburgh University. *The Rosary Garden* won the Dundee International Book Prize, was shortlisted for the McIlvanney Prize, and selected as one of the four best debuts by Val McDermid at Harrogate. She grew up in Dublin and New York, and now lives in the Scottish Highlands.

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