



The reading stack

where you can find a pile of good books

Issue 11, August 2008

What's Inside

- Crime 
- Mystery 
- Romance 
- History 
- Science Fiction 
- Fantasy 
- Biographical 
- Adult Other 
- Adult Non-Fiction 
- Picture 
- Young Reader 
- Junior 
- Young Adult 
- Children's Non-Fiction 
- Interview 
- Australian 

From The Editor's Desk

With Fathers Day around the corner—what better present than a book or two—but the big decision—which one? Let us take the hassle out of it for you and give you a few ideas. Then maybe a few more for Dad to read to his children!

And it is our FIRST BIRTHDAY here at the Reading Stack—it nearly passed by without a blink because we were too busy ... reading. Thanks to all our dedicated readers and we hope that you enjoy the Reading Stack as much as we do creating it! Psst... pass it on!

Reader reviews can be emailed to
thereadingstack -at- people.net.au
(replace -at- with @ when emailing)

The Night We Made The Flag (A Eureka Story) Editor's Choice

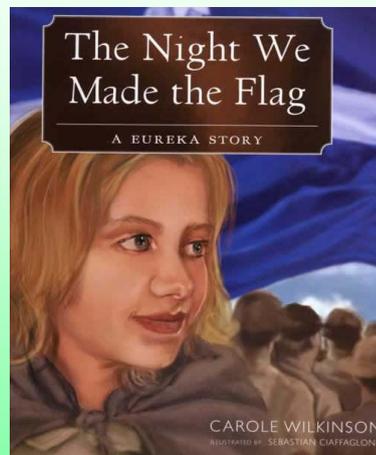
by Carole Wilkinson. Illustrated by Sebastian Ciaffaglione - black dog books. Hardback rrp \$29.99

The Eureka rebellion is a major part of Australian history and the beginning of our democracy. Into this wonderful story about the women who hand-sewed the Eureka flag, is interwoven the story of young Mary. She helps her mother with small tasks that ultimately are just as important as the women's sewing.

Three women, one heavily pregnant, sit in a candle lit tent and sew the large blue flag. It is hard work. There are times when they need more thread and have to secretly approach other women under cover of darkness to obtain it. When they run out of material to make the beautiful white stars, Mary gives up one of her most treasured possessions, her beautiful petticoat.

This is not a true historical account as no records were ever kept about the women who created the flag. But stories have been passed through generations and the oral history supports the version of three women sewing the flag over one night.

Carole Wilkinson has created a tale that depicts the tough life and times of the Eureka people in a one night snapshot. Sebastian Ciaffaglione's beautiful paintings



capture the feelings of that night. In particular, the picture of Mary holding her very white petticoat in the darkness, is magical. I wish it was hanging on my bedroom wall.

Every primary school should own a copy of this book. This is fiction at it's very best – bringing history alive.

www.carolewilkinson.com.au

Assassin

by **Andrew Britton** - Penguin. Paperback rrp \$32.95

Guest Reviewer - Ian Brown

Assassin is the story of a terrorist plot reaching from New York to the Middle East. It is a topical story with twists and turns which will keep you interested for the over 600 pages.

The plot objective is to blame Iran for a terrorist attack in New York so that the USA will retaliate against Iran. The man behind the plot is a former Saddam Hussein politician, Izzat Ibrahim Al-Douri (former vice president of Iraq), who wants to destroy the current Iraqi government.

This would then incite a civil war between the Shites and Sunnis, ultimately involving the USA to help resolve the conflict.

Once the Americans leave then Al-Douri would step in to take over as the leader of Iraq. He enlists the services of a South African born, former combat soldier for the USA forces and an Arab woman.

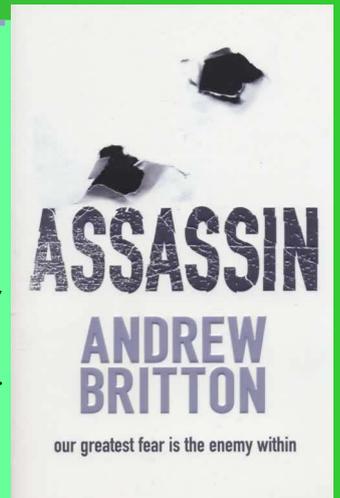
Maverick CIA agent, Ryan Kealey discovers the truth about the plot but no-one believes him. Can he stop the cluster bomb detonating in Times Square? And does he catch the criminal mastermind behind it all?

This is a great, action packed thriller. Very current. Very political. If you like writers such as Tom Clancy and Frederick Forsyth then you will love Andrew Britton's *Assassin*. Unfortunately

Andrew passed away earlier this year at 27 years of age. A great loss to the genre.

I must say this is one of the best books I have read in a very long time and I highly recommend it.

www.andrewbrittonbooks.com



Rebel With A Cause

by **Glenn Ford** - Zeus Publications. Paperback rrp \$19.95

Guest Reviewer - Jo Burnell

If anyone says 'no', Glenn says 'Let's go!' and he does, despite his wheelchair.

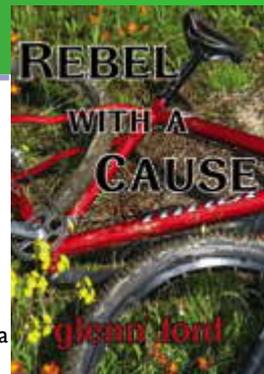
At 14 years of age, a serious bike accident changed Glenn Ford's life forever. Even today, doctors warn family members that the longer a person remains comatose, the less chance they have of living independently. Glenn's story shows how wrong doctors can be. He emerged from a coma after 19 weeks with serious physical injuries, but intellect and sense of humour intact.

Forty years after his accident, Glenn tells the candid story of his physical, emotional and spiritual journey through secondary and tertiary studies to publication of his autobiography. Difficulties with balance and coordination make catching public transport dangerous, but for Glenn, it's just another fun challenge.

Swallowing difficulties make eating a constant challenge. An unreliable voice box leads to frustrating misunderstandings. Luckily for Glenn, his self-described pigheadedness leads to rebellion. He doesn't allow anything to get in his way. If it takes two hours by public transport to get where he needs to go, so be it. A high tolerance for pain (physical, emotional and spiritual) allows Glenn to persevere where many would give up.

Glenn shares the highs and lows of living in supported accommodation. He gives a perspective that outsiders could never imagine. This includes issues with privacy and intimacy that carers unwittingly overlook.

Using two fingers and a thumb on the keyboard, Glenn tells his story



with humour and deep faith.

Important life decisions are saturated in prayer before he acts. Glenn doesn't airbrush the truth, nor does he overlook his own weaknesses.

Rebel with a Cause is a rare opportunity to experience from the inside, the lifelong struggle that comes with permanent injury. Friends, carers and family of people with acquired disabilities will be compelled to keep reading as Glenn's journey unfolds. Those in caring professions will find Glenn is a rare voice. He is one of very few who has spoken publicly about what it's like to live – and fight – a life that happens to come with a few physical limitations.

Rebel with a Cause is a compelling read and the humour makes it accessible.

Nightwork

by **Thomas Glavinic** - The Text Publishing Company. Paperback rrp \$32.95

What happens when one day you wake up and find out you are the only living being on earth. No dogs, cats, mosquitoes, flies, fish ... no humans! Not even any carcasses. Absolutely nothing!

That's what happens to Jonas. Jonas lives in Vienna with his partner Marie who is visiting relatives in Scotland. On 4 July Jonas wakes, washes, eats and waits to catch his bus to work. Except the bus never comes. In fact the street seems strangely still. Where are the barking dogs, honking horns, people

chattering.

Jonas searches fruitlessly for another human being. The television shows snow. The radio just static. His mobile rings out

when he tries to contact Marie.

Inexplicably, eerie things start to happen to Jonas. He wakes to find a new jacket in the cupboard, his father's hunting knife imbedded into the concrete wall, items missing or

moved. Is there another person after all? Why don't they show themselves? He nicknames this mysterious person the sleeper.

Soon he is obsessed with catching the "sleeper". He places video cameras around his bed, around the flat and around the city.

This is a story that asks many questions but doesn't answer them all. Instead it provides many hints and clues. The reader must find their own answers. Recommended for those who don't want to see every loose end tied up for them.



Bloodlust - The Unsavoury tale of Alexander Pearce the Convict Cannibal

by **Nick Bleszynski** - Random House. Paperback rrp \$32.95

Guest Reviewer

Why had the Doctor called him out on a wintry night and wordlessly put a human skull into his hand? Daniel Ruth wondered as he poked at the points of the small, slightly rounded canines with his forefinger and waited to be enlightened by the older, soft-faced man sitting opposite. *'I'd be careful, they belong to a cannibal,' said Dr Morton flatly.*

In 1852 Daniel Ruth, the brilliant young protégé of the celebrated American phrenologist Dr Samuel Morton, is sent to faraway Tasmania to discover the true story of Alexander Pearce, the convict cannibal of Macquarie Harbour, who was executed almost 30 years before..

On arrival in the deserted penal colony of Macquarie Harbour, on the uncharted west

coast of Tasmania, Daniel discovers Pearce's journal hidden in the old gaol. It describes the incredible barbarity of Australia's most brutal penal colony and how it spurred Pearce and seven others to make a break for freedom.

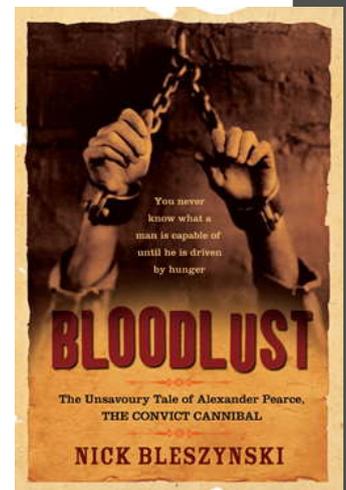
Lost and starving after a week in a wilderness no white man had ever traversed, order breaks down when one finally gives voice to their secret thoughts, *'I could eat a piece of a man.'* Betrayal, lies, murder and cannibalism soon reign as they quickly discover what happens when men are pushed past their civilised limits and what lies in the shadows beyond.

In an chilling final twist, Daniel Ruth discovers that Pearce may be dead, but

the legend of Macquarie Harbour still lives on.

Nick Bleszynski, author of the best-selling *Shoot Straight You Bastards!* and *You'll Never Take Me Alive*, mixes archive, history and the power of imagination to bring one Australia's darkest and most controversial legends to life.

www.blackrosemedia.com.au



Gypsy ♥ 🎻

by **Lesley Pearse** - Penguin Group. Paperback rrp \$32.95

When do you know you are reading a really good book? When you find yourself sitting up in bed and your husband keeps looking up at the clock and the next thing you know the book is finished and it's in the early hours of the morning! *Gypsy* is one of those books for me. It's thick – 516 pages! But every page was ... excuse the pun ... "a real page turner"!

It is 1893 in Liverpool, England. Teenagers Beth and Sam Bolton are children of a well respected bookmaker and have a privileged life. Sam is an honest and attractive young man. Beth is beautiful and has a talent playing her grandfather's fiddle. Then their father commits suicide, their mother dies in childbirth and the family business is lost. Beth and Sam are forced to become adults overnight. With a baby sister to care for, their lives seem to have been cruelly twisted.

Both Beth and Sam gain employment while a neighbour enjoys caring for their baby sister Molly. But after their home is deliberately lit and burnt to the ground by an unhappy lodger they find themselves destitute. Life twists again. Beth's employers allow them to live in a small building on their property. They are a

childless couple who offer to take responsibility of Molly to allow Beth and Sam to follow their dreams to travel.

Sam and Beth sail to America to start a new life, a new beginning. On board the steamer to New York they meet Jack and Theo. Jack is a street urchin and knows how to survive. Theo is an upper class gentleman who loves to gamble. These four unlikely people band together to seek their fortunes in America.

With Beth playing her fiddle and Sam and Jack becoming skilled bartenders they are soon welcomed in many saloons. When Beth goes on stage, she mesmerises all who hear and see her, nicknamed Gypsy by her fans. But Theo's gambling and cheating and Sam's loyalty get them into trouble and they find themselves fleeing to Canada. Gold has been found in the Klondike and Theo, Jack and Sam see an opportunity to make a lot of money opening their own saloon and gambling place.

The four find themselves on a dangerous journey to the Yukon valley, travelling through snowy, icy mountains and along treacherous rivers to reach, what they

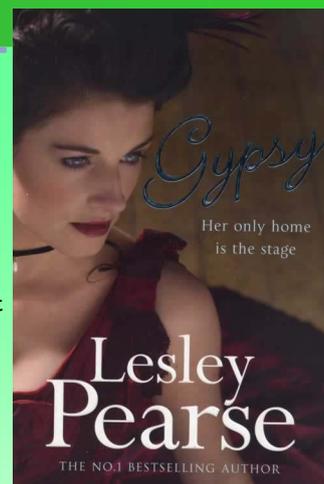
hope, will be their fortune. But in the end only three realise the dream. And then only two finish the story.

This book is about Beth, her fiddle, and her travels with the three men she has found she is bound to; Sam, her dreamy, beautiful brother, her best friend and confidant; Theo, her lover; and Jack, the friend that is devoted to them all and has only their best interests at heart.

What happens to them is a wonderful and heart wrenching story woven though the history of gold being found in the Klondike and how the pioneers arrived in their thousands to start a new life in an inhospitable area. Beth and her companions were part of that journey.

I loved *Gypsy* and highly recommend it.

www.penguin.co.uk/static/cs/uk/0/minisites/lesleypearse/index.html



Juno of Taris 🎧

by **Fleur Beale** - Random House. Paperback rrp \$17.95

Have you ever dreamed of living on a tropical paradise where the climate is exactly the same each day – perfect? I have. Juno is living the dream in Taris, her isolated island home in the Southern Ocean.

But something is amiss in this idealistic image of a perfect society.

Firstly, the Taris Project was created by people from the 21st century. They needed to build a community to survive while the rest of humanity perished. The island is separated from the outside world by a protective dome with the climate controlled by the authorities on Taris.

Taris seems perfect. But then Juno wants to grow her hair when it's not allowed. She also dreams of going to the Outside. Also not allowed. Is Taris perfect now?

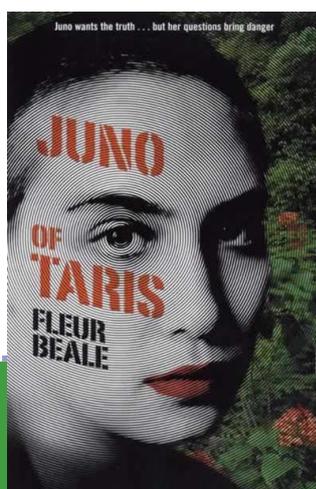
When Juno and her friends start to question this and other rules, their lives and their families are made to suffer.

Why do the 500 people who live on Taris all wear the same tunic?

Why do Juno's grandparents teach her to read and write when no-one has read anything for over 200 years? Could they possibly be over 200 years of age?

Her questions lead Juno to find hidden objects, but as she draws closer to the answers, a terrible danger awaits.

Not since *George Orwell's 1984* has there been a story, set in the not too distant future, to make us question our lives and what lies ahead. An excellent read.



Against the Tide

by **Irini Savvides** - ABC Books. Paperback rrp \$16.95

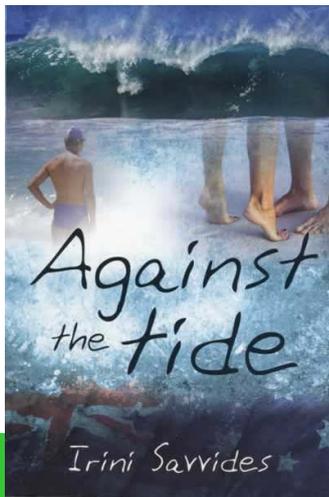
This is a story of racial tension, friendship and finding your identity. It is also about fitting in, learning to swim, changing schools and falling in love. *Against the Tide* is a wonderfully Australian story with images and themes immediately relevant to young adult readers.

Cousins Katie and Matt are champion ocean swimmers from Cronulla. They have spent their whole lives around Sydney's beaches. It's where they feel most comfortable. But when Katie's mother abandons the family for Matt's father, everything changes. Katie and her father leave the coast to build a new life in the western suburbs.

Effi initially appears to be the exact opposite of 'blond surfer chick' Katie. Greek and curvy, Effi is afraid of the water. Before she was

born her brother drowned. Effi inherited a fear of the water and never learned to swim.

Christie is tough, loves her rhyme and spends a lot of time in detention. Effi does Christie's math's homework and in return, Christie is Effi's self-appointed protector. When Katie thoughtlessly makes fun of Effi's name, 'Flipper' has immediately made an enemy.



When Katie attempts to dunk Christie into the pool as payback, she mistakenly pushes Effi, who almost drowns. Christie sees this as the perfect opportunity to make sure Effi learns to swim and tells Katie that to make amends, she must teach Effi. Despite their unconscious resistance, the three become good friends. Katie joins her two separate worlds firmly together when she introduces Matt to Effi and the

'unattainable' Matt falls in love.

Katie is learning to change. Her world has expanded but the Cronulla race riots quickly remind her that not everyone sees things the same way. Especially when Effi chooses the wrong time to take a trip to Cronulla.

Friendship is not about geography. Or is it? When Katie's father decides to move to Victoria and Matt opts to go with them, Effi is heartbroken.

Against the Tide is a verse novel where each character tells pieces of the story in their own voice. We don't read about Katie, Effi, Christie, Matt and their families. We see the world directly through their eyes. What transpires is a powerful narrative, rich with emotion.

The problems and resolutions of the main characters mirror our contemporary society. This is a book which can make you laugh and cry. And feel proud to be Australian.

Princesses and Pornstars

by **Emily Maguire** - Text Publishing. Paperback rrp \$32.95

Guest Reviewer - **Anastasia Gonis**

Emily Maguire is the author of *The Gospel According to Luke*, and *Taming the Beast*. She has published an extensive list of articles and essays on sex, religion, culture, and literature.

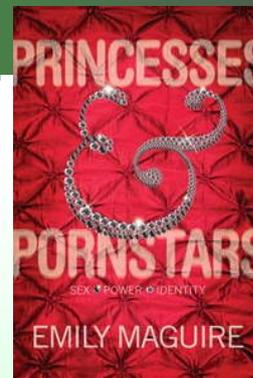
Maguire doesn't 'identify with or aspire to belong to any group, gendered or otherwise'. Her intention is to bring into focus how women are perceived in society, and that 'people should not be defined solely by their sex'. So when she speaks of feminism and argues for the rights of women, she simultaneously stands up for the rights of every individual, regardless of their gender, identity and/or their sexual preference.

Maguire has researched her subject well through extensive and varied sources, presented her arguments intelligently, and included her own experiences to further her arguments. Her analogies are humorous, the writing polemic and full of wit. She

approaches persisting subjects such as: How is personal worth measured? How is a woman's worth measured, and why is she said to 'depreciate in worth' when measured by her sexual encounters. Men's behaviour patterns are described differently. Why?

There is strong attention paid to society's perception of women's needs, sustained by television shows that want to correct women's imperfections. Thus they are categorized as Princesses or Pornstars. But, 'men's bodies are not the objects of public consumption to the extent women's are'.

Many arguments are often confronting, and in parts of the book, references to sex are explicit, such as in the reports on the abuse of women within the adult film industry, and on the various genital reconstructive surgery that



women undertake to make

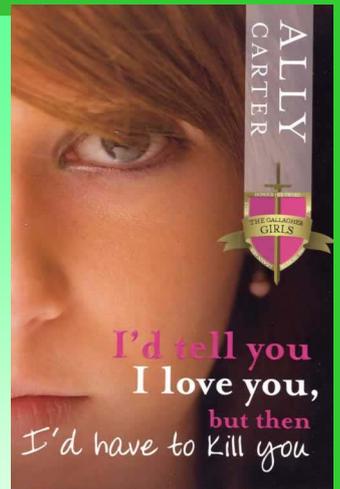
themselves appear younger and more desirable to men.

Further eye-opening statistics on women around the world, what they offer through their jobs, their home lives, their parenting skills, others' expectations of them in comparison to men, are detailed and thought-provoking.

This is an extremely well written and informative book suitable for adults to discuss at their discretion, with teenage children who always need answers. Some may be put off by the title, but, Never judge a book by its cover (or title)!

<http://emilymaguire.typepad.com/>

I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have To Kill You 🎧 📖 ❤️



by **Ally Carter** - Hachette Livre. Paperback rrp \$16.99

Cammie Morgan attends the Gallagher Academy for Exceptional Young Women. The school, in the local villagers' perception, is a very expensive private school where the girls live a life of luxury while being taught an education. How wrong!

The Gallagher Academy is a spy school. And Cammie Morgan is an elite spy in training. Both her mother and her father were top international spies and Cammie goes to spy school to be just like her mother. She can blend into her surroundings, is fluent in fourteen languages, can kill a man in seven different ways (including using a piece of uncooked spaghetti), yet she can't seem to organise her own love life. Now that her

mother is headmistress of the school, life is even harder.

Whilst Cammie is learning all about chemical warfare, martial arts, breaking computer codes, she is also using these same teachings to find out more about the local boy. Although he must never know who she really is.

Despite her elite training, Cammie knows nothing about affairs of the heart and none of her other friends seem to have any idea either. That is, until Macey turns up. She isn't one of them. Or is she? Cammie, along with her best friends, Bex and Liz, learn that

Macey knows everything about the real world and only she can help Cammie on her quest for true love.

I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have To Kill You is a story that will certainly make some young girls ask questions about what they are learning at school. And also ensure none of them complain about how hard it is to date again!

www.allycarter.com

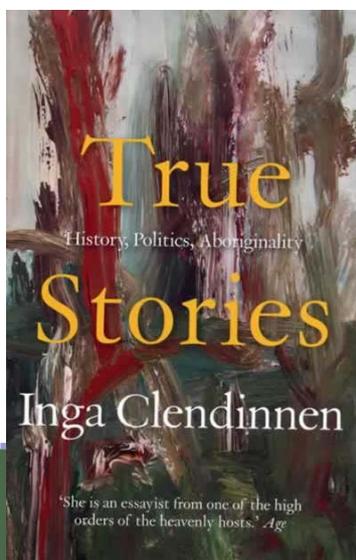
True Stories: History, Politics and Aboriginality 📖 📰 🇺🇸

by **Inga Clendinnen** - Text Publishing. Paperback rrp \$19.95

Guest Reviewer - Anastasia Gonis

True Stories are six essays written for and delivered at the 1999 Boyer Lectures for the ABC. Inga Clendinnen, a respected historian, is regarded as Australia's leading essayist and this publication is further proof of that.

Taken from documented life, these essays are presented in a detailed narrative that is poetic in structure and charged with the passion and social conscience that rules all of Clendinnen's work. She has the ability to present an even-sided case with all her evidence backed-up by strong references from original sources. Her intention through these Boyer Lectures is to inform and educate on important moral and ethical issues that will provoke self-analysis and thought, and to seek out and present the historical



truth when those seeking to pervert the course of truth and justice, have distorted it.

She has achieved all this. There are many disturbing truths within these pages, beginning with *Incident on a Beach* that goes back to 1801, when a French scientific expedition comes across an aboriginal woman on the beach in

Western Australia. Curiosity from their anthropologist's point of view leads them to lay hands on, and examine the woman. This essay has been approached from a woman's point of view.

Back to the Past again examines the effect the white man had on the culture, beliefs and lives of

the Aboriginal people. It gives an evenly balanced view of the good and bad influences, people, political decisions and historical events that affected them all in negative and positive ways.

You open yourself to questioning when reading this book. What have your beliefs been till now? Have they been based on credible sources, hearsay, or the intention to misguide?

Pilgrims, Saints and Sacred Places changes tone as it addresses the various type of pilgrim that has left their mark on the Australian landscape, starting from the soldiers that died in the Great War and the ceremonies that remember them, to the 'notion of culture' where displaced people, having lost their own countries, have sought to make now Australia their homeland.

The book includes a generous bibliography and detailed endnotes.

A Brief History of Montmaray

by **Michelle Cooper** — Random House. Paperback rrp \$17.95

Set in the imaginary island kingdom of Montmaray, this book brilliantly blends fictional history with real life events of the 1930's.

Sophie FitzOsborne, her younger sister Henry, her cousin Veronica and Veronica's father (mad King John) are the royal family of Montmaray. They live in a rundown castle beside a village with barely any inhabitants. The island is isolated and communications are unreliable.

Veronica is beautiful and could easily make an advantageous marriage but her heart belongs to learning and she spends her time writing a history of the island. Into a fictional history, Michelle Cooper weaves incidents from recent history - the rise of

Nazi Germany, the abdication of King Edward to marry Wallis Simpson and the Spanish Civil War – to name a few. The author provides a list of historical events and people cited at the end of the novel.

The young Montmaray royals are devoted to their cousin and future king Toby, who is away at boarding school in London, and determined to see the monarchy survive the combined threat of poverty, international diplomacy and war.

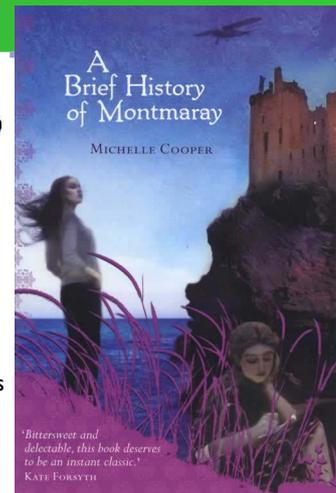
Told through the eyes of Sophie and the words of her journal, this is the story of two very different heroines with ultimately the same purpose. Sophie and Veronica must save the people they love and somehow rescue

Montmaray from ruin.

A Brief History of Montmaray is a unique novel which will appeal

to those readers looking for something a little different. It doesn't quite read like a historical novel but has many threads of history woven through it. And there's plenty of action and adventure with just a touch of fantasy and romance. It's in a category all of its own. Recommended reading.

www.michellecooper-writer.com



Fartiste

by **Kathleen Krull & Paul Brewer**. Illustrated by **Boris Kulikov**

- Simon & Schuster. Hardback rrp \$22.95

Here is a book that you will be immediately drawn - the cover image is a very colourful man blowing out the title from his posterior! After reading the title you'll just have to "flick" through a few pages. But then you won't be able to stop – reading and laughing.

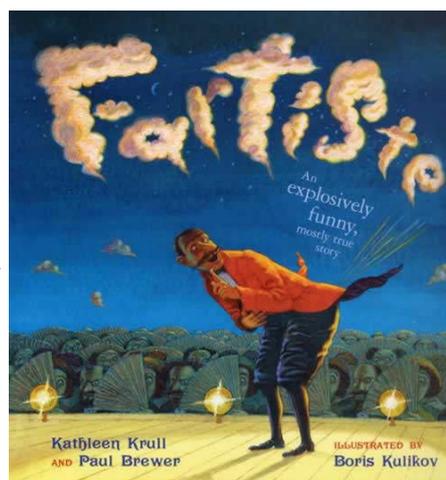
After I read *Fartiste* to my family they didn't believe it was written about a real person. "No way" said my 16-year-old. "I don't believe you" said my 12-year-old. My husband just shook his head as if to say "yeah right!" But it is a true story. A fascinating and funny one.

Joseph Pujol was a French boy of eight When he stumbled upon his very best trait, While splashing around in the ocean one day

Not far from his house in the town of Marseille.

Joseph could make noises with his bottom – by farting. Not only could he could make music and imitate sounds, but his farts didn't smell. A popular performer at the Moulin Rouge, even Kings came to hear him.

In Joseph's old age, he allowed doctors to examine his body, reporting in medical journals about his muscles and digestive



process.

For the sceptical or the historically inclined, an "Encore" at the end provides the facts behind this story and a list of source references.

This is a wonderful book, a great use of rhyming poetry with clever and funny pictures. Every time I open up a page I still

have a giggle. And my family will never doubt me again! Non-fiction has never been such a laughing matter!

www.paulbrewer.com

Mac Slater, COOL HUNTER

Book 1 the Rules of Cool

by **Tristan Bancks** - Random House. Paperback rrp \$16.95

So you think you are cool? What is cool? And who decides anyway? These are questions I have asked many, many times. But to ask them means only one thing – I'm not cool!

Mac Slater doesn't think he is cool either. In fact he is definitely uncool! But when Tony and Speed, the creators of Cool Hunters, approach him he starts to think he may be wrong. But how can Mac be cool? He lives in an old bus in a hippie commune on the outskirts of a popular surfing town in Australia. His mother sells fire twirling

sticks at the local market and his father is an inventor and activist.

But Mac and his best friend Paul like inventing stuff. Like the light bulb that lights for an hour with just a few minutes pedalling a bike. Their latest invention, the flying bike, is what is going to make them famous.

When Mac is asked by Tony and Speed to compete against Cat DeVrees, the most popular and cool girl in town to see who will be the next Cool Hunter, of course Mac says no. He isn't cool. But if

he wins he gets a trip to New York. And Mac has always wanted to go to New York. What has he got to lose?

This is a great young adult read and one that most kids will enjoy, whether they be cool, uncool, geeks, revolutionaries or something completely different. Great website too.

www.macslater.com.au



Outcast (Chronicles of Ancient Darkness Book 4)

by **Michelle Paver**. Illustrated by **Geoff Taylor** - Orion Children's Books (Hachette Livre) Paperback rrp \$17.99

I hesitated to review this book. After all, I am a huge fan and it's inevitable I will love the fourth book in the *Chronicles of Ancient Darkness* series. But then again, I told myself, to review this book would mean reading the preceding three. And after that, who would not be a fan?

In *Outcast*, Toorak's dreadful secret is discovered. When the clans see the mark of the Soul Eater on his chest, he is immediately cast out. Then in accordance with ancient law, the following dawn the clans prepare to hunt and kill him.

He refuses to let his friends Renn and Bale accompany him on his flight. Even Wolf is driven away. It is much too dangerous and Toorak will not risk harming those he loves.

Alone in the haunted reed beds of the lake of the Otter People, he falls prey to the dreaded soul-sickness. Now Toorak is in even greater danger as the Souleater Viper Mage seeks to bind him to her own evil design.

This is real magic, deeply drawn from the Bronze Age culture of many peoples, particularly those of the Pacific Northwest. For readers with a fascination for history, Paver includes anthropology notes at the end of the book.

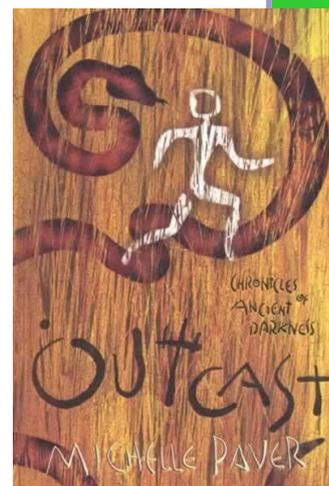
I can't improve on this extract from the back cover: '*Outcast is an enthralling story of friendship, survival and the need to belong.*' Except perhaps to add a few more superlatives - wonderful,

marvellous, terrific, excellent.

I make no apologies for my bias. For all lovers of good fantasy books, *Outcast* is a must-read book and *The Chronicles of Ancient*

Darkness is a must-read series.

www.michellepaver.com (author site) and www.torak.info (fan site).



Curly and The Fent

by Sally Morgan and Ambelin, Blaze & Ezekiel Kwaymullina.

Illustrated by Adam Hill - Random House. Paperback rrp \$12.95

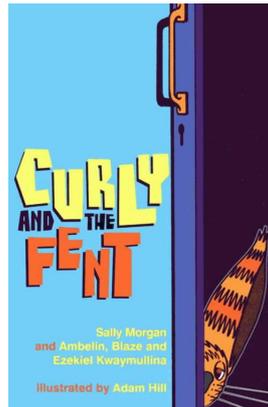
Curly hears a noise in his wardrobe. He is only eight years old and he is scared.

The door of the wardrobe opens. Curly sees an eye. When he calls for his mum she replies 'Curly, you're eight. That's too old to believe in monsters.'

Curly finally meets the monster. It is a small mysterious creature who says he is a Fent. The Fent follows Curly to school where he makes life miserable for Curly. No-one else can see the Fent and Curly gets blamed for all the naughty stuff that the Fent does - such as tickling Curly until he laughs, farting in class and eating Curly's dad's invention (edible soap).

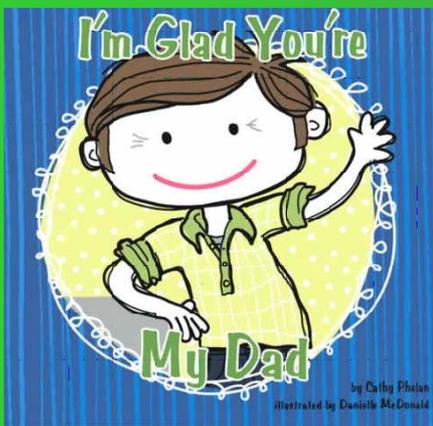
Curly tries to talk to his mum and dad about the Fent but no-one believes him. Curly's neighbour and the school bully, Billy, eventually sees the Fent and wants him for his own.

And it gets worse when a third person wants to possess the Fent. That person is an adult. How do



they even know about the Fent when they can't see it?

Bestselling Aboriginal Australian author Sally Morgan has teamed up with her adult children and accomplished, award-winning Indigenous illustrator Adam Hill to create a unique tale of a child and a mischievous little creature. A second book in the Curly series is soon to be released, *Curly Saves Grandma's House*.



I'm Glad You're My Grandpa I'm Glad You're My Dad

by Cathy Phelan. Illustrated by Danielle McDonald

- black dog books. Softcover rrp \$5.99 each

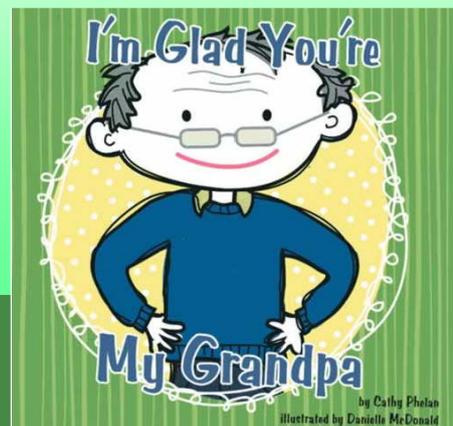
is something for (almost) all the family! *I'm Glad You're My Dad* and *I'm Glad You're my Grandpa* are companion books to the earlier releases *I'm so Glad You're My Mum* and *I'm so Glad You're My Gran*.

These books are the perfect Father's Day gift for a child to give. The pictures of Dad and Grandpa have a fun generic comic feel. Different pages provide

varying ways for a young person to say how they feel about the special people in their life. There are pages for drawing, writing and colouring.

Fathers and grandfathers are traditionally difficult to find a gift for. Here the problem is solved with a wonderful personal memento of an important relationship. At

\$5.99 each, these books are excellent value.



The Dudgeon is Coming

by Lynley Dodd - ABC Books. Hardback rrp \$21.95 each

What happens when a message is passed from one person to another many times over? Lynley Dodd knows. The message changes as it goes along - with some very funny consequences.

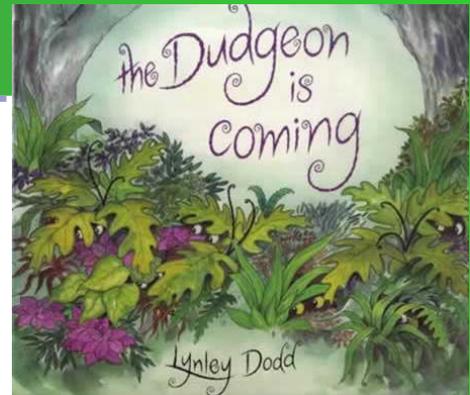
*'Pass on the news,
said the bombazine bear
to the taffeta cat
who was dressing her hair,
'The Dudgeon is coming,
he's shy
and polite...'*

But when the message finally reaches the ears of the omnibus owl, it is very

*'Warn everybody
With all of your might...
THE TERRIBLE DUDGEON IS COMING
TONIGHT.'*

Rumours are flying thick and fast. There might even be a fight! But in the end, the Dudgeon arrives and all fears are put to rest. The creatures discover he is in fact *'shy and polite.'*

The quirky illustrations are guaranteed to delight the young reader, from the almost familiar blue cockatoo to the



weird and wonderful stickleback twitch. My favourite is the hopalong snoot with his oversized hat and pink and purple striped tail.

Lynley Dodd is the acclaimed author and illustrator of 24 picture books including the much loved *Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy*. *The Dudgeon is Coming* is yet another winner.

The Little Lunch Games

by Danny Katz. Illustrated by Mitch Vane - black dog books. Softcover rrp \$16.99

Tamara Noodle was just about the fastest kid in the whole school. She could even catch all the boys in a game of kiss-chasey, but she especially liked to catch Battie.

One day Tamara arrives at school after watching the Olympics on television and decides to hold her own school Olympic Games. - because one day she will win a gold medal at the Olympics... because she *can beat anyone at ANYTHING.*

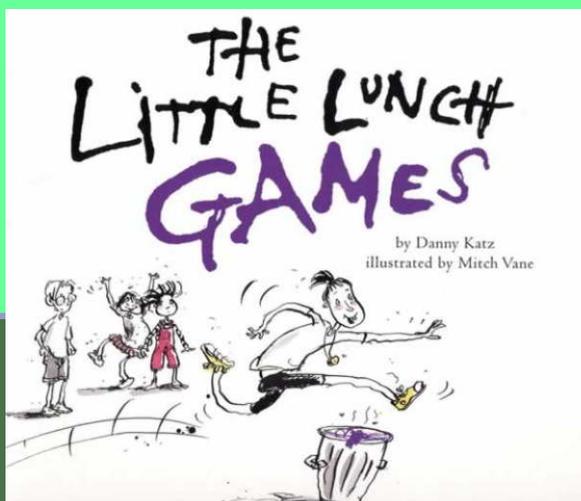
Tamara Noodle and her friends do all sorts of sports such as

fencing, gymnastics, equestrian and steeplechase.

Battie doesn't compete, sitting as far away as possible, when he hears Tamara

yell *Hey Battie, I bet I can beat you in the steeplechase!* Battie is worried as he thought she wanted to *people-chase* and that means chasing him and kissing him. No way was Battie going to get a smooch from Tamara Noodle.

There are over six books in the *Little Lunch* series and they have sold more than 35,000 copies. *The Little Lunch Games* is another fun book and timely for young children to read with the Olympic Games happening.



Giants ☺

by Mij Kelly. Illustrated by Nick Maland - Hachette Children's Books. Paperback rrp \$16.99

This book is very BIG and since it is about Giants.... so it should be!

Giants is a wonderful story for young children who are learning to read or still like to be read to. The large and colourful pictures enhance the text adding extra interest for little eyes.

Sweet Pea and Boogaloo are walking through the woods when Sweet Pea starts asking Boogaloo questions about giants. 'Do they look like you and

me?' 'Are giants kind?' 'Do giants have feelings like you and me?'

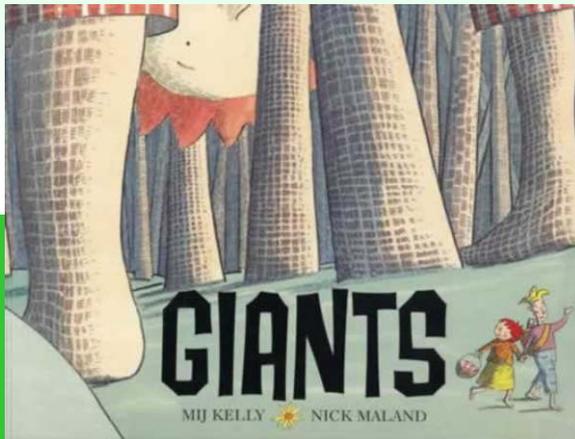
Boogaloo gives Sweet Pea answers but are they correct? Sweet Pea isn't so sure. Especially when she notices that someone is listening and watching them.

The story has a modern day message about jumping to conclusions and

stereotyping others and the illustrations are interactively fun. *Giants* is similar to the *I Spy* books, where you can find things that are blending into the other environments. My son kept pointing to the obvious but I helped him look out for the not so obvious details.

This is one book that will sit on my son's bedside table for a long time – constantly being looked at, not by just him, but his siblings and parents too. Because it's always fun to play a reading game.

www.mijkelly.com

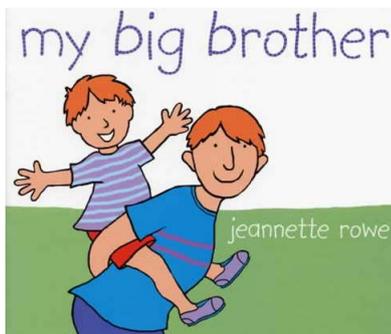


My big brother / My big sister ☺ 🇦🇺

by Jeannette Rowe - ABC Books. Softcover rrp \$12.95 each

I have three children. Two boys and one girl. The youngest is a boy. So these two books were very appropriate for him. But before I could even pick them up off the table my daughter and youngest had whisked them off to their private domains. I had to wait my turn to read.

My daughter says that *My big brother* only has one appropriate page for our



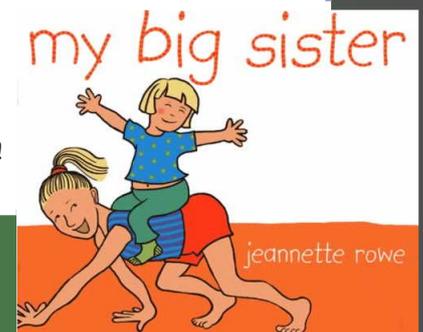
eldest child: "My big brother has stinky feet." She also mentions that *My big sister* describes her perfectly on every page, especially: "My big sister makes great cubby houses."

I read them to check up on her. These books are a delight to read – for both parent and child - and I had some wonderful chuckles

with my "baby" about what was behind each flap. Every page has repetitive words "My big brother/

sister..." with a strong, colourful picture where you try to guess what words are behind the flap. The other page has a large flap where, hiding underneath, is the end of the sentence with more great pictures.

These are excellent books for young brothers and sisters. And it might even prompt older siblings to copy some of the 'admired actions' to get in the younger child's good books. No pun intended!



Dorothy's Memory Book ☺ 🇦🇺

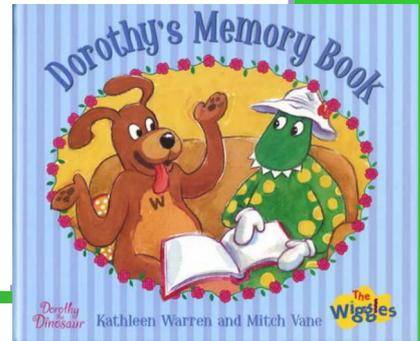
by **Kathleen Warren and Mitch Vane** - ABC books. Hardcover rrp \$12.95

Dorothy's Memory Book is a story of every young child's favourite dinosaur, Dorothy the Dinosaur.

Dorothy and her friend, Wags the Dog, after having a cup of Rosy Tea, enjoy looking at and reading Dorothy's memory book. The book is packed with stories and pictures of fun times

Dorothy and Wags have shared.

Dorothy's Memory Book is filled with all your favourite characters from the brand new Dorothy the Dinosaur television series. It's bound to become a treasured possession for any young fan.

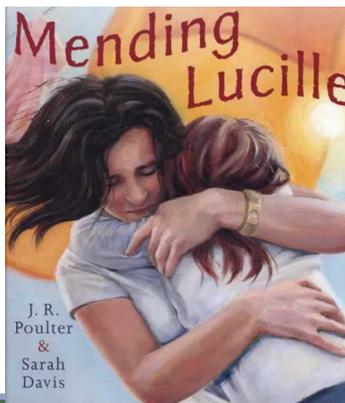


Mending Lucille ☺ 🇦🇺

by **J.R. Poulter and Sarah Davis** – Hachette Children's Books. Hardback rrp \$28.99

Mending Lucille is a book to be treasured by all. It is the story of a young girl and how she copes with the loss of her mother. The illustrations are both stunning and sensitive.

The young girl relates her grief through her broken doll, Lucille. When her father can't fix Lucille, he suggests it is time for her to be replaced. Instead, the girl hides her beloved Lucille. She's already lost



her Mother and she's not giving up anyone else she loves.

Then they meet Chrissie, a waitress who the little girl feels so comfortable with, she shows her Lucille. Chrissie looks after the doll while the girl and father have their tea. When Chrissie returns Lucille has been

repaired. As good as new.

Mending Lucille is a story which will help any child coping with the loss of a loved one. It shows that time will heal but you never have to forget. The theme of grief is dealt with in a sensitive and age appropriate manner. The little girl is never given a name. She doesn't need one. She is every child who has ever suffered the pain of losing someone they care about.

I loved it.

The Gobbling Tree ☺ 🇦🇺

by **Mark Carthew. Illustrated by Susy Boyer** - New Frontier. Hardback rrp \$24.95

What young reader, or their parent, doesn't love a well-written, brightly-illustrated rhyming story? Such a book is not only perfect for young listeners but makes an excellent text for young readers who find the rhyming a helpful reading aid.

The Gobbling Tree is the tale of a troublesome tree that swallows everything thrown or poked at it, accidentally or on purpose. First it swallows Zac's ball, with a wonderful 'Swishhh... crack, crack!' Then it proceeds to gulp down everything the

children use to try and retrieve the ball – brooms, football boots, ladders, boomerangs and even... Simon.

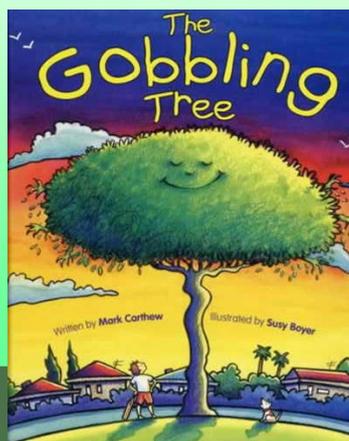
The rhyme twists and turns with the story, changing its meter to suit the action:

'Don't worry Zac,' Said Zac's friend Jack.
'I've got a plan to get it back.'

I'm not going to spoil the ending but there is a wonderful two

page illustration detailing exactly what happens when the wind begins to blow. Susy Boyer's artwork is glorious – like the sunrise on my favourite page. Big and bold, bright and colourful. The pages are packed with illustration. There are wide-eyed possums and cheeky children, dragonflies dodging cricket balls and a very naughty face on the tree.

The Gobbling Tree is based on a common scenario in every playground. Young readers will immediately identify with this problem and enjoy the humour as Zac and his friends try everything they can think of to solve it. Recommended for children 4 – 8 years.



Web Site: www.cbca.org.au

Established in 1945, the Children's Book Council of Australia is a volunteer based organisation dedicated to the promotion of children's literature. The CBCA Book Week is celebrated around Australia in August and encourages children to focus on books and reading.

Book Week also includes the announcement of the Book of the Year awards. You can find a review of *Dragon Moon* by Carol Wilkinson, the Book of the Year for Younger Readers, in *The Reading Stack* Issue 2. Reviews of the Honour Books in the Information Book category – *Girls Stuff* by Kaz Cooke and *Kokoda Track: 101 Days* by Peter MacInnes - can be found in Issues 3 and 1 respectively.

Contact us

You can contact us thereadingstack-at-people.net.au (*replace -at- with @ when emailing.*) We are always happy to receive feedback and welcome guest reviews from our readers.

Visit our website to:

- Download back issues www.thereadingstack.com/backissues.htm
- Find ALL our reviews for Aussie authors www.thereadingstack.com/aussieauthors.htm

Legend

Crime



Science Fiction



Adult's Non-Fiction



Young Adult



Mystery



Fantasy



Picture



Children's Non-Fiction



Romance



Biographical



Young Reader



Interview



History



Adult Other



Junior



Australian Author



Visit our webpage at www.thereadingstack.com