



THE PENGUIN POST

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BOOKS FOR BOOK LOVERS

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COPY!**

OUR BOOK CLUB PICK

*The Dictionary
of Lost Words*
by Pip Williams

**JORDAN B.
PETERSON**

"If something
**happens
every day,**
it is important."

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**LATEST
RELEASES**

From E L James &
Abbie Greaves to
Andy Weir &
Claire Fuller

**THE MARVELOUS MIND OF
MALCOLM
GLADWELL**

COMFORTING CURRIES

Out of Cariema Isaacs'
brand-new cookbook

ENGAGING EXTRACT

Guilaine Kinouani's
Living While Black

MUSINGS ON WRITING

From *The Promise*
author Damon Galgut

BIRDING IN SUBURBIA

Duncan Butchart
on domestic birdlife

From the author of
The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry



WHAT THE GOOD BOOK APPRECIATION SOCIETY HAD TO SAY:

*"A beautifully written, funny
and poignant story with wonderful
characters, adventure and suspense."*

– Melissa Volker

*"Original, exciting and laugh out loud
funny. Perfect escapism in these
troubled times. Just loved it!"*

– Kathy Page Wood



OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK



04 COVER

Malcolm Gladwell on the inspiration behind his fascinating new book, *The Bomber Mafia*

contents

02 BOOKSCAPE New novel from *Fifty Shades* author, E L James and Charlie Mackesy in numbers

07 BOOK CLUB The *Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams

08 AT MY DESK Elizabeth Lee on her bewitching historical debut plus our round-up of new reads

10 ON WRITING *The Promise* author Damon Galgut's non-advice to aspiring writers

11 INSIDER A peek inside *Living While Black*, the essential guide to overcoming racial trauma

12 NATURE Duncan Butchart on the joys of birding in your very own garden

14 EXTRACT *Beyond Order* is Jordan B Peterson's much-anticipated sequel to *12 Rules for Life*

16 WELLBEING Kick yo-yo dieting to the curb with a 12-week body and mind transformation

17 FOOD Cosy up with mouth-watering curry recipes from Cariema Isaacs' new cookbook

20 NA MY MENING Erla-Marie Diedericks oor hoe ver sy sal gaan met navorsing vir haar nuutste riller, *Dominique*

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Welcome!

What's better than getting *The Penguin Post* straight to your inbox each month?

Winning R5 000! If you subscribe to the mag this May, you'll automatically be entered into the competition to win this cash prize, plus a hamper of books featured in this issue. All you do is visit www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/penguin-post and click to sign up. It's that easy. Good luck!

The Bomber Mafia was a group of American military men who believed that airpower was the way to win the war and, in his book by the same name, our cover author Malcolm Gladwell describes it as "a story worthy of my obsession". Gladwell is known for his books on social psychology, and *The Bomber Mafia* doesn't stray far from that mode of thinking, exploring the impact of best intention meeting technology. It's a fascinating read, and we've featured his author note in this issue to get you started.

Our book club pick is *The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams. I devoured it – the book tapped into my love for words, following the fascinating 70-year-long process behind the compilation of the Oxford English Dictionary in the early 1900s. But more than that was how the book explores the way words define us, particularly the women who orbited the process, comprised mainly of men, and Esme's lifelong journey to define not just her own identity, but that of the women of the time. It's a full and joyful read, which I can't recommend enough.

Also in this issue, an extract from Jordan B. Peterson's *Beyond Order*, Damon Galgut on writing and delicious recipes from Cariema Isaacs' *Curried*. So cosy up, and happy reading!

Lauren

Lauren Mc Diarmid

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bookscape

news | snippets | events | what's new

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Everyone's talking about ... The New Novel from *Fifty Shades* of Grey author E L James



E L James, number one Sunday Times and New York Times bestselling author of the global blockbuster *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy will release her newest novel, *Freed*, the highly anticipated conclusion to her *Fifty Shades Trilogy as Told by Christian*, next month.

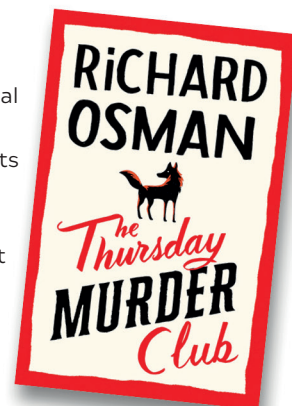
In *Freed*, Christian Grey and Anastasia Steele tie the knot – but marriage brings its own challenges. Though their passion burns hotter and deeper than ever, Ana's defiant spirit continues to stir Christian's darkest fears and tests his need for control. As old rivalries and resentments endanger them both, one misjudgement threatens to tear them apart.

E L James shared, "I am thrilled to announce the publication date for *Freed*." She continued, "This story has been a labour of love, one that my readers have been eagerly awaiting. For me, just as for Anastasia Steele, Christian is a challenging, infuriating, and endlessly fascinating character. Living in his head is exhausting, but I got to explore aspects of his life in *Freed* that we only glimpsed in the original trilogy, and to follow his emotional growth in response to Ana's love and compassion."

Freed will be in stores nationwide and online in June 2021.

DOMINATING THE BESTSELLER LISTS

Richard Osman's debut novel, *The Thursday Murder Club*, hits the spot for cosy crime fiction. The quirky murder mystery, which involves four septuagenarians solving their first live case after the brutal murder of a local developer, has soared to the top of bestseller charts around the world. Osman is a presenter, producer, writer and comedian, best known for his quiz show TV series, *Pointless*.



"It was so easy to find yourself doing the things in life you weren't passionate about, to stick with them even when you didn't want them and they hurt. But now the time for dreaming and wishing was over, and she was going. She was

traveling to the other side of the world. It wasn't just the ship that had been unmoored. It was her entire sense of herself."
– Rachel Joyce, *Miss Benson's Beetle*

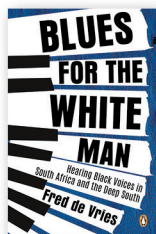


RELEASE RADAR

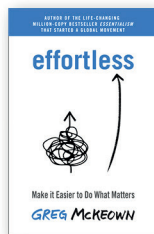
Don't miss out this month...


**The Scandalous
Times of a
Book Louse**

by Robert Muponde
Laughter guaranteed with this poetic and poignant coming-of-age story of Ronald Guramatunhu, the rural Zimbabwean boy who devours words.


**Blues for the
White Man**

by Fred de Vries
Using sound and song as a key to understanding white fear and black anger, the book draws historical parallels between South Africa and the American Deep South.


Effortless

by Greg McKeown
The author gives practical strategies for making the most vital tasks the easiest ones, and doing away with non-essential activities. A timely book in a world beset with burnout.


SUBSCRIBE TO WIN!

R5 000 plus a book hamper is up for grabs for one lucky winner who subscribes to *The Penguin Post* this May. Simply visit www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/penguin-post and click to subscribe. Ts & Cs apply; entries close 31 May 2021.

CHARLIE MACKESY in numbers

Ever wondered what's behind the British artist and the author of *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*? We break it down.

3 months

spent in America with a portrait painter where he learned about anatomy. He never went to art school.



The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse is out now.

2006

he produces 'The Unity Series', a collaborative set of lithographs with Nelson Mandela.

1.4 million

copies of *The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse* sold

1.1 million

Instagram followers

Q&A

Een minuut met...

Gerda Taljaard

Familie, 'n plaas, die broeiende nádraai van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog. En dan daag daar 'n Italiaanse krygsgevangene op. Gerda Taljaard vertel meer oor *Vier Susters*, haar nuwe roman.



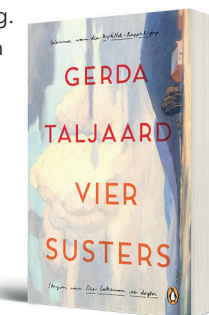
Wat sal jy sê is die sentrale tema van die roman? Die vernietigende, verreikende impak van oorlog. Die aaklige nalatenskap daarvan wat nog vir eeue daarna gevoel word. Ook die temas van verlies, dood en ouderdom. Die vervlietendheid van alles. Die titel *Vier susters* hou natuurlik verband met Tsjechof se *Drie susters*: albei werke gaan oor susters wat op die drumpel van ingrypende verandering staan.

Stel jy belang in die geskiedenis? Moes jy baie navorsing doen om jou boek in die Suid-Afrika van 1945 te plaas? Op skool het ek dit verpes. My belangstelling daarin het met familiegeskiedenis begin, met die genealogie, en toe uitgebrei na wêreldgeskiedenis. Dit was fassinerend om navorsing te doen oor die 1940's in Suid-Afrika: die Ossewabrandwag, Rooilissies, Natte en Sappe, om van die Afrikanervrou se betrokkenheid by die Terreurgroep nie eens te praat nie!

Die roman vertel die verhaal van vier susters - en 'n krygsgevangene. Het jy self susters?

Ja, ek is die jongste van vier susters en verstaan dus die komplekse verhouding tussen sibbe. *Vier susters* gaan oor hierdie verwikkelde dinamika van konflik en afguns, maar ook van liefde en aanvaarding. Die susters verteenwoordig elkeen 'n perspektief op die politiek van die 1940's. En natuurlik word al hierdie dinge tot 'n spits gedryf wanneer die krygsgevangene sy opwagting maak...

Vier susters is nou beskikbaar.



**“One day, a stray bomb landed
in my grandparents’
back garden”**



Author Malcolm Gladwell talks obsession, his first short story and the inspiration behind his new book, *The Bomber Mafia*, an exploration of how technology and best intentions collide in the heat of war.

“As a little boy, lying in his bed, my father would hear the planes overhead. On their way in. Then, in the small hours of the morning, heading back to Germany. This was in England, in Kent, a few miles south and east of London. My father was born in 1934, which meant he was five when the Second World War broke out. Kent was called Bomb Alley by the British, because it was the English county that German warplanes would fly over on their way to London.

It was not uncommon, in those years, that if a bomber missed its target or had bombs left over, it would simply drop them anywhere on the return trip. One day, a stray bomb landed in my grandparents’ back garden. It didn’t explode. It just sat there, half buried in the ground – and I think it fair to say that if you were a five-year-old boy with an interest in things mechanical, a German bomb sitting unexploded in your backyard would have been just about the most extraordinary experience imaginable.

Not that my father described it that way. My dad was a mathematician. And an Englishman, which is to say that the language of emotion was not his *first* language. Rather, it was like Latin, or French – something one could study and understand but never fully master. No, that an unexploded German bomb in your backyard would be the most extraordinary experience imaginable for a five-year-old was my interpretation when my father told me the story of the bomb, when I was five years old.

That was in the late 1960s. We were living in England then, in Southampton. Reminders of what the country had gone through were

still everywhere. If you went to London, you could still tell where the bombs had landed – wherever a hideous brutalist building had sprouted up on some centuries-old block.

BBC Radio was always on in our house, and in those days, it seemed like every second interview was with an old general or paratrooper or prisoner of war. The first short story I wrote as a kid was about the idea that Hitler was actually still alive and coming for England again. I sent it to my grandmother, the one in Kent who’d had the unexploded bomb in her back garden. When my mother heard about my story, she admonished me: someone who had lived through the war might not enjoy a plotline about Hitler’s return.

My father once took me and my brothers to a beach overlooking the English Channel. We crawled together through the remnants of an old World War II fortification. I still remember the thrill of wondering whether we would come across some old bullets, or a shell casing, or even the skeleton of some long-lost German spy who’d washed up on shore.

I don’t think we lose our childhood fascinations. I know I didn’t. I always joke that if there’s a novel with the word *spy* in it, I’ve read it. One day a few years back, I was looking at my bookshelves and realized – to my surprise – just how many nonfiction books about war I had accumulated. The big history bestsellers, but also the specialty histories. Out-of-print memoirs. Academic texts. And what aspect of war were most of those books about? Bombing. *Air Power*, by Stephen Budiansky. *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare*, by Tami Davis Biddle. *Decision over Schweinfurt*, by Thomas M. Coffey. Whole shelves of these histories.¹

“With *The Bomber Mafia*, I’ve found a story worthy of my obsession.”

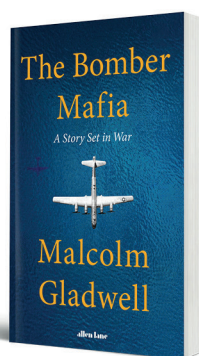
Usually when I start accumulating books like that it's because I want to write something about the subject. I have shelves of books on social psychology because I've made my living writing about social psychology. But I never really wrote much about war – especially not the Second World War or, more specifically, airpower. Just bits and pieces here and there.² Why? I don't know. I imagine that a Freudian would have fun with that question. But maybe the simpler answer is that the more a subject *matters* to you, the harder it is to find a story you want to tell about it. The bar is higher. Which brings us to *The Bomber Mafia*. I'm happy to say that with *The Bomber Mafia* I've found a story worthy of my obsession.

One last thing – about the use of that last word, *obsession*. This book was written in service to my obsessions. But it is also a story about other people's obsessions, about one of the grandest obsessions of the twentieth century. I realize, when I look at the things I've written about or explored over the years, that I'm drawn again and again to obsessives. I like them. I like the idea that someone could push away all the concerns and details that make up everyday life and just zero in on one thing – the thing that fits the contours of his or her imagination. Obsessives lead us astray sometimes. Can't see the bigger picture. Serve not just the world's but also their own narrow interests. But I don't think we get progress or innovation or joy or beauty without obsessives.

When I was reporting this book, I had dinner with the then chief of staff of the US Air Force, David Goldfein. It was at the Air House, on the grounds of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, in northern Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington, DC – a grand Victorian on a street of grand Victorians where many of the country's top military brass live. After dinner, General Goldfein invited a group of his friends and colleagues – other senior Air Force officials – to join us. We sat in the general's backyard, five of us in total. They were almost all former military pilots. Many of their fathers had been military pilots. They were the modern-day equivalents of the people you are going to read about in this book. As the evening wore on, I began to notice something.

Air House is just down the road from

“I always joke that if there's a novel with the word *spy* in it, I've read it.”



The Bomber Mafia is out now.

Reagan National Airport. And every ten minutes or so, a plane would take off over our heads. Nothing fancy: standard commercial passenger planes, flying to Chicago or Tampa or Charlotte. And every time one of those planes flew overhead, the general and his comrades would all glance upward, just to take a look. They couldn't help themselves. Obsessives. My kind of people.”¹

¹ I could go on. If, for example, you haven't read Roberta Wohlstetter's *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, then you're missing a real treat.

² Airpower has been something I've explored in a number of episodes of my podcast, *Revisionist History*, including “Saigon 1965,” “The Prime Minister and the Prof,” and the eponymous series starting with “The Bomber Mafia” in season 5.

Of Women and Words

In 1901, the word “Bondmaid” was discovered missing from the Oxford English Dictionary. *The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams is the story of the girl who stole it.



“**T**his book began as two questions: Do words mean different things to men and women? And if they do, is it possible that we have lost something in the process of defining them?”

I have had a love–hate relationship with words and dictionaries my whole life. I have trouble spelling words and I frequently use them incorrectly (affluent, after all, sounds so much like effluent, it really is an easy mistake to make). As a child, when I used to ask the adults in my life for help, they would say, ‘look it up in the dictionary’, but when you can’t spell, the dictionary can be an impenetrable thing. Despite my clumsy handling of the English language, I have always loved how writing words down in a particular way can create a rhythm, or conjure an image, or express an emotion. It has been the greatest irony of my life that I should choose words to explore my inner and outer worlds.

A few years ago, I read Simon Winchester’s *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*. It is a non-fiction account of the relationship between the Editor of the Oxford English Dictionary, James Murray, and one of the more prolific volunteers, Dr William Chester Minor. I thoroughly enjoyed it, but I was left with the impression that the Dictionary was a particularly male endeavour.

The Dictionary of Lost Words won Book of the Year and Best Fiction Debut at the 2021 Indie Book Awards in Australia, and has been shortlisted for the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction, alongside Hilary Mantel and Maggie O’Farrell.

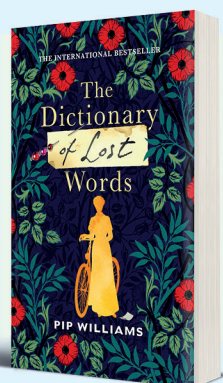
Where, I wondered, are the women in this story, and does it matter that they are absent?

I decided that the absence of women did matter. A lack of representation might mean that the first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary was biased in favour of the experiences and sensibilities of men. Older, white, Victorian-era men at that.


It took me a while to find the women, and when I did, they were cast in minor and supporting roles. Amongst them was Edith Thompson and her sister Elizabeth, who between them provided 15,000 quotations, for A and B alone, and continued to provide editorial assistance until the last word was published in 1928. But in all cases, the women were outnumbered by their male counterparts, and history struggles to recall them at all.

Edith and Elizabeth, were dedicated and highly valued volunteers. I got to know Edith a little from the materials that have been preserved in the OED archives. It is an extraordinary feeling to come across a note penned by her and pinned to the edge of a proof. Her original letters to James Murray reveal intelligence, humour and a wry wit. When she wanted to better explain a word, she was in the habit of drawing annotated pictures.

This novel is my attempt to understand how the way we define language, might define us.”



ABOUT THE BOOK

Five years old and irrepressibly curious, Esme spends much of her childhood hanging around her father and his team of lexicographers who are collecting words for the very first Oxford English Dictionary. Hiding under a table, she rescues a forgotten word - Bondmaid - from the floor, stashing it away in an old case. As Esme gets older, she begins to collect other words which have been misplaced, neglected or discarded by the men, and soon her own dictionary begins to grow: *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, which will help to teach her about how women’s stories and words are so often discarded and unrecorded by history. 

at my desk

Author Elizabeth Lee chats to us about her favourite characters, finding time to write and the inspiration for her novel, *Cunning Women*.

“I'd been aware of the Pendle Witch Trials for years, as it's a very well-known and well-documented case, but the idea for the book came after I watched a documentary about it a few years ago. It's a terrible story and I was horrified and fascinated by the whole thing, but I was particularly interested in the position that the family involved found themselves in. They were very vulnerable, poverty-stricken and outcast from the local community, yet were believed to have a great power that meant they were also feared. I kept thinking about what it must have felt like to live with this conflict at the centre of your life. From that came the character of Sarah, and she was my way into the story.

It's always the characters that are the starting point for me, and it was especially intriguing with *Cunning Women* to imagine how they would be affected by living in that time and place, and in those particular circumstances. The characters drive the plot, and it will obviously be affected by the circumstances of the time and place, too. I had a good idea of how the book was likely to end, but the plot really just developed as I wrote.

But when it comes to choosing my favourite character, I find it tricky, because I'm really fond of so many of them! I suppose I'd have to say Sarah, because she's so passionate about protecting her little sister, Annie, and so defiantly hopeful about her own future. But I also have a soft spot for Bett, who is so kind in a gruff way.

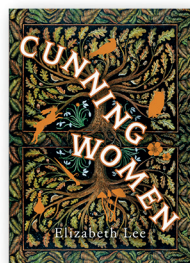


It was probably somewhere between two and three years from having the idea to having a polished version ready to submit to agents. At the time I was very busy, working two jobs and parenting my teenagers, so it was really a case of squeezing in a bit of writing whenever I could! I try to write a certain number of words a day when I'm working on a first draft, even if it's just a few hundred, and these were mostly done when I was supposed to be concentrating on cooking the dinner. There were a lot of burnt meals at that time!"

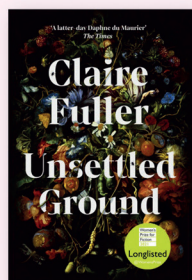
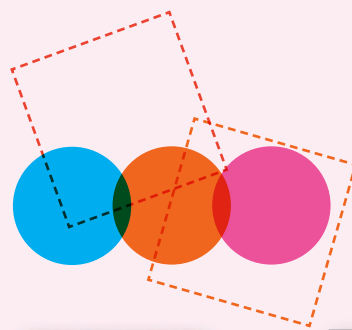
ABOUT THE BOOK

Cunning Women by Elizabeth Lee

1620s, Lancashire. Away from the village lies a small hamlet, abandoned since the Plague, where only one family dwell amongst its ruins. Young Sarah Haworth, her mother, brother and little sister Annie are a family of outcasts by day and the recipients of visitors by night. They are cunning folk, the villagers will always need them, quick with a healing balm or more, should your needs require. They can keep secrets too, because no one would believe them anyway. A bewitching debut from a magnetic new voice in historical fiction.

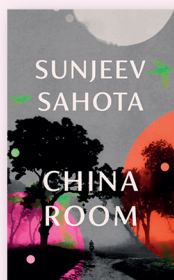


THIS MONTH'S TOP FICTION



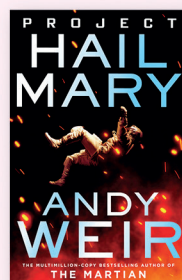
Unsettled Ground by Claire Fuller

Twins Jeanie and Julius have always been different. At 51 years old, they still live with their mother, Dot, in rural isolation and poverty. Their cottage is at the same time their armour against the world and their sanctuary. But when Dot dies suddenly, threats to their livelihood start raining down. At risk of losing everything, the twins must fight to survive in an increasingly dangerous world as their mother's secrets unfold. A thrilling novel of resilience and hope, of love and survival, that explores how the truths closest to us are often hardest to see.



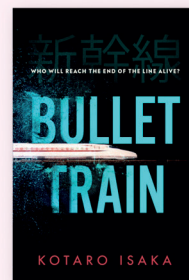
China Room by Sunjeev Sahota

Mehar, a young bride in rural 1929 Punjab, is trying to discover the identity of her new husband. She and her sisters-in-law, married to three brothers in a single ceremony, spend their days hard at work in the family's 'china room', sequestered from contact with the men. When Mehar develops a theory as to which of them is hers, a passion is ignited that will put more than one life at risk. Spiralling around Mehar's story is that of a young man who, in 1999, travels to the now-deserted farm, having found the strength to finally return 'home'. An intoxicating page-turner.



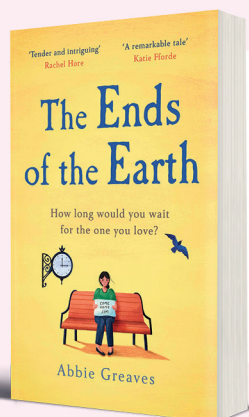
Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir

Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a last-chance mission - and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish. Except that right now, he doesn't know that. He can't even remember his own name, let alone the nature of his assignment or how to complete it. All he knows is that he's been asleep for a very, very long time. And he's just been awakened to find himself millions of miles from home, with nothing but two corpses for company. Ryland realises that an impossible task now confronts him. A tale of discovery, speculation, and survival to rival Weir's *The Martian*.



Bullet Train by Kotaro Isaka

Satoshi looks like an innocent teenage schoolboy, but he is really a viciously cunning psychopath. Kimura's young son is in a coma thanks to Satoshi, and he's tracked him onto the bullet train headed from Tokyo to Morioka to exact his revenge. But Kimura soon discovers that he and Satoshi are not the only dangerous passengers onboard. A suitcase full of money leads others to show their hands. Why are they all on the same train, and who will get off alive at the last station? An original and propulsive thriller from a Japanese bestseller.



The Ends of the Earth by Abbie Greaves

Mary O'Connor has been keeping a vigil for her first love for the past seven years. Every evening without fail, Mary arrives at Ealing Broadway station and sets herself up among the commuters. In her hands, Mary holds a sign which bears the words: 'Come Home Jim.' Call her mad, call her a nuisance, Mary isn't going anywhere. That is, until an unexpected call turns her world on its head. In spite of all her efforts, Mary can no longer find the strength to hold herself together. She must finally face what happened. A unique and moving love story with a mystery at its heart. **12**



NON-ADVICE TO ASPIRING WRITERS

"Let me start my advice to aspiring writers by saying that my advice won't help you". Well, at least novelist and twice shortlisted Booker Prize nominee **Damon Galgut** is honest.



“Writing fiction is a highly personal activity, so your biggest asset and enemy in the process is yourself. And nobody knows better than you what that involves.

So you may, for example, have a pernicky and controlling nature, which won't allow you to start writing before you know exactly what happens at every stage of the plot. If this sounds like you, any advice I offer will be useless. Orderly, regulated writing is not my territory and I have nothing to tell you.

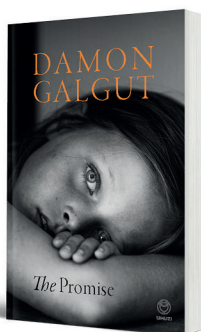
On the other hand, if the prospect of a writing-day fills you with dread, to the point where you'd rather do almost anything else instead, then you may want to pay attention to what follows.

My first piece of non-advice is this: don't go against the grain of your nature. If you like fixed working hours, then set them for yourself. If routine makes you anxious, don't follow a routine. If you can only focus in little concentrated bursts, then do it like that. No need to make it harder than it is.

On the other hand, learn to strategise against yourself. If you're good at procrastination, start your day by writing a couple of sentences. Doesn't matter how bad they are; just engage with the work. You'll find you return to it later, even if you don't want to.

Write the kind of book you like to read, whatever that may be. It's probably what got you interested in the first place.

“I'm ceaselessly amazed by people who want to write books but aren't interested in reading them.”



The Promise is out now.

By extension, do read. All the time, as much as you can. I'm ceaselessly amazed by people who want to write books but aren't interested in reading them. What's the point? You have to keep your brain excited by what's possible.

A book is a long slog, so just deal with what you can at any moment. If you think of the book as a journey of several years, you may have the whole route worked out on a map, but the only thing that matters is what's in your headlamps right now.

First drafts are a mess, so let them be messy. I've learned over time just to get the shape of the thing down. Don't be held back by your manifold shortcomings; tell yourself you can sort them out later. Because you can. Real writing mostly happens in the re-writing. If there's pleasure in the process, it comes from the feeling of refining and shaping what felt unrefined and shapeless to begin with. There's a sense in which writing is a series of problems to be solved, starting with the big ones and zooming slowly in on the tiny particularities. It doesn't matter at which point you find your answers, so take as much time as you like. It's urgent that you begin writing; it's not urgent that you finish.

These tactics work for me, because I'm the obstacle I'm trying to overcome. Your problems and their solutions belong to you. The only thing writers have in common is the activity; all the rest is unique. So throw this page aside and get down to what really matters..."



FACING RACIAL ADVERSITY


What does it really feel like to live in a society that repeatedly tells you that you are not welcome and, that you do not belong? In an extract taken from *Living While Black*, psychologist and author **Guilaine Kinouani** explores.

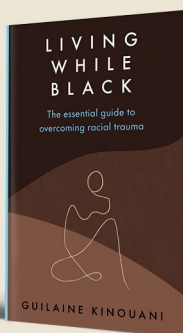
“The denial of racism can have serious consequences. Denial is part of the cycle of abuse. Some researchers have conceptualised it as secondary injury akin to ‘rubbing toxins into an open wound’. Silencing or denial significantly increase distress after initial racist incidents. Yet covert or subtle racism makes it virtually impossible to objectively establish the occurrence or non-occurrence of racism beyond the embodied experience of the person at the receiving end of it, lending itself particularly well to that process of internal displacement. An uprooting of marginalised people from their internal home through their repeated gaslighting when they attempt to speak of their experience of the world is enacted through the misuse of power. Is it any wonder that so many Black people are vulnerable to diagnoses of psychosis or become dissociated from their own reality, when the home that is their sense of truth and reality is chronically rendered precarious? This is what I have previously referred to as ‘epistemic homelessness’. I argue that our capacity to know is dependent on our capacity to have a home.

In 2017, in preparation for my TEDx Talk on the subject, I ran a few polls on social media. I asked three questions: Firstly, whether people of colour found covert or overt racism more challenging. Five hundred and forty-nine people answered. Covert racism was found to be about seven times more challenging. Second, I asked about the outcome of conversations about

“Silencing or denial significantly increase distress after initial racist incidents.”

subtle discrimination. The results were that a whopping 95 percent said they were mocked, ignored, or not believed when they named their experience of subtle racism. Finally, I enquired about the impact of such invalidation. The most common feeling reported was that one was ‘losing one’s mind’ which was experienced by 36% of participants, followed by 32 percent saying that they felt pain or were in distress. Other reported feelings including rage, helplessness, exhaustion, shame, disbelief and of being gaslighted.

These findings are consistent with my own clinical experience and with other research findings on the serious psychological impact of microaggressions. The term racial microaggressions was coined by African American psychiatrist Dr Chester Pierce to describe everyday and often subtle insults, indignities and dismissals experienced by Americans of colour and which affected their mental health. Experiences of covert bigotry often create much more race-based distress than more overt and direct expressions of racism. Not only are the triggering effects of strategically ambiguous words or deeds often loaded with racial denigration, Black targets are often left to do hours of cognitive work. Hours of hypothesis testing. Hours of rumination. Hours replaying, often second by second, what was said or what was done, in the hope of trusting that they know what they do indeed know. Gaslighting ourselves and in doing so, reproducing the contempt this society holds toward our capacity to know, and our authority.” 



Living While Black is out now.

BIRDING IN SUBURBIA



Malachite
sunbird

Over 40 years, Duncan Butchart rewilded his own garden spaces from Johannesburg to Nelspruit and, now, Hermanus, and his book *Garden Birds in Southern Africa* is testament to that. Here, he writes of his joy in the abundance of suburban bird life during the quiet months of lockdown.

“One of the positive aspects to come out of the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19, was that those of us fortunate to have a garden space got to know our local birds a lot better. Being more-or-less stuck in our homes for weeks on end, gave us the opportunity to not only identify the different bird species coming into our gardens, but also to observe their habits and interactions.

Overall, the towns, suburbs and roads of South Africa were so much quieter which also meant that birds were moving around more freely, and the number of suburban roadkill would have dropped dramatically.

Unable to travel to favoured birding hotspots, enthusiastic photographers turned their cameras to the robin-chats, bulbuls and sunbirds in their own garden spaces, and social media was filled with their stunning images.

Most importantly, we became more aware of what our garden birds were actually feeding on and which micro-habitats they favoured. We

also learned when they were most vocal and at what time of day they were bathing or drinking.

Birds are wonderful indicators of overall biodiversity. Instead of providing seeds and fruit on bird tables, or artificial ‘nectar’ in sugar-water bottles, rather plant berry-bearing shrubs and encourage invertebrates to flourish in your soil, leaf-litter and foliage. By growing plants native to your own district or region, you can actually rewild all or part of your property to create a miniature reservoir of biodiversity. If 10 families in one suburb do the same, then it is possible for wild species (at least those with wings) to multiply and expand their range. Many of us are obsessed with keeping our gardens as neat as our kitchens, but allowing fallen leaves and dead branches to decompose into mulch is crucial for feeding and protecting the soil upon which all life depends. When we watch an Olive Thrush flipping through the leaf-litter to grab a millipede for its nestling, or a Malachite Sunbird pollinating an aloe as it sips nectar



“Birds are wonderful indicators of overall biodiversity.”



FAR LEFT Olive Thrush
LEFT Karoo Thrush
BELOW Cape Robin



from each flower, we realise that our own small actions can restore food webs that allow some of our fellow inhabitants of planet Earth to survive and flourish.

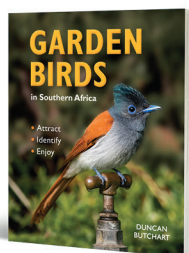
For too long, insects and other invertebrates have been seen as the ‘enemy’ of the gardeners. Yes, certain species may have to be controlled in a selective way, but the great majority are not only harmless but play a critical ecological role in bigger landscapes. To know that you have helped to repair nature and that the birds visiting your garden are responding to your actions is incredibly rewarding.”



Duncan Butchart

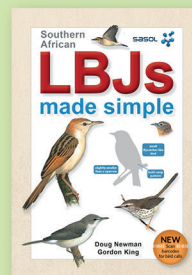
ABOUT THE BOOK

Outlining the best ways to attract birds into the garden, naturally, *Garden Birds in Southern Africa* gives advice on garden structure and water provision, and goes into depth with full-page profiles on 101 of the most familiar garden birds in the sub-region. Details of the most suitable plant species, for birds and their invertebrate prey, is also covered in this attractive and affordable book.



Garden Birds in Southern Africa is out now.

MORE BACKYARD BIRDS



Southern African LBJs Made Simple
by Doug Newman and Gordon King

This enhanced and updated new edition is an

invaluable guide for anyone who wants to tell one LBJ from another, offering a unique method for identifying and distinguishing the cryptic little birds known as ‘little brown jobs’. Using a three-stage process, the book guides readers through successive stages, each of which takes them closer to identifying the bird in question. As calls play a critical role in identifying these birds, individual calls and comparative tracks are included. The book features instant bird call access using a free downloadable call app to scan barcodes on the species pages as well as concise text describing key ID criteria.

As a Struik Nature Club member, you’ll be the first to hear about new releases, offers and special editions. You’ll also receive invites to our launches and author events and have the chance to win great prizes. Visit www.struiknatureclub.co.za to join.





EXTRACT FROM
BEYOND ORDER
BY JORDAN B. PETERSON

In *Beyond Order: 12 More Rules for Life*, the much-anticipated sequel to his bestseller, *12 Rules for Life*, Jordan B. Peterson shows that part of life's meaning comes from reaching out into the domain beyond what we know, and adapting to an ever-transforming world.

In this extract taken from the chapter titled *Rule III: Do Not Hide Unwanted Things in the Fog*, Peterson talks about choosing to confront issues when you have the capacity to do so, rather than being forced into it when you least expect to be.

“I love my father-in-law. I respect him, too. He is extremely stable emotionally – one of those tough or fortunate people (perhaps a little of both) who can let the trials and tribulations of life roll off him and keep moving forward with little complaint and plenty of competence. He is an old guy now, Dell Roberts – eighty-eight. He has had a knee replaced, and is planning to get the remaining one done. He has had stents inserted into his coronary arteries and a heart valve replaced. He suffers from drop foot and sometimes slips and falls because of it. But he was still curling a year ago, pushing the heavy granite rock down the ice with a stick specifically designed for people who can no longer crouch down as easily as they once could.

When his wife, Beth, now deceased, developed dementia at a relatively young age, he took care of her in as uncomplaining and unresentful a manner as anyone could imagine. It was impressive. I am by no means convinced that I could have fared as well. He cared for her right to the point where it became impossible for him to lift her out of whatever chair she had settled into. This was long after she had lost the ability to speak. But it was obvious by the way her eyes lit up when he entered the room that she still loved him – and the feeling was mutual. I would not describe him as someone who is prone to avoidance when the going gets tough. Quite the contrary.

When Dell was a much younger man, he was for several decades a real estate dealer in Fairview, Alberta – the small town where I grew up (we lived right across the street from the Roberts family, in fact). During that time, he habitually went home for lunch, in accordance with the general custom.

If something happens every day, it is important. 9

Beth typically prepared him soup (probably Campbell's, which everyone ate at that time – “M'm! M'm! Good!”), and a sandwich. One day, without warning, he snapped at his wife: “Why in the world do we always eat off these tiny plates? I hate eating off these tiny plates!”

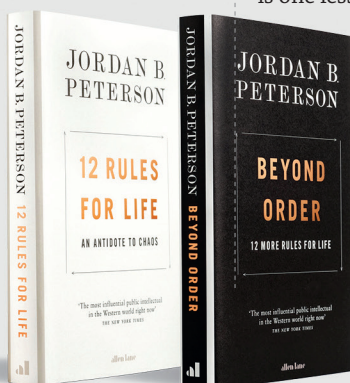
She had been serving the sandwiches on bread-and-butter plates, which average about six or seven inches in diameter, instead of fullsize dinner plates of ten to twelve inches. She related this story to her daughters, soon after, in a state of mild shock. This story has been retold to much laughter at family gatherings many times since. After all, she had been serving him lunch on those plates for at least twenty years by the time he finally said anything. She had no idea that he was annoyed by her table settings. He had never objected. And there is something inexhaustibly amusing about that.

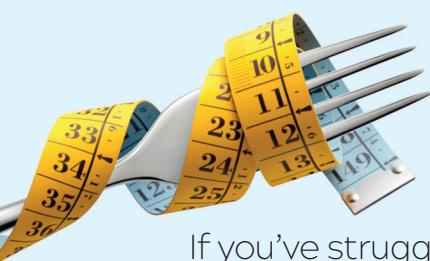
Now, it is possible that he was irritated by something else altogether that day and did not really care about the plates. And in one sense, it is a trivial issue. But seen another way, it is not trivial at all, for two reasons. First, if something happens every day, it is *important*, and lunch was happening every day. In consequence, if there was something about it that was chronically bothersome, even in a minor sort of way, it needed to be attended to. Second, it is very common to allow so-called minor irritations (which are not minor, as I said, if they happen constantly) to continue for years without comment or resolution.

Here is the problem: Collect a hundred, or a thousand, of those, and your life is miserable and your marriage doomed. Do not pretend you are happy with something if you are not, and if a reasonable solution might, in principle, be negotiated. Have the damn fight. Unpleasant as that might be in the moment, it is one less straw on the camel's back. And that

is particularly true for those daily events that everyone is prone to regard as trivial – even the plates on which you eat your lunch. Life is what repeats, and it is worth getting what repeats right.” 12

Beyond Order and *12 Rules to Life* are out now.





THE 6 STEPS TO WEIGHT LOSS

If you've struggled with emotional eating, lowering your sugar intake or managing your weight, despite trying loads of diets, check out these steps to getting started taken from *Your 12-week Body & Mind Transformation* by nutritional therapist, gym junkie and health foodie, Bernadine Douglas.

1 Unfollow all social media pages, people or groups related to weight loss

Simply watching what other people are doing and following their achievements, but not doing the same, is only going to cause you to fantasise about weight loss, and potentially cause you to fail. So stop self-sabotaging! Only, and I mean *only* when you are working on your weight loss and doing something about your problem, can you follow these pages, people or groups to inspire and motivate you. But if these pages are demotivating you and you find yourself becoming jealous of others' successes, then unfollow them.

2 Unfollow all dessert and random recipe platforms

If you have a thing for sweet stuff, then these platforms will only tempt you. It's important to remove yourself from social media platforms that can lead you into temptation. Just like other addictions, your sugar cravings will become a reality if you are constantly reminded of them.

3 Don't wait until Monday

Why wait? It's the same as saying that you will wait until Monday before buying electricity, despite knowing for a fact that the units are very low and it's only Friday! And you are planning to do the laundry, cook a delicious Sunday roast and then switch on the dishwasher. So why would you wait until Monday to take care of your health and your weight, which are far more important than electricity? So start now, start today.

4 Break the yo-yo diet mindset

I watched this amazing TEDx Talk by Renée Jones called 'Lose weight and keep it off: Emotional eating'. Renée says that you need to have a positive mindset and tell yourself that you have what it takes to stop yo-yo dieting. You need to have enough confidence in yourself to know that this time you are going to keep to your healthy programme and not jump to another diet. You already know that your past dieting efforts have not worked and the only way this programme can work for you is if you follow it with commitment.




Your 12-week Body & Mind Transformation is out now.

5 Identify your comfort food

Every time you eat a certain food, you get a dopamine kick out of it and you feel happy. But that feeling doesn't last, and sooner or later you feel like have to indulge again to get that same feeling. Try revisit when that specific food was introduced to you and identify the event related to it. Every time you feel the same emotion that you experienced back then, and you find yourself wanting to eat, pause for a minute and realise that you are emotional, and that if you eat, it will only make matters worse, by delaying your weight loss goals. As Renée says: 'Face your stuff, don't stuff your face.'

6 Set realistic weight-loss goals

Decide how much you want to lose, then break it down. For example, if you have 20 kilograms to lose, divide that amount over a realistic time frame of, say, eight months. This will give you 2.5 kilograms per month, or about 625 grams per week. It makes it more realistic and easier to achieve. You need to remind yourself that it took you months, even years to gain all that weight and you are definitely not going to lose it in a short time. Be realistic with the time you give yourself to lose the weight, be patient and persevere! 

ALL CURRIED UP

This joyful homage to one of the world's most beloved and versatile dishes – the curry – is inspired by the author's memories of the slow-cooked Cape Malay curries of her childhood, as well as the fast-paced landscape of the Middle East.

Amina's Wonder Spice Tandoori-Glazed Salmon

The story of Amina's Wonder Spice is an endearing one. Abdulgani Rahman was working for a clothing retailer in Durban, South Africa, and found it difficult to survive on his salary. After being asked to arrange a barbecue for his then employers, the guests complimented his marinade and some even suggested he bottle and then sell it. With an initial outlay of just R375 (\$60), Abdulgani and his

wife, Amina, bottled their first two products – Chicken Tikka and Steak & Chops – and started selling them. The rest, as they say, is history. The essence of this quality-based company is that all its products are 'ready mixed' and 'ready to use', making cooking simpler, easier and less time-consuming. My kitchen pantry is incomplete without Amina's Wonder Spice range!

6 salmon fillets, skin on
1 lemon, thinly sliced

FOR THE TANDOORI GLAZE

3 Tbsp (45 ml) Amina's Tandoori Marinade
3 Tbsp (45 ml) honey
2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely minced
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
2 tsp (10 ml) roasted masala
1 thumb-size piece fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
Salt to taste

PREPARING THE TANDOORI GLAZE

1. Place all the ingredients into a small bowl.
2. Give this a good mix and set aside.

PREPARING THE FISH

1. Preheat the oven to 220 °C. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Place the salmon fillets on the baking tray, skin-side down. Use a pastry brush to coat the flesh of the fish with the tandoori glaze.
3. Reduce the heat of the oven to 180 °C and place the fish on the middle shelf of the oven. Grill the fish for 8–10 minutes.
4. Serve with slices of lemon, a green salad and naan bread.

SERVES
6



TIP This marinade is ideal for fish and chicken grilled in the oven or on an open fire. I've also used the marinade for tuna steaks and tuna kebabs.

Heirloom Tomatoes and Brinjal Rogan Josh

This curry is a picture-perfect showpiece of what ‘culinary spring’ looks like! Bursting with vibrancy, it’s packed with colourful ingredients like the heirloom tomatoes and baby brinjals. Tomatoes are also perfect for creating lush curry sauces, but they must be ripe (overripe, is even better). This is one of those times when you have to leave the couch and go in search of a farmers’ market armed only with your wallet and a fairly big basket, to stock up on one of those glorious vegetables the season has to offer!

1 lemon, halved
6 baby brinjals, stalks removed, rinsed and halved
¼ C (60 ml) water
1 punnet (600 g) heirloom or heritage cherry tomatoes
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
½ tsp (2.5 ml) Kashmiri chilli powder
1 Tbsp (15 ml) white sugar
Salt to taste
2 Tbsp (30 ml) rogan josh curry paste or 1½ C (375 ml) rogan josh cook-in sauce
1 handful cashew nuts, pounded to form coarse crumbles (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 180 °C.
2. Rub the lemon halves over the brinjal flesh to prevent it from discolouring.
3. Heat a medium-size ovenproof saucepan on medium heat. Add the water and brinjals, skin-side down, to the pan. Cook, covered, for 5–8 minutes or until the water has evaporated and the brinjals are tender to the touch.
4. In the meantime, portion the tomatoes, halving the medium-size ones, quartering the larger ones and leaving any smaller ones whole.
5. Add the portioned tomatoes, oil, spices, sugar, salt and curry paste to the saucepan and give this a good mix.
6. Turn the brinjal halves over and give the pan a little shake.
7. If you are using nuts, scatter over the cashew crumbs and transfer the saucepan to the oven.
8. Cook, uncovered, for 20–25 minutes or until the sauce has reduced and the vegetables are golden. Add more water if you prefer a saucier curry.
9. Garnish with cashew crumbs (if using) and serve hot with fluffy basmati rice and poppadums.

SERVES
4–6

TIP Use a saucepan that is ovenproof because the curry is made on the stovetop but finished off in the oven. I’ve also used baby brinjals for this recipe because they are the perfect vegetable to make a vegetable curry. They have a meaty texture like mushrooms and soak up the curry flavours and juices like a sponge. If brinjals are not in season, then opt for butternut squash or even carrots.



Carrot Halwa

SERVES
4-6


Carrot halwa is a traditional Indian dessert made from carrots and milk. It is rich and creamy in texture and is as popular in the Middle East as it is in India. This comforting, warm dessert is ideal for the winter and autumn months, when temperatures have dropped, and the body yearns for a bit of warmth.

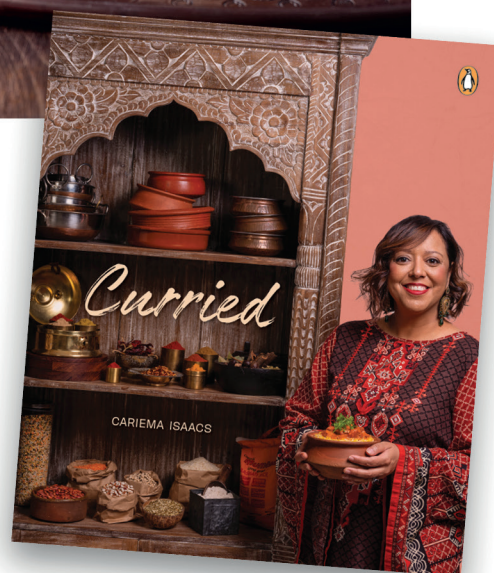
500 g (4-6) medium-size carrots, peeled, rinsed and grated
 2 C (500 ml) full-cream milk
 3 Tbsp (45 ml) ghee or clarified butter
 ¼ C (60 ml) flaked almonds
 180 g white sugar
 ¼ tsp (1.25 ml) ground cardamom (or 3 large cardamom pods, husked and ground)
 1 Tbsp (15 ml) flaked almonds, lightly toasted, for garnishing

1. Place the grated carrots and milk in a medium-size saucepan on medium heat and simmer for 7-10 minutes.
2. Don't be alarmed if the mixture appears as if it's curdled, it's perfectly ok. Remove from the heat and set aside.
3. Heat another medium-size pan on medium heat. Add the ghee and cook for about a minute until it is melted.
4. Add the flaked almonds and fry them until they have a deep golden brown appearance.
5. Transfer the cooked carrots and milk mixture to the pan with the fried almonds.
6. Add the sugar and reduce the heat to low. Cook for about 30 minutes, stirring intermittently to prevent scorching.

TIP Don't be tempted to increase the quantity of sugar when you do a taste test while the halwa is hot, as your taste buds will not be able to judge the sweetness. Instead, scoop out a teaspoonful, cool it, taste it and then adjust the sugar to your individual taste.



7. Simmer gently until all the moisture has evaporated.
8. The halwa is ready when the ghee begins to leave the sides of the pan and the colour of the mixture has transformed into an intense orange colour.
9. Lastly, stir in the cardamom powder.
10. Serve hot, with a dollop of vanilla ice cream and garnish with toasted flaked almonds. 



Recipes taken from *Curried* by Cariema Isaacs, out now.

Na my mening

Die dodelike gedagtegang van domestic noir

Erla-Mari Diedericks is besig met haar nuutste boek, *Dominique*. Maar oor 'n paar minute gaan sy haarself versmoor. Waarom? Sodat sy kan skryf hoe dit voel.

“Ek sit op my bed met 'n geel plastieksak in my hand. My plan is om die sak oor my kop te trek.

My rekenaar lê voor my en ek werk aan my nuutste boek, *Dominique*. Maar oor 'n paar minute gaan ek myself versmoor. Waarom? Sodat ek kan skryf hoe dit voel.

Wat jy ookal doen, moenie die plastieksak vasknoop nie, praat ek met myself.

Wat as ek die sak vasknoop en iets loop verkeerd en ek kry dit nie weer los nie?

Wat as ek dit nie weer wil losknoop nie...

Ek trek die plastieksak oor my kop. 'n Geel mistige vrees sak oor my. My hart klop nie vinnig nie. Dit is 'n cliché. My hart word vasgesuig deur die plastiek en meteens kan niks meer asemhaal en niks meer klop nie.

Een sekonde. Ek ruk die sak af.

Wéér sit ek die sak oor my kop. Die dodelikgladde plastiek suig vas teen my vel, my neus my mond.

Haal vlak asem, vlak.

Met elke teug suig die sak stywer om my gesig. Klam geel angs verstop my luggate.

Ek ruk die sak af, drink 'n glas whiskey vir die senuwees. Frommel die platieksak op en smyt dit in die asblik. Nooit, ooit weer nie.

Dan is ek gereed om verder te skryf.

Domestic Noir, die genre van my boek, word opgesom as 'n blik op vreesaanjaende gebeure wat in die huislike of werkomgewing plaasvind.

Maar waar begin vrees en geweld te broei? In 'n mens se kop. En dit is waarheen ek my lesers wou sleep. Tot binne in die warboel van gedagtes wat in my karakters se koppe leef.

Dink daaroor.

Sal jy gerus slaap as jy weet wat in jou man se kop aangaan? Sal jy nog veilig voel as jy die gedagtes kan lees van die vrou wat oorkant jou sit in die koffiewinkel?

“Wéér sit ek die sak oor my kop. Die dodelikgladde plastiek suig vas teen my vel, my neus my mond.”

Om in 'n karakter se kop te klim en dit geloofbaar te maak vir 'n leser, moet die skrywer één word met die karakter, en só die regstreekse ervaring oordra aan die leser. Die leser word dus in die karakter se skoene geplaas.

So word die leser vasgewikkel in die angsbevange gedagtes van *Dominique*, 'n hoogsbetaalde escort wat agtervolg word deur 'n bekruiper.

Dan is daar Martin du Plessis, die psigiater wat bekruipers profileer en wat vir *Dominique* help om die bekruiper op te spoor.

Op die oog af is Martin 'n kalm persoon wat die hele tyd in beheer is. Klinies, selfs. Maar dan word die lesers ingegooi aan die diep kant van Martin se angstige kompulsiewe obsesiewe gedagtes. 'n Malle maalkolk.

'n Skrywer moet letterlik in sy karakters se vel inklim om sodoende weer onder die leser se vel te kan inkruip.

Write about what you know.

Maar in die geval van *Dominique* se wêreld van geweld, kinky seks en bekruipers het die persoonlike ervaring my met tye ontwyk. Die antwoord was baie en intense navorsing. Ek het gesels met sielkundiges, ek het self gegaan deur behandeling vir trauma om te sien hoe dit is, ek het onderhoude gevoer met sekswerkers en ook met hul klante waar moontlik.

Ek het gaan aanklop by kunstenaars om uit te vind oor skilder, BDSM-videos gekyk oor Japannese bondage en met bergklimmers gesels oor bergklimtegnieke.

Wat my bring by die geel plastieksak.

Met wie kan mens daaroor 'n onderhoud voer? Hoe vind mens dus uit hoe dit voel om met 'n plastieksak versmoor te word?

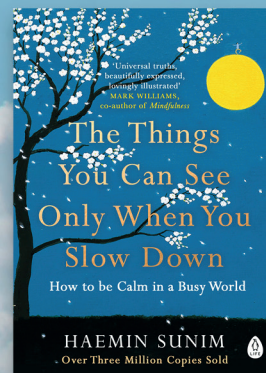
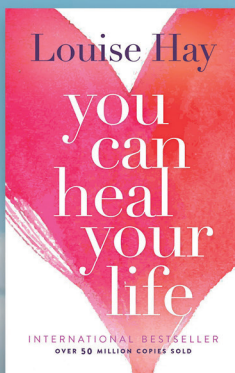
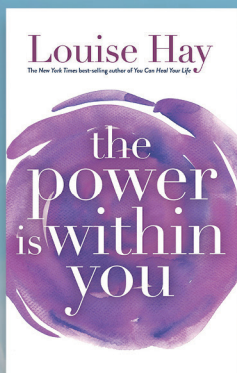
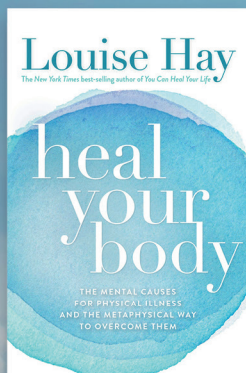
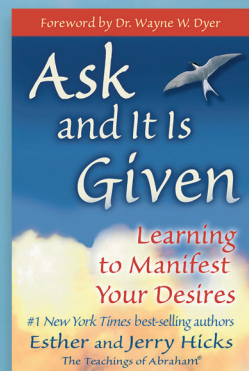
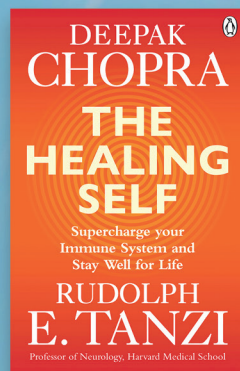
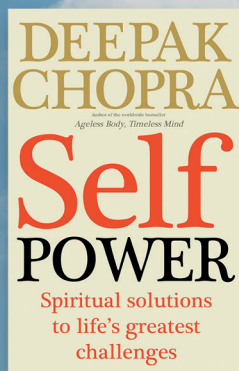
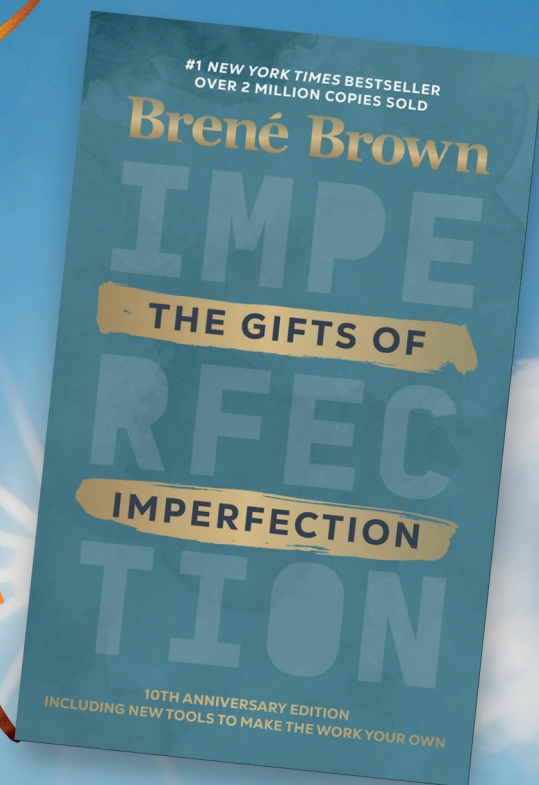
Jy probeer dit self, natuurlik. En hoop maar jy oorleef dit om die storie oor te kan vertel.”



Dominique is nou beskikbaar.

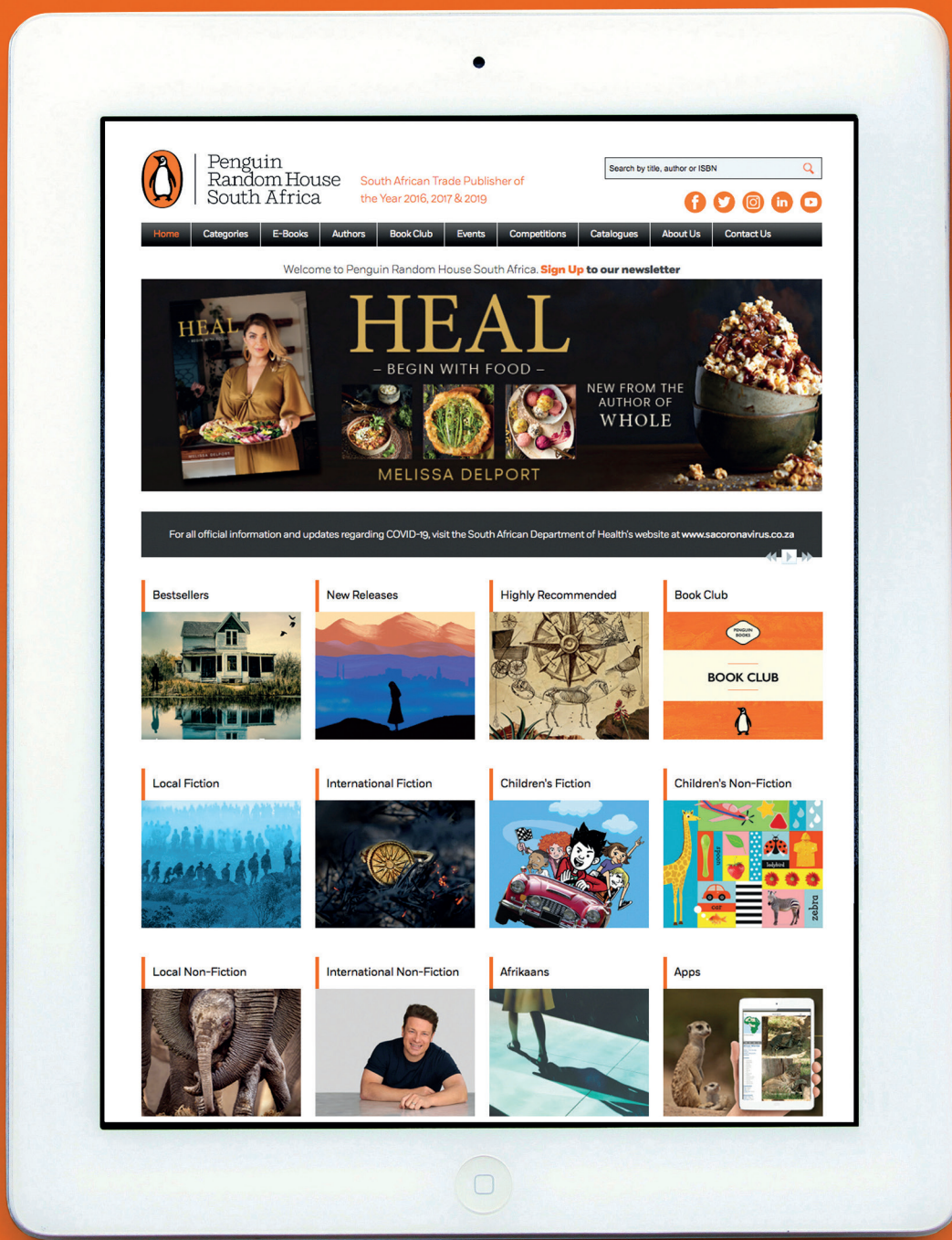
Live HAPPY

Books to spark
your spiritual
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