



## **BOOK CLUB PACKAGE TITLES - FICTION**

**Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi**

**Purple hibiscus**

A compelling novel, set in Nigeria, which captures both a country and a teenage girl at a time of tremendous change. Fifteen-year-old Kambili's life is lived under the shadow of her repressive and fanatically religious father. When Nigeria begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili and her brother are sent away to their aunt's, whose house is noisy and full of laughter. Here Kambili discovers love and a life - dangerous and heathen - beyond the confines of her father's authority. (336 pages)

**Atwood, Margaret**

**Blind Assassin**

Booker prize-winning novel looking back over the lives, secrets and scandals of 2 Canadian sisters, their family and lovers. Atwood's intricately constructed story alternates Iris's reminiscences with passages from a novel written by long-dead sister Laura. (637 pages)

**Austen, Jane**

**Pride and Prejudice**

Elizabeth Bennet is at first determined to dislike Mr. Darcy, who is handsome and eligible. This misjudgement only be matched in folly by Darcy's arrogant pride. Their first impressions give way to truer feelings in a comedy concerned with happiness and how it might be achieved. (367 pages)

**Bail, Murray (Australian Author)**

**Eucalyptus**

On a property in western New South Wales a man named Holland lives with his daughter Ellen. Over the years, as she grows into a beautiful young woman, he plants hundreds of different gum trees on his land. When Ellen is nineteen her father announces his decision: she will marry the man who can name all his species of eucalyptus, down to the last tree. Winner of the Miles Franklin Award and the Commonwealth Writers Prize 1999. (264 pages)

**Blee, Jill (Australian Author)**

**The liberator's birthday**

Historical novel set in Ballarat during the goldrush years. The Irish community who came seeking gold brought their old-world conflict with them to the new land of Australia. The Orange and the Green focused their antagonism on the bars of neighbourhood hotels in 1875, at a time of waning profits and underemployment on the famous Ballarat goldfields. The mines and mining tragedies loom large in the background as the intemperate zealotry of the local Catholic Dean works on the Irish patriotism and religious ignorance of much of his flock, threatening the unity of the Farrell family. This historical novel recounts the day that the Catholic community in Ballarat celebrated the centenary of the birth of Daniel O'Connell, known as the Liberator. (252 pages)



**Bohjalian, Chris**  
**Midwives**

Set in a small rural community in Vermont, *Midwives* tells the story of Sibyl Danforth, a respected midwife who is accused of murder after she performs a caesarean section on a mother in her care.

(312 pages)

**Boyne, John**  
**The Boy in the striped pyjamas**

Berlin 1942. When Bruno returns home from school one day, he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has received a promotion and the family must move from their home to a new house far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence running alongside stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people he can see in the distance. But Bruno longs to be an explorer and decides that there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different to his own, and their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences.

(224 pages)

**Brooks, Geraldine (Australian Author)**  
**March**

From Louisa May Alcott's beloved classic *Little Women*, Geraldine Brooks has taken the character of the absent father, March, who has gone off to war, leaving his wife and daughters to make do in mean times. Brooks turned to the journals and letters of Bronson Alcott, Louisa May's father - a friend and confidant of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. March emerges as an idealistic chaplain in the little known backwaters of a war that will test his faith in himself and in the Union cause as he learns that his side, too, is capable of acts of barbarism and racism.

Pulitzer Prize winner, shortlisted for British Book Award & Commonwealth Writers Prize 2006.

(496 pages)

**Brooks, Geraldine (NEW) (Australian Author)**  
**People of the Book**

The new novel from the author of *March* and *Year of Wonders* takes place in the aftermath of the Bosnian War, as a young book conservator arrives in Sarajevo to restore a lost treasure. When Hannah Heath gets a call in the middle of the night in her Sydney home about a precious medieval manuscript which has been recovered from the smouldering ruins of wartorn Sarajevo, she knows she is on the brink of the experience of a lifetime. A renowned book conservator, she must now make her way to Bosnia to start work on restoring *The Sarajevo Haggadah*, a Jewish prayer book to discover its secrets and piece together the story of its miraculous survival. But the trip will also set in motion a series of events that threaten to rock Hannah's orderly life, including her encounter with Ozren Karamen, the young librarian who risked his life to save the book. As meticulously researched as all of Brooks's previous work, *People of the Book* is a gripping and moving novel about war, art, love and survival.

(390 pages)



**Brooks, Geraldine (Australian Author)**

**Year of wonders**

Loosely based on a true story of a Derbyshire village, which was struck by the plague in 1666. This historical fiction contrasts a heroine with a surprisingly modern outlook and the grim realities of the Black Death.

(310 pages)

**Browne, Marshall (Australian Author)**

**The trumpeting angel**

Intrigue, scandal, seduction and corruption. A pot boiler set in Melbourne at the time of Federation.

(298 pages)

**Brown, Dan**

**The da Vinci code**

The curator of the Louvre is brutally murdered, and a series of codes found near the body lead to the works of Leonardo da Vinci. A Harvard professor and a French cryptologist are faced with menace, intrigue and secrets stretching back centuries, in a race against time to decipher the code.

(560 pages)

**Capote, Truman**

**Breakfast at Tiffany's**

"Fred", the narrator, is introduced to Holly Golightly, a 19 year old former Hollywood starlet, one night when she crawls through his window from the fire escape. This story portrays the life of a young woman, Holly a transplant to Manhattan with an unknown past, who is trying to find her place in the world. Capote wrote this novella in 1958.

(160 pages)

**Chevalier, Tracy**

**The Lady and the unicorn**

A vibrant story based around the creation of a series of real medieval tapestries. Chevalier starts with a handful of facts and creates a tale of art, ambition and desire. The book follows the stories of fictional characters in 15<sup>th</sup> century Paris and Brussels, all connected to the commissioning or production of the tapestries.

(256 pages)

**Christie, Agatha**

**The Murder of Roger Ackroyd**

In the quiet village of King's Abbot a widow's suicide has stirred suspicion - and dreadful gossip. There are rumours she murdered her first husband, rumours she was being blackmailed, and rumours that her secret lover was Roger Ackroyd. Then Ackroyd is found murdered - and all the members of the household stand to gain from his death. Hercule Poirot, who has retired to King's Abbot, is reluctantly drawn into finding a clever and devious killer.

(368 pages)



**Cleven, Vivienne (Australian Author)**

**Her sister's eye**

A novel about life in a rural trans-racial community. Murilla lives in a town with a history of vigilante raids, missing persons and unsolved murders. She is a protector of Sophie, her intellectually disabled adult sister, and she seeks to unearth the community's secret atrocities and call to account the perpetrators. Author is an indigenous Australian who grew up in western Queensland leaving school at thirteen to work with her father as a jillaroo.

(240 pages)

**Coehlo, Paulo**

**The Alchemist**

An Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles along the way. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasures found within.

(167 pages)

**Connelly, Michael**

**The Closers**

After three years as a PI, Harry Bosch returns to the LAPD, working with his former cop ally and partner, Kizmin Rider. Harry and Kiz are assigned to the LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit. These detectives are the Closers; they put a shovel in the dirt and turn over the past. Harry and Kiz are immediately thrown into a politically sensitive and dangerous case when a DNA match connects a white supremacist to the 1988 murder of a mixed race 16-year-old girl. As he navigates the case, Harry finds a police department far different from the one he left three years earlier.

(403 pages)

**Day, Marele (Australian Author)**

**Lambs of God**

Three nuns and their flock of sheep are the sole inhabitants of a rundown monastery on a remote, unnamed island, possibly off the coast of Britain. Enter Father Ignatius. In this ingenious religious novel everything interconnects in a satisfying web of symbolism and allusion.

(263 pages)

**Day, Marele (Australian Author)**

**Mrs Cook**

While her husband James Cook circumnavigated the globe, in her imagination Elizabeth Cook travelled with him, experiencing the exotic and strange locations. Shaped by historical fact, the novel evokes the love and interior worlds of the Cooks.

(368 pages)



**Desai, Kiran**

**The Inheritance of loss**

In the foothills of the Himalayas sits a once grand, now crumbling house, home to three people and a dog. There is the retired judge dreaming of colonial yesterdays; his orphaned granddaughter Sai who has fallen for her clever maths tutor; the cook whose son Biju writes untruthful letters home from New York City; and Mutt, whose bark is worse than her bite. Around the house swirls mountain mist, but also the forces of revolution and change. Booker prize winner 2006  
(336 pages)

**Diamant, Anita**

**Red tent**

A different perspective of womanhood set in and around Egypt. This story explores and exposes cultural and sexual attitudes in Biblical times; and perhaps now?  
(395 pages)

**Dorrestein, Renate**

**Heart of stone**

Translated from the original Dutch, Heart of Stone explores the haunting past of a woman whose idyllic childhood also included a disturbing family tragedy. The now-pregnant adult Ellen takes us back and delicately combs through her thoughts and memories in an attempt to make sense of it all. Each chapter cleverly alludes to the ending.  
(244 pages)

**Dubus III, Andre**

**House of sand and fog**

A former colonel of the Iranian Air Force and his family purchase a small California home at auction. They are then faced with a great conflict as the former owner fights to get it back at any cost. An explosive and tragic collision course ensues. This book is now a film.  
(365 pages)

**Du Maurier, Daphne**

**Rebecca**

Du Maurier's famous tale of suspense, mystery and love concerns Maxim de Winter's shy new bride and the house she is to inhabit, but that still reverberates to the haunting presence of his previous wife's influence. A dark tale of the feminine unconscious.  
(452 pages)

**Edwards, Kim**

**Memory keeper's daughter**

Norah's grieving for her baby girl, Phoebe, who died in childbirth. In another city, another woman raises Norah's little girl as her own. It's 1964 and a blizzard is blowing outside the small-town surgery where Dr David Henry finds himself delivering Norah's twins. Relieved, he sees that his son is born healthy, but recognizes the signs of Down Syndrome in his daughter's face. In a split-second decision that will haunt their family for ever, he asks the nurse, Caroline, to take his daughter away. As his wife mourns the missing piece in their apparently perfect lives, can David prevent his painful secret from pulling his family apart.  
(416 pages)



**Faulks, Sebastian**  
**Charlotte Gray**

A young woman travels to occupied France in 1942, both to carry out a mission for British Intelligence and to search for her lover, an English airman missing in action. Once there she witnesses the full horror of the Occupation, and confronts a secret which threatens to overshadow the rest of her days.

(496 pages)

**Fforde, Jasper**  
**The Eyre affair**

Thursday Next lives in England in 1885 – but not the 1885 we remember. The Crimean war has never finished, travel by airship is still common, classic literary figures and movements have massive cult followings and Thursday has one time-travelling parent. Literary crime is so prevalent that there is a special government department for fighting it, and this light-hearted book follows Thursday's efforts against a very wily criminal.

(384 pages)

**Fusillo, Archimede (Australian Author)**  
**The Dons**

The Dons focuses on an Italian family with a teenage boy called Paul Taranto. Paul lives with his mother Teresa and his Nonno (Grandfather) in Melbourne. Paul is finding it kind of hard to juggle a lot of things in his life, like his grandfather who is a handful as he is slowly losing his mind. But Nonno still has stories to tell, some of which are sad, others are shocking and Paul must learn to cope with the stories.

(186 pages)

**Frazier, Charles**  
**Cold Mountain**

Set against the backdrop of the American Civil War, this is the story of a wounded soldier, Inman, who escapes the army and tries to make his way home to Cold Mountain to Ada, the woman he left behind. He travels through the war-torn landscape of the Confederate states in his voyage home, encompassing all the tragedy and waste of war.

(438 pages)

**Garner, Helen (NEW)**  
**The Spare Room**

An extraordinary work of fiction from one of Australia's best-selling and most admired writers. First, in my spare room, I swivelled the bed on to a north-south axis. Isn't that supposed to align the sleeper with the planet's positive energy flow, or something? She would think so. I made it up nicely with a fresh fitted sheet, the pale pink one, since she had a famous feel for colour, and pink is flattering even to skin that has turned yellowish. Helen prepares her spare room for her friend Nicola, who is flying down from Sydney for a three-week visit. But this is no ordinary visit - Nicola has advanced cancer. She is coming to Melbourne to receive treatment she believes will cure her. From the moment Nicola steps off the plane, Helen becomes her nurse, her protector, her guardian angel and her stony judge. The Spare Room tells a story of compassion and rage as the two women - one sceptical, one stubbornly serene - negotiate their way through Nicola's gruelling treatments. Garner's dialogue is pitch perfect, her sense of pacing flawless as this novel draws to its terrible and transcendent finale.

(195 pages)



**George, Elizabeth**

**Well schooled in murder**

The quiet, confident atmosphere of Bredgar Chambers School is shattered by the discovery of the body of one of its pupils in a country churchyard. Who murdered the brilliant boy and why?  
(446 pages)

**Grenville, Kate (Australian Author)**

**The Secret river**

After a childhood of poverty and petty crime in the slums of London, William Thornhill is sentenced in 1806 to be transported to New South Wales for the term of his natural life. With his wife Sal and children in tow, he arrives in a harsh land that feels at first like a death sentence. But among the convicts there is a whisper that freedom can be bought, an opportunity to start afresh. Away from the infant township of Sydney, up the Hawkesbury River, Thornhill encounters men who have tried to do just that: Blackwood, who is attempting to reconcile himself with the place and its people, and Smasher Williams, whose fear of this alien world turns into brutal depravity towards it. As Thornhill and his family stake their claim on a patch of ground by the river, the battle lines between old and new inhabitants are drawn.

Commonwealth Writers Prize winner and shortlisted for Miles Franklin Literary Award 2006.  
(352 pages)

**Gruen, Sara**

**Water for elephants**

Set in a travelling circus touring the backblocks of America during the Great Depression of the early 1930s. It's a story of love and hate, trains and circuses, dwarves and fat ladies, horses and elephants - or to be more specific, one elephant, Rosie, star of Benzini Bros Most Spectacular Show on Earth... When Jacob Jankowski, recently orphaned and suddenly adrift, jumps onto a passing train, he enters a world of freaks, swindlers and misfits in a second-rate circus struggling to survive during the Great Depression. A veterinary student who almost earned his degree, Jacob is put in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. It is there that Jacob meets Marlana, the beautiful equestrienne who is married to August, a charismatic but violently unpredictable animal trainer. Jacob also meets Rosie, an elephant who seems unmanageable until he discovers an unusual way to reach her. Water for Elephants is a story that has it all - warmth, humour, poignancy and passion. It has an energy and spirit like the feeling under a big top when the show is about to begin. It is a novel that will win your heart.

(347 pages)

**Haddon, Mark**

**The curious incident of the dog in the night-time**

A murder mystery like no other, this novel features Christopher Boone, a 15 year-old who suffers from Asperger's syndrome. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered, he sets out on a journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

(272 pages)

**Ham, Rosalie (Australian Author)**

**The Dressmaker**

Myrtle Dunnage returns to Dungatar, a small Australian country town where the townspeople's eccentricities are many and varied. This novel, often described as "gothic", deals with the issues of acceptance, tolerance, exclusion and vengeance within a small community.

(296 pages)



**Harris, Joanne**  
**Chocolat**

Try me...Test me...Taste me...When an exotic stranger, Vianne Rocher, arrives in the French village of Lansquenet and opens a chocolate boutique directly opposite the church, Father Reynaud identifies her as a serious danger to his flock - especially as it is the beginning of Lent, the traditional season of self-denial. War is declared as the priest denounces the newcomer's wares as the ultimate sin. Suddenly Vianne's shop-cum-café means that there is somewhere for secrets to be whispered, grievances to be aired, dreams to be tested. But Vianne's plans for an Easter Chocolate Festival divide the whole community in a conflict that escalates into a 'Church not Chocolate' battle. As mouths water in anticipation, can the solemnity of the Church compare with the pagan passion of a chocolate éclair? For the first time here is a novel in which chocolate enjoys its true importance. Rich, clever and mischievous, *Chocolat* is a literary feast for all senses.  
(320 pages)

**Harris, Robert**  
**Enigma**

March 1943, the war hangs in the balance, and at Bletchley Park a brilliant young codebreaker is facing a double nightmare. The Germans have unaccountably changed their U-boat Enigma code, threatening a massive Allied defeat. And as suspicion grows that there may be a spy inside Bletchley, Jericho's girlfriend, the beautiful and mysterious Claire Romilly, suddenly disappears  
(448 pages)

**Hearn, Lian (Australian Author)**  
**Across the nightingale floor**

The first book in the Otori trilogy is a tale of war, intrigue, love and betrayal set in an imaginary ancient Japanese society. It is the story of Takeo, a young man born to a spiritual people known as the Hidden. Unbeknown to him his father was a celebrated assassin.  
(361 pages)

**Heller, Zoe**  
**Notes on a scandal**

From the first day that the beguiling Sheba Hart joins the staff of St George's, history teacher Barbara Covett is convinced that she has found a kindred spirit. Barbara's loyalty to her new friend is passionate and unstinting and when Sheba is discovered to be having an illicit affair with one of her young pupils. Barbara quickly elects herself as Sheba's chief defender. But all is not as it first seems in this dark story and, as Sheba will soon discover, a friend can be just as treacherous as any lover.  
256 pages

**Hemingway, Ernest (NEW)**  
**A Farewell to Arms**

In 1918 Ernest Hemingway went to war, to the 'war to end all wars'. He volunteered for ambulance service in Italy, was wounded and twice decorated. Out of his experience came *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway's description of war is unforgettable. He recreates the fear, the comradeship, the courage of his young American volunteer, and the men and women he meets in Italy, with total conviction. But *A Farewell to Arms* is not only a novel of war. In it Hemingway has also created a love story of immense drama and uncompromising passion.  
(451 pages)



**Hoffman, Alice**  
**Blue diary**

When Ethan Ford fails to show up for work on a brilliant summer morning, none of his neighbours would guess that for more than thirteen years, he has been running from his past. Ethan's secret splits his small American town apart.

(304 pages)

**Hornby, Nick**  
**High fidelity**

Reading the popular first novel by this British author, is like reading from an old diary -- at once hilarious and pathetic, the stories of romantic engagements and disengagements are often an embarrassing reminder of who you once were.

(245 pages)

**Hosseini, Khaled (NEW)**  
**A Thousand Splendid Suns**

Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry Rasheed. Nearly two decades later, a friendship grows between Mariam and a local teenager, Laila, as strong as the ties between mother and daughter. When the Taliban take over, life becomes a desperate struggle against starvation, brutality and fear. Yet love can move a person to act in unexpected ways, and lead them to overcome the most daunting obstacles with a startling heroism.

(412 pages)

**Hosseini, Khaled**  
**The Kite runner**

Winter, 1975: Afghanistan, a country on the verge of an internal coup. 12 year old Amir is desperate to win the approval of his father, one of the richest merchants in Kabul. He's failed to do so through academia or brawn but the one area they connect is the annual kite fighting tournament.

American Library Association Notable Books Award winner 2004

(336 pages)

**Jacobson, Michael (Australian Author)**  
**Windmill Hill**

To escape the indignity of a nursing home Angus kidnaps his grandfather to return him to his love of the land and his great skill as a gardener. The two have a close bond as they reminisce about friends and comrades. Set in Tasmania this warm tale is one of great companionship, memories and confusion as a talented man grows older.

(361 pages)

**Jinks, Catherine (Australian Author)**  
**Little white secrets**

David French leaves Sydney to work in Sable Cove, a small Canadian fishing town. Everyone has something to hide and in a small town community it's a fight to keep your secrets to yourself.

(352 pages)



**Jinks, Catherine (Australian Author)**  
**The Gentleman's garden**

In the early 1800s Dorothea accompanies her officer husband to his posting in the colony of New South Wales. Endeavouring to make sense of her new and difficult life, she begins to cultivate a garden. As she finds new strength she finds her values diverging from those of her husband.  
(444 pages)

**Jones, Lloyd (NEW)**  
**Mister Pip**

After the trouble starts and the soldiers arrive on Matilda's tropical island, only one white person stays behind. The eccentric Mr Watts assumes the role of school teacher and begins to read aloud to the class from his battered copy of Great Expectations. Soon Dickens' hero Pip starts to come alive for Matilda. But Matilda is not the only one who believes in Pip. And, on an island at war, the power of the imagination can be a dangerously provocative thing.  
(240 pages)

**Keyes, Marian**  
**Rachel's holiday**

Marian Keyes is the queen of the 'Brit chick' books. The secret of her success lies in her humour and the bright style which reflects her chosen milieu. But Rachel has a bit of a drug problem and this novel has to come to grips with some tough issues.  
(626 pages)

**Khouri, Norma**

**Forbidden Love: a harrowing true story of love and revenge in Jordan.**

This high profile book is an exploration into Muslim family life. Norma Khouri supposedly wrote the story after her friend died in an "honour killing" in Jordan.  
(211 pages)

**Kidd, Sue Monk**  
**The Secret life of bees**

Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her mother when she was four. She not only has her own memory of holding the gun, but her father's account of the event. Now fourteen, she yearns for her mother, and for forgiveness.  
(320 pages)

**Kingsolver, Barbara**  
**Prodigal summer**

Set in the mountains and small farms of southern Appalachia, this satisfying novel skilfully weaves together three interconnected stories. Deanna is a ranger in an isolated mountain cabin whose solitariness is threatened, recently-widowed Lusa must face decisions about her husband's farm and family, and down the road are a couple of elderly feuding neighbours with ties to them both.  
(447 pages)



**Krauss, Nicole**  
**The History of love**

Leo Gursky is a man who fell in love at the age of ten and has been in love ever since. These days he is just about surviving life in America, tapping his radiator each evening to let his upstairs neighbour know he's still alive, drawing attention to himself at the milk counter of Starbucks. But life wasn't always like this: sixty years ago in the Polish village where he was born Leo fell in love with a young girl called Alma and wrote a book in honour of his love. These days he assumes that the book and his dreams are irretrievably lost, until one day they return to him in the form of a brown envelope. Meanwhile, a young girl, hoping to find a cure for her mother's loneliness, stumbles across a book that changed her mother's life and she goes in search of the author. Soon these and other worlds collide in *The History of Love*, a captivating story of the power of love, of loneliness and of survival.

Shortlisted for British Book Award and Orange Prize for Fiction 2006.

(272 pages)

**Larsson, Steig (NEW)**  
**The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo**

Forty years ago, Harriet Vanger disappeared off the secluded island owned and inhabited by the powerful Vanger family. There was no corpse, no witnesses, no evidence. But her uncle, Henrik, is convinced that she was murdered by someone in her own family - the deeply dysfunctional Vanger clan. Disgraced journalist Mikael Blomqvist is hired to investigate, but when he links Harriet's disappearance to a string of gruesome murders from forty years ago, he needs a competent assistant - and he gets one: computer hacker Lisbeth Salander - a tattooed, truculent, angry girl who rides a motorbike like a Hell's Angel and handles makeshift weapons with the skill born of remorseless rage. This unlikely pair form a fragile bond as they delve into the sinister past of this island-bound, tightly-knit family. But the Vangers are a secretive lot, and Mikael and Lisbeth are about to find out just how far they're prepared to go to protect themselves - and each other.

(572 pages)

**Lee, Harper**  
**To kill a mockingbird**

The all-time classic American story of an ethical lawyer and his 2 children, Jem and Scout, caught up in the racial and class attitudes of a small Southern town during the 1930s depression.

(320 pages)

**Levy, Andrea**  
**Small island**

It is 1948, and England is recovering from a war. But in London, the conflict has only just begun. Queenie's neighbours do not approve when she agrees to take in Jamaican lodgers, but she doesn't know when her husband will return, or if he will come back at all. Gilbert Joseph was one of the several thousand Jamaican men who joined the RAF to fight against Hitler. Returning to England as a civilian he finds himself treated very differently. It's desperation that makes him remember a wartime friendship with Queenie. Gilbert's wife Hortense, joins him there, but she is shocked to find London shabby, decrepit, and far from the golden city of her dreams. Even Gilbert is not the man she thought he was.

(533 pages)



**Lewycka, Marina**

**A Short history of tractors in Ukrainian**

For years, Nadezhda and Vera, two Ukrainian sisters, raised in England by their refugee parents, have had as little as possible to do with each other - and they have their reasons. But now they find they'd better learn how to get along, because since their mother's death their aging father has been sliding into his second childhood, and an alarming new woman has just entered his life. Valentina, a bosomy young synthetic blonde from the Ukraine, seems to think their father is much richer than he is, and she is keen that he leave this world with as little money to his name as possible. If Nadezhda and Vera don't stop her, no one will. But separating their addled and annoyingly lecherous dad from his new love will prove to be no easy feat - Valentina is a ruthless pro and the two sisters swiftly realize that they are mere amateurs when it comes to ruthlessness. As Hurricane Valentina turns the family house upside down, old secrets come falling out, including the most deeply buried one of them all, from the War, the one that explains much about why Nadezhda and Vera are so different. In the meantime, oblivious to it all, their father carries on with the great work of his dotage, a grand history of the tractor.

(336 pages)

**Lippi, Rosina**

**Homestead**

Lippi's heartfelt and expertly-crafted first novel covers 70 years in the life of a tiny isolated alpine village called Rosenau. The arrival of a postcard is enough to set all 363 villagers talking. Other visitors and intrusions from the outside world have more serious and long lasting impact on the interconnected families in the community.

(195 pages)

**London, Joan (Australian Author)**

**Gilgamesh**

An epic tale of Edith, a teenager who, just before the outbreak of the second World War, takes her baby from rural Western Australia to London, and then Armenia, to find the baby's father. This is a short book - dialogue, character and events are pared down, as in the epic tale of Gilgamesh itself.

(256 pages)

**McCall Smith, Alexander**

**The Sunday philosophy club**

Amateur sleuth Isabel Dalhousie is a philosopher who also uses her training to solve unusual mysteries. Instinct tells Isabel that the young man who tumbled to his death in front of her eyes at a concert in the Usher Hall didn't fall - he was pushed.

(304 pages)

**McCall Smith, Alexander**

**Tears of the giraffe**

Part of the exceptionally popular "No 1 Ladies Detective Agency" series. These gentle, sharply observed novels feature agency founder Precious Ramotswe and her motor-mechanic fiancé, her staff, neighbours, clients and the Botswanan landscape and way of life.

(227 pages)



**McCarthy, Cormac**  
**The road**

A father and his young son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing but a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road. Pulitzer prize winner 2007  
(256 pages)

**McEwan, Ian**  
**Atonement**

A story that begins with three young people in the garden of a country house on the hottest day of 1935, and ends with three profoundly changed lives. A depiction of love and war, class, childhood and England, that explores shame and forgiveness, atonement and the possibility of absolution.  
(372 pages)

**McEwan, Ian**  
**Chesil beach**

It is July 1962. Florence is a talented musician who dreams of a career on the concert stage and of the perfect life she will create with Edward, an earnest young history student at University College of London, who unexpectedly wooed and won her heart. Newly married that morning, both virgins, Edward and Florence arrive at a hotel on the Dorset coast. At dinner in their rooms they struggle to suppress their worries about the wedding night to come. Edward, eager for rapture, frets over Florence's response to his advances and nurses a private fear of failure, while Florence's anxieties run deeper: she is overcome by sheer disgust at the idea of physical contact, but dreads disappointing her husband when they finally lie down together in the honeymoon suite. Ian McEwan has caught with understanding and compassion the innocence of Edward and Florence at a time when marriage was presumed to be the outward sign of maturity and independence.  
(176 pages)

**Mahfouz, Naguib**  
**Palace Walk**

The first volume of the Cairo Trilogy, Palace Walk is a family saga that takes place in Cairo during the period after WWI (including the 1919 revolution against the British). Centering around the home of the Jawad family, the father, Ahmad Abd al-Jawad, a merchant, rules with stern, unrelenting dominance, while enjoying a secret, separate life of complete, selfish, sensual enjoyment.  
(498 pages)

**Maloney, Shane (Australian Author)**  
**Stiff**

Single father and true believer Murray Whelan makes his debut in Shane Maloney's first thriller set among the ethnic feuds, union shenanigans and sexual politics of his city's working class heartland. Murray has to deal with everything from a snap-frozen Turk, the tattooed vote, a killer car and blood-sucking parasites. That's when the red-hot Ayisha knocks on his door.  
(288 pages)



**Martel, Yann**

**Life of Pi**

Highly original Booker Prize-winner focuses on 16-year-old Pi's experiences after being stranded on a life-raft with 4 zoo animals. When they finally reach shore only Pi and one animal remain, and the authorities force Pi to offer an alternative version of the story of the voyage, after not accepting his first account.

(319 pages)

**Mason, Daniel**

**The piano tuner**

It is 1886 and piano tuner Edgar Drake receives a strange request from the War Office - he must leave his wife, and his life in London, to travel to Burma to tune a rare Erard grand piano. The piano belongs to an enigmatic British officer whose unorthodox methods are attracting suspicion.

(304 pages)

**Mehran, Marsha**

**Pomegranate Soup**

Pomegranate Soup is a magical story of three Iranian sisters who escaped the Islamic Revolution in the early '80s (just as the chador was implemented and the morality squads began their street patrols), and who have ventured to the damp little Irish village of Ballinacroagh in hopes of a sweeter life. Once there, the sisters set up the Babylon Cafe right at the heart of Main Mall, where they serve up traditional Persian dishes - fresh herb kuku, lamb abgusht, and elephant ear fritters - along with friendship and an air of something truly magical.

(272 pages)

**Miller, Alex (Australian Author)**

**Conditions of faith**

When Alex Miller's mother died she left him her fragmentary journal from the 1920s. Set in Paris and Tunisia this is at once a provocative romance and an elegant exploration of the timeless dilemmas of womanhood.

(403 pages)

**Mitford, Nancy**

**Love in a cold climate**

Fanny Logan tells the stories of her two aristocratic friends Polly and Linda and their various pursuits of love in a 1930's pre-war world.

(256 pages)

**Niffenegger, Audrey**

**The Time Traveller's Wife**

This is the story of Clare, a beautiful art student, and Henry, an adventuresome librarian, who have known each other since Clare was six and Henry was thirty-six, and were married when Clare was twenty-three and Henry thirty-one. Impossible but true, because Henry finds himself periodically displaced in time, pulled to moments of emotional gravity from his life, past and future. His disappearances are spontaneous, his experiences unpredictable, alternately harrowing and amusing. The Time Traveller's Wife depicts the effects of time travel on Henry and Clare's marriage and their passionate love for each other, as the story unfolds from both points of view.

(518 pages)



**Norman, Howard**

**Bird artist**

Memorably set in a remote coastal village in 1911, this vivid book is the tale of an odd local man who murdered the lighthouse keeper. A short novel, haunting in its simplicity, it's as much about Newfoundland as it is about human character and motivation.

(289 pages)

**Parsons, Tony**

**Man and boy**

A novel as witty and sharp as any Parsons has written, this story of a successful Englishman who throws it all away to learn about life is irresistible. Hilarious and tear jerking by turns.

(344 pages)

**Patchett, Ann**

**Bel Canto**

A moving, and at times very funny, novel about a group of hostages captured at an international gathering in a South American country. The hostages include a famous opera singer and her greatest fan, a Japanese tycoon. The tycoon's sympathetic translator plays a key role in the subsequent relationships between so many nationalities closeted together, doing more to promote foreign relations than the original function would have.

(336 pages)

**Perlman, Elliott (Australian Author)**

**Three dollars**

Melbourne-based Perlman's first novel is a portrait of Eddie, a man attempting to retain his sense of humour in these grim times of downsizing, outsourcing and privatising. When he loses his job he discovers that as well as humour and a conscience he also has a wife, a small child and three dollars to his name. This is a sharp, touching and humorous look at life at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

(358 pages)

**Picoult, Jodi**

**Keeping faith**

After a painful divorce as Mariah battles with depression her seven year old daughter Faith starts to confide in an imaginary friend. Faith begins to quote bible passages, performs miracles and develops stigmata, Mariah wonders if Faith maybe actually seeing God. As news of this spreads they are besieged by believers and non believers, the media and religious groups.

(468 pages)

**Picoult, Jodi**

**My sister's keeper**

The only reason Anna was born was to donate her cord blood cells to her older sister. By the age of 13, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions and injections so that her sister Kate can fight the leukaemia that has plagued her since she was a child. Now Anna wants control over her own body.

(423 pages)



**Picoult, Jodi**

**Nineteen minutes**

Set in a small town in the wake of a horrific school shooting, *Nineteen Minutes* features the return of two beloved Picoult characters Jordan McAfee, the lawyer from *The Pact* and *Salem Falls*, who once again finds himself representing a boy who desperately needs someone on his side; and Patrick DuCharme, the intrepid detective introduced in *Perfect Match*, whose best witness is the daughter of the superior court judge assigned to the case. As the story unfolds, layer after layer is peeled back to reveal some hard-hitting questions about the nature of justice, the balance of power and what it means to be different.

(464 pages)

**Pierre, D.B.C.**

**Vernon God Little**

Fifteen-year-old Vernon Gregory Little is in trouble, and it has something to do with the recent massacre of 16 students at his high school. Soon, the quirky backwater of Martirio, barbecue capital of Texas, is flooded with wannabe CNN hacks, eager for a scapegoat.

Winner of Man Booker prize 2003

(288 pages)

**Reichs, Kathy**

**Cross Bones**

A man is found shot to death in Montreal. As Tempe Brennan tries to make sense of the victim's wounds, a stranger slips her a photograph of a skeleton, telling her it holds the key to the victim's death. Was the murder victim - an orthodox Jew involved in the Israeli "import business" - actually a trader in black market antiquities? Teaming up with Detective Andrew Ryan and aided by colleague and biblical archaeologist, Jake Drum, Tempe follows the clues to Israel. In the Holy Land, Drum describes a strange ossuary and takes Tempe to a tomb in the Kidron Valley. Together they make a startling discovery that raises radical questions about Christ's death: Could the crypt be the last resting place of the holy family?

(348 pages)

**Ruiz Zafon, Carlos**

**Shadow of the Wind**

Hidden in the heart of the old city of Barcelona is a labyrinthine library of obscure & forgotten titles that have long gone out of print. To this library, a man brings his 10-year-old son Daniel one cold morning in 1945. Daniel is allowed to choose one book from the shelves and pulls out 'La Sombra del Viento' by Julian Carax. But as he grows up, several people seem inordinately interested in his find. Then, one night, as he is wandering the old streets once more, Daniel is approached by a figure who reminds him of a character from *La Sombra del Viento*. This man is tracking down every last copy of Carax's work in order to burn them. What begins as a case of literary curiosity turns into a race to find out the truth behind the life and death of Julian Carax and to save those he left behind.

(528 pages)



**Sebold, Alice**  
**Lovely Bones**

When we first meet 14-year-old Susie Salmon, she is already in heaven. This was before milk carton photos and public service announcements, she tells us; back in 1973, when Susie mysteriously disappeared, people still believed these things didn't happen. In the sweet, untroubled voice of a precocious teenage girl, Susie relates the awful events of her death, and her own adjustment to the strange new place she finds herself. With love, longing, and a growing understanding, Susie watches her family as they cope with their grief.  
(328 pages)

**Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft**  
**Frankenstein**

The fable of the scientist who creates a man-monster. The dire and terrifying consequences of giving it life are beyond his imagination, as the creature vows revenge on his creator after being rejected by society. This novel was written by a 19 year old Mary (Godwin) Shelley in response to a challenge, Frankenstein is a thought provoking read.  
(208 pages)

**Shields, Carol**  
**Unless**

Reta is a fairly normal happy Canadian. When her eldest daughter suddenly withdraws from the world sitting on a street corner with a sign, 'GOODNESS', around her neck, Reta is forced into a desperate search for the causes of her daughter's retreat.  
(213 pages)

**Sijie, Dai**  
**Balzac and the little Chinese seamstress**

In 1971 Mao's campaign against the intellectuals is at its height. Our narrator and his best friend, Luo, distinctly unintellectual but guilty of being the sons of doctors, have been sent to a remote mountain village to be 're-educated'. The kind of education that takes place among the peasants of Phoenix Mountain involves carting buckets of excrement up and down precipitous, foggy paths, but the two seventeen-year-olds have a violin and their sense of humour to keep them going. Further distraction is provided by the attractive daughter of the local tailor, possessor of a particularly fine pair of feet. Their true re-education starts however, when they discover a comrade's hidden stash of classics of great nineteenth-century Western literature - Balzac, Dickens, Dumas, Tolstoy and others, in Chinese translation. They need all their ingenuity to get their hands on the forbidden books, but when they do their lives are turned upside down. And not only their lives: after listening to their dangerously seductive retellings of Balzac, the Little Seamstress will never be the same again.  
(176 pages)



**Smith, Dodie**  
**I capture the castle**

Smith's classic story of a young woman and her sister growing to adulthood in a crumbling English castle with an impoverished father suffering from writer's block, and a nature-communing stepmother. Written as Cassandra's journal, this book is both funny and moving. I capture the castle has been constantly in-print since its first publication in 1949 and was recently released in a film version.

(410 pages)

**Smith, Zadie**  
**White teeth**

Humorous and moving saga tracing the lives of 3 London families (from a variety of ethnic backgrounds) over 3 generations. Deals with friendship, love, war, cultures and families.

(542 pages)

**Shriver, Lionel**  
**We need to talk about Kevin**

Eva never really wanted to be a mother-and certainly not the mother of the unlovable boy who murdered seven of his fellow high school students, a cafeteria worker, and a much-adored teacher who tried to befriend him, all two days before his sixteenth birthday. Now, two years later, it is time for her to come to terms with marriage, career, family, parenthood, and Kevin's horrific rampage in a series of startlingly direct correspondences with her estranged husband, Franklyn. Uneasy with the sacrifices and social demotion of motherhood from the start, Eva fears that her alarming dislike for her own son may be responsible for driving him so nihilistically off the rails.

(432 pages)

**Swarup, Vikas**  
**Q and A**

Ram Mohammad Thomas has been arrested. For answering twelve questions correctly on a quiz show because a poor orphan who has never gone to school cannot name the smallest planet in the solar system, or the plays of Shakespeare, unless he has cheated. Ram tells us how he won, and takes us on an amazing tour of his life. From the day he is rescued from a dustbin, to his encounter with a security-crazed Australian colonel, and a spell as an over-creative guide at the Taj Mahal, Ram's survival instincts are infallible. Stunning an audience of millions, he draws on a store of street wisdom and trivia to provide him with the essential keys, not only to the quiz show, but to life itself.

(384 pages)

**Temby, Susan (Australian Author)**  
**Bread with seven crusts**

In 1943 Giuseppe, an Italian prisoner-of-war, is posted to a small rural Western Australian wheat belt community. The Nash family takes him in, but their gradual acceptance of him has its limits when he becomes attracted to his host's sister.

(496 pages)



**Temple, Peter (Australian Author)**

**In the evil day**

Peter Temple's first international thriller opens in Johannesburg and shifts through Hamburg to London. The action is fast paced but the "spare elegant prose" demands close study to get the best out of this well crafted book.

(444 pages)

**Tiffany, Carrie (Australian Author)**

**Everyman's rules for scientific living**

It is 1934, and the belief that science can provide the answers is great. The 'Better Farming Train' travels through the wheat belts of Australia dispensing advice to those already living on the land. The train is on a crusade to persuade the country that science holds the answers and that productivity is patriotic. An unlikely seduction occurs between Robert Pettergree, and Jean Finnegan, they settle in the impoverished Mallee with the ambition of proving that science can transform the land. With failing crops and the threat of a new World War looming, Robert and Jean are forced to confront each other, the community they have destroyed, and the impact of progress on an ancient and fragile landscape.

Miles Franklin award short list 2006.

(256 pages)

**Vonnegut, Kurt**

**Slaughterhouse five**

The destruction of Dresden by bombs and a fire storm was a catastrophe that Vonnegut himself witnessed as a prisoner of war and forms the basis of this modern classic. Prisoner of war, optometrist, time-traveller - these are the life roles of Billy Pilgrim, hero of this latter-day *Pilgrim's Progress*, a miraculously moving, bitter and funny story of innocence faced with apocalypse, in the most original anti-war novel since 'Catch 22'.

(160 pages)

**Winton, Tim (NEW) (Australian Author)**

**Breath**

More than once since then I've wondered whether the life-threatening high jinks that Loonie and I and Sando and Eva got up to in the years of my adolescence were anything more than a rebellion against the monotony of drawing breath. Breath is a story about the wildness of youth - the lust for excitement and terror, the determination to be extraordinary, the wounds that heal and those that don't - and about learning to live with its passing. In his first novel for seven years, Tim Winton has achieved a new level of mastery. Breath confirms him as one of the world's finest storytellers, a writer of novels that are at the same time simple and profound, relentlessly gripping and deeply moving.

(216 pages)

**Winton, Tim (Australian Author)**

**Dirt music**

Georgie is a mess. At forty, she has lost her way and lives between pointless domesticity and isolating cyberspace. When a dangerous new element enters her life a story about breaking with the past, about love and hope and grief is created. Another beautiful Tim Winton novel; Western Australia as only he can write it.

(461 pages)



**Woolf, Virginia**  
**Mrs Dalloway**

This whole story takes place on a single day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway - the wife of a parliamentary member. She is planning a grand party on this particular day and the narrative woven around her by the author is clever and vivid. The movie 'The Hours' is partly based on this classic 1920s novel.

(212 pages)

**Zusak, Markus (Australian Author)**  
**The Book thief**

'It's just a small story, really, about among other things: a girl, some words, an accordionist, a Jewish fist fighter, and quite a lot of thievery ...' Narrated in the all-knowing matter-of-fact voice of Death, witnessing the story of the citizens of Himmel Street: When nine-year-old Liesel arrives outside the boxlike house of her new foster parents, she refuses to get out of the car. Liesel has been separated from her parents - 'Kommunists' - for ever, and at the burial of her little brother, she steals a gravedigger's instruction manual which she can't read. It is the beginning of her illustrious career. In the care of the Hubermans, Liesel befriends blond-haired Rudy Steiner, her neighbour obsessed with Jesse Owens. She also befriends the mayor's wife, who hides from despair in her library. Together Liesel and Rudy steal books - from Nazi book burning piles, from the mayor's library, from the richer people of Molching. In time, the family hide a Jewish boxer, Max, who reads with Liesel in the basement. By 1943, the Allied bombs are falling, and the sirens begin to wail. Liesel shares out her books in the air-raid shelters. But one day in the life of Himmel street, the wail of the sirens comes too late ... A life-changing tale of the cruel twists of fate and the coincidences on which all our lives hinge, this is also a joyous look at the power of book to nourish the soul. Its uplifting ending will make all readers weep.

(592 pages)