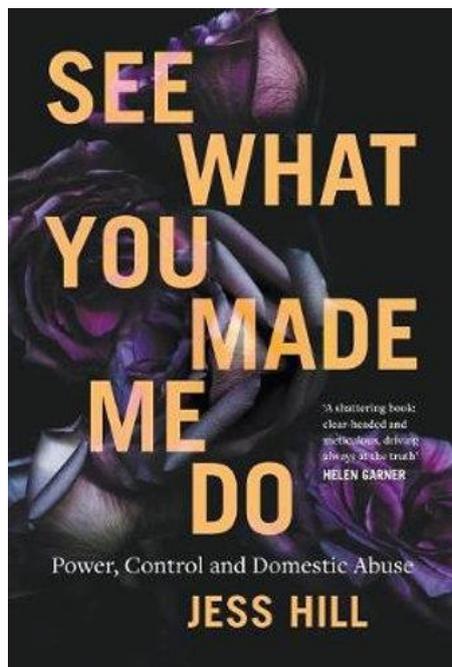


RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER READERS

[Library Lovers Book Group Online – Goondiwindi Regional Council \(grc.qld.gov.au\)](http://grc.qld.gov.au)

Non Fiction

See What You Made Me Do by Jess Hill (2020) (Thanks Kate)

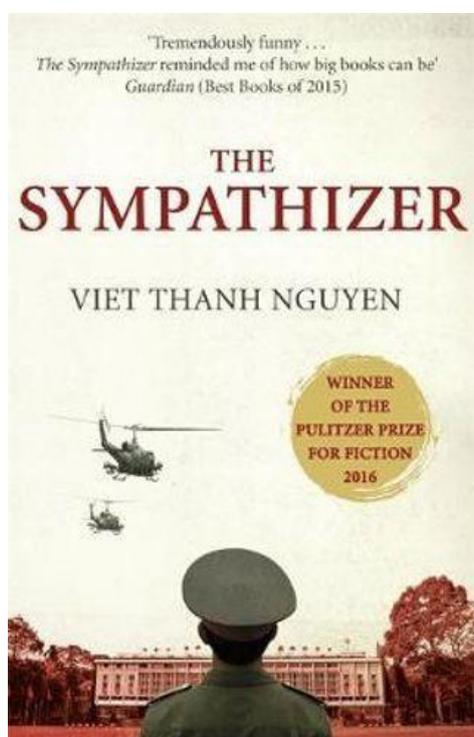


At the office of Safe Steps, Victoria's dedicated 24/7 family violence response call centre, phone counsellors receive a call every three minutes. Many women are repeat callers- on average, they will go back to an abusive partner eight times before leaving for good. 'You must get so frustrated when you think a woman's ready to leave and then she decides to go back,' I say. 'No,' replies one phone counsellor, pointedly. 'I'm frustrated that even though he promised to stop, he chose to abuse her again.'

Women are abused or killed by their partners at astonishing rates- in Australia, almost 17 per cent of women over the age of fifteen - one in six - have been abused by an intimate partner.

In this confronting and deeply researched account, journalist Jess Hill uncovers the ways in which abusers exert control in the darkest - and most intimate - ways imaginable. She asks- What do we know about perpetrators? Why is it so hard to leave? What does successful intervention look like?

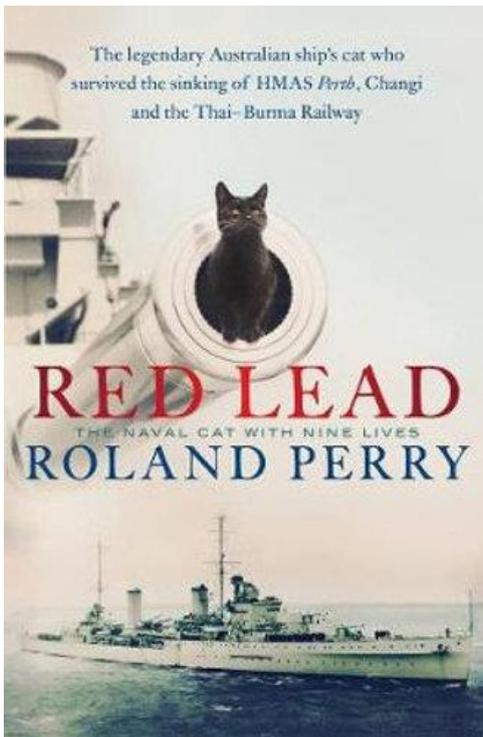
What emerges is not only a searing investigation of the violence so many women experience, but a dissection of how that violence can be enabled and reinforced by the judicial system we trust to protect us. Combining exhaustive research with riveting storytelling, *See What You Made Me Do* dismantles the flawed logic of victim-blaming and challenges everything you thought you knew about domestic and family violence.



The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen (2015)
(Thanks Di)

It is April 1975, and Saigon is in chaos. At his villa, a general of the South Vietnamese army is drinking whiskey and, with the help of his trusted captain, drawing up a list of those who will be given passage aboard the last flights out of the country. The general and his compatriots start a new life in Los Angeles, unaware that one among their number, the captain, is secretly observing and reporting on the group to a higher-up in the Viet Cong. *The Sympathizer* is the story of this captain: a man brought up by an absent French father and a poor Vietnamese mother, a man who went to university in America, but returned to Vietnam to fight for the Communist cause. A gripping spy novel, an astute exploration of extreme politics, and a moving love story, *The Sympathizer* explores a life between two worlds and examines the legacy of the Vietnam War in literature, film, and the wars we fight today.

Red Lead by Roland Perry (2020) (Thanks Judy)



The legendary Australian ship's cat who survived the sinking of HMAS *Perth* and the Thai-Burma Railway

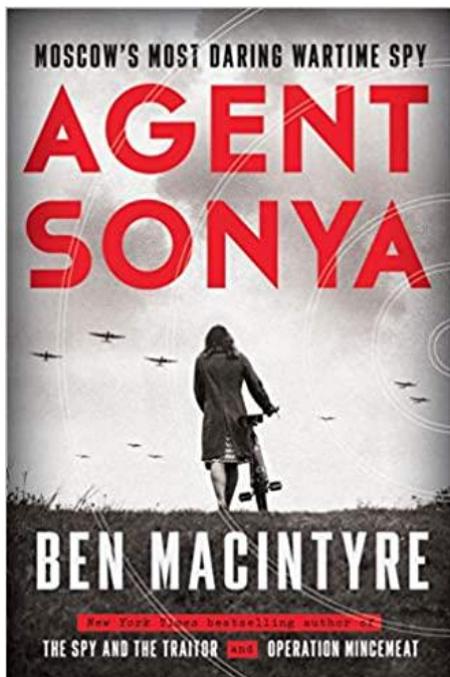
Just after midnight on 1 March 1942, Australia's most renowned cruiser, HMAS *Perth*, was sunk by Japanese naval forces in the Sunda Strait off the coast of Java. Of the 681 men aboard, 328 survived the sinking and made it to shore—and one cat. Her name was Red Lead, and she was the ship's beloved cat.

But surviving shellfire, torpedoes and the fierce currents of the Sunda Strait was only the beginning of the terrible trials Red Lead and the surviving crew were to face over the next three-and-a-half years. From Java to Changi and then on the Thai-Burma Railway, Red Lead was to act as a companion, mascot and occasional protector for a small group of sailors who made it their mission to keep her alive in some of the most hellish prison camps on earth.

Red Lead's story, of courage, loyalty and love amidst battle, imprisonment and death, is brought vividly to life.

This book was a history lesson for me. I knew of the fall of Singapore and of Changi, but didn't know any of the history of the battles around Java. (Local Reader)

Agent Sonya by Ben MacIntyre (2020) (Thanks Suzanne)



In 1942, in a quiet village in the leafy English Cotswolds, a thin, elegant woman lived in a small cottage with her three children and her husband, who worked as a machinist nearby. Ursula Burton was friendly but reserved, and spoke English with a slight foreign accent. By all accounts, she seemed to be living a simple life. Her neighbours knew little about her.

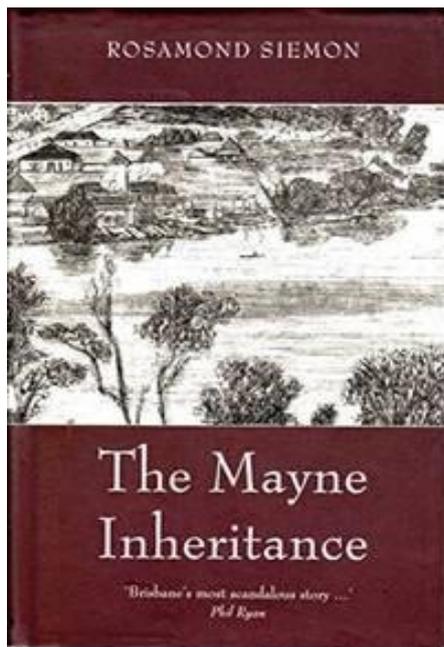
They didn't know that she was a high-ranking Soviet intelligence officer. They didn't know that her husband was also a spy, or that she was running powerful agents across Europe. Behind the facade of her picturesque life, Burton was a dedicated Communist, a Soviet colonel, and a veteran agent, gathering the scientific secrets that would enable the Soviet Union to build the bomb.

This true-life spy story is about the woman code-named "Sonya." Over the course of her career, she was hunted by the Chinese, the Japanese, the Nazis, MI5, MI6, and the FBI—and she evaded them all. Her story reflects the great ideological

clash of the twentieth century—between Communism, Fascism, and Western democracy—and casts new light on the spy battles and shifting allegiances of our own times.

With unparalleled access to Sonya's diaries and correspondence and never-before-seen information on her clandestine activities, Ben MacIntyre has written a history of a legendary secret agent, a woman who influenced the course of the Cold War and helped plunge the world into a decades-long standoff between nuclear superpowers.

***The Mayne Inheritance* by Rosemond Siemon (1997) (Thanks Tom)**



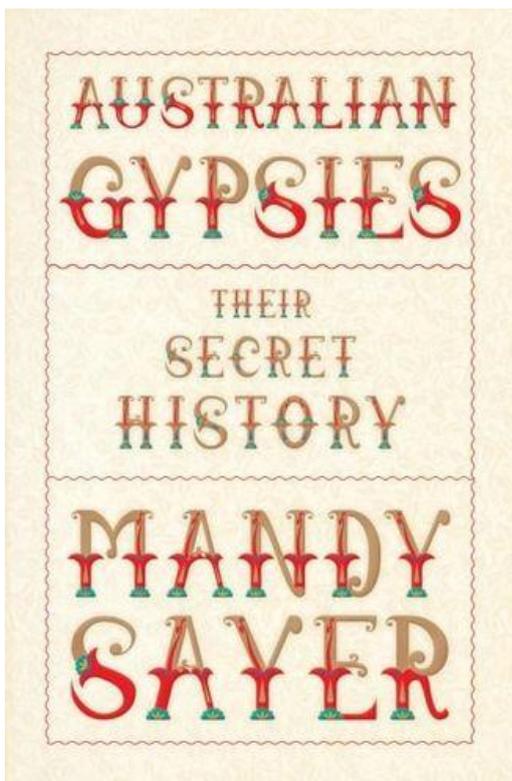
Opening with a macabre mid-nineteenth century murder, *The Mayne Inheritance* unfolds like a gothic thriller.

Was it the murder victim's money that founded patriarch Patrick Mayne's Queen Street business empire? And were the whispered accusations of murder and genetic madness true?

For 150 years scandal and mystery have surrounded the Maynes, a wealthy family who donated the magnificent site on which the University of Queensland now stands.

***Australian Gypsies: Their Secret History* by Mandy Sayers**

(2017) (Thanks Pauline)



Today, roughly 100,000 Gypsies call Australia home, yet until now their experiences have been hidden from our history, and from our present.

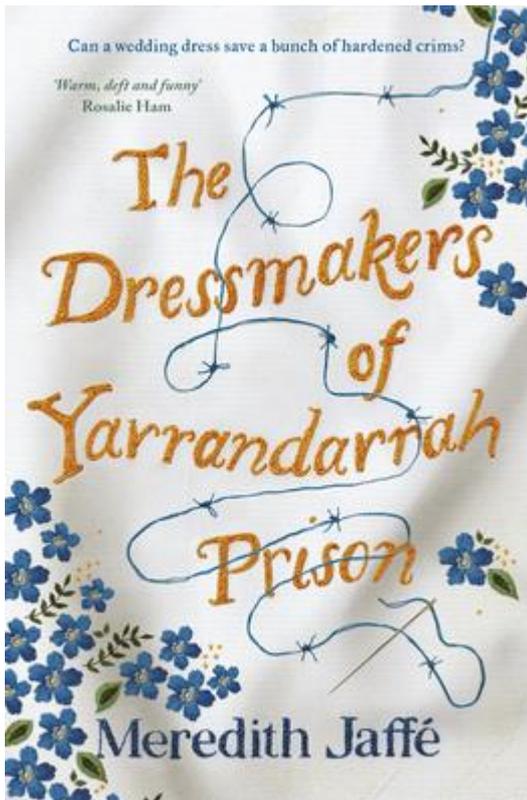
Here, award-winning memoirist and novelist Mandy Sayer weaves together a wide-ranging and exuberant history of *Gypsies in Australia*. She begins with the roots of Romani culture, and traces the first Gypsy people to arrive in Australia, including James Squire, the colony's first brewer. She meets Gypsy families who live all over Australia, who share the stories of their ancestors and their own lives.

With her own nomadic early life and experiences as a street performer, Sayer brings unique insight into the lives of the people she meets, and a strong sense of their extraordinary history. She also demolishes some longstanding but baseless myths along the way. Her original and compelling book reveals a rich part of our history that few of us even know is there.

Fiction

***The Dressmakers of Yarrandarrah Prison* by Meredith Jaffé (2021)**

(Thanks Judy)



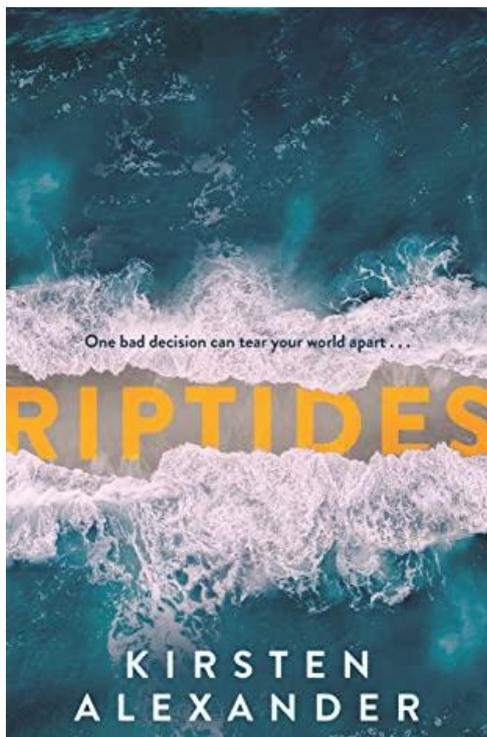
Can a wedding dress save a bunch of hardened crims? A poignantly comic story about a men's prison sewing circle.

Derek's daughter Debbie is getting married. He's desperate to be there, but he's banged up in Yarrandarrah Correctional Centre for embezzling funds from the golf club, and, thanks to his ex-wife, Lorraine, he hasn't spoken to Debbie in years. He wants to make a grand gesture - to show her how much he loves her. But what?

Inspiration strikes while he's embroidering a cushion at his weekly prison sewing circle - he'll make her a wedding dress. His fellow stitchers rally around and soon this motley gang of crims is immersed in a joyous whirl of silks, satins and covered buttons.

But as time runs out and tensions rise both inside and outside the prison, the wedding dress project takes on greater significance. With lives at stake, Derek feels his chance to reconcile with Debbie is slipping through his fingers ...

***Riptides* by Kirsten Alexander (2020) (Thanks Sue)**



In 1974, in country Queensland, Charlie Campbell forces a car off an unlit and rarely travelled dirt road into a tree, killing the pregnant driver. The crash wakes Charlie's sister, Abby, who'd been sleeping in the passenger seat next to him. They were heading to their father's farm.

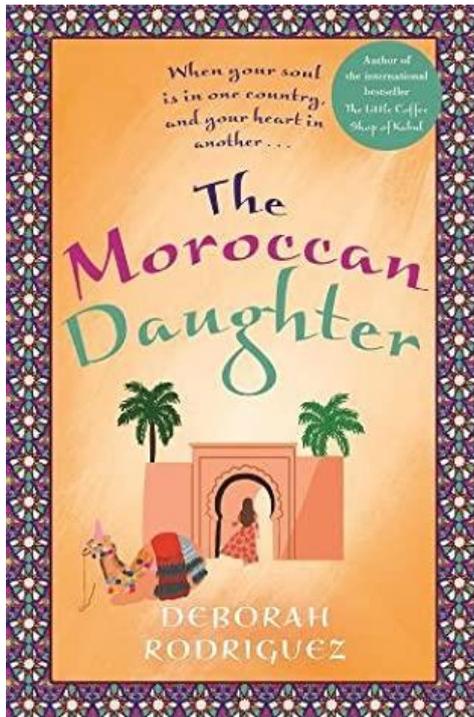
A dead woman has no place in either of their plans. They drive away, leaving her on the ground as heavy rain falls. They cannot help her, there are no witnesses, and there is too much at stake.

When they arrive at the farm, the siblings learn that the dead woman, Skye, was their father's fiancée.

They resolve to tell no one what they've done — to admit to this crime will cost them their father and their future. Charlie leans on his older sister to lead them out of trouble, to act as the protector she's had to be since their mother died. But their secret grows more complicated by the day. Abby, however, is not one to give up. She keeps the single piece of evidence hidden, and decides to redeem herself.

She determines to raise Skye's son as her own, study, and make a difference. She is convinced that she and Charlie can get back on track. But along the way, they need to reconsider exactly what it is they want.

The Moroccan Daughter by Deborah Rodriguez (2021) (Thanks Christine)



Morocco: a captivating country of honor and tradition. And, for these four women, a land of secrets and revelations. Amina Bennis has come back to her childhood home in Morocco to attend her sister's wedding. The time has come for her to confront her strict, traditionalist father with the secret she has kept for more than a year – her American husband, Max.

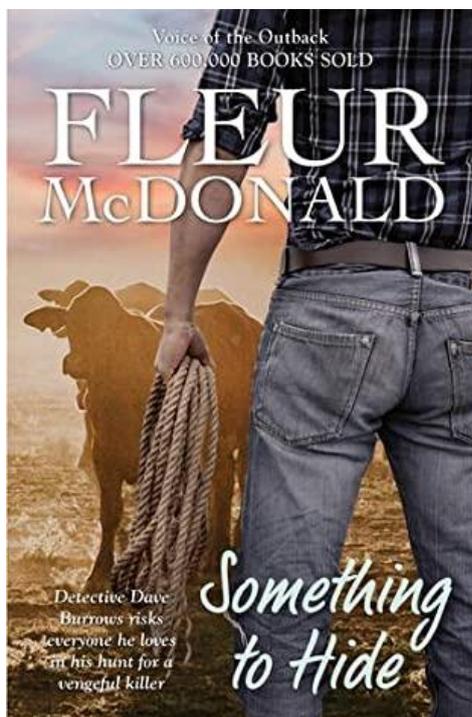
Amina's best friend, Charlie, and Charlie's feisty grandmother, Bea, have come along for moral support, staying with Amina and her family in their palatial riad in Fès and enjoying all that the city has to offer. But Charlie is also hiding someone from her past – a mystery man from Casablanca.

And then there's Samira, the Bennis's devoted housekeeper for many decades. Hers is the biggest secret of all – one that strikes at the very heart of the family.

As things begin to unravel behind the ancient walls of the medina, the four women are soon caught in a web of lies, clandestine deals and shocking confessions . . .

From the twisted alleyways of the ancient medina of Fès to a marriage festival high in the Atlas Mountains, Deborah Rodriguez's entrancing new bestseller is a modern story of forbidden love set in the sensual landscape of North Africa,

Something to Hide by Fleur McDonald (2021) (Thanks Georgie)



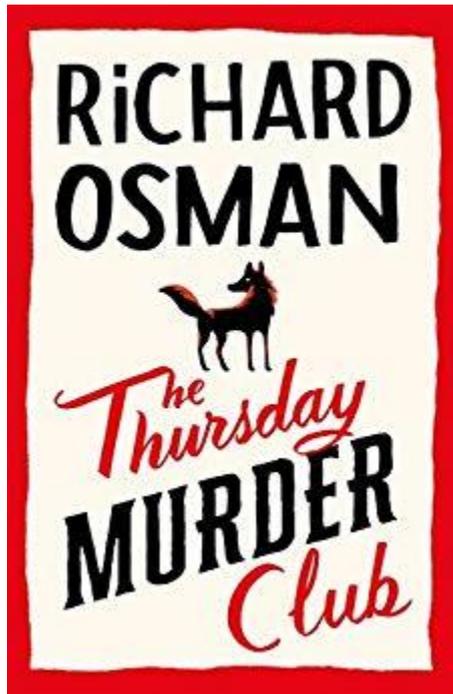
With the sickening realisation that his cover has been blown, Detective Dave Burrows knows his family is in serious danger from the vicious stock thieves and murderers, Bulldust and his brother Scotty.

Devastating news brings Dave back to Barrabine, where circumstances force him to question his determination to stay in the police force. How could he live with himself if anything happened to Mel and the kids?

Mel, understandably frightened, must decide who she'll listen to. Can she trust Dave to handle this threat hanging over their family, or is her father right to argue that she should leave her marriage immediately?

With her acclaimed skill for tension and drama, Fleur McDonald has delivered another richly compelling story.

***The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman (2020) (Thanks Pauline)**

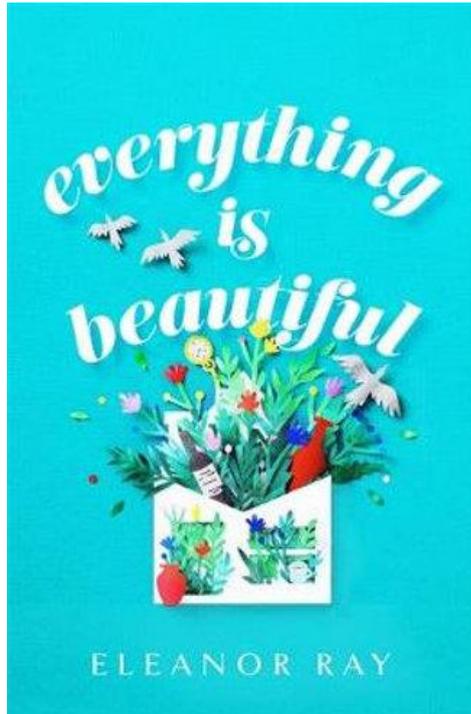


Four septuagenarians with a few tricks up their sleeves
A female cop with her first big case
A brutal murder
Welcome to...
The Thursday Murder Club

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet weekly in the Jigsaw Room to discuss unsolved crimes; together they call themselves The Thursday Murder Club. Elizabeth, Joyce, Ibrahim and Ron might be pushing eighty but they still have a few tricks up their sleeves.

When a local developer is found dead with a mysterious photograph left next to the body, the Thursday Murder Club suddenly find themselves in the middle of their first live case. As the bodies begin to pile up, can our unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer, before it's too late?

***Everything Is Beautiful* by Eleanor Ray (2021) (Thanks Vanessa)**



When Amy Ashton's world fell apart eleven years ago, she started a collection.

Just a few keepsakes of happier times: some honeysuckle to remind herself of the boy she loved, a chipped china bird, an old terracotta pot . . . Things that others might throw away, but to Amy, represent a life that could have been.

Now her house is overflowing with the objects she loves - soon there'll be no room for Amy at all. But when a family move in next door, a chance discovery unearths a mystery, and Amy's carefully curated life begins to unravel. If she can find the courage to face her past, might the future she thought she'd lost still be hers for the taking?

This uplifting novel shows us that however hopeless things might feel, beauty can be found in the most unexpected of places.