



THE PENGUIN POST

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BOOKS FOR BOOK LOVERS

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LATEST RELEASES

From Liane Moriarty
& Anthony Horowitz
to Imraan Coovadia
& Irna van Zyl

EXCLUSIVE

Paula Hawkins

On her brand-new thriller
A Slow Fire Burning

QUIT YOUR STALLING!

With *Atomic Habits*
author James Clear

AT MY WRITING DESK

The Echo Chamber
author John Boyne

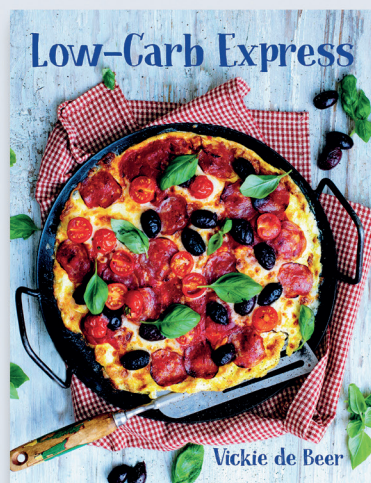
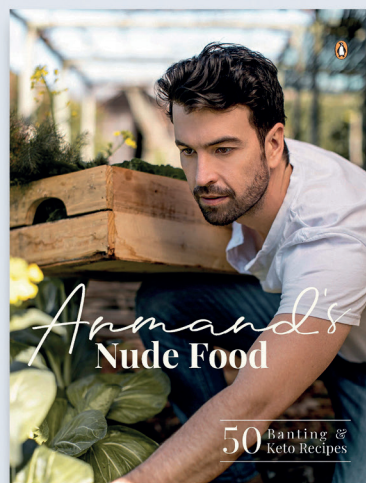
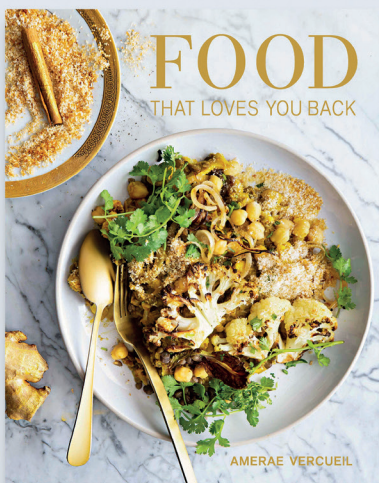
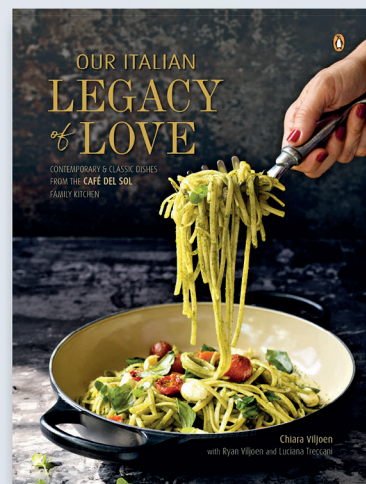
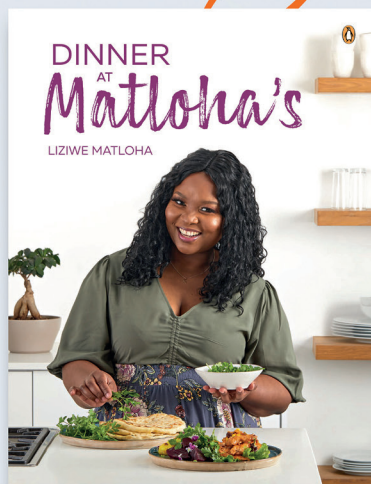
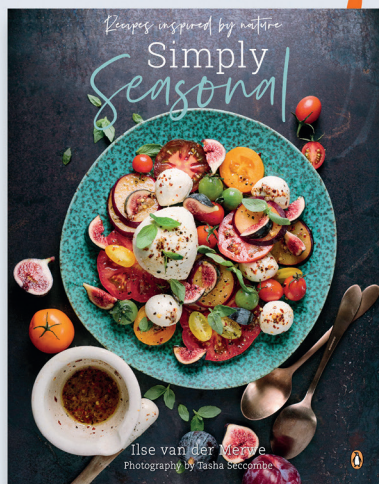
THE LIVING DESERTS

Expert Barry
Lovegrove reflects

SIZZLING SUMMER FOOD

From Jamie Oliver's
new cookbook

Must-have cookbooks *for Spring!*



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now at
leading
bookstores
nationwide
and online



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Welcome!

Spring is finally here - and thank goodness for that! We celebrate with a bumper cookery feature. Expect mouth-watering recipes, such as Jamie Oliver's prawn cocktail, taken from his newest cookbook, *Together*, Ilse van der Merwe's BBQ pulled pork tortillas and Mynie Steffens se riboogsteak met kruisous: dishes that are perfect for casual feasting out in the sun.

We were lucky to land an interview with our fantastic cover star this month, Paula Hawkins. Her new novel, *A Slow Fire Burning*, is yet another cut-throat mystery, which begins with a brutal murder that takes place on a London houseboat. Circling potential suspects, Hawkins shows the domino effect that a single tragedy can have on one's life, and how one wrong choice can lead to a life of crime. She gives her insight on the book, discusses her focus on women's stories, and shares some of the mechanics behind her bestselling work. There's a lot more from this interview, plus an extract, on our blog, The Waddle. Find it at www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/penguinbooksblog.

Our book club pick this month is a razor-sharp thriller from an exciting new voice in fiction, Vera Kurian. *Never Saw Me Coming* follows a cat-and-mouse game between two diagnosed psychopaths after a murder takes place on their university campus. It's so good!

Also in this issue, James Clear shares his small trick for big change, Barry Lovegrove writes fondly on the wonders of desert life, and Renaldo Schwarp celebrates LGBTIQ+ people with an exclusive column.

So settle in, and happy reading!

Lauren

Lauren Mc Diarmid

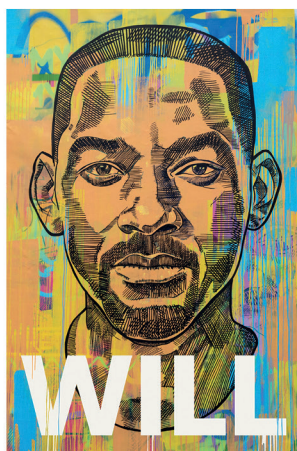
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bookscape

news | snippets | what's new

Everyone's talking about ... Will Smith's Highly Anticipated Memoir



In November 2021, *WILL*, a memoir by two-time Academy Award nominee, Grammy Award and NAACP Image Award winner Will Smith, hits shelves.

In *WILL*, one of the most dynamic and globally recognised entertainment forces of our time opens up fully about his life, tracing his learning curve to a place where outer success, inner happiness and human connection are aligned. Along the way, *WILL* tells the story of one of the most amazing rides through the

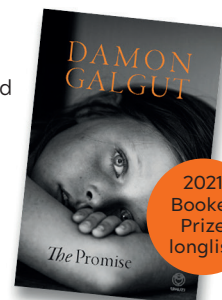
worlds of music and film that anyone has ever had. This brave and inspiring book was written with the help of Mark Manson, author of the bestseller, *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck*.

Will Smith's transformation from a fearful child in a tense West Philadelphia home to one of the biggest rap stars of his era and then one of the biggest movie stars in Hollywood history, with a string of box office successes that will likely never be broken, is an epic tale of inner transformation and outer triumph, and *WILL* tells it astonishingly well. But it's only half the story. Will Smith thought, with good reason, that he had won at life: not only was his own success unparalleled, his whole family was at the pinnacle of the entertainment world. Only they didn't see it that way: they felt more like star performers in his circus, a seven-day-a-week job they hadn't signed up for. It turned out Will Smith's education wasn't nearly over. The combination of genuine wisdom of universal value and a life story that is preposterously entertaining, even astonishing, puts *WILL* the book, like its author, in a category by itself.

WILL hits shelves in November 2021.

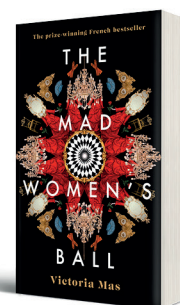
DOMINATING THE BESTSELLER LISTS

The many voices of *The Promise* tell a story in four snapshots, each one centered on a family funeral, each one happening in a different decade. In the background, a different president is in power, and a different spirit hangs over the country, while in the foreground the family fight over what they call their farm, a worthless piece of land outside Pretoria. Over large jumps in time, people get older, faces and laws and lives all change, while a brother and sister circle around a promise made long ago, and never kept...



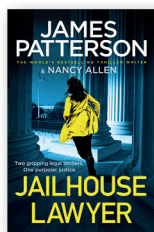
"No woman can be certain that her words, her aspirations, her personality will not lead to her being shut away behind the fearsome walls of the hospital in the thirteenth arrondissement.

And so, they are circumspect. Even Eugénie, for all her audacity, knows there are some lines that one must not cross - especially not in a salon filled with influential men."
- *The Mad Women's Ball*
by Victoria Mas



RELEASE RADAR

Don't miss out this month...

**Jailhouse Lawyer**

by James Patterson

In picture-perfect Erva, Alabama, the most serious crimes are misdemeanours.

Speeding tickets.

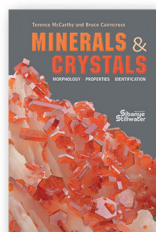
Shoplifting.

Contempt of court.

Then why is the jail so crowded? And

why are so few

prisoners released?

**Minerals & Crystals**

by Terence McCarthy & Bruce Cairncross

This invaluable guide examines a selection of important minerals that occur on

Earth, how they form, their physical characteristics, and

how to go about

identifying them.

**Global Investing Made Easy**

by Warren Ingram

This book demystifies global investing by

providing novice

investors with

practical guidelines

on how to invest

overseas while

helping them to

avoid the pitfalls.

SUBSCRIBE TO WIN!

One lucky new subscriber could win a hamper of books to the value of R2 000. To enter, scan the code using your phone camera, or visit www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/competitions Ts & Cs apply. Entries close 30 September 2021.

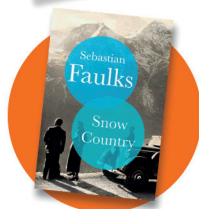
Sebastian Faulks
in numbers

Ever wondered what's behind this award-winning and bestselling novelist? We break it down.

2008

Faulks pens *Devil May Care*, a James Bond novel, which becomes Penguin's fastest ever selling hardback fiction title

Snow Country is out now.

**21 novels**

including his bestseller, *Charlotte Gray*, also adapted as a film starring Cate Blanchett

3 million

copies sold of his critically acclaimed fourth novel, *Birdsong*

Q&A

One minute with...

Imraan Coovadia

Poison, used in South Africa's political history, is a subject with many stories to tell.



What interesting (albeit perhaps rather bone chilling) facts about poison have you learnt in your research?

When you have some idea of how many of the figures in this book have hidden or have even been celebrated by various structures and communities in our country - Wouter Basson appearing at the Kelvin Grove club or teaching Stellenbosch University students or working for Netcare as a cardiologist - and you hear the paper-thin rationalisations given by these institutions, you realise that there is no kind of evil that South Africans won't embrace if it suits their prejudices. Also, for the most part, poisoners, given what they work with every day, get poisoned. Finally, the stories told about poisoning, especially by senior members of the government from Thabo Mbeki to Jacob Zuma and Ace Magashule, are in many ways more destructive than the individual killings.

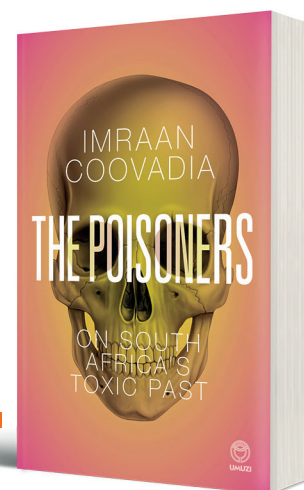
What is your personal poison?

Dilmah Tea. It's very good.

How did you find writing non-fiction, versus fiction?

I wrote this book to understand for myself something about evil - what it is, what stories we tell about it, how it shapes our history. In fiction I would have my own imagination get in the way. In non-fiction, I could see what the facts were instead.

The Poisoners is out now.





PROPULSIVE PAULA HAWKINS

Paula Hawkins is the bestselling author of *The Girl on the Train*, and her latest novel, *A Slow Fire Burning*, is yet another unputdownable thriller. She chats to Lauren Mc Diarmid about curiosity, writing women's stories and the psychology behind people who do terrible things.

“I’ve always been a curious person, and possessed of a very overactive imagination. I think the observant side of me developed later. I moved from Zimbabwe to England when I was seventeen, and felt very much an outsider then; the move was a bit of a culture shock and I struggled initially to make friends. I think that period of sitting on the sidelines, looking at others going about their lives, made me watchful. And then later I became a journalist, so you need to watch and listen carefully when that is your job.

Curiosity is essential, too, for someone who wants to create vivid characters. You have to look at people in the street or at the next table in the restaurant and wonder, Who are they? What is the relationship of that very young girl to the older man who is sitting at her side?

Women’s stories are central to *A Slow Fire Burning*, just as they were in my novels *The Girl on the Train* and *Into the Water*. The easy answer to why I write about women is because I am one. I am particularly interested in the lives of women who feel like outsiders, or who are seen

as outsiders, who might be found wanting by society’s exacting standards for what the right sort of woman should be. Because, despite all the progress women have made over the past half century or so, there remain certain societal expectations about women: to be pretty and pleasing, compliant and nurturing, to marry and have children. What happens to women who refuse those things? Or women who try to do what is asked of them and fail?

Laura from *A Slow Fire Burning* emerged from a story I had been told by a friend about someone she knew who had been in an accident: this young woman’s personality was altered after the accident, and I found myself wondering, What might that be like? What would that mean for her, for the way she was seen by others, treated by others, for how she lived her life? The origins of Carla’s character are murkier to me now, but they centred on her loss; on what a tragedy like losing a young child would do to a person, to a marriage, to a family.

This is how my characters usually develop: they come from a snippet of a story – that



A Slow Fire Burning is out now.

someone has told me, or that I have read in a newspaper – but that only forms the skeleton. I have to put the flesh on the bones.

I think you have to love all of your characters – even the less likable ones – to some degree in order to be able to develop them fully. I felt quite hurt when people talked about Rachel from *The Girl on the Train* as an awful person! She was never awful to me: she might have done awful things, but I felt quite tender towards her. And I do towards the characters in this book, too – especially Irene and Laura, both of whom are so spirited and determined.

When I dive into a new novel, I have an idea of the direction I want it to take, but I do not have a clear map. I need to have a few certainties: who is responsible for the crime and why, for example, but beyond that, I try not to plot in too much detail. I find that writing a very detailed plot outline robs me of one of the joys of writing a novel, which is the joy of discovery, the unearthing of new ideas and connections which you make when you are deep into a book.

Acts of violence in and of themselves are not interesting to me; rather I am concerned with how people arrive at a place at which they are prepared to do terrible or extreme things. I'm also fascinated by the impact of trauma or

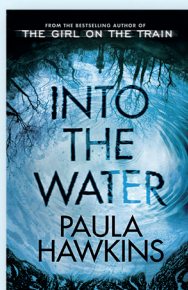
“I am concerned with how people arrive at a place at which they are prepared to do terrible or extreme things.”



tragedy on the mind, on the ways we behave in the wake of a terrible event, both immediately and years down the line. I am interested in how people deal with their pain.

Once they put down the book, I want readers of *A Slow Fire Burning* to feel satisfied at the resolution of a mystery, but I want them to wonder, too. I want them to be left with questions: was what happened just? Did the characters get what they deserved? I would like to write the sort of books that readers want to re-read, to go back to see what they might have missed the first time around.”

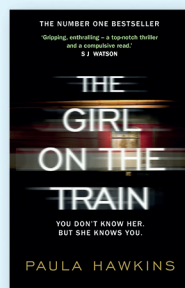
ALSO BY PAULA HAWKINS



Into the Water

In the last days before her death, Nel called her sister. Jules didn't pick up the phone, ignoring her plea for help. Now Nel is dead. They say she jumped. And Jules has been dragged back to the one place she hoped she had escaped for good, to care for

the teenage girl her sister left behind. But Jules is afraid. Of her long-buried memories, of the old Mill House, of knowing that Nel would never have jumped. And most of all she's afraid of the water, and the place they call the Drowning Pool... With propulsive writing and acute understanding of human instincts, Hawkins delivers an urgent read that hinges on the stories we tell about our pasts and their power to destroy the lives we live now.



The Girl on the Train

Rachel catches the same commuter train every morning. She knows it will wait at the same signal each time, overlooking a row of back gardens. She's even started to feel like she knows the people who live in one of the houses.

'Jess and Jason', she calls them. Their life – as she sees it – is perfect. If only Rachel could be that happy. And then she sees something shocking. It's only a minute until the train moves on, but it's enough. Now everything's changed. Now Rachel has a chance to become a part of the lives she's only watched from afar. Now they'll see; she's much more than just the girl on the train... A riveting psychological thriller.

A psychopath's revenge

A stunning new voice in thriller writing: Vera Kurian uses her experience working in psychology to investigate the truth about psychopathy in an edge-of-your-seat read.



“I once heard a podcast about a psychologist who had developed a behavioural modification programme for young boys who were psychopathic, which was based on the idea that everything had to be couched in terms of the boys’ own self-interest. I thought, what if there was an entire school of psychopaths (but then realised that that is numerically too many!), and that was the initial inspiration for *Never Saw Me Coming*.”

My background in Social Psychology helped me understand research materials I had on psychopathy, while still recognising the impact that personality and context would have on a character’s behaviour. My time in grad school helped me create a realistic psychology department and to speckle the book with a variety of psychology Easter eggs (like the little experiments the subjects do).

Initially, I knew I wanted Chloe to be this smart, incredibly driven person, but when I started writing her she kept saying funny, snarky things. Chloe was so fun to write: she is ridiculous, but also observant, and uses a funny sort of diction like no other character I’ve ever written.

Veronica Mars, which had a third season set at college that I absolutely loved, was one of the TV shows that influenced my writing. I watch a ton of horror and thriller movies so I’m very aware of what the tropes are and what beats people are expecting. There is a French film called *Jeux d’enfants* that sort of inspired one of the relationships in the book.

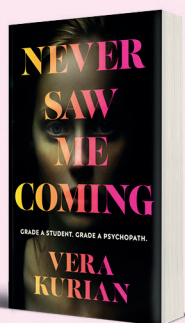
I hope you laugh and are entertained by *Never Saw Me Coming*. If quarantine taught me anything, it taught me the value of being able to be transported into a fictional world where it’s nice to spend a little time. I hope it gives you something to talk about at book club or over drinks with a friend.”

ABOUT THE BOOK

Meet Chloe. First-year student, ordinary, legging-wearing, girl next door... and highly intelligent diagnosed psychopath. Her hobbies include yogalates, parties, and plotting to kill Will Bachman.

Chloe is part of a secret clinical study of young psychopaths run by the university’s Psychology Department. Most psychopaths aren’t criminals, but when a string of murders on campus causes upheaval, Chloe’s private vendetta is sidelined. Partnered with fellow study participants she can’t trust - and distracted by typical university life - Chloe has to walk the line between hunter and prey.

Perfect for fans of Donna Tartt’s *The Secret History*, *Never Saw Me Coming* is a sharp, electrifying and hugely entertaining thriller with an antiheroine who will work her manipulative magic on you. **P**



Never Saw Me Coming is out now.

at my desk

Bestselling author John Boyne chats about writer's discipline, developing characters and the moment that sparked the idea for his new novel, *The Echo Chamber*.



Four years ago, I published a young adult novel called *My Brother's Name is Jessica*, the story of a 12-year-old boy whose older brother is transitioning into a girl. The novel was greeted with a form of hysteria on social media with a vocal group of antagonists, none of whom had yet read the book, condemning it from the start. I found this response very distressing, not just the negativity of these online crusaders but the brutality of their words, the violence of their messages to me. It led me to question the purpose of social media and wonder about the types of people who use it regularly simply to attack others. I wondered what is missing in their lives that they feel this is the only way they can interact with the world.

In developing *The Echo Chamber*, I decided to take a family who had once been very loving and connected to each other but who had drifted apart because, one way or another, they're all obsessed with the idea of living their lives in public. George and Beverley, the parents, are a chat-show host and romantic novelist respectively, and their relationship, which had once been strong, has become diminished in recent times. Their three children, Nelson, Elizabeth and Achilles, have their own personal problems and no one to turn to for help because the people who should care about them are endlessly scrolling on their phones. I chose to follow the family over the course of a week, when each of them ends up in some sort of personal drama, and see how they would cope when the only support they have are nameless people on Twitter with an '@' before their profiles.

I'm very disciplined as a writer and tend to be at my desk by 8:30 every morning, seven

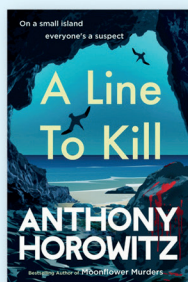
days a week. I prefer to work regular day hours and rarely work after around 5 p.m. When I'm at home, my day is split between reading and writing. I view reading not just as an enormous pleasure but as an essential part of my job. And I'm almost always editing, working on a new novel or a script or writing a book review. I don't like to be idle, and I feel at my best when I have a busy day. I work in my home in Dublin but I'm pretty much able to work anywhere. Back in the pre-Covid travel days, I was perfectly happy working on planes, trains, in hotel bars. Once I have my laptop with me, I'm contented."

The Echo Chamber by John Boyne

The Cleverley family live a gilded life, little realising how precarious their privilege is. Together they will go on a journey of discovery through the Hogarthian jungle of modern living where past presumptions count for nothing and carefully curated reputations can be destroyed in an instant. Along the way they will learn how volatile, how outraged, how unforgiving the world can be when you step from the proscribed path. To err is maybe to be human but to really foul things up, you only need a phone. Powered by Boyne's characteristic humour and deft observation, *The Echo Chamber* is a satiric helter skelter, a dizzying downward spiral of action and consequence, poised somewhere between farce, absurdity and oblivion.

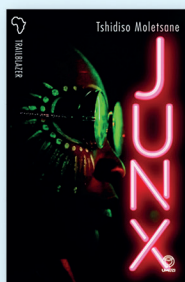


THIS MONTH'S TOP FICTION



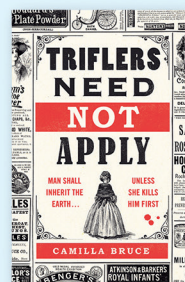
A Line to Kill by Anthony Horowitz

PI Daniel Hawthorne has been invited to talk about his new book at a literary festival on the tiny island of Alderney. The writer, Anthony Horowitz, travels with him. Very soon they discover that all is not as it should be. Alderney is in turmoil over a planned power line that will cut through it, desecrating a war cemetery and turning neighbour against neighbour. When the festival's wealthy sponsor is found brutally killed, Alderney goes into lockdown and Hawthorne knows that he doesn't have to look too far for suspects.



Junx by Tshidiso Moletsane

Just hours before the party of the year, a guy shares a joint with his friend Ari. Ari is always right. And winged. And imaginary. While Ari plays both angel and demon on his shoulder, our man will take a joyride to a brothel in a snatched rental car. But the police are in pursuit. At some point, when you're a hunted man and there's a gun tucked in the waistband of your pants, things come to a head. Will he be okay? Ask Ari. Prepare for a night that courses through Soweto to the Joburg CBD serving shots of sex, drugs and anxiety while tearing into life, death, race and politics, with consequences only Ari could have seen coming.



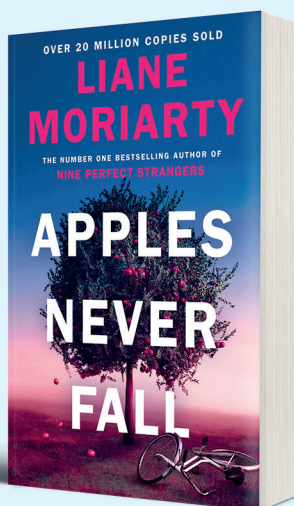
Triflers Need Not Apply by Camilla Bruce

In 1900 Chicago, a husband dies under suspicious circumstances. According to his wife, Belle Gunness, he had come home from work with a terrible headache. She said she gave him quinine powder, a common remedy, and went to prepare dinner. When she returned to check on him, she said, he was dead. Just like that, he becomes the first on Belle's long list of victims. In a dazzlingly original and chilling reimagining of the original black widow, Camilla Bruce opens the door to the mind of a female serial killer, where murderous scheming and the darkest of thoughts reside.




Een vir een deur Peet Venter

Kaptein Fritz Hartzler ondersoek twee moorde in Gauteng se georganiseerde misdaad. Ook binne misdaadbaas Don Knoxe se kringe is iemand besig om die grootkoppe in georganiseerde misdaad uit te haal - of só lyk dit. Fritz meen iemand binne wetstoepassing of regeringskringe is dalk betrokke. Wanneer 'n vrou met verdagte bande in die polisiestasie vermoor word, weet Fritz iemand aan die binnekant is betrokke. Nie bekend vir sy subtile aanslag nie, moet Fritz versigtig vorentoe. Maar is dit alles die moeite werd - veral as Fritz bykans nooit meer by die huis is om sy vrou en dogter te sien nie?



Apples Never Fall by Liane Moriarty

Joy Delaney and husband Stan have done well. Four wonderful grown-up children. A family business to envy. The golden years of retirement ahead of them. So when Joy Delaney vanishes - no note, no calls, her bike missing - it's natural that tongues will wag. How did Stan scratch his face? And who was the stranger who entered and suddenly left their lives? What are they all hiding? But for the Delaney children there is a much more terrifying question: did they ever know their parents at all? 

Vrees met 'n hoofletter

Iemand stuur die anderdag vir haar 'n strokiesprent van 'n beertjie wat aan 'n ballon hang, skryf Irna van Zyl.



“Wat as ek val?” roep die beertjie terwyl hy al hoe hoër styg. “Maar, my engel, wat as jy vlieg?” kom die antwoord.

En somehow gee hierdie prentjie my groot troos.

Die afgelope jaar leef ons almal in meer vrees as ooit tevore. Vrees met 'n hoofletter. My dokter sê tot 70 persent van haar pasiënte ly aan angs en depressie.

Vir my was my eerste reaksie op die pandemie tipies van myself. Hou jou kop af. Met ander woorde: steek dit in die sand en moenie dink nie. My sand was 'n aksielys. 'n Onhaalbare, onmoontlike, verdomde lys: Eerstens my volgende spanningsroman. Sommer ook 'n radiodrama vir RSG, 'n paar kortverhale vir die ontwykende bundel, 'n jeugroman en natuurlik gedigte oor die kwaliteit van lig in die eerste herfs van die pandemie.

Totdat ek probeer. En besef ek kan nie langer as vyftien minute konsentreer nie.

Dis vrees met 'n hoofletter wat so maak.

Vrees vir mislukking, vrees vir beoordeling, vrees dat ek my eie simpel teikens nie kan haal nie. Dat ek nie aan my verwagtinge gaan voldoen nie.

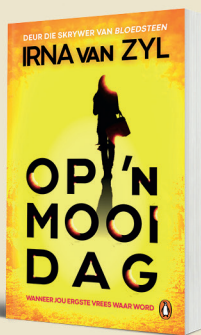
“Kan ek die vrees verpersoonlik?” vra die lewensafriker in my lewe. “Wat is dit? Hoe lyk dit? Hoe beweeg dit?”

Ja, lag ek, ek kan aan 'n hele paar sensente dink, moet ek hulle beskryf?

Maar grappies op 'n stokkie.

“Hy is groot en vloeibaar soos 'n inkklaar, soos 'n Rorschach-toets. Hy's 'n donker blerts,”

“Wanneer Blerts kom, kan ek nie skryf nie. Nie eens probeer nie. Ek verdwyn in 'n wêreld waar ek klein is en Blerts my plat gesit het.”



Op 'n mooi dag, is nou beskikbaar. Also available as One Fine Day.

sê ek. “Hy praat nie, maar hy word al hoe groter en hy waggel al hoe nader.”

“So kom ons doop hom Blerts.”

Wanneer Blerts kom, kan ek nie skryf nie. Nie eens probeer nie. Ek verdwyn in 'n wêreld waar ek klein is en Blerts my plat gesit het. Ek bou 'n hele Krismisboom van selfdenke (eensydige wat-as-vrae) wat wyer en wyer uitkring totdat dit geen verband hou met die werklikheid nie.

“Wat daarvan jy nooi vir Blerts om langs jou te kom sit wanneer jy skryf,” sê my liewe afriker.

Soos die gemmerkat op die sagste stoel in my studeerkamer? dink ek.


Nooit gesien nie.

Weerloos, soos 'n afgedopte garnaal sal ek wees. Nakend in die strate.

Maar die waarheid is ek gaan Blerts in die oë moet kyk totdat hy begin krimp. Klein, kleiner, kleinste, moet hy word. Ek meen wat is die ergste wat kan gebeur as iemand negatief reageer? Belangriker, wat kan ek leer? Oordeel mense nie maar in elk geval die heeltid nie?

So stadigaan verskraal Blerts, maar hy verdwyn nooit heeltemal nie. Ek leer om met hom saam te leef. Om hom selfs soms te ignoreer.

Hy sit daar in die stoel terwyl ek tik dat die biesies bewe. Ek word bewus van 'n liggpunt so groot soos 'n koppiespeld in my binneste. Ek voed die ligkol met stiles, met boeke, met rus en oefening.

Elke dan en van keer Blerts en die onsekerheid terug, maar die liggpunt hou ook aan met groei. Eendag, gou, gaan hy hopelik vir Blerts verblind sodat ek kan vlieg.” 

HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING

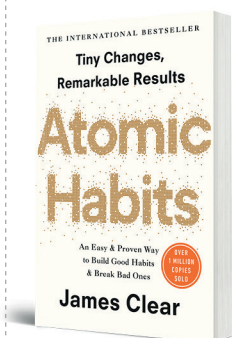
In *Atomic Habits*, author and world-renowned habits expert James Clear conveys how big change starts with small, everyday shifts. In this extract from the book, he writes about how any new habit can start with a simple two-minute action.

“Even when you know you should start small, it’s easy to start too big. When you dream about making a change, excitement inevitably takes over and you end up trying to do too much too soon. The most effective way I know to counteract this tendency is to use the Two-Minute Rule, which states, “When you start a new habit, it should take less than two minutes to do.”

You’ll find that nearly any habit can be scaled down into a two-minute version:

- “Read before bed each night” becomes “Read one page.”
- “Do thirty minutes of yoga” becomes “Take out my yoga mat.”
- “Study for class” becomes “Open my notes.”
- “Fold the laundry” becomes “Fold one pair of socks.”
- “Run three miles” becomes “Tie my running shoes.”

The idea is to make your habits as easy as possible to start. Anyone can meditate for one minute, read one page, or put one item of clothing away. And, as we have just discussed, this is a powerful strategy because once you’ve started doing the right thing, it is much easier to continue doing it.



Atomic Habits is out now.

A new habit should not feel like a challenge. The actions that *follow* can be challenging, but the first two minutes should be easy. What you want is a “gateway habit” that naturally leads you down a more productive path.

You can usually figure out the gateway habits that will lead to your desired outcome by mapping out your goals on a scale from “very easy” to “very hard.” For instance, running a marathon is very hard. Running a 5K is hard. Walking ten thousand steps is moderately difficult. Walking ten minutes is easy. And putting on your running shoes is very easy. Your goal might be to run a marathon, but your gateway habit is to put on your running shoes. That’s how you follow the Two-Minute Rule.

People often think it’s weird to get hyped about reading one page or meditating for one minute or making one sales call. But the point is not to do one thing. The point is to master the habit of showing up. The truth is, a habit must be established before it can be improved. If you can’t learn the basic skill of showing up, then you have little hope of mastering the finer details. Instead of trying to engineer a perfect habit from the start, do the easy thing on a more consistent basis. You have to standardise before you can optimise.”

Extracted from *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. 

Very easy	Easy	Moderate	Hard	Very Hard
Put on your running shoes	Walk 10 minutes	Walk 10 thousand steps	Run a 5K	Run a marathon
Write one sentence	Write one paragraph	Write one thousand words	Write a five-thousand-word article	Write a book
Open your notes	Study for 10 minutes	Study for three hours	Get straight A’s	Earn a PhD

The Wonders of Desert Life

Barry Lovegrove writes for the layperson, student and academic alike. His revised *Living Deserts* overviews the adaptations of plants and animals to the four desert biomes of southern Africa.

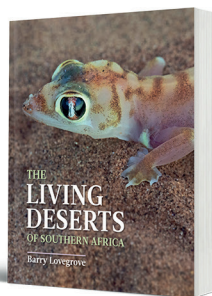


“Cape Town’s Day Zero was caused by a bad drought,” wrote the scribes. Indeed it was, but what caused the drought?

“Climate change,” I argue. The slow drift of the winter rainfall region southwards, at about one degree latitude per decade. In 50 years, it will have shifted five degrees south. That’s a lot. I can say this because I have researched the *mechanism* of climate change. Things will get worse in Cape Town with time.

Sadly, few scientists bother sharing what they know lucidly. Who can blame them? They get credit only for writing scientific publications – inaccessible to the public – not for popular science writing. But some, fortunately, wait for retirement to share their wisdom, and for me this is an obligation. We yearn for and deserve more knowledge of the world around us in a readable style, not only to negate conspiracy theories, but to better enjoy what we see in the veld.

Consider a case study, if you wish; that of the Succulent Karoo Biome of Namaqualand and surrounds. It is a winter rainfall biome.



The Living Deserts of Southern Africa is out now.

It harbours a plant family, the Aizoaceae, within which the subfamily Mesembryanthemoideae, or vygies, evolved during the Ice Age, around two million years ago; a blink of the eye in evolutionary terms. The rate of appearance of the roughly 1 800 species during this time is unprecedented in the plant kingdom. These plants are really special; they form the only desert biodiversity hotspot in the world. They cope with a long, dry, hot summer and a cool, “wet” winter. How they are adapted to do so, their structure, physiology and pollination systems, is fascinating. Yet, the succulent Karoo species face the greatest extinction threat from climate change, more so than any of the other southern African biomes, and for the same reason that Cape Town will face another Day Zero. I had only a vague grasp of this 28 years ago when I wrote the first edition of *Living Deserts*.

I revised the book in retirement. I had the time, but it took me two years. Nothing was salvageable from the first edition, and an enormous amount of new research needed to be accessed, synthesised and conceptualised. Five hundred photos had to be retaken or sourced. Chapters dealing with

how plants and animals cope with water, heat, resource and predatory stresses have been updated with recent research, as has the chapter on animal sociality.

However, I have added a new chapter, The Ancient Karoo, which documents the remarkable story of the evolution of the mammals told by the fossils of the so-called ‘mammal-like reptiles’, the therapsids, of the Karoo Basin. How can I talk about the modern Nama Karoo without mentioning what unfolded there, underfoot, around 250 million years ago during the greatest extinction of all time? I have brought these animals alive again, by reconstructing their ancient form and function.

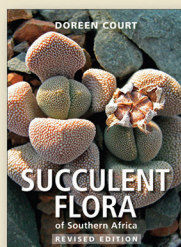
The final chapter, titled The Future of the Deserts, demanded a complete rewrite mostly because of what we now know about climate change, and to document how the

“We yearn for and deserve more knowledge of the world around us to better enjoy what we see in the veld.”



conservation status of the desert biomes has changed. Capetonians will now appreciate why Day Zero will be approached again, and how it will cause mass extinctions of the vygies. The future of the highly diverse Richtersveld, quipped an expert, is “Sahara”. But all is not doom and gloom. Climate perturbations do indeed drive extinction events, but they also produce new species, though it might take another lifetime to witness.”

MORE DESERT LIFE

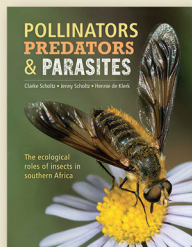


SUCCULENT FLORA OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

by Doreen Court

This botanical classic has long served as an

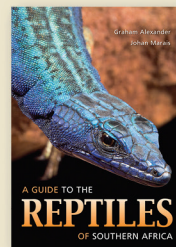
authoritative guide for academics and lay enthusiasts alike. This third edition takes into account intervening taxonomic advances and the discovery and naming of ever more species. Information has been supplemented in line with the latest thinking and the book has been newly designed for clarity and ease of reference. Given the phenomenal extent of our succulent flora, this fully updated edition is a timely addition to the botanical literature of southern Africa.



POLLINATORS, PREDATORS & PARASITES

by Clarke Scholtz, Jenny Scholtz, Hennie de Klerk

This lavishly illustrated book is structured around southern Africa's 13 distinct biomes, and highlights the crucial role insects play as ecosystem service providers, giving intimate insight into the beauty and importance of insects in the natural world. Depicting the insects and phenomena described in some 1 600 photographs that accompany accessible text, this key publication detailing the latest research in the field of entomology will appeal to academics and nature enthusiasts alike.



A GUIDE TO THE REPTILES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

by Graham Alexander & John Marais

Drawing on

the latest scientific research, the authors introduce the book with a discussion of reptile identification, diversity, biology, distribution patterns, and where to find and observe them, as well as unravelling the facts and fallacies of snakebites. Written in a lively and accessible way, the subsequent chapters offer insight into features such as distribution, reproduction details, and detailed descriptions of appearance. A wealth of full-colour photographs throughout brings the subject matter vividly to life.

Visit www.struiknatureclub.co.za and join our Struik Nature Club to be the first to know about our new releases, special offers and special editions, plus you will be invited to our launches and author events and will stand in line to win great prizes monthly!





EXTRACT: Breakthrough

by Mac Maharaj
& Z. Pallo Jordan

While much has been written about the negotiations of the early 1990s, which paved the way to democracy in South Africa, *Breakthrough* answers the question of how those negotiations came to begin in the first place.

“One of the hurdles in any attempt to end conflict through negotiation is who among the protagonists will make the first move. Usually, this is seen as a sign of weakness and is framed around the question: who blinks first? Mandela believed that his isolation afforded him the freedom to take the first steps. It ‘furnished my organisation with an excuse in case matters went awry: the old man was alone and completely cut off, and he took his actions as an individual, not as a representative of the ANC’.¹

By the end of 1985, South Africa was in the grip of a partial state of emergency. The country was burning. The news of Mandela’s hospitalisation from 3 to 23 November at Volks Hospital caused alarm among cabinet ministers, who feared that in the event anything went wrong, they would shoulder the blame. The commanding officer of Pollsmoor Prison warned that civil war would break out if Mandela died. Kobie Coetsee paid him an unannounced ‘courtesy’ visit. Mandela had not received a reply to an earlier request to see Coetsee and he now

suspected the minister ‘might want to make some kind of deal, but he did not let on’.²

Upon his discharge from hospital, Mandela was separated from his comrades in Pollsmoor and housed on the ground floor with three large cells all to himself – one for sleeping, one for exercise and one for studying. They were damp, dark and bleak, with hardly a view. When he saw his comrades a few days later, they told him the regime was trying to divide them and that they wanted to object to his isolation. Mandela thought differently. His focus was not on himself and his plight. He did not complain about being segregated from his comrades. ‘Something good may come of this,’ he told them.³

Mandela read his isolation as signalling the arrival of the moment to engage the regime and persuade them it was time to talk to the ANC. He did not consult his four comrades, because he feared they would veto his decision. Mandela knew that such a step did not contradict the longstanding strategy of the liberation struggle, but he took the precaution of sending a message via George Bizos to Tambo, reassuring him that he would

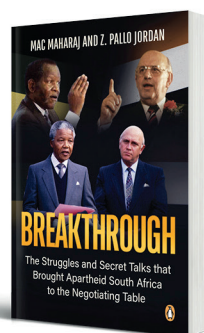
not commit to anything without the approval of the ANC. With the green light from Tambo, he was ready to make his move.

It was while Mandela sought to reassure Tambo that the EPG [Eminent Persons Group] made its first visit to South Africa in February 1986. As we have seen, their shuttle diplomacy ended when South African military forces raided Lusaka, Harare and Gaborone in May. The idea of talks was over. In June 1986, Botha embarked on a total crackdown when he imposed a nationwide state of emergency.

Mandela wrote two further letters to Kobie Coetsee, to which there was no response. Although Coetsee had a mandate from Botha to find a way out of the impasse, he was hesitant to engage with Mandela. In April 1986, Coetsee requested the South African Law Commission 'to investigate and make recommendations regarding the definition and protection of group rights ... and the possible extension of the existing protection of individual rights'.⁴ The Broederbond, under the chairmanship of Pieter de Lange, was in the throes of discussions that culminated in a position paper in June 1986. The intelligence services were also monitoring developments closely and keeping as fully informed as possible of the meetings held by the stream of delegations visiting Lusaka and elsewhere to engage with the ANC.⁵ And Coetsee was aware of Mandela's willingness to use the EPG 'negotiating concept' as a starting point for negotiations to begin.

Mandela persisted. In June 1986, he asked to see the commissioner of prisons, Lieutenant General Willemse, whose

“Mandela read his isolation as signalling the arrival of the moment to engage the regime and persuade them it was time to talk to the ANC.”



Extracted from *Breakthrough*, out now.

headquarters were in Pretoria. Within four days, Willemse was in Cape Town. Mandela asked him to forward a request for a meeting with the state president. Willemse phoned Coetsee, who ordered that Mandela be brought immediately to his residence, Savernake, in the Groote Schuur ministerial estate. The two talked for three hours and over two successive days.⁶ Then the contact ceased. Mandela wrote to Coetsee once more, but there was no response.

Then, just before Christmas, the deputy commander of Pollsmoor casually suggested that he and Mandela take a drive through the city of Cape Town. Over the next few months, there were more such sightseeing trips. Mandela speculated: 'I sensed they wanted to acclimatise me to life in South Africa and perhaps at the same time, get me used to the pleasures of small freedoms that I might be willing to compromise to have complete freedom.'⁷ Mandela was now allowed more visits from family and friends too.

Contact between Coetsee and Mandela resumed in early 1987 just as abruptly as it had stopped in 1986. They met three times during the year at Savernake, followed by a meeting on 6 October at Kommaweer, a guesthouse meant for visiting generals in the Pollsmoor prison complex.⁸ These talks played a part in the regime's decision to free Govan Mbeki and Harry Gwala on 5 November 1987. The administration was feeling its way around how to manage and manipulate the inevitable release of Mandela himself. For Mandela, his release from prison could not be a standalone event. It had to be part of a broader process leading to the ending of the conflict that had brought them to prison in the first place.”

1. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp. 514-15.
2. Sampson, *Mandela*, p. 343.
3. Walter Sisulu's interview with George Houser and Herbert Shore, September/October 1995, quoted in Sampson, *Mandela*, p. 346.
4. Heinz Klug, *Constituting Democracy: Law, Globalism and South Africa's Political Reconstruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 84. In June 1986, the Broederbond Constitutional Policy Committee distributed to all its branches a document for confidential discussion by its members titled 'Basiese staatkundige voorwaardes vir die voortbestaan van die Afrikaner' (Basic political policy conditions for the survival of the Afrikaner), which is in the Erfenisstigting Archive, ref. AB 10/32/2/1, at the Voortrekker Monument.
5. Kobie Coetsee was previously deputy minister of defence and intelligence.
6. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp. 518-19. See also the handwritten prison records which indicate that Mandela and Coetsee met at least fifteen times between 1985 and 1990.
7. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp. 520-21.
8. This is according to handwritten notes in Afrikaans kept by the prison authorities.

HELLO, SUMMER!

Welcome summer with family and friends and food with delectable dishes from Jamie Oliver's brand-new cookbook, *Together*, a joyous celebration of great food for sharing.

Watermelon skewers

Cucumber, feta, parsley & ham

It's always nice to welcome friends with something tasty and mouthwatering that pairs perfectly with a cold drink. For me, this combo is absolutely delicious, particularly on a warm day. Take pride in putting them together and get prepped ahead of time - they'll go down a treat.

SERVES
6

¼ of a small watermelon (500g)
½ a cucumber
120g feta cheese
½ a small red onion
1 lemon
½ a bunch of flat-leaf parsley (15g)
optional: higher-welfare serrano ham or pata negra

ON THE DAY Peel the watermelon and slice 1.5cm thick, then into 1.5cm chunks. Quarter the cucumber lengthways and chop into the same sized chunks, along with the feta. Peel and finely chop the onion and toss with the lemon juice and a pinch of sea salt and black pepper in a shallow bowl. Pick in the parsley leaves, add the cucumber, watermelon and feta and gently toss together. Spend a bit of time skewering everything up on cocktail sticks, then line up on a platter. Spoon over the juices, and pop into the fridge until needed.

TO SERVE Delicious fridge cold, with some good ham on the side.



ENERGY	FAT	SAT FAT	PROTEIN	CARBS	SUGARS	SALT	FIBRE
83kcal	4.4g	2.8g	4.1g	7.8g	6.5g	0.7g	0.7g

Jam jar prawn cocktails

Cocktail sauce, avo, tomatoes & crispy pancetta crumbs

SERVES
6

1 clove of garlic
4 rashers of higher-welfare smoked pancetta
olive oil
100g breadcrumbs
3 tablespoons mayonnaise
3 tablespoons natural yoghurt
3 tablespoons tomato ketchup
1 lemon
Worcestershire sauce
Tabasco sauce
2 little gem lettuces
1 cucumber
200g ripe cherry tomatoes
1 punnet of cress
1 ripe avocado
100g cooked brown shrimp, from sustainable sources
200g cooked peeled prawns, from sustainable sources
cayenne pepper

ON THE DAY Peel the garlic and finely chop with the pancetta, then place in a non-stick frying pan on a medium heat with 1 teaspoon of olive oil. Add the breadcrumbs and fry until crunchy and golden, tossing regularly. Leave to cool.

For the sauce, whisk up the mayo, yoghurt, ketchup, half the lemon juice and a dash each of Worcestershire and Tabasco sauce, then season to perfection, tasting and tweaking. Finely shred the lettuces. Halve the cucumber lengthways and scrape out the seeds with a teaspoon, then chop into 1cm dice. Quarter the cherry

tomatoes. Snip the cress. Halve and destone the avocado, squeeze the flesh into a blender with the remaining lemon juice and blitz until smooth, loosening with a splash of water, if needed, then season to perfection.

Line up six clean wide-necked jam jars or glasses ready to fill. Divide the lettuce between them, followed by the cucumber and tomatoes, gently pressing down as you build the layers. Spoon in the cool, crispy pancetta crumbs, top with the cress, then sprinkle in the shrimp and prawns. Drizzle in the sauce and add a pinch

Together
is out now.



of cayenne to each. Spoon over the blitzed avo, cover and you're done.

PERFECT PRAWNS: A good fishmonger will have a nice selection of prawns – I like to use a mixture here, even a few smoked ones would be great. Have fun with it.

ENERGY	FAT	SAT FAT	PROTEIN	CARBS	SUGARS	SALT	FIBRE
237kcal	13.2g	2.2g	14.8g	15.3g	6.8g	2.3g	2g

Together by Jamie Oliver is published by Penguin Random House © Jamie Oliver Enterprises Limited (2021 *Together*).

TASTY TORTILLAS

This recipe for oven-braised BBQ pulled pork tortillas taken from *Simply Seasonal* by Ilse van der Merwe is perfect for hot summer days and casual eating around the pool.

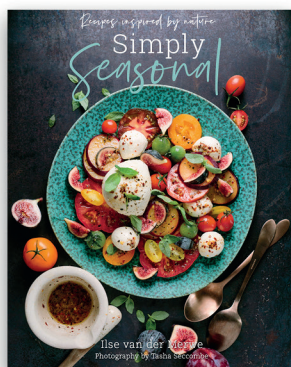
Oven-braised BBQ pulled pork tortillas

BBQ RUB

30 ml (2 tablespoons) soft brown sugar
15 ml (1 tablespoon) salt
15 ml (1 tablespoon) smoked paprika
5 ml (1 teaspoon) ground cumin
2.5 ml (1/2 teaspoon) ground black pepper

PORK & BBQ SAUCE (RECIPE CAN EASILY BE DOUBLED)

2 kg boneless pork shoulder, cut into 5-6 large chunks
45 ml (3 tablespoons) olive oil
1 bottle lager beer (or apple cider)
125 ml (1/2 cup) tomato sauce or ketchup
45 ml (3 tablespoons) apple cider vinegar
45 ml (3 tablespoons) Dijon mustard
10 ml (2 teaspoons) brown sugar
15 ml (1 tablespoon) Worcestershire sauce



Simply Seasonal is out now.

15 ml (1 tablespoon) soy sauce
2 cloves garlic, finely grated
salt and pepper, to taste
8-12 toasted flour or corn tortillas, to serve
sour cream, to serve (or mayonnaise)
tomato salsa and/or cabbage slaw, to serve
sliced red onion, to serve
fresh coriander, to serve

For the rub, mix all the ingredients together in a wide mixing bowl. Now add the pork chunks and toss to coat all over, rubbing the mixture into the meat. Cover and leave overnight in the fridge, if you have the time, or continue straight on.

Preheat the oven to 150°C. In a large cast-iron pot (I use a 31 cm oval Le Creuset casserole for the doubled recipe) over medium-high heat, heat the oil. Working in batches, add the rubbed pork and sear on all sides (remember there's sugar in the spice mix, so it will tend to burn quickly –

watch carefully). Place all the meat back in the pot, add the beer and cover with a lid. Transfer to the preheated oven and cook for 3 hours, then remove the lid and cook for another hour, or until the pork is very tender and pulls apart easily. Remove from the oven, transfer the meat to a clean bowl and let it rest while you prepare the sauce in the used pot with drippings.

To make the BBQ sauce, add the tomato sauce or ketchup, vinegar, mustard, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce and garlic to the pot with the remaining drippings and stir well. Bring to a simmer for about 5 minutes over medium heat, scraping the bottom and sides to incorporate all the dark roasted bits, then taste and season with salt and pepper. Now shred the rested pork using two forks. Toss the shredded meat with about half the barbecue sauce (or more if you want). Serve warm with freshly toasted tortillas, sour cream or mayonnaise, salsa and/or cabbage slaw, red onion, coriander and some extra BBQ sauce on the side.

SERVES
AT LEAST
6



VUURWARM!

Braaigroentjie of goed gemarineer, met Mynie Steffens se resep vir riboog-steak sal jy vriend en vyand beïndruk

Riboog-steak met Kruiesous

750 g riboog-steak
sout

MARINADE

4 e worcestersous
4 e olyfolie
1 e sout
1 t varsgemaalde swartpeper

KRUIESOUS

2 knoffelhuisies, gekap
4 e gekapte vars
platblaarpietersielie
1 e gekapte vars tiemie
1 e gekapte vars roosmaryn
1 t sout
1 t varsgemaalde swartpeper

Meng die bestanddele vir die marinade en marineer die riboog-steak vir ongeveer 1 uur.

Meng al die bestanddele vir die kruiesous.

Braai die steak oor warm kole – minstens 5 minute aan die eerste kant voor jy dit omdraai en dan nog 5 minute vir lig- tot halfgaar. As jy 'n halfgaar steak verkies, braai vir 13 minute. Sout die steak terwyl jy dit braai. Wanneer die steak gaar is, laat dit vir 7 minute op 'n houtbord rus voor jy dit in 2 cm-repies sny.

Rangskik die steakrepies op 'n opdienbord en sprinkel die kruiesous oor.




Mynie speel met vuur is nou beskikbaar.
Also available as Mynie Plays with Fire

Halloumi- en Groentesosaties

6 kersietamaties
1 rooi ui, in die lengte gehalveer en elke helfte dan weer in 3 stukke gesny
1 geel soetrissie, in 3 x 3 cm-blokkies gesny
6 blokke ferm halloumikaas, in 5 x 5 cm-blokkies gesny
6 mediumgroot dwergsampioene
olyfolie om oor te sprinkel
1 e sout
2 e gekapte vars roosmaryn

Ryg een stukkie van elke soort groente en een blokkie kaas op 'n groot sosatiestokkie. Sprinkel olyfolie oor en strooi sout en roosmaryn oor. Herhaal met al die stokkies en bestanddele.

Braai oor warm kole vir 5–7 minute (of tot die halloumi oraloor bruin is). 

HET JY GEWEET?

Dis 'n bekende feit dat ek sukkel om groente te eet. Maar hierdie geurbom maak dit regtig maklik!





On my mind Celebrating the LGBTIQ+ people whose stories freed us

Retelling our story on our own terms enables us to develop a greater awareness about our identity and those of others, says media personality and *Skeef* author, Renaldo Schwarp.

“Questions of heritage and identity have never been as straightforward as they might first appear. And yes this pun was unapologetically intended!

Perhaps the first and best place to start addressing these topics is by acknowledging that in a country like South Africa, there is not one heritage or an easily delineated set of distinct identities. Our cultures, languages, and histories are multiple, diverse, and as dynamic as the colours of the rainbow.

For LGBTIQ+ people these questions often become even more difficult to navigate.

Gay. Brown. Afrikaans.

Three words that best describe my identity. Over the years, this sequence might have looked different, but the above-mentioned three definitive words stand core to my identity and the lens through which I experience the world. These three things shape me – all at the same time and not one before the other.

During the process of writing my debut book, *Skeef*, the concept of intersectionality came into sharp focus. In its most basic form, intersectionality demonstrates a multifaceted connection between race, gender and other systems that work together to oppress some while allowing privilege to others.

In 1990, during South Africa's first Pride march, LGBTIQ trailblazer Simon Nkoli poignantly expressed why race and sexuality fundamentally can't be divorced: "I am black and I am gay... In South Africa, I am oppressed because I am a black man, and I am oppressed because I am gay. So when I fight for my freedom

“In a country like South Africa, there is not one heritage or an easily delineated set of distinct identities.”



Skeef is out now. Ook beskikbaar in Afrikaans.

I must fight against both oppressions.”

It's exactly 31 years since the first Pride was held in Johannesburg and Nkoli's words on intersectionality have become more important than ever before. That is why it was important for me to write *Skeef* in the context of the discrimination and conservatism of the Afrikaans community. My community. My gay identity cannot be removed from my Afrikaans identity. These are intertwined and will be forever.

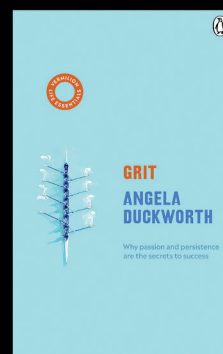
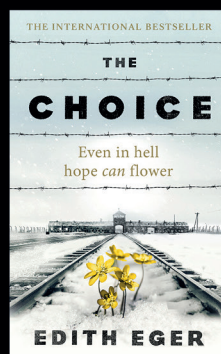
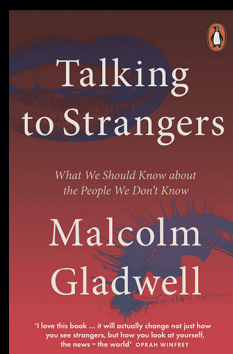
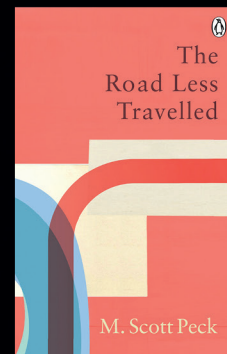
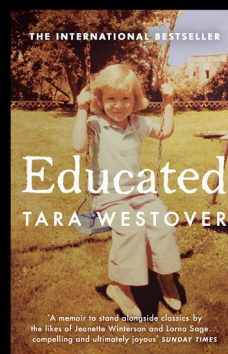
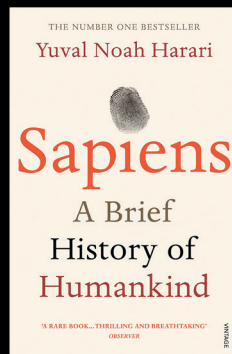
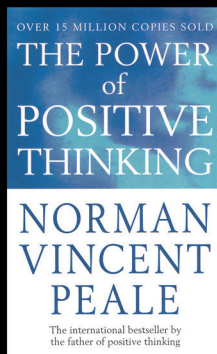
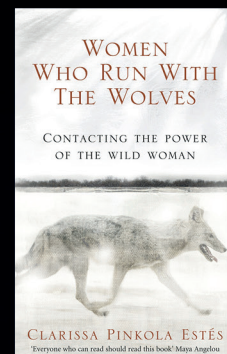
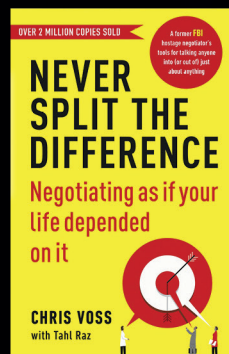
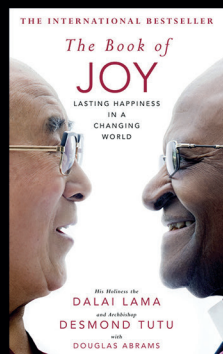
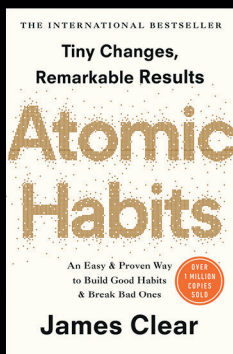
The LGBTIQ+ community is often bombarded with cultural and societal limitations around our sexuality and identity versus our heritage. The question as to how LGBTIQ+ people celebrate our heritage often pops up. Now I'm sure there have been many panel discussions held about this and think pieces penned around this topic, but the answer to this question is actually quite simple for me... By unashamedly centering our lived experiences and retelling our story – on our own terms.

In doing so it helps us examine our history and traditions, and it enables us to develop a greater awareness about our identity and those of others. It also affords us the opportunity to see our current struggles and triumphs in a greater context.

So this Heritage month, I'll be celebrating LGBTIQ+ people – present and past. People whose stories fill the pages of *Skeef*. People like Simon Nkoli, Kewpie and many others. Their contributions allowed us a lot of the freedom we have today; freedom that many other LGBTIQ+ people around the world aren't afforded.”

GREAT MINDS

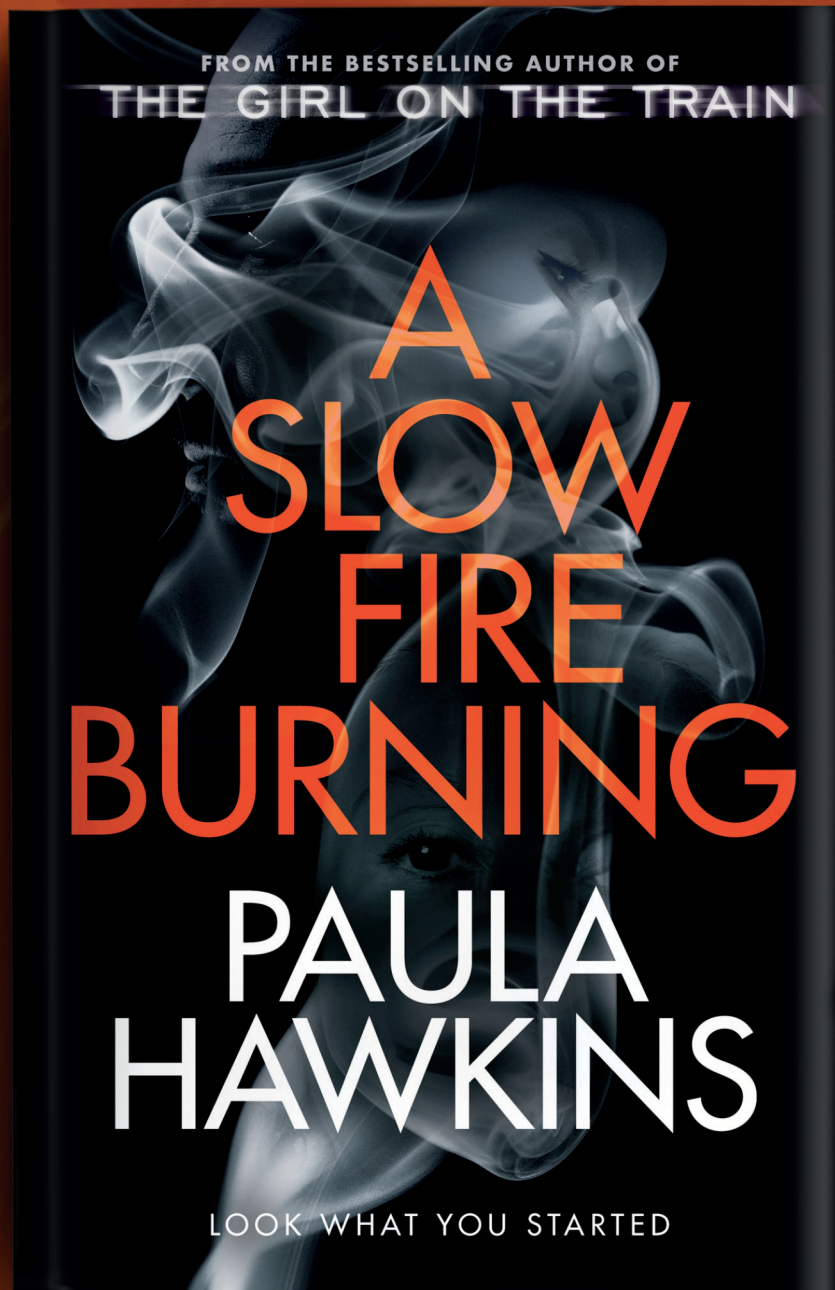
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