



THE PENGUIN POST

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BOOKS FOR BOOK LOVERS



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THE TENDER ART OF KINDNESS

Five years of Charlie Mackesy's
heartwarming story



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A BOOK STACK
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OF R1 000!



NATURAL GETAWAYS

Where the nature
gurus go on holiday

FESTIVE FOOD

Your Christmas Day
menu is here

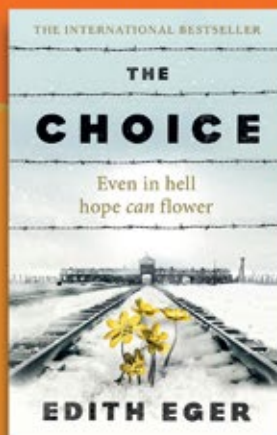
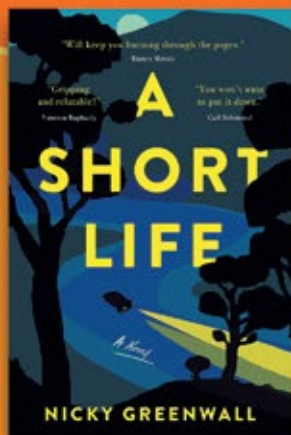
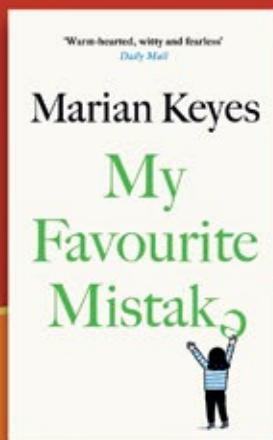
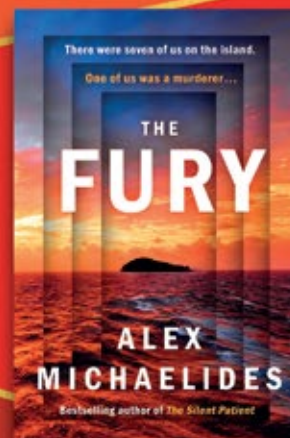
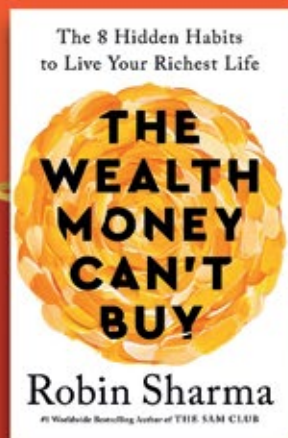
FIVE MINUTES WITH

John Boyne on his
Elements series

EXPLOSIVE EXTRACT

Mathews Phosa's
tell-all memoir

Gifts for her





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Welcome!

As the festive season envelops us in its warm embrace, there's no better time to reflect on the art of kindness and connection, themes beautifully captured in Charlie Mackesy's *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. Celebrating its fifth anniversary, this heartwarming tale continues to resonate, reminding us of the simple yet profound joys of life.

In this edition of *The Penguin Post*, we also delve into the creative minds behind some of the year's most compelling reads. John Boyne's *Fire* promises a psychological journey to the heart of human nature, while Nick Harkaway's reflections on his father, John le Carré's legacy in *Karla's Choice* offer a unique blend of homage and innovation. James Norbury's art, inspired by the innocence of animals, and Yuval Noah Harari's exploration of our digital age in *Nexus*, challenge us to think deeply about our world and our place within it.

For those seeking peace amidst the holiday hustle, read an extract from Zen Buddhist monk Shunmyo Masuno's *How to Let Things Go*, which provides insights into living with clarity and purpose. And for nature lovers, the experts share their perfect escape into wild wonderlands.

Finally, as you gather with loved ones, let our festive recipes inspire a Christmas feast to remember. From citrus salads to succulent meats, we've got everything you need on the menu to make your celebrations truly special.

Wishing you a season filled with joy, connection, and unforgettable stories. Happy reading!

Lauren

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bookscape

news | snippets | what's new

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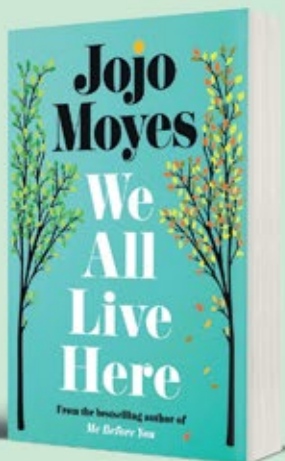
Everyone's talking about ... **JOJO MOYES'** **BEST BOOK** **SO FAR**

The beloved international bestselling author Jojo Moyes is back with a heartwarming and emotionally charged novel that critics are calling her best work to date. Known for penning hits like *Me Before You* and *The Giver of Stars*, Moyes' latest release promises to be an unforgettable story of family, forgiveness, and the ties that bind us all.

Set against a backdrop of broken relationships and unexpected reunions, the book introduces readers to Lila Kennedy, a woman grappling with more challenges than she can count. With a crumbling house, a career that's slipping away, two rebellious daughters, and an elderly stepfather who has settled in unannounced, Lila's life is already at a tipping point. But when her estranged father - who vanished to Hollywood thirty-five years ago - shows up on her doorstep hoping to reconcile, it feels like the final straw. As Lila wrestles with whether

to let her father back into her life, Moyes skilfully explores themes of love, forgiveness, and what it truly means to be family. In a surprising twist, this long-lost parent might just have something valuable to offer, teaching Lila that sometimes, healing comes from the unlikeliest of places.

The buzz around this new release is a testament to Jojo Moyes' enduring appeal. With her novels translated into 46 languages and over 57 million copies sold worldwide, she has solidified her place as one of the most beloved authors of contemporary fiction. And this latest book is a poignant reminder of why she remains at the top of the literary game.



We All Live Here hits shelves in February 2025.



DOMINATING THE BESTSELLER LISTS



"The Tea Merchant blends historical fiction with cultural exploration. It is a tale of inheritance, landlessness, love and the origins of the cherished Rooibos tea. It transcends a mere love story, delving into themes of community life, loss, grief, racial dynamics, heritage and belonging."
Lesego Makgatho,
The Star



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PHOTOGRAPHS: Claudia Janke

#bookstagram MUST of the MONTH

@transkeimeg



4.3k followers



Meg Orton is a freelance writer, and content editor who lives at the beach but hardly ever swims because she's too busy watching horror movies, adopting animals, and trying to read all the books cluttering her shelves.

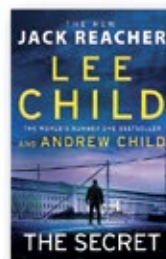
"*The Gathering* by C.J. Tudor takes place in the fictional Alaskan small town of Deadhart; home to a collection of eclectic characters, a violent history, and a long-suffering (in)tolerance for the neighbouring vampyr colony, run by a centuries-old vampyr who looks eerily like a little girl. When a teenage boy is found murdered in the same way as another teen boy 25 years prior, the authorities send Detective Barbara Atkins to the soon-to-be snowed-in town. There she is met with distrust by the locals, and painted as a 'vampyr sympathiser'. As the bodies start piling up, the only person on her side is Jensen Tucker, a hermit, and the former Sheriff of Deadhart, and they are running out of time to save both the town and the Colony. C.J. Tudor is one of my favourite horror authors, not only because she writes scary fiction, but because her characters don't just walk off the page, they also crawl, slither, and do whatever else monsters do."

WIN! WIN! WIN!

A hamper of books from this issue valued at R1 000 is up for grabs to one lucky reader. To enter, scan the code using your phone camera, or visit www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/competitions. Ts & Cs apply. Entries close 31 December 2024.



OUT IN PAPERBACK



The Secret by Lee Child and Andrew Child

A man falls to his death under mysterious circumstances, drawing Jack Reacher into a dangerous investigation involving a 23-year-old secret, and the attention of the Secretary of Defense.



The Spy Coast by Tess Gerritsen

Maggie Bird, a retired spy turned chicken farmer, is forced to revisit her past when a body appears on her driveway. With her ex-spy friends, the 'Martini Club,' she unravels a deadly mystery.

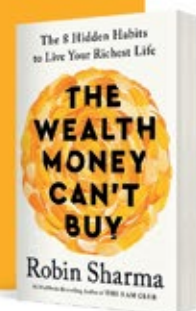


Lone Wolf by Gregg Hurwitz

Evan Smoak returns, this time tasked with finding a little girl's lost dog, but the mission spirals into a high-stakes chase, pitting him against a deadly assassin who mirrors his every move.

“So you’ve been hurt. And yes, you’ve been scarred. I get you. I’ve been there too. Yet may I humbly suggest that you celebrate your scars. And worship your wounds. Because they have served you beautifully.”

Robin Sharma, *The Wealth Money Can't Buy*



Five minutes with ... **JOHN BOYNE**

In *Fire*, John Boyne takes the reader on a chilling, uncomfortable but utterly compelling psychological journey to the epicentre of the human condition.

What inspired you to write the *Elements* series, and how do you feel it differs from your previous works?

I'd written a lot of long novels in the past and wanted to focus on something shorter, which ultimately resulted in the novella *Water*. However, when I was writing *Water*, I realised that the theme I was exploring, that of sexual abuse, could be looked at from various different angles. As the novella was titled for one of the elements, the idea came to me that I could write four books based on each of the four elements - water, earth, fire, and air - with connected characters and themes.

Tell us more about the latest book in the series.

While the first two novellas, *Water* and *Earth*, are narrated by characters who are either enabling or complicit in abuse, *Fire* takes the perspective of a perpetrator. It's narrated by a middle-aged woman, ostensibly successful in

life; a surgeon, who prays on innocent teenage boys. Through her eyes we discover why she commits these crimes and the traumatic past that has led her to this awful place.

Can you elaborate on how the elements are represented in each book and what they symbolise?

The elements are represented by themes that run through each of the books. In *Water*, for example, the setting is a small island off the West Coast of Ireland. Willow, the narrator, is surrounded by water. Her husband was a swimming coach. She is the mother of a drowned girl. In *Earth*, the narrator, Evan, comes from a farming background. He is a footballer and spends much of his time on pitches. In *Fire*, Freya, the narrator, is a plastic surgeon, specialising in those who have suffered burns. Each symbolises the philosophical building blocks of human existence, as the four

books themselves are a unified attempt on my part to understand some of the darker aspects of our lives.

How does writing a series compare to writing standalone novels?

It was a very interesting experience for me because I knew that the first two novellas would probably be published before the fourth was even completed, so there would be no opportunity on my part to go back and change anything that I had written before. Therefore each novella had to work as a standalone story, independent of the other three books, while also feeling fully connected to the project as a unified whole. I've written about abuse before. As a

person who experienced sexual abuse during my teenage years at school, I was able to draw on my own experiences and the damage that it did me. It's very different drawing on such things than researching for a historical novel. It's more personal. And it's cathartic. **P**

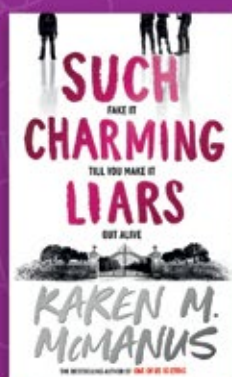
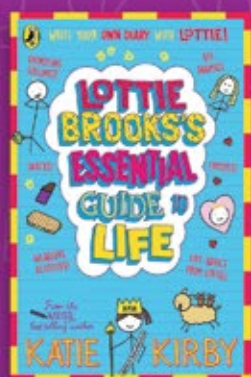
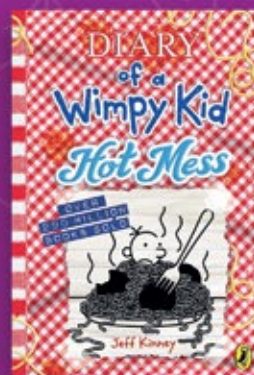


Fire is out now.



PHOTOGRAPHS: Rich Gilligan

FESTIVE Reads FOR BUDDING BOOKWORMS





The title is rendered in a mix of blue and dark blue serif fonts. 'THE' and 'OF' are in a lighter blue, while 'ART', 'KINDNESS', 'AND', and 'CONNECTION' are in a darker blue. The background features light blue watercolor washes and dark blue ink splatters. A fountain pen with a black barrel and silver nib is positioned on the right side, pointing towards the text. Two ink wells, one dark blue and one lighter blue, are visible in the bottom right corner.

THE ART OF KINDNESS AND CONNECTION

Charlie Mackesy is the author of the heartwarming story, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. With the release of the fifth anniversary limited edition of the book, we heard from Charlie about the story behind his four beloved characters, the inspiration for his illustrations, and the powerful life lessons that resonate with readers around the world.

"Most of the old moles
I know wish they had
listened less to their fears and
more to their dreams."



I began drawing seriously as a way to deal with grief. I have always drawn – I started drawing horses when I was six – but I never considered it a serious career option. Art just wasn't something people aspired to do after school. The focus was more on getting into professions such as law, medicine, or academia. I still sometimes feel like I'm being chased down by what's considered to be "proper" work! I really started drawing in earnest when I was 18 years old, after my best friend Jamie was killed. Drawing helped me get through it and, like *Forrest Gump*, I just didn't stop.

Art school just never panned out for me.

I originally wanted to be a sculptor, so in the nineties, I went to America to study anatomy, of all things. The college was in the middle of nowhere, so they gave me a barn to sleep in. Let's just say I learnt a lot during that time about dealing with bed bugs, but not much else. Then, I tried out art college, but I found it difficult to connect with the way they did things there. I got the feeling that if I'd continued, I'd give up making art, and I didn't want whatever I had to be crushed, so after a week, I left.

If I got run over tomorrow, what would I like to have said? This was the thought I had before I started working on *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* in 2017. I'd already illustrated quite a few books by then, which saw me return to working with ink and water colour after making sculptures and big surly rough things. Slowly these four characters emerged. Then a vague narrative started forming around them, things like *What's the point of life?* and *Why are we here?* and *What is success?*

I remember the day of the first conversation between the boy and the mole. I was with the lovely Bear Grylls, one of my oldest friends, and his son. We were mucking about in a tree and Bear's son was sitting on a precariously thin branch, chatting to us. I thought it was a great place to do a drawing, of someone sitting on a branch, asking questions, so I drew him. Then we were asking him what he wanted to be when he grew up, and I was thinking about the idea of kindness, so I just wrote "Kind". That was the very first drawing of the book.

"Do you have a favourite saying?" asked the boy.

"Yes" said the mole.

"What is it?"

"If at first you don't succeed, have some cake."

"I see, does it work?"

"Every time"





Each character in the book represents a different side to the human condition.

The boy is the naïve, curious part that wants to know why we're alive and what we're meant to be doing. The mole is me: he thinks he's clever, but he's not; he thinks he's wise but he's not ... and he's always hungry. The fox is withdrawn and finds it difficult to trust. He's still carrying around pain from the past, which is something many of us do. And the horse is the wise and spiritual side of us, but also the more vulnerable. So there's something to all four of the characters that anyone reading the book can relate to.

The natural world is the most welcoming place. It's always fascinated me. Being brought up on a farm, my life was spent mostly outdoors, with the dogs and the sheep and the horses and the cats and the rabbits, you name it. In the evenings, I'd take the longest walks, finding a spot to sit and just watch, catching badgers walking across the field or foxes chasing rabbits. Animals have a special place in my heart. There's a purity to them that human beings seem to have lost, and we have so much to learn from them in terms of their capacity to trust and love.



The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse Fifth Anniversary Limited Edition is out now.

What gives me a sense of purpose is hearing how my drawings have positively impacted people's lives. There have even been a few who have chosen against taking their own lives because of one of my drawings. Knowing that fills me with a sense of relief. I feel profoundly privileged that I can make a few marks on a piece of paper and they help people stay alive. That is quite moving to me. For me personally, learning how to love and support people and have them do the same for me, is a kind of success. As the boy asks in the book, *What do you think success is?* to which the mole responds, *To love.* And I really believe that.

To other artists, I say don't give up.

Persevere, always. I did a drawing where the boy asks the mole, *How do you make a good mole hill?* and the mole says, *By making a lot of bad ones first.* We can be very hard on ourselves. I, for one, tend to give up on things quite quickly. I've had to learn to accept my mistakes, and acknowledge that every one of them is a journey to getting it right. So, find artists or people you admire, and study them. Stay inspired. ■

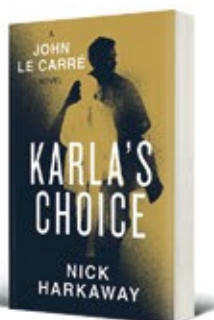
AT MY DESK

Exploring the legacy of John le Carré through *Karla's Choice*, his son, Nick Harkaway, discusses honouring a literary giant while forging a unique voice. Harkaway reflects on his upbringing steeped in Smiley's world and the unexpected journey of continuing his father's iconic series.

Taking on my father's legacy has been a journey filled with unique challenges and pressures, but surprisingly, less conflict than expected. As an author, I usually write fantastical thrillers involving everything from rejuvenation science to god-sharks, but my stylistic and thematic approach aligns closely with his. Growing up with George Smiley, I was surrounded by the craft of storytelling from an early age. My father was writing the *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* sequence as I learned to walk and talk. I heard him read early drafts to my mother before school and saw them work on new pages at night, cutting and pasting literally with scissors and glue. My exposure to Dickens, Conan Doyle, and Wodehouse as a child deeply influenced my writing. Thus, when I set out to write *Karla's Choice*, it was less about compromising and more about stripping away elements like magic and wildness from my work to better fit within his world. Our writing voices, like our speaking voices, are surprisingly similar.

Initially, I hesitated to continue the Smiley series, choosing to keep my identity as Nick Harkaway separate from John le Carré's legacy. My father was very careful not to overshadow me, and I had spent a dozen years maintaining that separation. However, as one of his literary executors, I needed to make efforts to keep his work alive, and the idea of continuing the Smiley series came up. I had a long list of potential writers, from Colson Whitehead to Arundhati Roy, and was about to argue

I was immersed in the world of Smiley from a young age, which profoundly shaped my approach to writing.



Karla's Choice is out now.

their merits when my older brother Simon pointed out that it was clearly my role to continue the series. Everyone agreed, and after taking a few weeks to try it out, I found that I truly enjoyed the process.

Reflecting on my childhood, it's challenging to pinpoint specific influences, as being my father's son felt entirely normal to me. Yet, certain memories stand out, such as Alec Guinness in our kitchen, holding a strand of homemade pasta and lamenting over its culinary misadventures, or the experience of watching the filming of *Smiley's People* in the dead of winter. These moments, though seemingly mundane, were magical and formative. I was immersed in the world of Smiley from a young age, which profoundly shaped my approach to writing.

So now I hand it over to the booksellers, the people at the pointy end. I sing for my supper, and I hope that everyone else says "yes" too. That's all you can do."

ABOUT THE BOOK

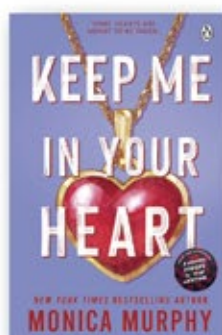
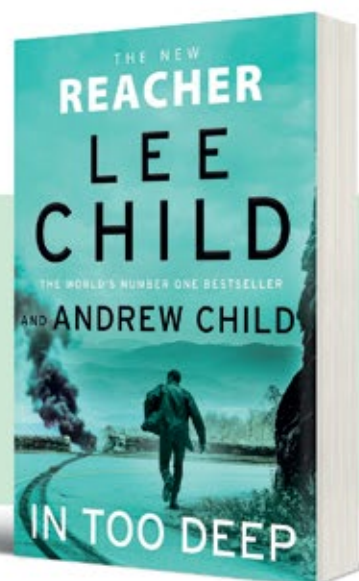
George Smiley, now retired and seeking peace, is pulled back into the world of espionage. With a Russian agent defecting and a missing target, Smiley must investigate Susanna, a Hungarian émigré. Set between *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, this thriller explores the shadows of Moscow and Smiley's ultimate challenges. **■**

TOP FICTION

November

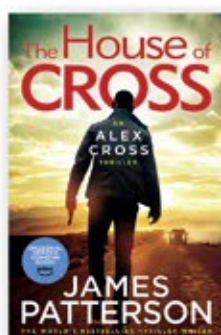
In Too Deep by Lee Child and Andrew Child

Jack Reacher returns in a gripping new thriller by Lee and Andrew Child. Reacher wakes up, handcuffed in the dark, with no memory of how he got there. His last recollection is a car crash that killed the driver, whom his captors believe was his accomplice. As they try to make him talk, they'll soon regret underestimating him. Reacher is ready to fight back – and it won't end well for his enemies.



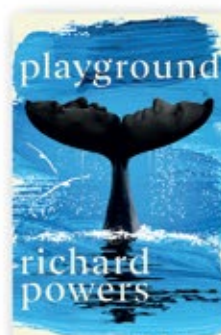
Keep Me in your Heart by Monica Murphy

In Monica Murphy's latest swoon-worthy novel, Rowan Lancaster's final football season at Lancaster Prep is shattered by a broken ankle. But Arabella Hartley Thomas – beautiful, stylish, and quirky – becomes the unexpected highlight of his year. Their playful banter turns into something deeper, and soon Rowan realises that Arabella sees through his walls, making him question if he's ready to fall – hard.



The House of Cross by James Patterson

A serial killer is taking out America's finest legal minds, and Alex Cross is called to investigate their brutal murders. But during a dangerous mission to track down the killer, his wife, Bree, and best friend, John Sampson, go missing. Now, Cross must find them, escape, and survive. If he fails, there will be no one left in the House of Cross. The thirty-second instalment of Patterson's bestselling Alex Cross series.



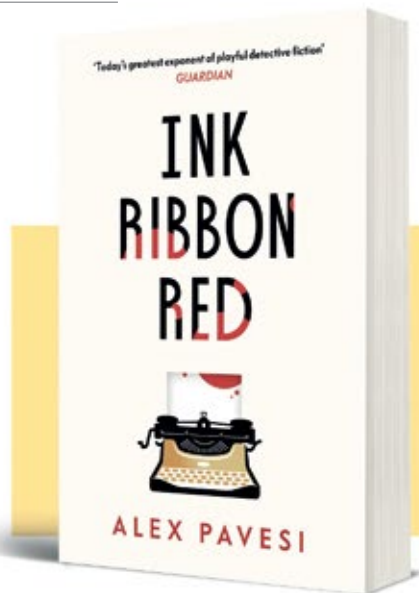
Playground by Richard Powers

A group of people meet on the history-scarred island of Makatea in French Polynesia, marked for humanity's next great adventure: a plan to send floating, autonomous cities out into the open sea. Set in the world's largest ocean, *Playground* explores that last wild place we have yet to colonise and interweaves profound themes of technology and the environment, and a deep exploration of our shared humanity in a way only Richard Powers can.



The City and Its Uncertain Walls by Haruki Murakami

In the new novel from the author of *1Q84*, a young man searches for his missing girlfriend in an imaginary city. Taking a job in a remote library with its own mysteries, he discovers her working in a dream library within the walled city. With her memory gone and reality blurring, he must decide what he's willing to sacrifice. A love story, a quest, an ode to books and to the libraries that house them, *The City and Its Uncertain Walls* is a parable for these strange times.

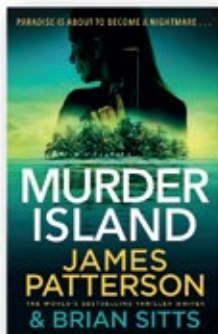


TOP FICTION

December

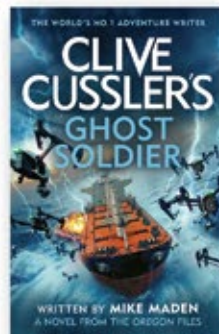
Ink Ribbon Red by Alex Pavesi

In the most original literary thriller of 2024, a group of friends at a country house birthday party write short mysteries where one is the killer and another the victim. As they reveal secrets and grudges in their tales, the lines between fiction and reality blur, culminating in a real murder. From the author of *Eight Detectives*, this story explores how hidden truths can unravel in the most unexpected ways.



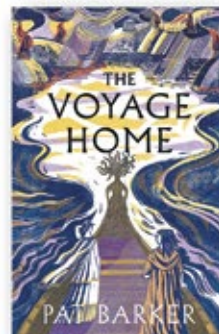
Murder Island by James Patterson

When Brandt 'Doc' Savage and his girlfriend Kira land on a desert island in the middle of the Atlantic, they think they've found a perfect utopia. An escape from their tumultuous pasts. But they don't have long to enjoy their new-found peace before they are violently separated and dragged to opposite ends of the earth. Can Doc and Kira find each other before one of their many enemies catches them first?



Clive Cussler's Ghost Soldier by Mike Maden

In the latest instalment of the Oregon Files series, Juan Cabrillo and the crew of the Oregon face their toughest challenge yet. As African jihadis attack with advanced American weapons, Cabrillo tracks a mysterious arms dealer known as the Vendor from Afghanistan to Kuala Lumpur. Undercover and surrounded by deadly AI-driven technology, Cabrillo must stop high-speed drones carrying neurotoxin to prevent global conflict.



The Voyage Home by Pat Barker

In the thrilling follow-up to *The Women of Troy* and *The Silence of the Girls*, the war has ended, and Troy is in ruins. Captured Trojan women, including prophetess Cassandra and her maid Ritsa, face a grim fate as concubines to King Agamemnon. Meanwhile, Queen Clytemnestra plots revenge for her sacrificed daughter. As fates intertwine, Agamemnon's return promises a dramatic and irreversible change for all.



Then Things Went Dark by Bea Fitzgerald

Six reality show contestants land on a desert island, eager to win, but after three weeks, five are at a Portuguese police station, and none are victorious. Because twelve million people were watching when Rhys Sutton died on camera, and someone must pay for the crime. With secrets under scrutiny, the best friend, rival, girlfriend, lover, and enemy are left to face the consequences, despite being silent. **12**

READ THE EXTRACTS

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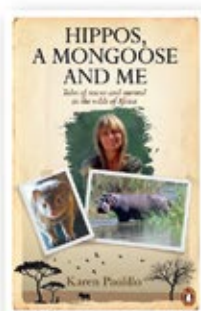


NATURE'S BEST

Find the perfect gift for the nature-lover in your life with our curated selection of captivating books that celebrate the beauty and diversity of the natural world.

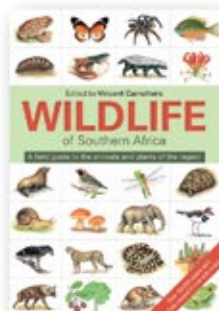
Veld: The Gardens and Landscapes of Patrick Watson by Garreth van Niekerk

Patrick Watson is South Africa's leading landscape architect, renowned for mega-sites like Sun City and intimate spaces such as the Apartheid Museum gardens. With over 200 gardens across Africa and beyond, he blends artistic intuition, botanical expertise, and a passion for conservation. *Veld* showcases 23 of his inspiring projects, celebrating his use of indigenous plants and landforms to create transformative landscapes that honour nature's beauty.



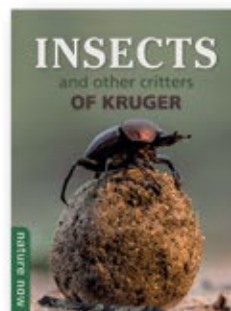
Hippos, a Mongoose and Me by Karen Paolillo

In this sequel to the popular *A Hippo Love Story*, author Karen Paolillo takes us deeper into her courageous but perilous life among Africa's wildlife in this collection of vivid stories reflecting the decades that Karen and her husband, Jean-Roger, have lived and worked in the wilds of southeast Zimbabwe. Inspiring, surprising and sometimes sad, this heartfelt anthology is testament to the courage and resilience of its intrepid author.



Wildlife of Southern Africa by Vincent Carruthers

This long-standing, trusted field guide to the wildlife of southern Africa describes over 2 000 plants and animals, each accompanied by accurate illustrations in full colour. Comprehensively updated, it now features range maps for most groups. The chapters are colour-coded for easy reference, and diagnostic features appear in bold type within the descriptions. Each chapter is written by a leading expert in the field, and covers all main plant and animal groups.




Insects and other Critters of Kruger by Joan Young

Besides being a world-famous game-viewing destination, the Kruger National Park is home to an incredible diversity of bugs, beetles, butterflies, spiders, scorpions and other creepy-crawlies. This richly illustrated, beginner-friendly guide is ideal for the casual visitor keen to identify and learn more about the Park's smaller inhabitants. Find out what happens inside a termite mound, how ladybirds protect themselves from predators, and why dung beetles race to fresh dung pats.



Kirstenbosch: The Most Beautiful Garden in Africa by Brian J. Huntley

Kirstenbosch is a name that resonates around the world as the home of a uniquely rich flora in a setting of unsurpassed beauty. Established soon after the unification of South Africa in 1910, the Garden continues to draw both tourists and locals to its enchanting spaces and botanical riches. In this new edition, the story is brought up to date with details of new developments and attractions, making it a quality memento. 

Art, Animals, & Authenticity

Animals and art have always been cornerstones of James Norbury's life. From fostering kittens to creating heartfelt illustrations, his journey has been shaped by the beauty and innocence of animals, leading him down an artistic path and helping him find joy in sharing his work with the world.



The first streaks of light brushed the sky.



“Animals have always held a special place in my heart. To me, they are the epitome of peace, innocence, and beauty, and they serve as endless sources of inspiration. My love for animals is reflected in my lifestyle; I don't consume or use any animal products and spend a lot of my time volunteering with a local animal charity. My wife and I also foster kittens, which, despite being demanding at times, brings us immense happiness.

My journey into the world of art began when I was a child. I was surrounded by creativity. My father, a sculptor and painter, influenced me deeply. I spent my early years drawing animals and cartoon characters, eventually moving on to architectural pen and ink drawings. Although I didn't attend art school, I always found ways to teach myself the techniques I needed to bring my ideas to life.

The most rewarding aspect of my career has been getting my ideas out into the world. Before my work with *Big Panda and Tiny Dragon*, much of my art and writing remained unseen, confined to drawers or obscure corners of the internet. Now, it's especially gratifying to know that my work is genuinely helping people.

I believe my work resonates with people because it stems from my own experiences and emotions. These feelings are universal, and no matter our status in life, we all share similar emotions and concerns. This commonality allows most people to relate to the ideas in my pictures. While not every piece connects with

'We should start now,' said the Wolf,



'for the moon will not wait for us.'


every reader, our human experiences are similar on many levels.

My father once told me that art is about the idea and that you need just enough skill to portray that idea. This perspective has been crucial for me, as it alleviates the pressure of trying to achieve perfection, which I find crippling. For other artists, my advice is to recognise your unique combination of elements and create work only you can create. Draw on the things you love and find inspiring, and channel them into your art. Always create for yourself first; if others like it, that's a bonus."



Following the Moon is out now.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The beautifully illustrated *Following the Moon* is a moving story that follows a wise, aged wolf and a young, orphaned pup on an unforgettable journey through a wintry landscape. As they navigate day and night, they learn profound lessons about friendship, life, death, change and loss. It's a quest that will stay with you forever. 



Just because we have lost sight of our goal,
it doesn't mean we should give up.

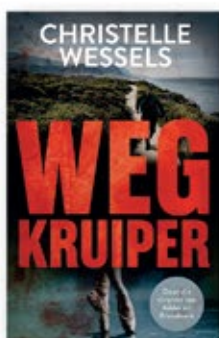
There is always the possibility of a new way.'

As Kersvader raad nodig het

Ons deel 'n paar resensente en boekwurms se keuses vir vanjaar se Kerskous.

Twa die tydloper deur Anoeschka von Meck

Die verhaal draai om Twalie Albrecht, die enigste dogter tussen 'n klomp woeste seuns, en het my meegesleur. Sy is 'n buitestander in die gesin. Haar ontdekkings oor hul komvandaan onthul stelselmatig die eksentrieke gesin se geheime. 'n Paar onwaarskynlike engele op Twalie se lewenspad help haar om sin van haar plek in die wêreld te maak. Boeiend van begin tot einde. - Phyllis Green, SARIE-boekeredakteur



Wegkruiper deur Christelle Wessels

“Wanneer volgende jaar se kortlys vir spanningsromans aangekondig word, gaan *Wegkruiper* op almal se lippe wees. Nie net is dit die skrywer se beste boek tot op hede nie, maar ook een van die top krimi's van die jaar. Dit is 'n tetris-spel wat teen 'n vinnige tempo inmekaar gepas moet word. Verskillende storielyne, cliff hangers, driedimensionele karakters, kleurvolle milieu-beskriving.” - Stefaans Coetzee, vryskut-resensent



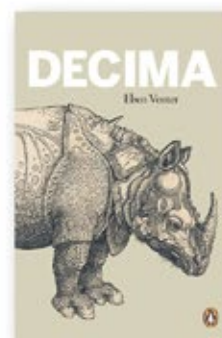
Anoniem deur Chanette Paul

“*Anoniem* is die skrywer se vyftigste roman. In hierdie mylpaalwerk kom die binnewerking van die uitgewersbedryf onder die loep. Die roman is 'n goeie voorbeeld van genrevermenging. Verwag 'n goeie skeut spanning, ernstige verhoudingsuitdagings en ingekleur deur die moontlikheid van moord. Verder word meervoudige storielyne knap verweef sodat dit by lesers met uiteenlopende smaak, byval vind.” - Amanda Claassens, *Penpunt*



Donker water deur Martin Steyn

“Hierdie roman het my onkant gevang omdat dit geensins 'n geykte resep volg nie. Gestroop van enige romantisering is dit 'n 'slice of life'-verhaal oor 'n jong polisiekonstabel, wie betrokke raak by die polisie se duikeneid. Die leser sak saam met die hoofkarakter in troebel waters af. 'n Kragtige metafoor van 'n stukkende wêreld waar 'n man, soos enige ander mens, sukkel om kop bo water te hou.” - Francois Bekker, vryskut-resensent



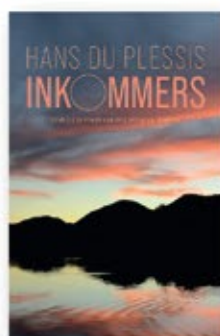
Decima deur Eben Venter

“Hierdie roman is gewoon meesleurend. Outofiksie, fabel, 'n speurverhaal, jeugherinneringe, reisverslag én wetenskap word saamgesnoer om te skryf oor bewaring. Die megaherbivoor, die renoster, word in hierdie boek beskryf vanuit verskillende invalshoeke met talle stemme. *Decima* gaan oor renosterstroping, maar dit gaan uiteindelik oor so veel meer. Selfs die renoster word aan die woord gestel.” - Joan Hambidge, vryskut-resensent



Die nege lewens van Mevrou Smit deur Elizabeth Wasserman

“Die mees onwaarskynlike speurder in die land. Mevrou Smit is ’n paradoksale karakter van wie die leser maklik hou. Met ’n donker verlede smag sy na eerlike suiwerheid op die platteland. ’n Klein dorp is egter ’n voorbeeld van stille waters, diepe grond. ’n Lyk by ’n bruilof - die bruidegom se eksvrou - verhoed die voltrekking van die huwelik. Daar is meer vrae as antwoorde. Skaterlag van begin tot einde met heerlike donker ondertone.”
- Francois Bekker, vryskut-resensent



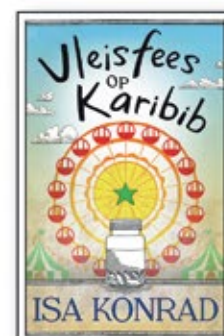
Inkommers deur Hans du Plessis

“Die Kom is sedert die Groot Trek die Afrikaners se plek. Dis ’n tuiste, ’n veilige vesting waarheen Bennie Afrikaner sy nuwe liefde bring om die mense te leer ken: die opregte, die allerwetters, die boelie, die slagoffer, die eenvoudige. Temas soos identiteit, plek en herkoms kom aan die bod. Behoort die Kom nét aan gebore Kommers? Só kom ons by een van die mensdom se boeiendste vrae: is almal nie maar inkommers sonder enige regte nie? En is die grond en alles wat dit dra, nie almal se verantwoordelikheid nie?”
- Amanda Botha, FMR Boekkeuse



Waar die wolwe huil deur Magdalen Walters

“Die formaat van Lapa se Romanzas maak dit ewe gepas vir ’n Kerskous of ’n strandsak. Waar die wolwe huil skets die oudwêreldse fleur van Engeland in 1814, met kastele, baronne en koetse van die rykes, in skrilke kontras met armoede en lewe in stegies. Wat hierdie historiese romanse nog meer interessant maak, is die elemente van fantasie en mitiese figure. Ideale volgoed leesstof.” - Amanda Claassens, *Penpunt*



Vleisfees op Karibib deur Isa Konrad

“Aanvanklik het die voorblaaie van *Vleisfees op Karibib* en sy voorganger, *Doodsake op Karibib*, vir my vreemd kinderlik voorgekom, maar toe ek eers oor *cozy mysteries* begin lees, het ek besef dis eintlik perfek. Ek het ook besef ek is die perfekte *cozy*-leser - ek hou van speurstories sonder grusame detail. Bowenal is ek egter ’n liefhebber van die liefdesverhaal - en dis Con en Alet se storie wat my hier ook die grootste genot gegee het.” - Alta Cloete, vryskut-resensent

Breekpunt deur Marie Lotz

“Kersfees is om die draai en ons almal kyk na vakansieleesstof. *Breekpunt* moet jou eerste keuse wees, want die skrywer het haar gevestig as een van die beste krimi skrywers nóg in Afrikaans. Net soos haar vorige boeke, lees dit soos ’n film. Dit is nie vir sensitiewe lesers bedoel nie. Dit het veelvoudige storielyne, strek karakters en die kinkels tref jou soos ’n sluipmoordkoeël onverhoeds!” - Stefaans Coetzee, vryskut-resensent



Lessons in Letting Go

In *How to Let Things Go*, Zen Buddhist monk Shunmyo Masuno teaches us the art of releasing what we can't control. Through 99 simple yet powerful insights, his calming guide shows how to live with clarity, ease, and purpose by letting go of unnecessary distractions and embracing the present.

“Those who have the power to let things go are not at the mercy of their personal relationships.

They don't feel compelled to be constantly connected on social media, so they don't monitor their friends by text 24/7, nor do they get caught up in gossip.

They know that friendship is about quality over quantity. They're good at disregarding the opinions and actions of people they don't even know.

Those who have the power to let things go are able to eliminate distractions at work.

They aren't easily swayed by others, so they don't obsess over the judgments of their coworkers. Nor do they allow useless or unnecessary information to motivate them.

They consider how things relate to them, then make a decision and take action. They're good at blocking out superfluous information and external influences, such as what other people say or do.

Those who have the power to let things go are able to spend their days in relative ease.

They aren't weighed down by regret, nor do they waste time worrying about things

6 Those who have the power to let things go are able to spend their days in relative ease.”

9



Extracted from *How to Let Things Go* by Shunmyo Masuno.

that have yet to happen. They don't torment themselves. They're good at letting go of things they can't control, things that are inevitable, things that are in the past.

They know what they ought to let go of.

Doing so gives them clarity of mind and heart, enabling them to concentrate on what's important. By minimizing complications, they are free to live their best lives, in good health and comfort. There are many things in this world that we cannot control. Other people, the past, the future ... let all those things go. Instead of allowing them to consume our mind and our energy, it's better to devote our efforts to what we can achieve in the moment.

There is a Zen expression, *hogejaku*, which means 'Let go of everything.' As that saying shows, a life in which you are able to let go is a Zen life.

Of course, at work or in relationships – as in everything in life – there will be things you can't let go of. How do you distinguish between what you ought to let go of and what you ought not to? I address all of that in the pages of *How to Let Things Go*.”

CAN WE CONTROL THE AGE OF AI?

From renowned historian Yuval Noah Harari comes *Nexus*, an exploration of how information networks have shaped humanity's past and now threaten our future. Spanning from ancient myths to the age of AI, Harari asks how we can wield the power of information without destroying ourselves



“If we Sapiens are so wise, why are we so self-destructive?

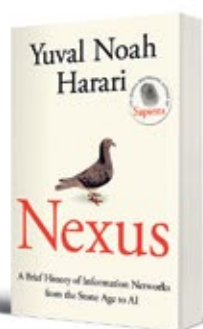
At a deeper level, although we have accumulated so much information about everything from DNA molecules to distant galaxies, it doesn't seem that all this information has given us an answer to the big questions of life: who are we? What should we aspire to? What is a good life, and how should we live it? Despite the stupendous amounts of information at our disposal, we are as susceptible as our ancient ancestors to fantasy and delusion. Nazism and Stalinism are but two recent examples of the mass insanity that occasionally engulfs even modern societies. Nobody disputes that humans today have a lot more information and power than in the Stone Age, but it is far from certain that we understand ourselves and our role in the universe much better.

Why are we so good at accumulating more information and power, but far less successful at acquiring wisdom? Throughout history many traditions have believed that some fatal flaw in our nature tempts us to pursue powers we don't know how to handle. The Greek myth of Phaethon told of a boy who discovers that he is the son of Helios, the sun god. Wishing to prove his divine origin, Phaethon demands the privilege of driving the chariot of the sun. Helios warns Phaethon that no human can control the celestial horses that pull the solar chariot. But Phaethon insists, until the sun god relents. After rising proudly in the sky, Phaethon indeed loses control of the chariot. The sun veers off course, scorching




“If we Sapiens are so wise, why are we so self-destructive?

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Extracted from
Nexus by Yuval
Noah Harari.

all vegetation, killing numerous beings and threatening to burn the earth itself. Zeus intervenes and strikes Phaethon with a thunderbolt. The conceited human drops from the sky like a falling star, himself on fire. The gods reassert control of the sky and save the world.

Two thousand years later, when the Industrial Revolution was making its first steps and machines began replacing humans in numerous tasks, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe published a similar cautionary tale titled 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice'. Goethe's poem (later popularised as a Walt Disney animation starring Mickey Mouse) tells of an old sorcerer who leaves a young apprentice in charge of his workshop and gives him some chores to tend to while he is gone, like fetching water from the river. The apprentice decides to make things easier for himself and, using one of the sorcerer's spells, enchants a broom to fetch the water for him. But the apprentice doesn't know how to stop the broom, which relentlessly fetches more and more water, threatening to flood the workshop. In panic, the apprentice cuts the enchanted broom in two with an axe, only to see each half become another broom. Now two enchanted brooms are inundating the workshop with water. When the old sorcerer returns, the apprentice pleads for help: 'The spirits that I summoned, I now cannot rid myself of again.' The sorcerer immediately breaks the spell and stops the flood. The lesson to the apprentice – and to humanity – is clear: never summon powers you cannot control.” 



EXCLUSIVE

BEHIND THE CURTAIN OF POWER

Mathews Phosa's *Witness to Power* chronicles his journey through South Africa's political upheavals - from exile and ANC leadership to navigating alliances and conflicts with presidents Mandela, Mbeki, Zuma, and Ramaphosa - offering insider insights into the country's ruling party. In this extract from the book, Phosa recounts his encounters with the Gupta brothers following his appointment as ANC treasurer-general in 2008.

“Being treasurer-general of the ANC is an honour with serious responsibilities. You are called on to pump life-giving oxygen into the heart of the organisation by creating networks for funding and raising real money. Unfortunately, whenever money is involved, the vultures soon start circling.

My first encounter with the now infamous Gupta brothers was in early 2008, shortly after the Polokwane conference. As the newly elected president and treasurer-general of the ANC, Zuma and I had met at his Forest Town home to discuss the political environment in which the party now found itself, when he told me there were ‘some people’ he wanted me to meet. Indicating that I should follow in my own car, Zuma set off in a small red Corolla.

We drove north into the wealthy suburb of Saxonwold. At a certain address on Saxonwold Drive, huge gates swung open to admit us. It was as if they were expecting us. I parked my car and was ushered up the steps of a white, porticoed entrance into the luxurious mansion beyond. It was here that

I was introduced to the three Gupta brothers – Ajay, Atul and Rajesh – none of whom I had met before.

After exchanging the usual niceties, the discussion turned to the ANC and funding. It was no secret that the party was facing some serious financial challenges and that we needed substantial support if we were to change our fortunes ahead of the 2009 general election. Elections are costly operations, and, as with every previous election, cash flow was a concern. The Guptas presented themselves as a wealthy and influential business family from India with a wide network of contacts in that country. I said that, if this was true, I'd like them to find out if companies such as Tata and Reliance would be willing to donate to the ANC. I remarked that it would also assist the party if they could identify ten prominent Indian businesses that we could approach for potential funding of our Luthuli House initiatives.

At some point the Guptas boasted that they were acting for Anil Ambani of the Reliance Group, a powerful conglomerate with reach across a wide range of industries. The Ambani family is one of the richest in India.

The brothers indicated that Reliance wanted to invest in mobile telecommunications provider MTN, but on condition that the primary listing be in India. I replied that our laws governing stock-exchange listings would not allow that.

I had been listening to Ajay, Atul and Rajesh, whom everyone called Tony, with an open mind, but alarm bells began to sound when they told me they'd be willing to fly 'Baba' (as Zuma was commonly called) to any destination the ANC identified as a potential source of party funding, including India, free of charge. This remark made me immediately uncomfortable. I feared where the discussion was leading and whether we were being compromised. We were in the midst of a complex and politically sensitive process trying to extricate Zuma from the Schabir Shaik scandal and had a duty to protect him from any similar embarrassment. If it emerged that we were being flown around the world for free, it would only add to the ANC's and Zuma's sorrows. I firmly told them as much.

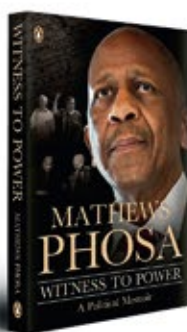
As we were having this discussion, Brian Molefe, then the CEO of the Public Investment Corporation, entered the room, greeted us and then casually wandered off into another part of the house. I had the distinct impression that he was familiar with both the house and the family. Molefe would later become CEO of Transnet and then Eskom.

Tony Gupta then suggested that we open an overseas bank account for the ANC into which they could pay the funds that they sourced for us. After some discussion, we agreed on opening an account in Dubai.

Towards the end of the meeting, the brothers surprised me with a business proposal. They needed a local partner for one of their companies, Sahara Computers. I said I would look into it, which I later did. After some research, my staff and I came to the conclusion that Sahara was nothing more than a shelf company with few assets and limited operating capabilities. While our finding was incorrect, it was fortuitous. I never replied to the offer and it was never repeated.

I travelled to Dubai some weeks later in my capacity as ANC treasurer-general. I flew with Emirates and stayed at the Burj Al Arab, all at the party's expense, despite an offer from the Guptas to foot the bill. The day after my arrival, Tony and I visited a financial institution and

I did not realise, at that stage, the extent to which they had already infiltrated the ANC.



Witness to Power is out now.


opened an ANC bank account as joint signatories. Afterwards, Tony said to me, 'We have to talk', and so we went to a restaurant not far from my hotel. To my great discomfort, he launched into excessive flattery, indicating that, in their view, I was the natural future successor to Zuma and that he and his brothers had only the highest respect for me. He said they knew that Zuma also deeply respected me. I did not react to his unfortunate adulation, wary as I was of where this was all leading.

It was then that Tony proposed an arrangement whereby the funds that accrued to the account we had just opened be managed in a particular way, namely that one third went to the Guptas, one third went to 'Baba' and one third to the ANC. I was infuriated but tried my best to remain calm. I refused point-blank to agree to his proposal, which, I told him, could potentially cause substantial harm to Zuma, the ANC and others. My position made clear, I bid him goodbye and left, leaving him at the restaurant.

Incensed, I set off for a scheduled meeting with Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). I returned home after that.

A month or two later, the Guptas dispatched a go-between to meet with me in my Johannesburg offices. The woman, whom I had never met before, conveyed to me a request from the brothers to remove my signature from the ANC's Dubai account. I refused to sign the forms she had brought with her to effect this change, and told her that I could not, in good conscience, sign anything without knowing what would happen to the funds that may already be in the account. She left without my signature, and to this day I do not know whether any money accrued in that account and, if it did, how it was disbursed.

I decided not to burden my fellow members of the Top Six with the details of my dealings with the Guptas, as I dismissed it as all a load of rubbish and a waste of time. I did not realise, at that stage, the extent to which they had already infiltrated the ANC, its leadership and the institutions of government.

In the national elections in April 2009, the ANC won 65.9 per cent of the vote, and Jacob Zuma was inaugurated as the country's president. After his brief term as caretaker president, Kgalema Motlanthe became deputy president." 



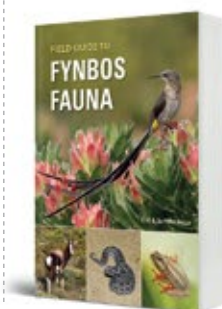
WILD WONDERLANDS

From the diverse wildlife of West Coast National Park to the lush greenery of Magoebaskloof, discover unforgettable natural escapes with insights from renowned nature authors.

WEST COAST NATIONAL PARK, WESTERN CAPE

“West Coast National Park has so much to offer and remains one of our favourite spots to unwind and recharge. Every day offers a new experience in this landscape; the key is to slow down enough to enjoy it!

Besides the beautiful scenery of the striking lagoon surrounded by dramatic granite outcrops and deep coastal sands, the reserve offers an abundance of wildlife. The well-placed bird hides allows for tranquil enjoyment of waders and waterbirds, while there is always a chance for an exciting rarity amongst them. Langebaan Lagoon is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) and a critical overwintering site for a diversity of migratory Palearctic wading birds. A



drive through the reserve can provide some special sightings of caracal, black harrier, common eland, angulate tortoise and puffadder. We were once even lucky enough to have the extraordinary little Grant's Golden Mole cross the road in front of us!

Walking one of the trails will additionally allow you a closer look at some spectacular plant species, such as the Western Cape endemic Fourtone Viooltjie on the granite outcrops, and some of the smaller critters such as the charismatic Bush Karoo Rat, the inquisitive Cape Grey Mongoose and the black morph of the Southern Karusa Lizard. Wet mornings can even produce a chorus of the special little Namaqua and Sand Rain Frogs punctuating another amazing day in a wonderful place.”

**Cliff and Suretha Dorse, authors of
*Field Guide to Fynbos Fauna***



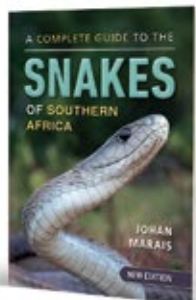
SPRINGBOK, NORTHERN CAPE

"After 30 years of joking about starting a reptile research farm in or near Springbok in Namaqualand, my good friend Paul Moler and I (with a generous donation from our good friend Ab Abercrombie) purchased an 850 hectare farm just west of Springbok, registered it as a non-profit company and immediately got stuck in removing alien vegetation and getting it back to pristine habitat. Kokerboom potentially has over 80 reptile species, more than 85 bird species, several mammals including springbok, duiker, aardwolf, aardvark, jackal. Caracal and African Wild cat.

The main function of Kokerboom Biological Research Station is to offer affordable accommodation and facilities to students doing their post graduate studies on wildlife, geology and vegetation. To generate funds, the ten-sleeper house is rented out ad hoc at R2,500 per day.

This is by far my favourite December holiday destination. It's a 12-hour drive from Pretoria but a piece of paradise. For one walk along the perimeter fence, gear yourself up for a 17 km hike over rocky outcrops with an abundance of wildlife and Namaqualand vegetation, including rare Conophytums and Quiver trees, with Verreaux eagles patrolling the outcrops in search of dassies. Sitting around the

With no light pollution Kokerboom Biological Research Station is also the perfect spot to watch the stars.



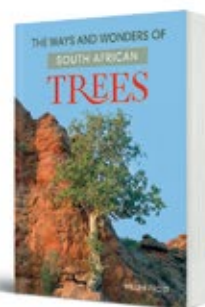
fire pit at night listening to the sounds of nature after watching a sensational sunset reminds one of how good life is. Many of our walks start in the afternoon and we get back to the farmhouse well after midnight. With no light pollution it is also the perfect spot to watch the stars."

Johan Marais, author of *A Complete Guide to the Snakes of Southern Africa*

TRANSVAAL DRakensberg ESCARPMENT, MPUMALANGA AND LIMPOPO

"I am living and working in the natural world and if I take a break, it is always to somewhere off the beaten track. South Africa doesn't have much by way of evergreen forests and that may be why the forests along the Limpopo and Mpumalanga escarpment are my *happy place*. Venturing on foot into these majestic wildlands, especially early in the mornings, is quite an enriching experience. In these forests you will encounter, amongst others, monumental trees like forest iron plum, assegai, wild peach, cabbage tree, red crowberry, red stinkwood, matumi, forest lavender tree, lemonwood, mitzeeri, wild figs, and so many others, all growing to gigantic versions of their species."

Willem Frost, author of *The Ways and Wonders of South African Trees*



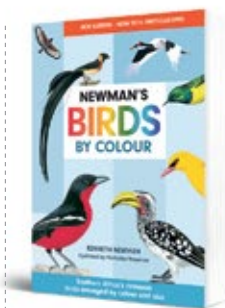


MAGOEBAKLOOF, LIMPOPO

"When the heat of summer makes the bushveld unbearable, there is only one place I want to retreat to during my December holidays. Nestled in the northernmost part of the Drakensberg Mountain range, Magoebaskloof is my ultimate retreat.

Known for its lush greenery, misty mornings, and cascading waterfalls, this area is a hidden gem for birders and nature lovers. One of my favourite activities here is birding in the indigenous forests, where exclusive species like the White-starred Robin, Narina Trogon, and Black-fronted Bushshrike are just the beginning of the elusive special species that can be spotted. Alongside hiking and kayaking, birdwatching adds to the magic of this peaceful escape. The cool mountain air provides a refreshing break from the summer heat. On misty days, cosy fires add to the charm, making Magoebaskloof feel like a nature lover's paradise. Whether it's spotting your next elusive bird or simply enjoying the cool mountain air and peaceful surroundings, Magoebaskloof offers me that perfect place to unwind and rejuvenate for the coming new year."

Nick Newman, co-author of *Newman's Birds by Colour* (ook beskikbaar in Afrikaans)



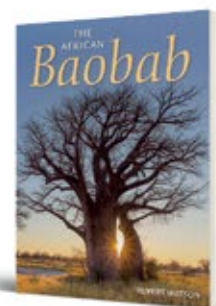
WATAMU, KENYA

"A combination of splendid restaurants, an all-tide lagoon to swim in, the fascinating remains of an abandoned Arab town nearby at Ged, just beyond which is the distinctive Arabuko-Sokoke forest with endemic birds and animals, make Watamu, near Malindi on Kenya's north coast a wonderful destination for naturalists as well as sun-seeking hedonists.

North and south are huge estuaries where thousands of migratory waders congregate during the northern winter, not to mention fascinating, more local birds like Crab Plovers and Greater Flamingos.

Several of the resorts are ideal for kids, and if we're grandchildren-free then we can rent a friend's house on the beach. And of course while everyone else is splashing in the shadows, I can go and satisfy my urge to hug *Adansonia digitata* all over the place after being deprived of such an opportunity for all the preceding months in baobab-free Nairobi!"

Rupert Watson, author of *The African Baobab*



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A FESTIVE FEAST

Christmas Day is all about gathering with loved ones, sharing joy ... and indulging in delicious festive food that brings warmth and celebration to the table. From citrusy salads to succulent slow-cooked meats, we've got everything you need to wow your guests and make the day unforgettable.

Citrus Salad with Burrata & Dukkah

**SERVES
4 as a
starter**

"Barely a recipe and more of an assembly than actual work. Prepare the citrus and vinaigrette ahead of time, and the fennel just before serving. If you don't have dukkah, replace it with toasted pistachio nuts - they're equally scrumptious."

1 orange, peeled and sliced
1 ruby grapefruit, peeled and sliced
1 pomelo, peeled and segmented
1 x quantity Orange & Coriander Vinaigrette (see below)
2 fennel bulbs, woody core removed, and thinly sliced
2 burrata balls
dukkah, to finish
pomegranate seeds, to finish
fennel sprigs, to finish

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE

30 ml extra virgin olive oil
7.5 ml apple cider vinegar
15 ml fresh lemon juice
15 ml orange juice
zest of half an orange
2.5 ml ground coriander
3.75 ml Dijon mustard
5 ml honey or maple syrup
+- 1.5 ml Maldon sea salt flakes
freshly ground black pepper

Arrange the citrus on a serving plate. Make the vinaigrette and drizzle a little over the fennel, then add to the citrus segments.



Place the burrata on top. Drizzle with more vinaigrette. Finish with dukkah, pomegranate seeds and fennel sprigs.

COOK'S NOTE:

You need only half the vinaigrette here. Use the remainder for a quick clear-out-the-fridge salad.



Recipe from
*Bibby's More
Good Food* by
Dianne Bibby

Roasted Veg with Camembert Fondue

“Everything tastes better with oozy melted cheese, and here, humble veg sing after a gentle roast.”

- 3 sweet potatoes (800g total)
- 3 mixed-colour peppers
- 3 cloves of garlic
- olive oil
- red wine vinegar
- 3 mixed-colour onions
- 250g Camembert cheese
- 1 French baguette
- ½ a bunch of basil (15g)

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 6. Scrub the sweet potatoes and slice into 1½ cm-thick rounds. Deseed the peppers and slice into chunky wedges. Peel and slice the garlic. Toss it all in a large roasting tray with 1 tablespoon each of olive oil and red wine vinegar and a pinch of sea salt and black pepper.

Halve the unpeeled onions and carefully place cut-side down directly on the bars of the oven, placing the tray of veg beneath. Roast for 45 minutes.

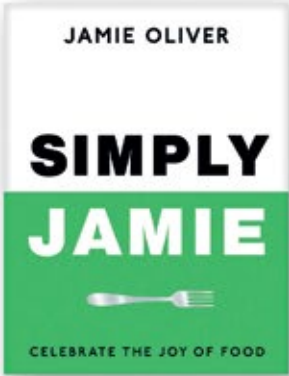
Remove the tray from the oven and use tongs to move the onions to your board, then remove the skins, break the onions apart and toss with the veg.

Leaving a 1 cm rim around the edge, cut the rind off the top of the Camembert, then nestle it into the middle of the tray, drizzle with a little oil, season with black pepper and bake for a final 10 minutes, warming the baguette alongside. Pick over the basil leaves, and serve!

SERVES 6

PREPARATION 7 minutes

COOKING 55 minutes



Recipe from *Simply Jamie* by Jamie Oliver

ENERGY	FAT	SAT FAT	PROTEIN	CARBS	SUGARS	SALT	FIBRE
475kcal	11.7g	6g	18.3g	74.2g	16g	1.7g	9.8g

Simply Jamie by Jamie Oliver is published by Penguin Michael Joseph © Jamie Oliver Enterprises Limited (2024 Simply Jamie). Recipe photography: © David Loftus, 2024.

Yoghurt & Cardamom Potato Curry

"Fear not - this is definitely not a hot potato salad; however, it does echo the creaminess of a classic potato salad through the addition of the yoghurt.

I love making this dish as a side to other meals, and it works beautifully with a huge green salad or even a meat dish. It's a great way to use up your almost-old potatoes and doesn't require too much hands-on time."

200g double-cream yogurt
1 Tbsp dried mango powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp garam masala
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ scant tsp ground ginger
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp chilli powder
1 tsp ground coriander
150ml water
4 medium potatoes, peeled or unpeeled, and chopped into bite-sized pieces
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil

1 bay leaf
3 cardamom pods
1 onion, chopped
1 tsp grated ginger (add more or less, to taste)
1 green chilli

In a bowl, combine the yogurt and spices, and mix well. Add the water and mix, then set aside.

Boil the potatoes until they are softened but still hold their shape. Drain well.

To a shallow pan, add the oil and fry the potatoes over medium heat until slightly crispy and golden. Remove and drain well on paper towel.

To the leftover oil, add the bay leaf and cardamom, and fry for a few seconds. Add the chopped onion and ginger, and cook until the onion is slightly soft and golden. Stir in the yoghurt mixture, green chilli and cooked potatoes. Cook for a few minutes, stirring occasionally, until thickened.

SERVES
2 as a main

TOTAL TIME
45 minutes



Recipe from *The Hungry Table*
by Fatima Saib

Pork Shoulder with Fennel and Roasted Garlic

"There's something to be said for lazy-day cooking. Slow cooking allows all the ingredients to get well acquainted with each other, adding richness and depth. My secret with this recipe is to season this beautiful piece of meat well and then to simply pop it in the oven, where it stays for hours. Every now and then, I check in on its progress, drizzling the pan juices at the bottom of the dish over the browning meat. It's an absolute showstopper every time!"

125 ml olive oil
5 kg pork shoulder
juice of 2 lemons
60 ml fennel seeds
Kalahari coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 whole garlic bulbs

Heat the oven to 180 °C. Drizzle olive oil into a large oven dish. Place the pork shoulder skin side down on your work surface. Drizzle a little olive oil and half of the lemon juice over the meat. Sprinkle half the fennel seeds on top and season with salt. Place the shoulder in the oven dish with the skin side facing up. Drizzle with the rest of the olive oil and lemon juice. Sprinkle the rest of the fennel seeds on top and season with salt and pepper. Place into the oven. After 2 hours lower the heat to 140 °C. Leave to roast for another 4 hours, basting every now and then with the meat juices. Slice the tops off the garlic bulbs and place them next to the pork shoulder for the last hour of cooking.



TIME
7 hours

SERVES
10-12



Recipe from
Klein Jan by
Jan Hendrik
van der
Westhuizen

Leg of Lamb with Mint & Port

SERVES
6-8

"Christmas time would not be complete without a leg of lamb on the table and of course, fresh mint. As your festive centrepiece, this wholesome dish will wow your guests."

2.25-2.7kg leg of lamb

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

¼ cup loosely packed fresh mint,
chopped or 2 tablespoons
dried mint

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 sprigs of fresh rosemary, woody
stems removed, chopped

2 garlic heads, sliced in half
horizontally

¾ cup balsamic vinegar

1 cup port wine

1 cup dry white wine

8 large black figs, some halved,
some left whole

Pomegranate seeds, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Place the leg of lamb inside a large deep roasting tray, fatty side down. Drizzle the meat all over with oil and season both sides generously with the mint, salt, pepper and chopped rosemary.

Arrange the garlic head halves around it, then combine the vinegar, port and white wine and pour it around the meat. Cover with a lid or foil and roast for 3 hours. Remove from the oven, then use tongs to turn the leg over with the fatty side up. Cover and roast for another 2 hours.

Remove the tray from the oven and turn the heat up to 200°C. Return the leg to the oven for 20 minutes, then add the figs around the meat

and roast for another 10 minutes - the figs should be just warm and soft, not falling apart. Garnish with the pomegranate seeds.

Serve warm in the tray as a festive centrepiece.

Recipe from
The Table by
Elmarie Berry



Mango Sorbet

You can't go wrong with a fruity sorbet after a big lunch on a hot South African Christmas day, and this one is just gorgeous.

SERVES
4

2 sweet, ripe mangoes, peeled and chopped
yoghurt or lime juice and lime slices (optional)

Freeze the mango flesh for 3 hours or until quite hard, but not rock solid.

Blend well with an electric mixer and put back in the freezer.

You can add a spoon of yoghurt or a squeeze of lime juice and a slice of lime before serving.

NOTES

This recipe depends on the mangoes being very delicious. If they are only average you may want to add cream or yoghurt to your mixture before freezing, or drizzle a little honey on top.

If the mango has frozen rock hard, wait a few minutes before you blend it.



Recipe from *Recipes to Die Live For: A Tannie Maria Cookbook* by Sally Andrew





SERVES
6-8

Tiramisu

"This decadent dessert is often found on Italian menus. The literal translation of the Italian word 'tiramisu' means 'cheer me up' or 'pick me up'. This refers to the two caffeinated ingredients that are included in this iconic dessert: cocoa and espresso. This is certainly apt; when served cold at the end of a meal, paired with a cup of coffee, you've hit the sweet spot, and nothing quite says 'pick me up' like a delicious helping of tiramisu. Substituting cream cheese for real cream and using a sugar substitute keeps the calories at bay."


$\frac{3}{4}$ cup whipping cream
1 x 250g tub low-fat cream cheese
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Greek-style yoghurt
1½ Tbsp sherry

3 Tbsp granulated sweetener
3 Tbsp coffee granules
1½ cups boiling water
200g sponge fingers
25g dark chocolate, grated
2 tsp cocoa powder

Place the cream, cream cheese, yoghurt, sherry and sweetener in a bowl. Whisk until well combined.

Mix the coffee granules with the boiling water and stir to dissolve. Pour the coffee into a shallow dish. Dip the finger biscuits into the coffee, turning once or twice, until the biscuits have soaked up some of the coffee but are not soggy. Arrange half of them in a dish, then spoon over half the cream cheese mixture, sprinkle over some of the chocolate then repeat the layering,

ending with the creamy layer on top. Cover the dish, then refrigerate for a number of hours or overnight.

When ready to serve, sprinkle over the remaining chocolate and dust with the cocoa powder. 



Recipe from *All Sorts of Junk Food Made Healthy* by Chantal Lascaris

ON MY MIND FROM NOW ON

Thinking about Christmas stirs feelings of nostalgia in Siphokazi Jonas. But one also has to look ahead.

“The festive season road trips of my childhood were defined by rising before dawn, washing in a *waskom* with water warmed over a paraffin heater, and moisturising with copious amounts of Vaseline. Brand new Christmas clothes packed in advance, locking the house up, asking the neighbours to mind the dog, three girls packed into the backseat and playing games to the backtrack of the radio and our parents chatting. We would stop at the rest area to eat steamed bread and hardbody chicken on cement tables on our way to a family gathering *eQoboqobo*.

Now, December is about finding the cheapest flight deals, which sometimes means flying home on Christmas Day, all while trying to figure out which of the myriad of *imicimbi* you can afford to attend between *imigidi*, funerals, weddings, the welcoming of *umakoti*. Dodging uncles who ask for money, or aunts asking how things are going at work, even though you left a job years ago.

Far removed from the sentiment of long ago are long lines in shopping centres, the boom of *amapiano kwitshisanyama* rattling the neighbourhood, youth camps and church conferences, traffic at the beach, fully booked restaurants and shrinking family gatherings. A lucky few might fulfil their dream of being trusted with the keys to the refrigerated trailer at a family event. We suffer the inevitable exhaustion of being on holiday. By the time January shows its face, you wonder whether you should have just stayed home to avoid a season that sometimes loses its meaning.

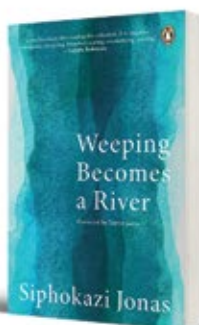
Is this how our parents felt while we, oblivious, went house to house asking for *ikrimesi*? Or while divvying up stokvel

By the time January shows its face, you wonder whether you should have just stayed home.

groceries: bags of mielie meal as tall as a small child, industrial-sized bottles of mayonnaise and mild Rajah curry spice for the potato salad and beef stew that would knock us into slumber after Christmas lunch? Were they looking at the travesty of unwashed dishes and empty coldrink bottles and wondering whether they had enough money left over for books and school fees in a few weeks?

Nostalgia can be intoxicating; a heady whiff of a sanitised past to avoid the discomfort of the present. But growing older, growing apart, losing loved ones, and gaining new ones has made me think a lot about nostalgia as kindling to ignite new traditions. At the end of the street near my grandmother's homestead there was a tap where we fetched water when the tank was empty. We would pack enamel buckets and bottles in a wheelbarrow and make our way down to the corner. If we had some money, a cousin would pop into the house which sold chocolates in unmarked plastic bags, while the others waited for the water to fill up. This is where we held court, nibbling on the conversations we didn't want adults to overhear, and catching up. We always took longer than the task required of us. We took our time at the tap. We took our time making our way back.

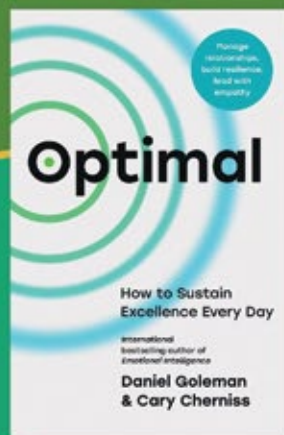
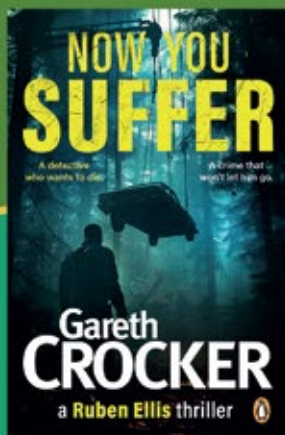
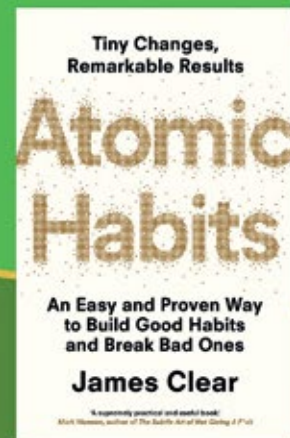
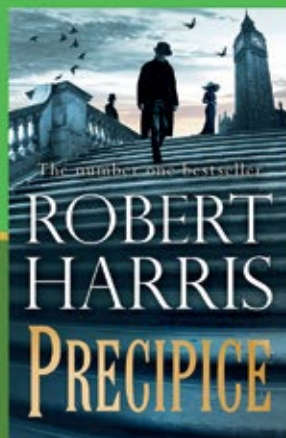
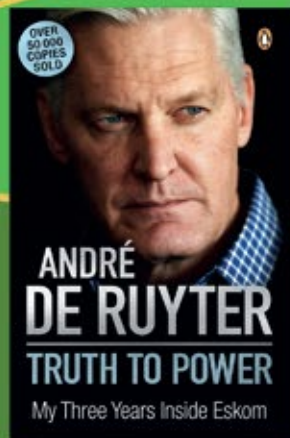
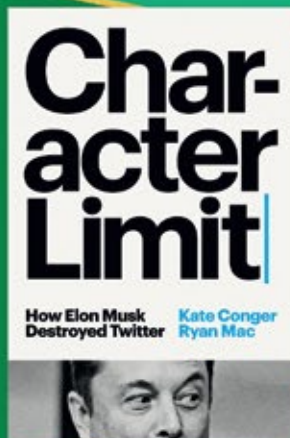
In 2022 we returned to the village for my uncle's funeral. They have plumbing there now, but that tap is still there. This is how I plan to harness nostalgia in making festive season memories for my nephew, even as I watch him grow on FaceTime and with WhatsApp videos throughout the year. I'm planning to take my time with rest, to take the scenic route from the airport, to sip on memory and be quenched.”



Weeping Becomes a River is on shelves now.



Gifts for him





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