



## **Spring 2025 – Rights List**

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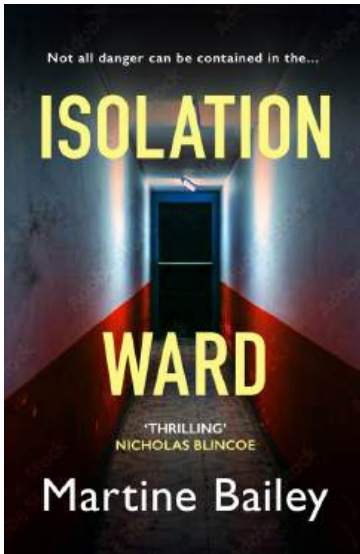
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**FICTION**

# ISOLATION WARD

## #2 in the LORRAINE QUICK SERIES

Martine Bailey 



Yorkshire, 1983. Thatcher is at Number 10, Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' is on the radio and Lorraine Quick is having to put plans to tour with her band on hold due to work.

With her expertise in psychometric testing, she is being sent to the Yorkshire moors to build a PR-friendly team out of the ragtag staff of the infamous Windwell Asylum as it transitions into a modern, top-security unit housing some of the most dangerous criminals in the country.

And then Lorraine stumbles on a brutal murder that has taken place despite the fifteen-foot-high perimeter wall and heavy-duty locks. Between the asylum's lingering reputation for violence, the haunting underground tunnels of the old institution and the arrival of almost-old flame DS Diaz to investigate the murder, events are coming to a head for Lorraine.

**Genre:** Crime/Thriller

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Allison & Busby  
(April 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

### Praise for The Lorraine Quick Series

*'A dazzling new voice in crime fiction. Taut, twisty and addictive. Martine Bailey is one to watch.'*

– Louisa Treger

*'The addictive first novel in an exciting new series of crime thrillers. Set in a sprawling northern hospital, and themed on psychometric tests. . . [a] devilishly clever, chilling murder mystery.'*

– Essie Fox

*'A brilliant and darkly compelling thriller, with a genuinely creepy mix of mystery, psychology and murder.'*

– SD Sykes

*'Sharp Scratch is such a chilling, insightful and fascinating exploration of human nature, it made me start questioning the dark recesses of my own psyche!'*

– Caroline England

*'Fascinating and original.'*

– Cari Rosen

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**Martine Bailey** studied English Literature while playing in bands on the Manchester music scene. She qualified in psychometric testing and assessed staff for Ashworth top security psychiatric hospital. *Sharp Scratch*, the first in a new series featuring Lorraine Quick, was published in February 2024. Martine has previously published four historical crime novels, *An Appetite for Violets*, *The Penny Heart*, *The Almanack* and *The Prophet*.

# HEART OF THE WYRDWOOD

#3 in the FORSAKEN TRILOGY

RJ Barker



WINNER OF THE BRITISH  
FANTASY AWARD  
(*THE BONE SHIPS*)

SHORTLISTED FOR  
GEMMEL MORNINGSTAR AWARD  
KITSCHIE GOLDEN TENTACLE  
(*WOUNDED KINGDOM TRILOGY*)



**Genre:** Fantasy

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Orbit (June 2025)

**Sold:** Germany (Panini), Poland (MAG)

**Options:** Arabic (Yatakhayaloon), France (Editions Leha), Hungary (Fumax Kiado), Italy (Elara), Russia (Eksmo)

**Material:** Manuscript

*Heart of the Wyrdwood* is the final in a new fantasy trilogy set within the bounds of a forest straight out of darkest folklore – with outlaws fighting an evil empire and warring deities.

Cahan Du Nahare is lost, taken by a dark god whose tendrils reach throughout the world, intent on its destruction. Those who followed Cahan are spread across the land, desperate and lost now fate has turned against them.

The Reborn warriors are toys for the enemy, the warrior Dassit, forestal Ania, and monk Ont are drawn to the dangerous North but do not know why.

Udinny is forced into the company of a woman who desires nothing more than her death and the Rai, Sorha, leads a dwindling band on a mission even she believes is doomed to failure. Only the trion Venn remains hopeful, slowly growing in power and trusting in the path of their god.

But maybe all is not lost; the great Wyrdwoods of Crua may be ancient and slow to act, but something in them is waking. Wyrdwood is coming...

## *Praise for the Forsaken Trilogy*

*'A triple-threat of world-building, character and plot [...] an experienced novelist at the top of his game [...] this is Avatar meets Dune, on shrooms.'*  
– SFX

*'Weighty, deliberate, tender and brutal, this is a big, wonderful book and an utterly involving read.'*  
– Daily Mail

*'Intelligently written, deeply clever worlds filled with gorgeous prose and incredible storytelling.'*  
– Starburst Magazine

*'There is violence, battle, murder, and yet there is love and support here, the importance of acceptance and inclusion... an arresting story with deep undercurrents weaving through a world you will not have experienced before.'*  
– The Fantasy Hive

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**RJ Barker** lives in Leeds with his wife, son and a collection of questionable taxidermy, odd art, scary music and more books than they have room for. As well as his acclaimed debut fantasy trilogy, RJ has written short stories and historical scripts which have been performed across the country.

# I AM A CAT by SOSEKI NATSUME

Nick Bradley (Translator)



A MODERN AND VIBRANT TRANSLATION OF  
THE CLASSIC JAPANESE NOVEL



A classic of Japanese literature, *I Am a Cat* is one of Soseki Natsume's best-known novels. In this new translation, Nick Bradley brings a fresh twist to a classic and beloved work.

*"I am a Cat. But I still don't have a name..."*

Once a stray kitten, *I Am a Cat*'s narrator finds himself adopted by a local scholar and thrown headfirst into the absurd upper middle-class world of Meiji-era Japan. Now a noble but somewhat world-weary observer, he has ample opportunity to dissect the strange ways and convoluted conversations of the human race.

First published at the turn of the 20th century, and regarded as one of Japan's most iconic classics, *I Am a Cat* is a captivating exploration of identity, society, and the often bewildering nature of the human condition - all seen through the eyes of a very special, uncompromising cat.

**Genre:** Literary Fiction

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Vintage Classics  
(September 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript due  
March 2025

## Praise for *I Am a Cat*

*'A nonchalant string of anecdotes and wisecracks, told by a fellow who doesn't have a name, and has never caught a mouse, and isn't much good for anything except watching human beings in action'*

– *New Yorker*

*'A biting satire of Meiji-era Japan told through the eyes of a sardonic street kitten'*

– *Guardian*

*'A mordantly comic evocation of Soseki's deep pessimism about his own humanity and indeed about humankind in general'*

– *Lit Hub*

*'Soseki is the representative modern Japanese novelist, a figure of truly national stature'*

– *Haruki Murakami*

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**Natsume Soseki** (1867 – 1916) is considered one of Japan's greatest and most influential modern writers. The success of *I Am a Cat*, first serialised in 1905, brought Soseki nationwide fame.

**Nick Bradley** was born in Germany in 1982 and grew up in Bath. After graduating with a Master's degree in English literature, he went to Japan for 'just one year' and returned to England ten years later to attend the Creative Writing MA at UEA, graduating in 2016. He has worked in a variety of jobs, including Japanese teacher, English teacher, video game translator, travel writer, and photographer. He speaks Japanese fluently, and undertook a PhD funded by the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation in Creative & Critical Writing at UEA, focusing on the figure of the cat in Japanese literature. His debut novel, *The Cat & The City* (Atlantic, 2020) has been reprinted over nine times. His second novel, *Four Seasons in Japan*, was chosen as a 'Book of the Year' by the *TLS*. His novels have been translated into almost twenty foreign languages.



# THE SURGEON'S HOUSE

Jody Cooksley



WINNER OF THE CALEDONIA NOVEL  
AWARD 2023  
(*THE SMALL MUSEUM*)

London, 1883.

The brutal murder of Rose Parmiter seems, at first, to be a random and senseless act. Rose was the beloved cook at Evergreen House, a place of refuge for women and children, a place from which they can start their lives afresh.

Proprietor Rebecca Harris, is profoundly shocked by the death of her dear friend and alarmed at the mysterious events which begin to unfold shortly afterwards. Could the past be casting a shadow on the present? The malign legacy of the Everley family who called Evergreen home, cannot be ignored.

After two further deaths, it becomes clear there is an evil presence infecting their sanctuary, and Rebecca must draw out the poison of the past so the Evergreen residents can finally make peace with the darkness in their lives.

**Genre:** Gothic Thriller

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Allison & Busby  
(May 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

## Praise for *The Small Museum*

*'I was blown away... There's such a delicious sense of unease running through the narrative... beautifully written gothic mystery.'*  
– Stacey Thomas

*'Beautifully written – dark, macabre, claustrophobic and strange in all the best ways for lovers of the gothic!'*  
– Kate Griffin

*'I was gripped by this thrillingly dark tale of twisted science and the horrors of Victorian marriage. Packed with hair-raising secrets and gothic mystery ... disturbing in the very best way!'*  
– Carmella Lowkis

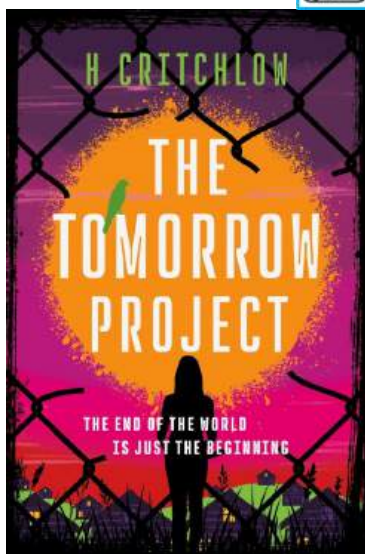
*'A chilling exploration which highlights how alone you can become when no one is willing to believe you, and a gothic slice of Victorian storytelling.'*  
– Waterstones

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**Jody Cooksley** studied literature at Oxford Brookes University, and has a Masters in Victorian Poetry. Her debut novel, *The Glass House*, is a fictional account of the life of pioneer nineteenth-century photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron, praised as a 'riveting account' by poet James Harpur. Her second novel, *How to Keep Well in Wartime*, was hailed as 'a powerful and finely crafted novel, exploring how we deal with grief, relationships and mental health,' by author Tracey Icton. Both are published by Cinnamon Press and have been shortlisted for various literary awards. Her last novel, *The Small Museum*, was chosen as the winner of the Caledonia Novel Award 2023.

# THE TOMORROW PROJECT

H. Critchlow



**Genre:** Speculative/Thriller

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Canelo (May 2025)

**Material:** Proofs

**The unmissable new speculative novel for fans of *Station Eleven*, *The End We Start From* and *The Last of Us*.**

When the end comes, what will you wish you'd done?

In 2050s London, fear grips like a vice as a deadly virus sweeps the globe. The British Prime Minister tells her people to remain calm. A vaccine will be available soon, and as a precautionary measure children will be whisked away to undisclosed locations, kept safe until the storm passes.

Marianne, Downing Street press secretary, doesn't realise the futility until it is far, far too late. When the truth hits her, Marianne is forced to choose: stay with her family, or do whatever she can to help the doomed survive.

As London falls, seven-year-old Maia is one of the last to escape the city. In an evacuation camp, she binds herself to Finn: in the absence of everything she knew, he becomes her everything. Yet as the years roll on and hope fades, Maia sees the bubble of safety is also a prison. She realises there is only one choice: to leave the camp and find what remains on the outside.

An utterly compelling and unforgettable tale of humanity, resilience and the lengths we will go to for love. *The Tomorrow Project* is the stunning first standalone novel from H Critchlow.

*'A heady mix of heartache and hope, love and loss, in a world that's splitting at the seams. Critchlow really excels in this tale of growing up in a world that's collapsed in on itself. I fell headfirst into this one, and couldn't come up for air till I turned the last page.'*  
– Robert Rutherford

*'A page-turning dystopian novel with the pace of a thriller full of heart and hope... A fresh, original novel with characters who linger and a propulsive plot. Genuinely un-putdown-able'*  
– Niki Mackay

*'Masterful... It broke my heart and patched it up so many times, holding me gripped throughout. A beautifully written parable of hope, love and humanity, it will live with me for a very long time. Superb.'*  
– Rob Parker

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**H. Critchlow** studied history and social science at Cambridge University, then trained as a business journalist. She was raised in rural Aberdeenshire, Scotland and now lives in St Albans. She has published four novels in the Cal Lovett Files series. The first, *Unsolved*, was shortlisted for the Bloody Scotland Debut Prize 2023. *The Tomorrow Project* is her first standalone.

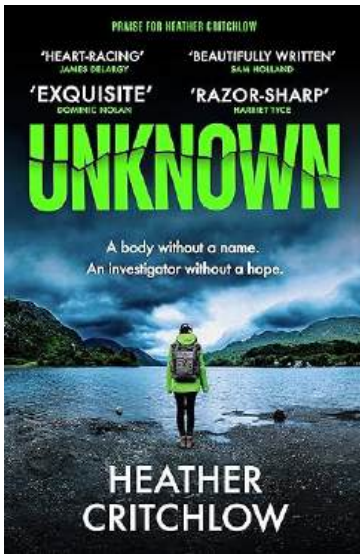
# UNKNOWN

#4 in THE CAL LOVETT FILES

Heather Critchlow



BESTSELLING SCOTTISH  
CRIME SERIES



**Genre:** Crime/Mystery

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Canelo (August 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

**Option:** Russia (Clever)

**A woman with no name, a reckoning with the past, a present fraught with danger.**

In the most remote spot of the hills surrounding Loch Tay, a woman's remains were found. She had lain there a while, but any evidence of who she was had long gone – or never existed. Crime podcaster Cal Lovett seeks to put 'Hillside Jane' to rest, but is he merely running from his own troubles?

With the wife of his sister's alleged killer missing and a sense that any chance he had of getting justice for Margot is slipping from his grasp, Cal is at a crossroads. Perhaps peace for Hillside Jane will soothe his own fears. But events in the village don't bring the results anyone expected. Is Cal so stuck in the past that he won't spot the risk he faces in the here and now?

A gripping instalment of the bestselling Scottish crime series from Bloody Scotland Debut Prize for Scottish Crime-shortlisted author Heather Critchlow. Perfect for fans of Jane Casey, Claire Douglas and Neil Lancaster.

## *Praise for The Cal Lovett Files*

*'A genuinely intriguing, well-plotted story with an emphasis on strong characterisation and relationships.'*  
– *The Herald (Scotland)*

*'Grippingly told through lifelike characters.'*  
– *Morning Star*

*'a series that just keeps getting better! Heather Critchlow's writing is razor sharp, with not a word wasted.'*  
– *Robert Rutherford*

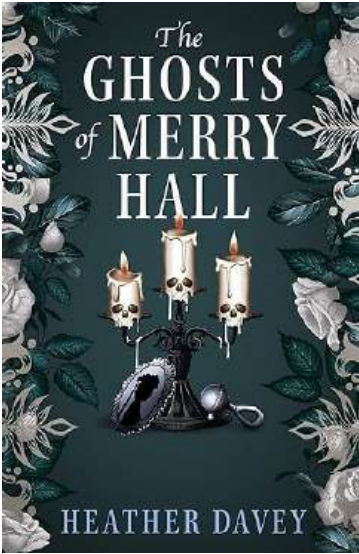
*'Characters so real I wanted to reach out to the family. I'm still thinking of them now.'*  
– *Rachel Wolf*

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**Heather Critchlow** studied history and social science at Cambridge University, then trained as a business journalist. She was raised in rural Aberdeenshire, Scotland and now lives in St Albans. She has published four novels in the Cal Lovett Files series. The first, *Unsolved*, was shortlisted for the Bloody Scotland Debut Prize 2023. She is also the author of *The Tomorrow Project*, a stand-alone thriller launched in 2025 under the name H Critchlow (Canelo).

# THE GHOSTS OF MERRY HALL

Heather Davey



**Genre:** Horror/Ghost Story

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Titan (September 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript due spring 2025

A chilling ghost story in which a mother and daughter move into a crumbling house haunted by the ghost of a girl who performed in Victorian freak shows, through which wind whistles eerily, floorboards creak ominously and things go bump in the night. *The Turn of the Screw* meets Alice Hoffman's *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.

Following the break-up of a controlling marriage, single mother Nell moves into the crumbling Victorian Merry Hall with her teenage daughter, Fern. She's determined to make a new life but the noises, moving objects, and strange smells in her new home make her increasingly unsettled.

In the 1840s, showman Abel Wenham seduces Dolly, a talented albino girl and makes her the star of his performing collection of 'freaks'. But after she becomes pregnant with his child, he discards her and imprisons her at Merry Hall, where her only solace is the company of fellow performers Ada the Bear Lady and the Jack the Posturer. They plan to escape with Dolly and her child and set up in business, but Wenham has other ideas.

When Fern admits she, too, is pregnant, it seems as though history may be about to repeat itself. But is Dolly, just one of the ghosts that haunt Merry Hall, reaching out across the centuries to protect her own child?

*The Ghosts of Merry Hall* is a chilling ghost story, a story about control, family relationships and love.

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[Heather Davey](#) has an MA in Writing (with distinction) from Bath Spa University and is an alumna of the Curtis Brown Creative Finish Your Novel course. She is a librarian and a forthcoming judge for the Yoto Carnegie Medals in 2025 and 2026. She lives in Dorset with her husband and two children. Heather has always been fascinated by ghost stories and was a key contributor to the recent BBC 2 series, *Uncanny*, with Danny Robins.

# THE HOTEL

**Kit Duffield**



**We all have secrets.  
And they know every one of yours...**

Welcome to Kuvastin – the most talked-about hotel on the planet.

A luxury retreat, deep in the Finnish wilderness, where the sights, sounds and scents of your stay are foraged from your own life story, plucked from your most precious memories... The exact brand of champagne you drank on the night you got engaged, the soundtrack to your first road trip, the fragrance that reminds you of home.

Just answer a few questions on a form, give the owners access to your social media and they will do the rest. But when you invite complete strangers to delve into your past, isn't there a danger they might unearth something you don't want to remember...?

Wealth, vanity and self-obsession give way to betrayal and bloodshed in this chilling psychological thriller.

**Genre:** Thriller

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Thomas & Mercer  
(August 2025)

**Sold:** Russia (Atticus)

**Material:** Manuscript

## *Praise for Kit Duffield*

*'A fast-paced, twist-filled plot that keeps readers captivated. An engaging read, with unexpected turns that make it hard to put down.'*

— *The Midland Tribune*

*'Grips you from the first page...*

*Duffield masterfully crafts complex characters and an intricately layered plot, blending psychological depth with heart-pounding suspense.'*

— *Deana E., Librarian*

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**Kit Duffield**, previously published as Chris Russell, writes chilling psychological thrillers with gripping plots and killer twists. Sitting somewhere between Gillian Flynn and Shirley Jackson, his stories are inspired by our fears, obsessions and the things we see in the dark.

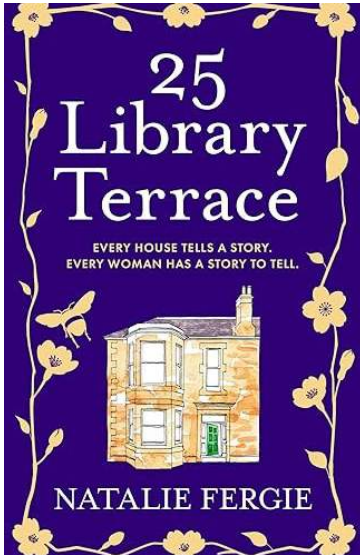


# 25 LIBRARY TERRACE

Natalie Fergie



OVER 125,000 COPIES SOLD  
FOR *THE SEWING MACHINE*



**Genre:** Book Club / Family Saga

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK/US:** Embla/Bonnier (June 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

**Have you ever wondered about all the people who lived in your house before you?**

25 Library Terrace in Edinburgh is a house where lives are changed.

In 1911, new resident Ursula Black embraces women's suffrage in the form of census protest, discovers vegetarianism, and learns just how difficult it can be to bring up someone else's children.

In 1931, the house becomes part of a radical experiment in a different way of living, and a family secret from the past is uncovered.

In 2011, Tess Dutton needs somewhere to live in the wake of a failed relationship and is introduced to a rather unusual landlady.

In 2022, delayed by the pandemic, it's another census year for Scotland, and as Edinburgh's residents are able to gather once more, the strands of four generations at 25 Library Terrace are finally woven together.

*25 Library Terrace* is a deeply satisfying novel about strong and determined women who grasp their own destiny and help other women to grasp theirs. At its centre stands the house, a reminder that however our lives change over the years, the things that matter – love, kindness, stories and good recipes – stay the same.

## *Praise for Natalie Fergie*

*'A tapestry of strong characters and accomplished writing.'*  
– Herald Scotland

*'Hopeful and poignant. . . lingers long after the final page.'*  
– Helen Sedgwick

*'Extraordinarily accomplished and beautiful... woven with historical detail.'*  
– Rachel Lucas

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**Natalie Fergie** lives near Edinburgh. After a twenty-five-year career in nursing, she set up a textiles business and spent ten years making and selling hand-dyed yarn and embroidery threads. She has now moved on to a third career as a writer. Her debut novel, *The Sewing Machine*, was published by Unbound in 2017 and became a word-of-mouth bestseller, selling over 125,000 copies, and was featured at #4 on the Scottish bestseller lists in April 2019.

# THE BONE RAIDERS

#1 in the RAKADA SERIES

Jackson Ford



The start of an edge-of-your-seat, action-packed fantasy series from the always irreverent Jackson Ford, where a wild band known as the Bone Raiders harness the power of gigantic, fire-breathing lizards to defend their homeland.

You don't mess with the Rakada. The people living in the grasslands of the Tapestry call them the Bone Raiders, from their charming habit of displaying the bones of those they kill on their horses and armour.

But being a raider is tough these days. There's a new Great Khan in the Tapestry. He's had it with the raider clans and plans to use his sizeable military to do something about it. And then there are the araatan: fire-breathing lizards the size of elephants, roaming the grasslands in search of dwindling food supplies.

**Genre:** High Fantasy

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Orbit (August 2025)

**Options:** Arabic (Tabashir)

**Material:** Proofs

Sayana is a Rakada scout, and she loves her job. But if she wants to keep it, she's going to have to do something drastic. Like convincing her clan to ride araatan, instead of horses. Sayana doesn't quite know how to get that done without being eaten and/or cooked alive, but she'd better figure it out fast - or she and her clan, along with every other raider in the Tapestry, will be wiped out.

## Praise for Jackson Ford

*'Proceeds at breakneck speed through almost 500 pages of madcap adventure, with some terrific jokes and plenty of tension.'*

– The Guardian

*'A fast-paced, high-adrenaline tale.'*

– Kirkus

*'Ford's strengths are evident in the taut action sequences and suspenseful pacing.'*

– Publishers Weekly

*'Ford's breakneck pace keeps the tension high, and the thrills coming the whole way through.'*

– Bookpage

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**Jackson Ford** is the bestselling author of *The Frost Files* series, beginning with *The Girl Who Could Move Sh\*t With Her Mind*. The series has been translated into multiple languages, and optioned for television. Under his real name, Rob Boffard, he is the author of the sci-fi trilogy *Outer Earth*. He is a former award-winning journalist and broadcaster, with stories appearing in the *Guardian*, *Wired Magazine*, the BBC, *io9*, and more. He most recently edited *The Master Switch*, a commercial audio review site. He lives in Vancouver, Canada.

# DARK HORSE

## Felix Francis



SCREEN RIGHTS TO THE DICK & FELIX  
FRANCIS NOVELS UNDER OPTION



**Sid Halley is brought in to investigate a stalking-turned-murder case in this thrilling addition to the Dick Francis novels.**

Imogen Duffy is an up-and-coming Irish jump jockey, making her mark in steeplechase racing when she discovers she's being stalked. Convinced the stalker is her estranged ex-boyfriend, she goes to the police, but Liam vehemently denies the accusations – until he's found dead, stabbed with a knife bearing Imogen's fingerprints.

Imogen's father, convinced of her innocence, seeks out Sid Halley to ask for his help uncovering the truth. Sid tries to refuse, but when he discovers that the man was one of the doctors who saved his wife's life when she was shot years prior, Sid agrees to see what he can do for Imogen.

After meeting with Imogen, Sid decides to take a quiet look at the evidence in the case. When her father announces on TV that Sid Halley is officially investigating the case and will clear Imogen of murder, Sid is furious.

**Genre:** Thriller

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Bonnier (September 2025)

**US:** Crooked Lane  
(September 2025)

**Options:** Czech Republic  
(Euromedia), Japan (Bungei  
Shunju)

**Material:** Manuscript due  
March 2025

What was supposed to be a discreet, small favour has been turned into a full-scale investigation under the close eye of the press. The case becomes all too personal soon after, when Sid realizes he is being stalked – is it the killer? With his life and reputation on the line, Sid races to solve the case before someone new ends up dead – or he ends up framed for murder.

### *Praise for Felix Francis*

*'Felix Francis' novels gallop along splendidly.'*  
– Jilly Cooper

*'He has become his own man as a purveyor of murder mysteries.'*  
– *The Racing Post*

*'The Francis flair is clear for all to see.'*  
– *Daily Mail*

*'From winning post to top of the best-seller list, time after time.'*  
– *Sunday Times*

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**Felix Francis** studied Physics and Electronics at London University and then spent seventeen years teaching Advanced-Level Physics. The younger son of crime writer and National Hunt jockey Dick Francis, Felix assisted his father with both the research and writing of his novels in a father-and-son writing partnership. Since Dick's death, Felix has written eleven successful novels, the latest being *Syndicate*.



# THE SILVER BONES OF FRANCES WINTER

**Fiona Goggin**



**Genre:** Historical Fiction / Bookclub

**Agent:** Anna Dawson

**UK/US:** Everything With Words (2026)

**Material:** Manuscript

*‘I swear I can hear the creak and crack of my bones growing in the night, the weight of them a whale washed up on the shore, the rusting carcass of a ship...’*

At eight years old, Frances is almost the same height as her father; by sixteen, she is over six feet tall.

As she continues to grow to an extraordinary height, Frances seeks a way to reduce her size and struggles not to lose herself in the process; desperate to remain hidden, while longing to be seen.

But the streets of Victorian London are not an easy place to be a woman – least of all one as striking as Frances. Wooed by the showman of a questionable ‘theatre troupe,’ taken in by shrewd spiritualists and charmed by a collection of hedonistic Pre-Raphaelites, Frances must reckon with what it means to inhabit a body that does not conform; grappling with how the world sees her versus who she is discovering herself to be.

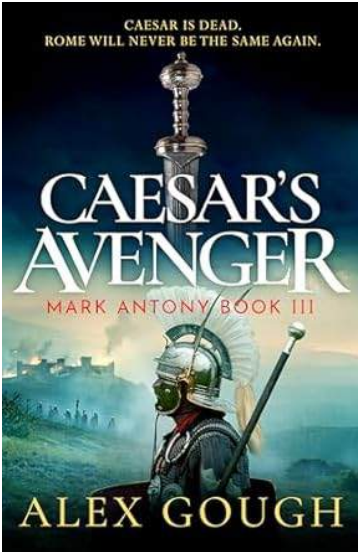
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**Fiona Goggin** was inspired to write Frances’ story based on her own teenage struggles with body image and a lifelong love of Victorian gothic novels. She completed the Curtis Brown Creative Three-Month Novel-Writing course in 2021. Fiona has two young children and works as a library assistant in a local public library in Kent. She loves spending her days talking to readers, young and old and everything in between.

# CAESAR'S AVENGER

## #3 in the MARK ANTONY SERIES

Alex Gough



### Julius Caesar is dead.

Mark Antony, his second in command, is surely in the sights of the assassins.

But for Antony, where there is danger, there is opportunity. Can he seize the chance, and replace Caesar as Rome's undisputed ruler?

The portents are good until a young man by the name of Octavian appears, claiming to be Caesar's heir. The months and years that follow are a time of shifting alliances, betrayals and score settling.

Above all, Antony must fulfil his vow to avenge Caesar and destroy his assassins, Brutus and Cassius, while at the same time preserving his position and stop Rome from falling apart. At risk are his family, his honour and his life.

**Genre:** Historical Fiction

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Canelo (June 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

### *Praise for the Mark Antony Series*

*'A bold and exciting recreation of the Roman world.'*  
– Harry Sidebottom

*'A compelling and admirably detailed opening act to what promises to be a truly epic saga.'*  
– Ian Ross

*'Roman fiction has a new master.'*  
– S. J. A. Turney

*'Puts flesh on the historical bones of Marcus Antonius and leaves us eagerly awaiting the next volume.'*  
– Amanda Cockrell

*'A tour de force from a master of Roman fiction.'*  
– Gordon Doherty

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[Alex Gough](#) has a decades-long interest in Ancient Roman history, and the Carbo Series (*Watchmen of Rome*, *Bandits of Rome*, *Killer of Rome* and the short story collection *Carbo and the Thief*) is the culmination of much research into the underclasses of Ancient Rome. His second series, the Imperial Assassin, is set in the reign of the Severan dynasty, a very under-examined period of Roman history. His latest series is based on the larger-than-life character of Mark Antony, the warrior, the commander, the politician and the lover.

**MARE**

**Emily Haworth-Booth**



3-WAY AUCTION

WINNER OF THE 2024

MSLEXIA PRIZE



A literary novel that draws on the conventions of fable, poetry and the lyric essay to tell what is, at its heart, a love story between a woman and a horse. For fans of Sheila Heti's *Motherhood*, Marian Engel's *Bear*, Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* and Annie Ernaux's *A Simple Passion*.

An unnamed female protagonist, at 39, has been diagnosed with a condition that means she can't have children. Being officially infertile is, somehow, easier than telling people she didn't want to have a baby anyway – but she does want something to love and care for. It's something, she explains to her husband, to do with being a woman – though she's not quite sure that's true.

When she hears about a female horse whose owner needs help looking after her part-time, it sounds like an ideal arrangement. At first the mare is simply a prism for seeing the world afresh. Can she be captured in metaphor or translated into written or drawn language? Is her femaleness different from human femaleness?

**Genre:** Literary Fiction

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Granta (Spring 2026)

**US:** Farrar, Straus and Giroux  
(Spring 2026)

**Material:** Manuscript

Over the course of a year, while the woman undergoes medical treatment for premature menopause, she finds solace in caring for the horse. Through riding lessons and the repetition of chores, first a language, and then a bond, begins to develop between them. But when affection grows into obsession, she must confront what it means to love a being who did not come from her body and who does not belong to her.

*Mare* challenges the idea of contemporary motherhood and how we think about female bodies, both human and other-than-human. It asks how family can be made in the modern world, beyond the constraints of biological reproduction.

*'I was gripped by her very first description. The concept and her approach to it are really bold  
– she just goes for it! I loved it!'*  
– Sophie Hannah

*'Incredible, wonderfully weird and thought-provoking. I loved its take on  
gender and physicality, and our proximity to the natural world.'*  
– Natasha Onwuemezi

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**Emily Haworth-Booth** is an artist, poet and graphic novelist, and winner of the 2013 Jonathan Cape/Observer/Comica Graphic Short Story Prize. After studying English Literature at Cambridge University, she worked in various jobs in the UK and US before landing at The Prince's Drawing School in Shoreditch, where she teaches a course called 'Drawing the Graphic Novel.' Emily was runner-up in the 2008 Jonathan Cape Graphic Short Story Prize (which she won in 2013 with her story 'Colonic'), and winner of the Young National Poetry Competition in 1998. In 2007 she won a Warner Comedy Box Competition, and was a finalist in the Nivea Funny Women Competition which meant she got to talk about her bum in front of 400 people at the Comedy Store in London. Emily lives in Catford with her husband and greyhound. She sometimes writes comedy sketches and, like all annoying people who work in Shoreditch, makes extravagant claims about being able to play the ukulele. However, she compensates for this with a poor-to-middling fashion sense. *Mare* is her debut adult novel.

# THE COUNTDOWN KILLER

#4 in the MAJOR CRIMES SERIES

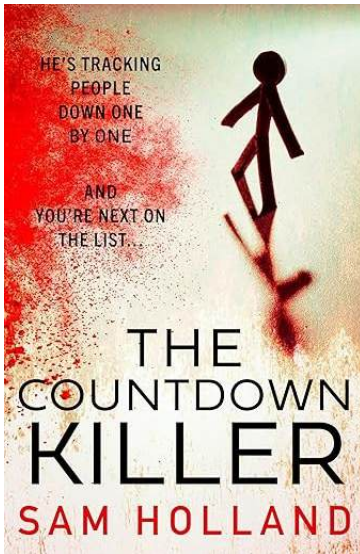
Sam Holland



AUTHOR OF DUTCH BRONZE & SILVER BAT WINNER

BEST DEBUT THRILLER

BEST THRILLER OF THE YEAR



**In a world where everything has its price, how much would you pay for murder?**

It's been three years since the Echo Man was caught; since DCI Cara Elliott's partner, DS Noah Deakin, was imprisoned for the murder of over thirty people. But something about these DVDs reminds Cara of that awful time. Of the VHS tapes found in the Echo Man's flat.

She goes back to the case files, to the evidence. And sure enough, the six digits scrawled on each one match. These new DVDs, and those old VHS tapes – they come from the same place. And their only lead is the killer who bought them. Is it possible the true Echo Man is out there?

It's a race against time, one Griffin and Hoxton know all too well. This time the stakes are all too clear. They need to track him down before he kills again.

**Genre:** Crime/Thriller

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** HarperCollins (June 2025)

**Sold:** Netherlands (HC Holland)

**Options:** Brazil (Darkside), Czech Republic (Euromedia), Denmark (HarperCollins Nordic), Estonia (Helios), France (HC France), Germany (DTV), Lithuania (Helios), Poland (Muza), Russia (Eksmo), Slovakia (Ikar), Sweden (Lind & Co), Turkey (Yediveren)

**Material:** Manuscript

## Praise for Sam Holland

*'Striking debut... the darkest of dark... Bleak, but utterly compelling.'*  
– Daily Mail

*'Gut-punches don't come much more powerful than the grimly satisfying ending. Nail-biting suspense matches credible emotional reactions... exceptional.'*  
– Publishers Weekly

*'Evokes a classic, satisfying, red-blooded fear. . . a stellar debut.'*  
– A. J. Finn

*'The novel as whole is intelligent, moving and exciting.'*  
– Literary Review

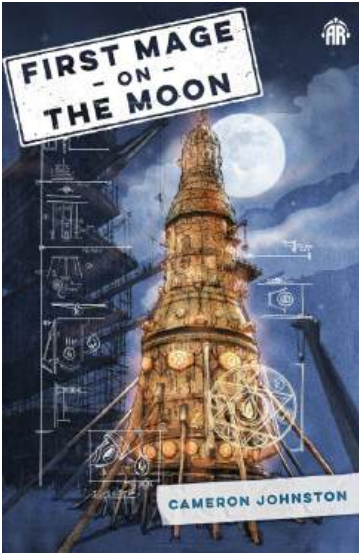
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**Sam Holland** is the award-winning author of the Major Crimes series, following detectives as they investigate murders committed by brutal serial killers in the south of England. Her debut, *The Echo Man* (HarperCollins, 2022), shocked and enthralled readers and reviewers alike with its sinister depiction of a serial killer copying notorious real-life murderers of the past. This was followed by *The Twenty* in 2023 and *The Puppet Master* in 2024. Her books have been published in 15 countries worldwide, including the US, Germany and the Netherlands, where she became the first author to win the Bronze Bat for her debut and the Silver Bat for best thriller in consecutive years at the Netherlands Thrillerfestival.



# FIRST MAGE ON THE MOON

Cameron Johnston



**Grimdark master Cameron Johnston returns in this innovative space fantasy where wizards race to be the first to touch the moon.**

**A fast-paced read, perfect for fans of Adrian Tchaikovsky.**

Caught in the grinding throes of a magical cold war rapidly heating up, the research and design mages of the Unity are sick and tired of building arcane weapons of mass destruction for far-mightier battlemages and the obscenely wealthy hierarchs that rule them.

The engineers and scholars go rogue, diverting funds and resources meant for the war effort towards building a vessel designed to traverse the void and land a mage on the moon - the home of the gods.

Magic was meant for more than warfare, and they aim to remind people of that - even if it means working with the enemy to do it.

**Genre:** Fantasy

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Angry Robot  
(July 2025)

**Option:** Russia (Eksmo)

**Material:** Manuscript

## *Praise for Cameron Johnston*

*'A ruthless, gritty world, [...] thrilling action and [...] characters you will either root for or hate right down to their core.'*

*– Fantasy Hive*

*'An action-packed ride filled with clashing battles, unforeseen betrayals, inventive deaths, evil magic and one very badass Commander of Shields. Epic fun.'*

*– Anna Stephens*

*'Gritty, action-packed, and ceaselessly clever.'*

*– Andrea Stewart*

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**Cameron Johnston** is the British Fantasy Award and Dragon Awards nominated author of dark fantasy novels *The Traitor God*, *God of Broken Things* and *The Maleficent Seven*. He is a swordsman, a gamer, an enthusiast of archaeology, history and mythology, and loves exploring ancient sites and camping out under the stars by a roaring fire. He lives in Glasgow.

# ODDBODY

Rose Keating



UK & US PRE-EMPTS!



**Genre:** Literary Horror /Short Stories

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Canongate (July 2025)

**US:** S&S (July 2025)

**Sold:** Italy (Mondadori/Oscar Fantastica)

**Material:** Proofs

Striking, visceral, and brutally honest, Rose Keating's *Oddbody* is a captivating short story collection that delves into the weirdness of bodies and of existence itself through the voices of social outsiders and outcasts.

In her debut collection, Rose Keating takes you on a bold journey through the intricacies of sex, shame, and womanhood. With ten enchanting short stories, she crafts an emotional masterpiece that challenges us to reflect on the movement and needs of our bodies. Strange yet utterly mesmerizing, *Oddbody* is a provocative exploration that feels both surprising and sincerely authentic.

In 'Oddbody', a woman finds herself navigating a codependent relationship with a ghost, while 'Squirm' portrays a daughter tending to her father as he devours himself from the inside out.

'Pineapple' introduces us to a woman who opts to have feather wings surgically attached to her back. In 'Eggshells', a waitress gives birth to an egg during her breakfast shift.

Each narrative in this collection is immersive, bizarre, and deeply empathetic, shining a light on women who dare to defy societal norms and invite you to question the conventions and milestones that determine success.

*'Our tender, prickling, ungainly human condition beautifully shimmers from these stories the more surreal they get, and in a relatable everyday way. A brilliant collection about our curious existence that would have been notable at any time in history, by an author we can expect to celebrate again'*

– DBC Pierre

*'Rose Keating's debut short story collection blends literary horror and gothic to delve into uncomfortable and taboo aspects of the female experience.'*

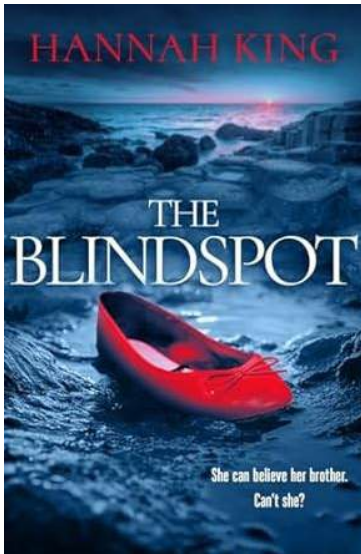
– Irish Times

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**Rose Keating** is a writer from Waterford, Ireland. She studied on the Creative Writing Prose Fiction MA at UEA, where she was a recipient of the Malcolm Bradbury Scholarship and the Curtis Brown Prize for best dissertation. She is a winner of the Marian Keyes Young Writer Award, the Sean Dunne Young Writers Award, the *Hot Press* Write Here Write Now prize, and the Ted and Mary O'Regan Arts Bursary. She has been published in *Apex Magazine*, *Hot Press* magazine, *Banshee* journal and *Southword* journal. In 2022, she received an Agility Award from the Irish Arts Council to fund the completion of her debut short story collection.

# THE BLINDSPOT

Hannah King



**A taut and thought-provoking exploration of a sibling relationship, a sister who would do anything for her younger brother, even when he's accused of an appalling crime.**

Abi Campbell's brother Jack has everything to look forward to: just turned 18 and finishing his A-levels, he's a star student with a prestigious university scholarship awaiting him. The youngest of five, Jack has largely been largely raised by Abi after their mother died, and she adores him.

The Campbells' world is turned on its head when, one summer morning, the police arrive to arrest Jack. His childhood friend, Katie Waltz, has accused him of a terrible crime. The worst one.

Rumours about what happened swirl through their small seaside town, turning friends against friends and brothers against brothers. Only Abi stands by Jack while it seems the rest of the world point fingers. She knows he is innocent. He has to be. He's her golden boy.

**Genre:** Family Drama / Suspense

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK (WEL):** Bedford Square  
(March 2025)

**Material:** Proofs

A love story in many ways, *The Blindspot* asks the question: Is blood truly thicker than water – and can you love someone too much?

## *Praise for Hannah King*

*'A nifty fusion of psychological thriller and police procedural.'*  
– Sunday Times

*'A heart-racing, addictive read about friendship and the dark truths we conceal.'*  
– Woman's Own, Bookclub pick

*'A taut and unrelenting mystery, expertly woven with the bruising drama of girlhood.'*  
– Anna Bailey

*'Gripping. Thoughtful. Lyrical ... This writer is going places.'*  
– Imran Mahmood

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**Hannah King** was born in County Down in 1994. She received a First Class degree in English with Creative Writing from Queen's University Belfast in 2016, and went on to become a proofreader at a law firm while studying for her Master of Arts in Creative Writing in 2017. Hannah's work draws on the dark and twisting storytelling of her favourite writers Roald Dahl, Donna Tartt and Ian McEwan, and focuses on relationships, class, mental health and addiction. . . with a few murders thrown in for good measure. She likes to write love stories, though never in a romantic sense. Her first novel, *She and I* (Raven Books, 2022), is a work of literary crime and explores female friendship and the dangers of assumption.

# JUICY SECRET FOR SALE

Damilare Kuku



#1 FICTION BESTSELLER 2022 IN  
NIGERIA (NEARLY ALL THE MEN IN  
LAGOS ARE MAD)



**Genre:** Bookclub Fiction

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK:** S&S

**West Africa:** TBLNG Press

**East Africa:** Nuria Books

**South Africa:** Picador

**Option:** HarperCollins (US)

**Material:** Manuscript due  
summer 2025

**With her searing wit and unapologetic candour, Damilare Kuku casts a spotlight on the double standards to which women are subjected when it comes to sex and relationships.**

Ara Ikoyi's in a bind. Her first three books have been bestsellers, but the deadline for her next novel is approaching, and she hasn't written a word. She doesn't have a story, or so she thinks. But suddenly everyone is talking about her neighbour, Juicy Mbelu, who lives in the same exclusive Lagos estate, and has allegedly killed her sugar daddy. As Juicy's story goes viral, Ara feels sure there's a book to be written...

Ara has to pull some strings to visit Juicy while in police custody, and to her relief, the young woman agrees to tell her side of the story, but on two conditions:

1. Ara must visit the other women on the estate and trade one secret for another, in order to discover the truth, baring her own soul in the process.
2. She must tell the story exactly as it is told to her.

But is Ara truly ready to tell Juicy's tale, or will she just unleash further chaos for both of them? And who might want to stop her?

## Praise for Damilare Kuku

*'Damilare Kuku is indeed the new wave.'*

– Marie Claire

*'Delightful and insightful, unforgettable... It establishes [Damilare Kuku] as a talented storyteller with a distinctive voice.'*

– Glamour

*'Kuku once again juggles immersive human drama with social commentary on such issues as beauty standards, domestic abuse, and female desire.'*

– Booklist

*'A polyphonic masterpiece... sharply insightful, bitingly funny, wondrously poignant.'*

– Shelf Awareness

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**Damilare Kuku** has worked as a radio presenter, scriptwriter, film producer, actor and director. Her debut collection of stories, *Nearly All The Men In Lagos Are Mad*, was a runaway bestseller in her native Nigeria, named by Rovingheights Bookstore as the bestselling fiction title of 2022. Her first novel, *Only Big Bumbum Matters Tomorrow*, was published by Ouida Books (Nigeria), Picador (South Africa), Simon & Schuster (UK) and HarperCollins (US) in July 2024.



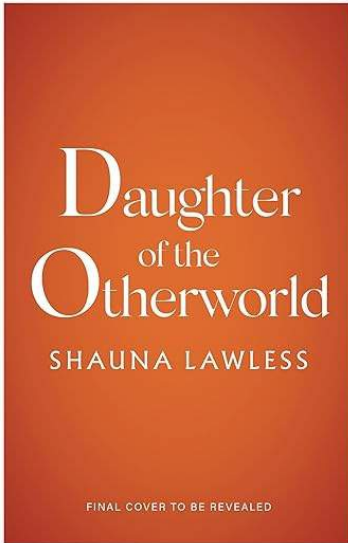
# DAUGHTER OF THE OTHERWORLD

## #4 in the GAEL SONG SERIES

Shauna Lawless



TV OPTION WITH  
PLAYGROUND



**Genre:** Historical Fantasy /  
Mythology

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Head of Zeus (September  
2025)

**Option:** Russia (Eksmo)

**Material:** Manuscript due March  
2025

From the author of the Gael Song Series, an epic new historical fantasy set in the tumultuous, magical world of medieval Ireland during the time of the Norman invasion.

Over a hundred years after she went missing, Isolde, daughter of the Crown Prince of Ireland and a powerful immortal, inexplicably reappears. Despite her decades of absence, Isolde is barely eighteen years old.

Her mother's kin are the Descendants, one of the two magical races of Ireland. But no Descendant can understand the reasons for Isolde's disappearance, and worse yet, she is believed to be Giftless - born with no magical ability, a dangerous thing when the magic-rich Fomorians, ancient enemies of the Descendants, have risen in power.

The Fomorians now control two of Ireland's provinces. They desire further power over the mortal world, and seek to spread their dangerous webs wider by encouraging the Pope to authorise an invasion of Ireland by England's Norman lords.

But when death and destruction seem inevitable, Isolde's true worth will show itself, for she is far more than she seems.

### Praise for the Gael Song Series

*'Absolutely luminous... a huge, epic, admirable sweep of a novel'*  
– Sunday Independent

*'Lawless blends fantasy with historical fiction to great effect.'*  
– SFX

*'Attention to historical detail and accuracy adds to the pleasure [...] beautifully written and totally captivating.'*  
– Grimdark Magazine

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**Shauna Lawless** is an author and lover of magical, historical fantasy fiction. Inspired by her childhood passion for Irish history and mythology, she has spent the last six years learning the craft of writing, and obsessing about Irish myths, famous druids and warriors, and Irish traditions. *The Children of Gods and Fighting Men*, her first novel in The Gael Song series, was published by Head of Zeus in 2022. The second instalment, *The Words of Kings and Prophets*, was released in Autumn 2023 and *The Land of the Living and the Dead* in 2024. She lives in County Down with her husband, three boys, and her loveable spoodle, Chewy.

# THE MIRES

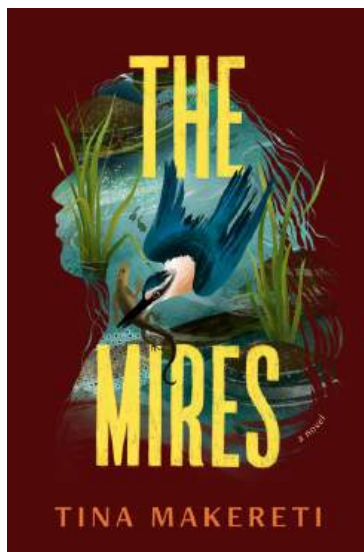
Tina Makereti



NEW ZEALAND BESTSELLER

3-WAY AUCTION  
(ANZ)

ONGLISTED FOR 2025  
OCKHAM NEW ZEALAND  
BOOK AWARDS



***The Mires* is a tender and fierce novel that asks what we do when faced with things we don't understand. Is our impulse to destroy or connect?**

Three women give birth in different countries and different decades. In the near future, they become neighbours in a coastal town in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Single parent Keri has her hands full with four-year-old tearaway Walty and teen Wairere, a strange and gifted child, who always picks up on things that aren't hers to worry about. They live next door to Janet, a white woman with an opinion about everything, and new arrival Sera, whose family are refugees from ecological devastation in Europe.

When Janet's son Conor arrives home without warning, sporting a fresh buzzcut and a new tattoo, the quiet tension between the neighbours grows, but no one suspects just how extreme Conor has become. No one except Wairere, who can feel the danger in their midst, and the swamp beneath their street, watching and waiting.

A literary page turner for readers of Celeste Ng, Elif Shafak and Mohsin Hamid.

**Genre:** Literary Fiction

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**ANZ:** Ultimo Press  
(July 2024)

**UK:** Footnote (September 2025)

**US:** HarperVia (September 2025)

**Sold:** Spain (Hoja de Lata)

**Option:** Russia (Eksmo)

**Material:** Finished copies

*'Truly magic from beginning to end. . . Acutely relevant... it brought me to tears... To review an utterly magical and important book such as this feels a privilege ... and a scar.'*  
– The Spinoff

*'[A] carefully wrought and emotionally convincing portrait of the price of disconnection and isolation, both from culture and place and at a larger, societal level... [A] novel of real complexity and power.'*  
– The Saturday Paper

*'Gripping and masterful, wise and compassionate.'*  
– The Post

*'A layered, beautifully written and extremely insightful novel.'*  
– Newsroom, Book of Week

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**Tina Makereti's** debut story collection, *Once Upon a Time in Aotearoa* won the Ngā Kupu Ora Māori Book Award for Fiction in 2011 and her story *Black Milk* won the Commonwealth Writers 2016 Short Story Prize for the Pacific Region. Her first novel, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* (Vintage NZ, 2014), has been described as a New Zealand classic, was longlisted for the Dublin Literary Award 2016 and won the 2014 Ngā Kupu Ora Aotearoa Māori Book Award for Fiction. Makereti has been writer in residence at Randall Cottage, Wellington, and Weltkulturen Museum, Frankfurt. She is of Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Rangatahi-Matakore and Pākehā descent.

# URSULA

#1 in the URSULA TRILOGY



C.K. McDonnell & Elaine Ofori

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR (STRANGER TIMES)

FOR FANS OF  
*BUFFY THE VAMPIRE  
SLAYER*



From birth, Ursula has been told that she is ‘the chosen one’. Well, at least ‘a chosen one’. On one hand she’s a kickass twenty-first century heroine – think Buffy meets Joan of Arc – but on the other, she’s a socially-inept eighteen-year-old girl who is woefully unprepared to make her way in the world. How did she end up that way?

Saint Ursula is a figure of legend. A woman who became a martyr when she and her posse of eleven or eleven thousand virgins (depends who you ask) were slaughtered outside Cologne by an invading Hun army when on a pilgrimage in about 383 AD. That’s the legend. The reality was very different.

They did indeed die, but not before eleven badass women defeated an invading army and saved a city from destruction. The Huns had a powerful warlock travelling with them and before he died, he cursed Cologne to be invaded by the ghosts of the thwarted Hun army every 10,000 days.

**Genre:** Fantasy/Thriller

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**Sold:** Germany (Eichborn, May 2025)

**UK/US:** Upcoming submission

**Options:** Bulgaria (Peppermill), Czech Rep. (Dobrovsky), Russia (Mann, Ivanov, Ferber), Spain (Atico de Los Libros/Oz), Ukraine (Bookchef)

**Material:** Manuscript (English-language)

And so, ever since, every twenty-seven-and-a-bit years, eleven virgins must be sent forth to stop this ethereal invasion or else these evil spirits will run amok in Cologne for one night, leaving a trail of death and destruction in their wake. Each time they are led by a new Ursula, an eighteen-year-old who has been raised for the task since birth.

## Praise for C. K. McDonnell

*‘Ripping entertainment from start to finish.’*  
– *The Times*

*‘A filmic romp with great characters, a jet-propelled plot, and a winning premise.’*  
– *The Guardian*

*‘Darkly witty.’*  
– *i Newspaper*

*‘A cracker. Brace yourself for murder, monsters, mesmerism – and merriment. Wonderfully wacky.’*  
– *Saga*

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**C.K. McDonnell** is the alter-ego of Caimh McDonnell, an award-winning Irish stand-up comic and best-selling author of *The Dublin Trilogy*. He has sold over 500,000 books to date (print and digital). He was the first indie author to be selected for the RTE/Rick O’Shea Book Club. He lives and writes in Manchester. The new URSULA trilogy is co-written with **Elaine Ofori**, Caimh’s wife and business partner.

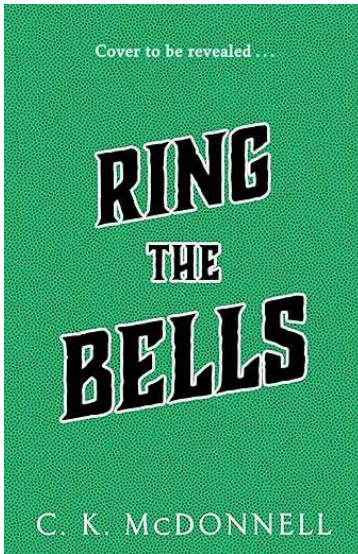
# RING THE BELLS

#5 in the STRANGER TIMES SERIES

C.K. McDonnell



INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING  
SERIES



**Genre:** Fantasy/Thriller

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Transworld (October 2025)

**Sold:** Germany (Eichborn)

**Options:** Bulgaria (Peppermill), Czech Rep. (Dobrovsky), Russia (Mann, Ivanov, Ferber), Spain (Atico de Los Libros/Oz), Ukraine (Bookchef)

**Material:** Manuscript due spring 2025

## It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas . . .

For most people, that means a time of celebration, relaxation and inebriation, but not for the staff of *The Stranger Times*. While a book club meeting ending in a triple murder isn't unprecedented, it is at least noteworthy. It quickly emerges that this is no ordinary book-club-triple-murder either, as it features a librarian possessed by a chaotic entity who has broken through from another dimension and is hellbent on vengeance.

Who would want to summon such a thing? And how is anyone going to be able to send it back? As if that wasn't enough to be dealing with, a shocking revelation about a member of *The Stranger Times* team's past brings family together, but not in a way that's ever going to make it into a Hallmark movie.

Featuring demonically possessed Santas, blood-thirsty books and the ghost of a legendary nightclub, it's beginning to look a lot like a Christmas apocalypse...

*Ring the Bells* is the fifth book in the award-winning, critically acclaimed and laugh-out-loud funny *The Stranger Times* series.

### Praise for The Stranger Times Series

*'Darkly comedic... alternating between sinister and silly, McDonnell's writing is intelligently witty.'*  
– *The Herald*

*'Terrific, easy-going fun.'*  
– *The Times*

*'With crisp plotting, scabrous dialogue and deftly applied splashes of gore.'*  
– *Daily Mail*

*'Bountiful and quick-fire dialogue exchanges and insightful, driven monologues.'*  
– *Entertainment Focus*

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**C.K. McDonnell** is the alter-ego of Caimh McDonnell, an award-winning Irish stand-up comic and best-selling author of *The Dublin Trilogy*. He has sold over 500,000 books to date (print and digital). He was the first indie author to be selected for the RTE/Rick O'Shea Book Club. He lives and writes in Manchester.



# NO COMFORT FOR THE DEAD

#1 in the CASTLEFREKE MYSTERY SERIES

R.P. O'Donnell



**Genre:** Mystery

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**US:** Crooked Lane  
(March 2025)

**UK:** New Island Books  
(Spring 2026)

**Material:** Finished copies

**The first in a darkly comic new mystery series, set in West Cork.**

*'In 1988, in Castlefreke, there were rumours and a rumbling of trouble – but that was Northern business. Belfast could've been on the other side of the world for all the village knew. When the village talked about crime, they meant the price of milk, or masturbation. There had never been a murder in Castlefreke, as far as anyone knew or could remember.'*

1988, West Cork, Ireland. Emma Daly has returned to her home in Castlefreke, a small and peaceful village where everybody knows everybody. She has taken over the local library and is trying not to think about the scandal she left behind in the city. But when the richest man in the village is murdered and the main suspect is the mysterious son of a local family, her charming small town life is turned upside down.

Emma knows for a fact that there is more to the story and when the family asks her to investigate, she decides to take matters into her own hands.

Teaming up with a stubborn widow, an elderly hypochondriac and her high school sweetheart, it is up to Emma to solve the mystery before either the police or the murderer can stop her.

*'O'Donnell debuts with a complex and accomplished whodunit...*

*Brings to mind the regional mysteries of Charles Todd, and he matches his gift for atmosphere with intricate plotting and nuanced characterizations.'*

*– Publishers Weekly*

*'O'Donnell's debut is so atmospheric in its background and poetic in its language.'*

*– Kirkus*

*'The dark story moves swiftly, unveiling long-held family secrets as the case unfolds.'*

*– Booklist*

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**R.P. O'Donnell** was born to an Irish American family on the South Shore of Boston, Massachusetts. He was short and wore a back brace for two years, so he really had no choice but to love reading and writing from a young age. After graduating with a degree in English, he moved to a tiny fishing village in West Cork, where he lives with his family. He works as a marketing content writer and has published articles in the *Irish Examiner* and *Irish Times*. In 2020, he was chosen by Paul McVeigh as winner of the J.G. Farrell Award at West Cork Literary Festival. He is now writing the second novel in the *Castlefreke* series.

# MEMORIAL PARK

#2 in the PC LUCY HALLIDAY SERIES

Louisa Scarr 



**Genre:** Crime / Procedural

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK/US:** Canelo (February 2025)

**Sold:** Netherlands (HC Holland)

**Material:** Final manuscript

The next thrilling instalment in the new British crime fiction series featuring dog handler PC Lucy Halliday. Perfect for fans of Jane Casey, Robert Bryndza and Cara Hunter.

Every family's worst nightmare. . .

Three-year-old Rosie Logan is missing. Her mother, Maria, turned away for just one moment and now her life is changed forever. It falls to PC Lucy Halliday and her police dogs, Moss and Iggy, to find the girl, under the direction of Lucy's boss and friend, DCI Jack Ellis.

The case brings up old trauma for Jack. His childhood best friend, Theo, went missing when he was eleven and was never found. This is Jack's chance to make things right. He won't fail Rosie like he failed Theo.

But the investigation doesn't go smoothly. The Logan family have been keeping secrets. And every time Lucy and Jack think they're making progress, they're hampered by yet another one. Can they find the truth, and Rosie, before it's too late?

## *Praise for the PC Lucy Halliday Series*

*'Ramps up the tension... will leave you breathless! Louisa Scarr specialises in crime fiction with heart'*  
– Jo Furniss

*'This is punchy, police procedural stuff: just as her protagonists don't play by the book, so Scarr takes the traditional set-up into darker, dirtier, more intriguing terrain.'*  
– Hampshire Living

*'Louisa Scarr's flair for characterisation is matched only by her skilful execution of a flawless plot... crime writing at its absolute best.'*  
– Marion Todd

*'Gripping from the first page, this book was as pacy as a spaniel on the scent.'*  
– Fliss Chester

*'Tightly plotted with superb characterisation.'*  
– Alison Belsham

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**Louisa Scarr** studied psychology at the University of Southampton and has lived in and around the city ever since. She works as a freelance copywriter and editor, and when she's not writing, she can be found pounding the streets in running shoes or swimming in muddy lakes. She is the author of the Butler and West crime series, published by Canelo Crime, beginning with *Last Place You Look* and ending with *Out of the Ashes*. A new series, about a police dog handler PC Lucy Halliday, launched in 2024 with *Gallows Wood*. Book two, *Memorial Park*, is out in February 2025, closely followed by *Broken House* in October. Her DS Kate Munro series, *Ask Me No Questions* and *Nowhere to be Found*, will be republished by Canelo Crime.

# #5 MARLOW MURDER CLUB

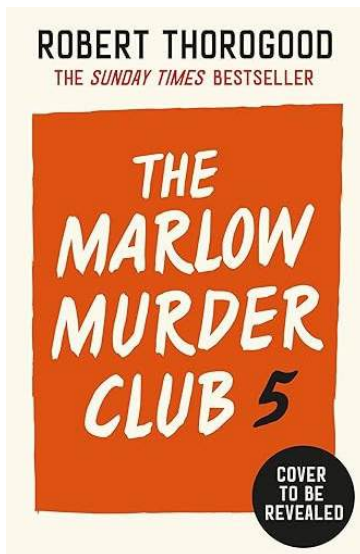
Robert Thorogood



OVER 780,000 COPIES  
SOLD FOR THE SERIES

ITV/Monumental TV

TV series



Judith Potts, Suzie Harris and Beck Starling were hoping for a quiet life after their recent adventures, but that's just not going to be possible: someone's started killing celebrities who live in Marlow.

First the flamboyant TV chef of the only Michelin-starred restaurant in town is found knifed through the heart. Then, world-famous stand-up comedian is bludgeoned to death with his Best Actor Oscar in his manor house. And next, a world-famous rock star is strangled with his headphone cables in the home studio of his riverside mansion.

Together, Tanika and The Marlow Murder Club soon uncover a web of lies, betrayal, blackmail and corruption that links the three victims and goes to the very top of Marlow society.

**Genre:** Cosy Crime/Bookclub

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** HQ (January 2026)

**Sold:** France (La Martiniere),  
Germany (KiWi)

**Options:** Brazil (Alta), Bulgaria (Benitorial), Czech (Dobra Detektivka), Denmark (Alpha Forlag), Estonia (Tanapaev), Finland (Siltala), Greece (Patakis), Hungary (Kossuth Kiado), Italy (Fanucci), Korea (The Open Books Co.), Netherlands (De Fontein), Poland (Znak), Portugal (PRH/Topseller), Russia (MIF), Slovenia (Didakta), Spain (Enciclopedia/Catedral), Sweden (Lind & Co), Turkish (Pegasus), Ukraine (Nova Druk)

**Material:** Manuscript due March 2025

## Praise for The Marlow Murder Club

*'Very funny and dark with great pace. I love Robert Thorogood's writing.'*  
– Peter James

*'Move over, Superman, there's a new caped crusader in town, and she's kicking butt. Her name is Judith Potts and you're going to love her.'*  
– Deon Meyer

*'Witty... The way the characters evolve as their relationships grow sets this light mystery above the pack.'*  
– Publishers Weekly

*'A fantastic whodunnit with laugh-out-loud moments.'*  
– The Sun

*'Definitely entertaining. . . satisfyingly pushes all the requisite Agatha Christie-style buttons.'*  
– The Independent

*'Brilliantly crafted, hugely enjoyable and suitably goosebump-inducing. . . an utter delight from start to finish.'*  
– Heat

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**Robert Thorogood** is an English screenwriter and novelist. He is the creator of the internationally acclaimed BBC murder mystery series *Death in Paradise*, and has written a series of spin-off novels featuring detective DI Richard Poole. *The Marlow Murder Club Series* has sold over 780,000 copies in the UK and is also a bestseller in the German and French languages.

# PARADISE

Ben Tufnell



**Genre:** Literary Fiction

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK:** Influx Press (February 2026)

**Material:** Manuscript

*'It was all a terrible mistake. As he waited for them to come, wondering if they would kill him or not, Nash could not rid himself of the growing conviction that it was all a terrible mistake.'*

Working for a shadowy organisation known only as The Company, Nash realises that he is in too deep. When an assignment goes badly wrong, he is taken to a house deep in a remote forest called Paradise, where he must await a decision on his fate. But in the woods something unexpected happens.

As the wheel of the year turns and winter gives way to spring, Nash forms an unlikely friendship with a local girl, and through her comes to see the mystery and beauty of nature, and to understand the trauma that has shaped him. When they come for him, will he accept the verdict or will he fight back?

A genre-bending novel, combining elements of noir with an unhealthy dose of the weird. For fans of Martin MacInnes, Fiona Mozley and Lucie McKnight Hardy, but with the propulsive action and deadpan black comedy of Martin McDonagh's *In Bruges* and the explosive finale of Ben Wheatley's *Kill List*.

## Praise for Ben Tufnell

*'Turning art and myth into narrative... An experiment in translating the slow time of painting into fiction.'*  
– *The Guardian*

*'Affirms the power of dreams and storytelling.'*  
– *Financial Times*

*'A queer, oneiric, watery fable in which narrative form and logic are in constant flux. [...]  
A captivating torrent of myth and grotesquery.'*  
– *Times Literary Supplement*

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**Ben Tufnell** is a writer and curator based in London. Previously a curator at Tate, he was a founding director of Parafin, an independent gallery. He has published widely on modern and contemporary art, in particular on artforms that engage with ideas of landscape and nature. His books include *Land Art* (Tate Publishing, 2006), *On The Very Edge Of The Ocean* (Tate St Ives Research Series, 2006), and *In Land: Writings Around Land Art and Its Legacies* (Zero Books, 2019). Ben has written fiction for many years. His short stories have been published by *Conjunctions*, *Litro*, *Lunate*, Nightjar Press, *Storgy* and *Structo*, amongst others, and included in *Best British Short Stories 2024* (Salt Publishing). He has been longlisted or highly commended for the BBC National Short Story Award, the Sean O'Faolain Short Story Prize, The White Review Short Story Prize and the Disquiet Fiction Prize, and shortlisted for the Society of Authors' ALCS Tom-Gallon Trust Award for short fiction. His debut novel, *The North Shore*, was published by Fleet (Little, Brown) in 2023.

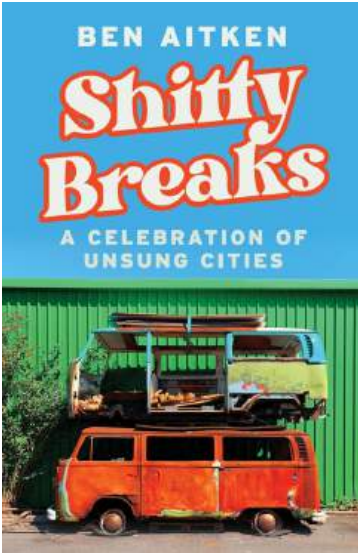


**NON-FICTION**

# SHITTY BREAKS

## A CELEBRATION OF UNSUNG CITIES

Ben Aitken



**Genre:** Lifestyle / Travel

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Icon (May 2025)

**Options:** Germany (DuMont)

**Material:** Manuscript

### Adios Paris. Hello Wolverhampton.

Not everything that glitters is gold - which is why Ben Aitken gave London the cold shoulder and went to Preston instead.

Hailing from Portsmouth, Ben knew from experience that unfashionable places could be quietly brilliant. So, over the course of a year, the author of *A Chip Shop in Poznan* and *The Gran Tour* visited twelve of the least popular spots in the UK and Ireland for a city break. The motivation wasn't to take the mickey or stick the boot in, but to seek out the good stuff, to uncover the gems, to have a nice time. By doing so, he hoped to demonstrate that anywhere – like anyone – can be interesting and nourishing and enjoyable if approached in the right fashion.

Ben went skiing in Sunderland, to the football in Wrexham, and fell in love with Dunfermline. He kissed an alpaca in Bradford, suffered jellied eels in Chelmsford, and had more craic in Limerick than was wise. The upshot is a celebration of the underdog; a hymn to the wrong direction; and evidence that there's no such thing as a shitty break. What's more, by spreading its affection beyond the usual suspects (which are often overdone and overpriced), *Shitty Breaks* promotes a less expensive and more sustainable brand of travel.

By ghosting Bath and giving Lisbon the boot, the book champions the unsung in an algorithmic, over-signposted world dominated by celebs and hotspots. Cheeky weekend in Milton Keynes anyone?

### Praise for Ben Aitken

*'Simply too good.'*

– Daily Mail

*'A powerful and delightful antidote to smug travelogues of popular places[...]. It is also an important love letter to ordinariness in all its forms which, in these needy times, is a precious thing. Funny and immensely thought provoking.'*

– Roger Morgan-Grenville

*'Charming, touching and very, very funny.'*

– Jenny Colgan

*'Frank and warm.'*

– Ruth Comerford

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**Ben Aitken** was born under Thatcher, grew to six foot then stopped, and is an Aquarius. He is the author of *Dear Bill Bryson: Footnotes from a Small Island*, which was featured in the *Guardian*, *The Times* and on *BBC Radio*, and described by the *Manchester Review* as a 'poignant comment on the state of the nation' and a 'highly accomplished homage'. In 2016, Aitken moved to Poland to work in a fish and chip shop. *A Chip Shop in Poznan: My Unlikely Year in Poland* was the fruit of that unlikely migration. He then followed a year later with *The Gran Tour: Travels with my Elders*. A journal based around his unlikely friendship at an unlikely time with his 85-year-old housemate, *The Marmalade Diaries*, was published in 2022. *Here Comes the Fun: A Journey Into the Serious Business of Having a Laugh* was released in 2023.

# DIRTY KITCHEN

## A MEMOIR OF FOOD AND FAMILY

Jill Damatac



FEATURED IN [ITALIAN](#) &  
[DUTCH](#) PRESS



**Genre:** Memoir/Food Writing

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**US (WEL):** One Signal/S&S  
(May 2025)

**Material:** Proofs

In the style of *Crying in H Mart* and *Minor Feelings*, Jill Damatac blends memoir, food writing, and colonial history as she cooks her way through recipes from her native-born Philippines and shares stories of her undocumented family in America.

Jill Damatac left the US in the early 2020s after living there as an undocumented immigrant with her family for 22 years. America was the only home she knew, where invisibility had become her identity – her mother tongue and indigenous roots long buried – and where poverty, domestic violence and xenophobia were everyday experiences.

First traveling to her native Philippines, she eventually landed in London, where, married to a British citizen, she finally obtained documents and was free to pursue an education at Cambridge University, fully investigate her roots and to process what happened to her and her family.

Interweaving forgotten colonial history and long-buried indigenous traditions, Damatac takes us through her time in America, cooking her way through Filipino recipes in her kitchen as she searches for a sense of self and renewed possibility. With emotional intelligence, clarity, and grace, *Dirty Kitchen* explores fractured memories to ask questions of identity, colonialism, immigration, belonging, and to find ways in which the ritual, tradition, and comfort of food, can answer them.

*'Damatac weaves history, mythology, and recipes into an affecting memoir.'*  
– Kirkus

*'Vulnerable and gripping, [...] heralds the arrival of an unforgettable new talent. This book will make you cry, laugh, and hunger for more, and Damatac's wisdoms will leave you forever changed.'*  
– Qian Julie Wang

*'Dirty Kitchen is not only an astonishing memoir — it is a bravura juggling act of genre, and a vivid testament to resilience. An absolute marvel.'*  
– Jose Antonio Vargas

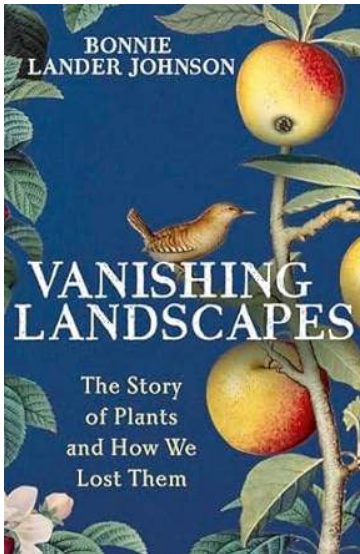
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**Jill Damatac** is a writer and filmmaker born in the Philippines, raised in the US, and settled in the UK. As a double immigrant, her work is centred around themes of migration, identity and indigeneity. Her film and photography work has featured on the BBC, *TIME Magazine*, and film festivals worldwide; her short documentary film *Blood and Ink (Duo at Tinta)*, about the indigenous Filipino tattooist Apo Whang Od, was an official selection at the Academy Award-qualifying DOC NYC, winning Best Documentary at Ireland's Kerry Film Festival. Jill holds an MA in Documentary Film from the University of the Arts London and an MSt in Creative Writing from Cambridge University. *Dirty Kitchen* is her first book. An excerpt was published by the Asian American Writers' Workshop magazine *Margins*, picked up by *Longreads* and translated into Dutch and Italian.

# VANISHING LANDSCAPES

## THE STORY OF PLANTS AND HOW WE LOST THEM

Bonnie Lander Johnson



**The story of our relationship with plants, from the medieval period to today's British landscape.**

In the past, we were deeply bound to plants. But we no longer understand nature as we once did. We value a plant for its use, often processing it until it barely approximates what once grew in the ground. We have lost a sense of plants as precious.

*Vanishing Landscapes* tells the story of how this happened – and with it the history of how we became modern. From the 1500s, in the space of just two hundred years, plants disappeared from our daily lives one by one. First were apples, then household medicines like saffron, cloth dyes like woad and then, eventually, the timber from which we built houses and the wheat we grew for our bread. In their place came the first corporation, the first factory, the banking system, private property, global trade, and the professionalisation of medicine.

**Genre:** Social and Cultural History/Nature Writing

**Agent:** Anna Power

**UK:** Hodder & Stoughton  
(April 2025)

**Material:** Proofs

Through eight different plants, Bonnie Lander Johnson conjures up a world we never knew, but whose loss we are still feeling. She takes us out into the fields of Britain and Ireland to camp in an orchard, to gaze up at an unchanging sky, and to meet the farmers and artisans who are fighting to save the old ways.

*'Vanishing Landscapes offers a unique interweaving of insights about culture, cult and cultivation. [...] This is a brilliantly ambitious and authentic cultural history. A real treasure.'*

– Rowan Williams

*'A rich and replenishing work [...]. I felt lovesick for it after it was done.'*

– Eleanor Catton

*'It's full of longing and nostalgia, but there's a clear-sightedness here too, an acknowledgement of modernity's gifts as well as its losses. [...] A bittersweet love letter to what we have lost, and what exists around us in the here and now.'*

– Jenn Ashworth

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**Dr Bonnie Lander Johnson** is Fellow and Associate Professor at Downing College at the University of Cambridge, where she teaches the literature and history of the early modern period. She has a particular interest in the history of our changing relationship with the natural world. Her academic books include *Botanical Culture and Popular Belief in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge University Press), *Blood Matters* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018) and *The Cambridge Handbook to Literature and Plants* (Cambridge University Press, 2025). She regularly chairs events at the Cambridge Literary Festival and Festival of Ideas and represents the University on the BBC / Cambridge National Short Story Award. Bonnie's creative non-fiction and fiction has been published in *Hinterland*, *Howl* and *Dappled Things* and shortlisted for The Royal Society of Literature's V. S. Pritchett Prize and The Brick Lane Bookshop Short Story Prize.

# LAZARUS

## THE SECOND COMING OF DAVID BOWIE

Alexander Larman



FIRST BOOK TO EXPLORE BOWIE'S  
LATER CAREER IN DEPTH



**Genre:** Music Biography

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Pete Selby/Nine Eight  
Books (Spring 2026)

**US:** On submission

**Material:** Proposal. Manuscript  
due spring 2025

*Lazarus* will be the first biography of the legendary musician, actor and cultural phenomenon to focus solely on the second half of his career, spanning the period from late 1991 until his death in 2016.

There have been countless books covering Bowie's Seventies' rise to fame and his brief, unlikely period as a world-conquering pop star in the Eighties. Yet the quarter-century that began with Bowie a diminished figure, mired in the failure of his Tin Machine experiment, and ended with him releasing his final masterpiece, *Blackstar*, and being hailed on his death as perhaps the greatest musician of the twentieth century, has been neglected; confined to a few rushed chapters in even the most comprehensive accounts of Bowie's life.

With extensive new interviews with high-profile collaborators of his, it will be a detailed and authoritative look at Bowie's life and work during this period, but will also place him in context as a pioneer of the potential (and pitfalls) of the internet, the spiritual godfather to the mid-Nineties Britpop movement and an endlessly stylish fashion pioneer.

*Lazarus* will not only offer in-depth accounts of the creation of the nine studio albums that were released during this period, but will also examine Bowie's other artistic achievements; the films he acted in, the canvases that he painted and the stage musical, also named *Lazarus*, that he was involved in shortly before his death.

*Lazarus* will be comprehensive, witty, revelatory and provocative – just as the man himself was – and will ensure that this hitherto neglected area of his life receives the attention it deserves in a definitive biography.

### Praise for Alexander Larman

*'As usual, Larman offers delicious behind-the-scenes details [...] this is his depth of research that makes the narrative crackle.'*  
– Kirkus

*'A detailed and fascinating account.'*  
– The Spectator

*'Fresh insights... brought to life with panache.'*  
– Observer

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**Alexander Larman** is an author, historian and journalist. His 'Windsors Trilogy' (Weidenfeld & Nicolson,) is a revisionist history of the Royal Family, from the abdication saga to the coronation of Elizabeth II. He has wanted to write about David Bowie since the beginning of his literary career. As a journalist, Larman regularly contributes to titles including *The Observer*, *The Critic*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Spectator* and *The Chap*, for which he serves as literary editor. He lives in Oxford.



# THE HIROSHIMA MEN

## THE QUEST TO BUILD THE ATOMIC BOMB, AND THE FATEFUL DECISION TO USE IT

Iain MacGregor



FEATURING AN INTERVIEW WITH

[NIHON HIDANKYO, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2024](#)



A vivid account of one of history's most significant events, timed to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the Hiroshima attack.

*The Hiroshima Men* is the most comprehensive and up-to-date narrative on this historical event, bringing a new 360-degree understanding to the history behind the bombing. It takes the reader on a decade-long journey, across science, the race to weaponise nuclear fusion, international politics and intrigue, the flowering of physics, aeronautical design, navigation and, the technology that made man capable of creating and using such a terrible weapon. All against the contextual backdrop of a global conflict, international politics, espionage, and death on a cataclysmic scale.

Based on years of research and trips to Japan and the US, direct conversations with eyewitnesses or survivors and all relevant archives, Iain MacGregor brings a wealth of brand new testimonies to a nuanced, deeply human account of the bombing's meaning and aftermath.

**Genre:** Narrative History

**Agent:** Anna Power

**UK:** Constable (June 2025)

**US:** Scribner (July 2025)

**Sold:** Spain (Atico de los Libros). Under offer in Poland

**Options:** Greece (Dioptra), Netherlands (De Arbeiderspers)

**Material:** Proofs

*'Written with moral clarity, tremendous verve, and the ability of a truly great historian to render the immensity of a moment through the smaller voices, as well as being faithful to the facts.'*

– Fergal Keane

*'A brilliant, superbly researched story of genius and terrifying destruction.'*

– Alex Kershaw

*'A meticulously researched and profoundly thought-provoking account of one of history's most consequential events . . . More than just a work of history, this is also a sobering meditation on war, science and morality.'*

– James Holland

*'Iain MacGregor's gripping book vastly expands the cast of characters [...] all portrayed vividly as the story dramatically unfolds.'*

– William Taubman

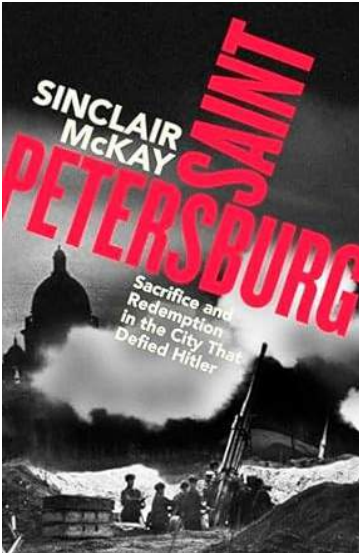
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**Iain MacGregor** is the author of the acclaimed history of Cold War Berlin: *Checkpoint Charlie*, and the award-winning *The Lighthouse of Stalingrad: The Hidden Truth Behind WWII's Greatest Battle*. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, has spoken at many literary festivals and conferences in the UK and abroad, appeared on podcasts such as *The Rest is History* and on television documentaries. His writing has appeared in the *Washington Post*, the *Spectator*, *BBC History Magazine*, and the *Guardian*. He lives in London.

# SAINT PETERSBURG

## SACRIFICE AND REDEMPTION IN THE CITY THAT DEFIED HITLER

Sinclair McKay



**Genre:** Narrative History

**Agent:** Anna Power

**UK:** Viking (April 2025)

**Options:** China (Beijing Imaginist), Denmark (Linghardt & Ringhof), Finland (Minerva), Germany (HC Germany), Hungary (Helikon Kiado), Italy (Mondadori), Japan (Hakusuisha), Netherlands (Atlas Contact), Poland (Znak), Spain (PRH/Taurus)

**Material:** Manuscript

Built by slave labour in the early years of the eighteenth century, Saint Petersburg was Peter the Great's so-called 'window on to Europe', a city that would outdo all of Europe in its splendour.

But a window works both ways, and as best-selling historian Sinclair McKay writes, St Petersburg has always been a city that has drawn Westerners who wanted to see into Russia. It is also a city where much has happened. It was St Petersburg until 1917, Petrograd after the revolution, Leningrad after Lenin's death in 1924, and St Petersburg once again from 1991.

This biography of a city stretches from Peter the Great to Vladimir Putin, who was born and made in St Petersburg. The story centres the '900 days and nights' of the Siege of Leningrad, 1941–44. Unlike Paris or Prague, the Nazis weren't trying to take over; they wanted to wipe it off the map. According to some, this siege of 1.5 million people – including Putin's mother – was an attempted genocide.

Based on first-hand and many unpublished accounts from figures from all walks of life – irascible authors, factory workers, bakers, furriers, dancers, sailors, grandparents, children – this masterpiece reveals the central importance of St Petersburg over the centuries. This is the story of the city told from the perspective of the people who lived there.

*'Richly-layered and packed with insight, this riveting account of terrible events tells us as much about the present as it does the past.'*

– Patrick Bishop

*'The story of the siege of Leningrad [has] never [been told] in such an engrossing, moving, often horrifying but also uplifting way'*

– Brendan Simms

*'Magisterial. [...] Will become a classic.'*

– Amanda Foreman

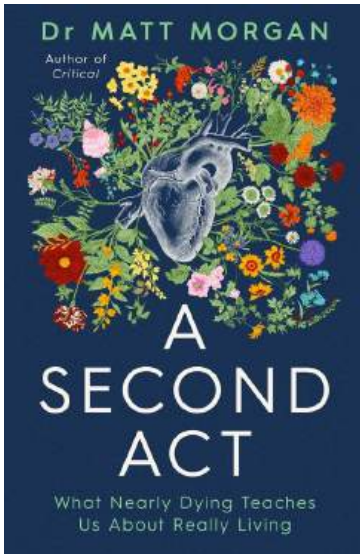
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**Sinclair McKay** is the *Sunday Times*-bestselling author of *Dresden: The Fire and the Darkness*, *The Secret Life of Bletchley Park*, *The Secret Listeners*, and *Bletchley Park Brainteasers*. He has written books on subjects ranging from codebreaking to the auteurs of the Hammer Horror films, from the evolution of rambling to the political manoeuvres behind the Battle of Britain; the linking thread being his fascination with social and cultural history. *Berlin: Life and Loss in the City that Shaped the World*, was published by Viking in the summer of 2022 to rave reviews. *50 Codes that Changed the World* was released in Autumn 2022 by Headline. His latest title, *Meeting Churchill: A Life in 90 Encounters*, was published by Viking in November 2023. Sinclair is a literary critic for *The Spectator* and the *Mail on Sunday* and for three years was a judge of the Encore Prize, awarded annually for best second novel. He lives in the shadow of Canary Wharf in East London.

# A SECOND ACT

## WHAT NEARLY DYING TEACHES US ABOUT REALLY LIVING

Matt Morgan



**Genre:** Popular Science

**Agent:** Charlotte Seymour

**UK:** S&S (January 2025)

**Sold:** Portugal (Vogais/PRH).  
Polish offer.

**Options:** Arabic (Sumo), China  
(Yilin Press), Estonia (Argo),  
Korea (Idea Shelf), Russia  
(Eksmo)

**Material:** Finished copies

*'I've worked as an intensive care doctor for over twenty years, caring for patients who are in the thick fog between life and death. I've met hundreds of people who have died, were resuscitated and lived. I've long thought that these are the people that we should be listening to, not influencers or business gurus. They know what really matters.'*

It happened in an instant. Ed was walking through a park with his friend Stuart when there was a bang, a bright light and then nothing. Ed and Stuart had been hit by a bolt of lightning – 300 million volts, enough to power a city for a day, coursed through their bodies, short-circuiting their hearts. Ed was found first, given life-saving CPR to start his heart again: he survived and had a second chance. He lives life a little differently now, every day knowing the thin margins that separate life and death.

In this book, Dr Matt Morgan meets people whose hearts have stopped and have been brought back from clinical death. He shows us how doctors resuscitate people, the shadowy world of ICU, how you can learn to save a life. We meet the patients who have experienced hypothermia, overdoses, cardiac arrests and a heart transplant and see how their lives have transformed and the lessons they want to share.

Along the way, Morgan has his own realisations about his life, how to make the most of it and ensure that life is not wasted on the living.

*'Morgan has a knack of writing simply and sincerely on matters that worry most of us, the kind of writing that does go viral.'*

– *The Times*

*'A brave and candid medical thriller.'*

– *Daily Mail, Book of the Week*

*'Morgan proves an excellent guide to such wisdom.'*

– *Observer, Book of the Week*

*'Unfailingly compassionate and humane.'*

– *New Statesman*

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**Dr Matt Morgan** is a British intensive care doctor who has worked in some of the largest UK and Australasian hospitals and has a background in military medicine. He lives in Cardiff with his family. Matt's first book *Critical*, a compelling and insightful look into the world of intensive care medicine, was published in the UK by S&S in 2019. His second book is *One Medicine: What Animals Can Teach Us And Why They Matter* (2023). In 2020, he published an open letter, 'A Letter from the ICU', addressing Covid patients and their families, which was read by over 130,000 people in the *British Medical Journal* and viewed by over 3 million after featuring on Channel 4. He has appeared at festivals including Hay and in 2020 was nominated for the Royal Society David Attenborough Prize for public engagement in society. He collaborated with playwright Tim Price and the National Theatre, as a medical adviser on the 2024 production of *Nye*, starring Michael Sheen.



# TO HEAR THE TREES SPEAK

## LESSONS ON HOW TO BE FROM MY JOURNEY TO LISTEN TO 10 TREES

Olivia Sprinkel



**'Imagine if you could hear the trees speak. How would it change your life? Your relationship to the world around you?'**

*This is the story of what happened when the trees whispered me to quit my job, leave my life in New York and go on a journey to listen. It is the story of what I learnt from ten trees on five continents – and the lessons that the trees have for all of us on how to be in a rapidly changing world.'*

Olivia Sprinkel was sitting in her office in New York, an experienced international sustainability strategy and communications consultant, and as a newly single woman, she decided she had to make a change in her life and undertake a journey.

*To Hear the Trees Speak* is the story of her travels to Europe, North and South America, Australia, and South Asia, to discover ten of our world's essential trees and their habitats. The ten trees range from the banyan and bodhi to the olive, giant sequoia and beech.

**Genre:** Nature Writing/Memoir

**Agent:** Michael Alcock

**UK:** Bedford Square (May 2025)

**Material:** Manuscript

Powerfully crafted, this is important and accessible nature writing blended with insightful memoir.

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**Olivia Sprinkel** is a sustainability strategy and communications consultant. She is half-Finnish, half-American. She has worked in both London and New York, and now lives in East Sussex, UK. Her poetry has been published in a variety of anthologies. *To Hear the Trees Speak* is her narrative non-fiction debut.

# TRAVELS WITH AGATHA CHRISTIE

David Suchet

TV DOCUMENTARY IN PRODUCTION BY  
SOHO STUDIOS ENTERTAINMENT &  
TWO RIVERS MEDIA



**Agatha the Adventurer – discovering a new side to the mystery queen.**

In *Travels With Agatha Christie*, the celebrated Poirot actor replicates an international expedition which Agatha Christie undertook herself in the 1920s. Travelling to the stunning landscapes of Canada, Hawaii, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, David sets to uncover the literary enigma's inspirations, with his trademark charm and warmth, along with a collection of his own photography.

Following in the footsteps of the great crime writer, David says: 'Having spent a quarter of a century personifying Agatha Christie's iconic character of Hercule Poirot, I now feel so honoured to embark upon a journey around the world, as myself – in the footsteps of possibly the greatest crime writer of all time. I feel that she will be sitting on my shoulders at every moment urging me on to share her passion for knowledge, travel, archaeology, and of course, mystery.'

**Genre:** Coffee Table Book/  
Illustrated Biography

**Agent:** Michael Alcock

**UK:** Little Brown/Constable  
(September 2025)

**Options:** Czech Republic  
(Euromedia), Estonia  
(Tanapev), Finland (Minerva),  
Hungary (Akademiai Kiado  
Zrt), Japan (Haro Shobo),  
Lithuania (Tyto Alba)

**Material:** Manuscript  
due March 2025 (30,000  
words ; 100-150 illustrations)

Tying into a five-part Channel 4 documentary series due to air in March 2025 which will be distributed internationally by Abacus Media Rights, TRAVELS WITH AGATHA CHRISTIE shows a less known and fascinating side of the Queen of Crime.

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**Sir David Suchet** is an award-winning English actor. International acclaim and recognition followed his performance as Agatha Christie's detective Hercule Poirot in *Agatha Christie's Poirot* (1989-2013), for which he received a 1991 British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) nomination. His memoir, *Poirot and Me* (Headline) co-written with Geoffrey Wansell, shares his memories of playing the role of Hercule Poirot from 1988 to 2013, in all seventy of Agatha Christie's Poirot stories. He followed this with *Behind the Lens: My Life*, the story of David's remarkable life, seamlessly combining photo and memoir (Constable, 2019).

# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING

## STORIES OF LOVE, LOSS AND HOPE ON THE PATH TO PARENTHOOD

Audrey Ward



**Genre:** Memoir / Inspirational

**Agent:** Anna Power

**UK:** HarperCollins (April 2026)

**Material:** Proposal. Manuscript due September 2025.

**An uplifting resource for anyone facing challenges in their quest to become a parent, inviting women and men from around the world to share their experience in a style similar to *Want* by Gillian Anderson.**

For some, trying to conceive can be incredibly straightforward but plenty of others struggle to become parents. What happens after the failed pregnancy tests, that first miscarriage, the unsuccessful round of IVF, the ectopic pregnancy or stillbirth? What is it like to adopt a child, rely on a surrogate, an egg or sperm donor, or come to terms with not having a child at all? So many of us don't talk about it.

When Audrey Ward was going through her own battle to make a baby, she scoured online message boards for stories of women whose journeys in some way mirrored hers or for tales which would offer hope or highlight how challenges might be overcome. It was only by opening up to people she trusted that she realised how common her experience was. It's estimated that 1 in 6 people worldwide are affected by infertility.

Now, working with *The Sunday Times* and a number of international charities, Audrey Ward wants to share her own experience, and is inviting women and men from around the world to share their stories for publication in *What To Expect When You're Not Expecting*. The book will offer readers a heartfelt and realistic account of what many individuals go through in a bid to become a parent, along with advice on how to navigate the emotional and practical challenges; and it will cover subjects like miscarriage, IVF, stillbirth, egg and sperm donation, late pregnancy interrupted, adoption, surrogacy, solo parenting and even coming to terms with a life without children.

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**Audrey Ward** has been an editor and writer at *The Sunday Times* for fifteen years and has previously worked as assistant editor on *News Review* and deputy editor of *Home*. Her account of her struggle to conceive was shortlisted for the Impress Prize for New Writers. As an interviewer, she has spoken about challenges on the path to parenthood with the likes of American Oscar-winning screenwriter, Dustin Lance Black, and Conde Nast's first black publisher, Vanessa Kingori. Her interview with Queen Elizabeth's grand-daughter Zara Tindall, during which Zara revealed that she had lost two babies following the birth of her eldest daughter, saw her become the first member of the royal family to speak publicly about miscarriage. The interview made headlines around the world. Audrey has forged strong connections with some of the top international infertility charities, and is a trustee of Surrogacy UK, helping them develop and direct their strategies and policies.

# CLARIDGE'S QUEEN OF HOTELS, HOTEL OF KINGS

## Martin Williams



**Genre:** Coffee Table Book/  
History

**Agent:** Ed Wilson

**UK:** Hodder & Stoughton  
(December 2026)

**Material:** Proposal

**There is no hotel in the world quite like Claridge's.**

The epitome of luxury, style and excellence, it has, from its earliest days, showcased the finest traditions of British hospitality while continuously demonstrating a genius for innovation and renewal. For generations of the international cognoscenti, it has been the best – indeed, the only – place to stay in London.

Along with its triumphs, Claridge's has known its fair share of set-backs. Occasionally down but never out, Claridge's rose to meet each challenge with consummate flair. Tempered by adversity, its claim to be considered the Queen of Hotels and the Hotel of Kings is one that few would dispute.

In this comprehensive, lively and supremely engaging account, Martin Williams immerses guests and general readers alike in the unique history of a London landmark, evoking the glamour and excitement of each chapter in its unfolding story while taking us behind the scenes to explain why, as it nears its bicentennial, Claridge's is for all who know and love it both a legend and a way of life.

### *Praise for Martin Williams*

*'A social historian and gifted storyteller'*  
– *The Times*

*'Adroitly-written...[told by Williams] so skilfully, and with such silken prose,  
that it's a pleasure to spend the time inside his head'*  
– *The Oldie*

*'I could read Martin Williams all day. He is a staggeringly communicative  
historian [...] Compulsory reading.'*  
– *Dame Joanna Lumley*

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**Martin Williams** is an art and fashion historian with a passion for early twentieth century royalty and high society. Martin is the author of William Wolfe's Guide to Excellent Living in London, and his book, *The King is Dead, Long Live the King!* on the death of King Edward VII and its impact on British society, was published by Hodder & Stoughton in 2023.

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