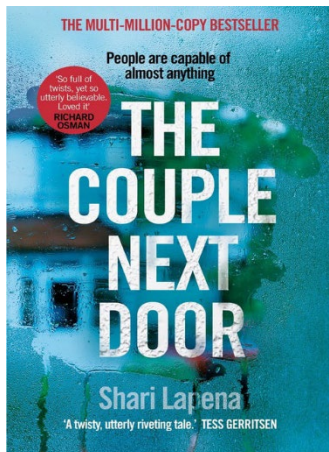


RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER READERS

<https://www.grc.qld.gov.au/homepage/108/library-lovers-book-group-online>

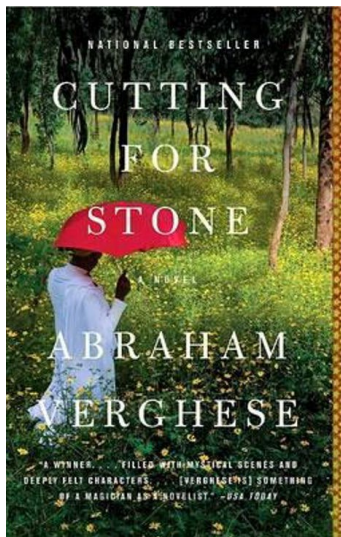
***The Couple Next Door* / Shari Lapena Fiction 2016**



Your neighbour told you that she didn't want your six-month-old daughter at the dinner party. Nothing personal, she just couldn't stand her crying. Your husband said it would be fine. After all, you only live next door. You'll have the baby monitor and you'll take it in turns to go back every half hour.

Your daughter was sleeping when you checked on her last. But now, as you race up the stairs in your deathly quiet house, your worst fears are realised. She's gone. You've never had to call the police before. But now they're in your home, and who knows what they'll find there. What would you be capable of, when pushed past your limit? How well do we ever know those around us?

***Cutting For Stone* / Abraham Verghese Fiction 2009**

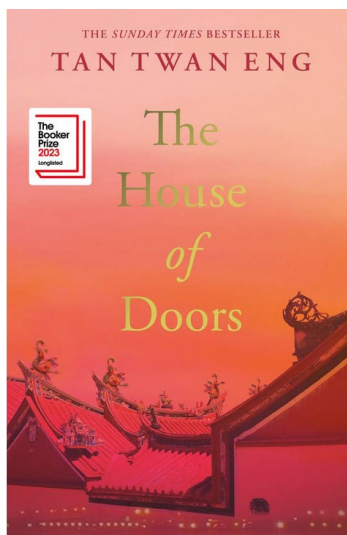


It starts with the birth of twin boys to a nursing nun, Sister Mary Praise Joseph, in a small hospital on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; an event which no one had expected:

"The everyday miracle of conception had taken place in the one place it should not have: in Sister Mary Praise Joseph's womb."

The delivery rapidly becomes a debacle when it's clear that Mary Praise Joseph can't deliver her baby normally; the last minute arrival home at "Missing" (the Mission Hospital) by Indian obstetrician, Hema, saves the children, but their mother dies and their presumed father, surgeon Thomas Stone, disappears into the night.

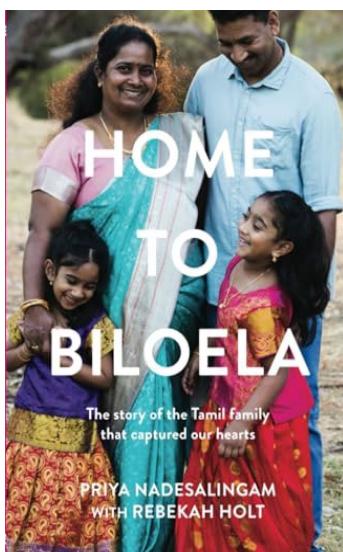
***The House of Doors* / Tan Twan Eng Fiction 2023**



It is 1921 and at Cassowary House in the Straits Settlements of Penang, Robert Hamlyn is a well-to-do lawyer and his steely wife Lesley a society hostess. Their lives are invigorated when Willie, an old friend of Robert's, comes to stay. Willie Somerset Maugham is one of the greatest writers of his day. But he is beleaguered by an unhappy marriage, ill-health and business interests that have gone badly awry. He is also struggling to write. The more Lesley's friendship with Willie grows, the more clearly she sees him as he is - a man who has no choice but to mask his true self. As Willie prepares to leave and face his demons, Lesley confides secrets of her own, including how she came to know the charismatic Dr Sun Yat Sen, a revolutionary fighting to overthrow the imperial dynasty of China. And more scandalous still, she reveals her connection to the case of an Englishwoman charged with murder in the Kuala Lumpur courts - a tragedy drawn from fact, and worthy of fiction.

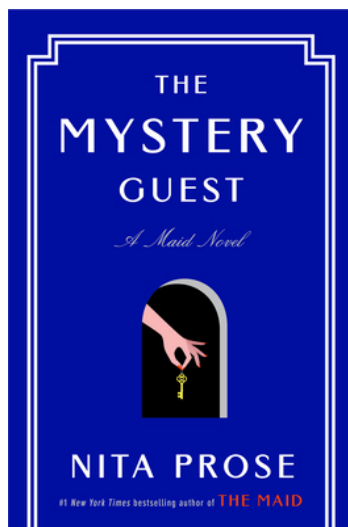
Home to Biloela : The Story of the Tamil Family That Captured Our Hearts / Priya Nadesalingam

Non Fiction 2023



It was dawn in the small rural town of Biloela. Loud thumps on the front door signalled the start of a four-year odyssey that would catapult Priya and her family into the heart of a national debate. For the first time, Priya shares the story of her childhood in war-torn Sri Lanka and her perilous escape across the Indian Ocean on an overcrowded fishing boat. Alone in a strange country, she had to make a new life without family or friends. She married Nades, another refugee, and settled with him in Biloela, where they had two daughters, Kopica and Tharnicaa. The shocking dawn raid in 2018 was the first of multiple attempts by the Australian government to deport the family. But the people of Biloela wouldn't have it. A small group swung into action and built an extraordinarily powerful social media campaign that gathered support from hundreds of thousands of ordinary Australians. Journalist Rebekah Holt first met the family in detention, and recounts the dramatic behind-the-scenes efforts to prevent the family from being deported.

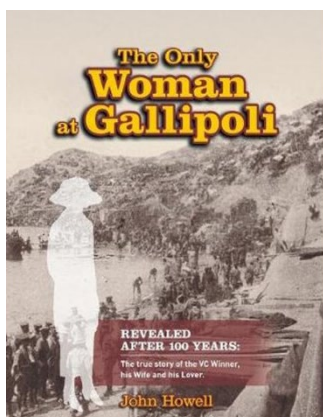
The Mystery Guest / Nita Prose Fiction 2024



Molly Gray wears her Head Maid badge proudly for every shift at the Regency Grand Hotel, plumping pillows, sweeping up the guests' secrets, silently restoring rooms to a state of perfection. But when a renowned guest -- a famous mystery writer -- drops very dead in the grand tea room, Molly has an unusual clean-up on her hands.

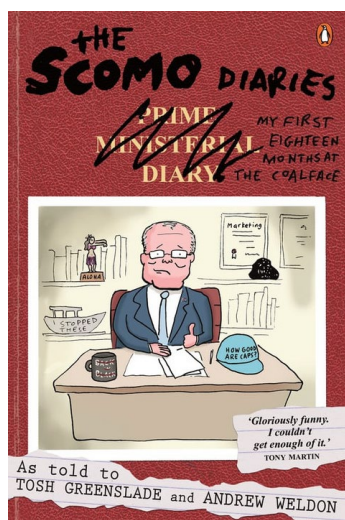
As rumours and suspicion swirl in the hotel corridors, it's clear there's grime lurking beneath the gilt. And Molly knows that she alone holds the key to the mystery. But unlocking it means thinking about the past, about Gran, and everything else she's kept tidied away in her memory for so long. Because Molly knew the dead guest once upon a time -- and he knew her...

The Only Woman at Gallipoli / John Howell Non Fiction 2014



In November, 1915 a woman appeared amid the fighting at Gallipoli. She laid a wreath on a grave and then disappeared. It was the grave of a hero, a man killed at the landings and awarded the Victoria Cross. There were two women who truly loved this man. Was the visitor a dedicated nurse and hospital founder who saved the lives of thousands in a 50 year career - a woman awarded medals by Britain, France and Turkey? Or was it a famous explorer, fluent in Arabic and Persian, a friend of the famous including T E Lawrence and Winston Churchill and the only female delegate among thousands at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919? Five years of research has revealed this amazing true story. It has emerged from tantalising clues, unpublished love letters and false trails deliberately left to hide the truth.

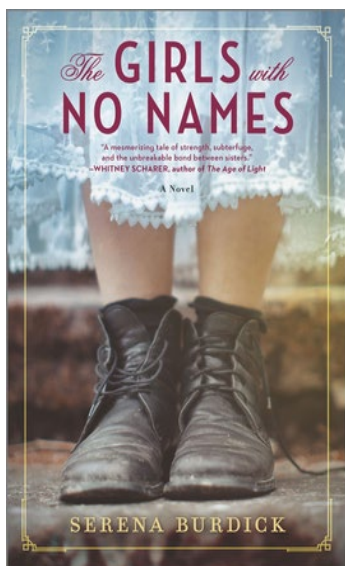
***The Scomo Diaries* / Tosh Greenslade and Andrew Weldon Non Fiction 2020**



All aboard the Scomo Express as our hero pulls back the lid on the life and times of one of history's great leaders and humbly serves up a steaming meat pie of everyman wisdom for the hungry masses.

These are the unofficial chronicles of Scotty's first 18 months in his new role as head honcho of the largest marketing firm in the country - the Australian Federal Government - as it unfolded, completely devoid of any self-aggrandisement, double-speak, sleight-of-hand or other dirty shenanigans played by the Opposition.

***The Girls With No Names* / Serena Burdick Fiction 2020**



A beautiful tale of hope, courage and sisterhood, inspired by the real House of Mercy and the girls confined there for daring to break the rules - cover.

Growing up in New York City in the 1910s, Luella and Effie Tildon realize that even as wealthy young women, their freedoms come with limits. But when the sisters discover a shocking secret about their father, Luella, the brazen elder sister, becomes emboldened to do as she pleases. Her rebellion comes with consequences, and one morning Luella is mysteriously gone. Effie suspects her father has sent Luella to the House of Mercy and hatches a plan to get herself committed to save her sister. But she made a miscalculation, and with no one to believe her story, Effie's own escape seems impossible—unless she can trust an enigmatic girl named Mable. As their fates entwine, Mable and Effie must rely on their tenuous friendship to survive.

***Black Silk and Sympathy* / Deborah Challinor Fiction 2024**



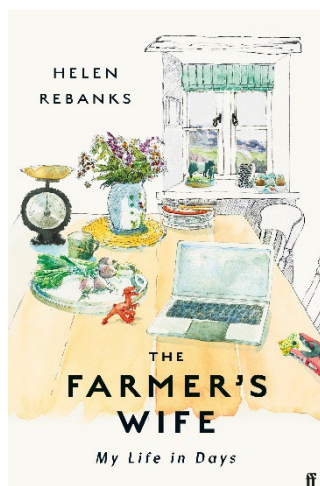
Sydney, 1865. Orphaned and impoverished, Tatiana Caldwell travels from London to make a new life. Her path leads her to Crowe Funeral Services, where she apprentices under the tutelage of Titus Crowe, the enigmatic owner.

Tatty finds herself drawn to the fascinating conventions of the funeral trade - plumed horses and processions, mutes and mortuary trains, flowers and finery - as well as the more visceral new practice of embalming. Soon she becomes a wife, then, after the sudden death of Titus, Sydney's first female undertaker.

Her hard-won stability is shattered when Elias Nuttall, a ruthless rival in the funeral trade, accuses Tatty of murdering her husband. Facing public scorn and legal peril, Tatty gathers an unlikely band of allies in a battle to clear her name.

Black Silk and Sympathy is a riveting and realistic journey through the front parlours and dark alleys of 1860s Sydney, from the criminal courts to the cemetery at midnight.

The Farmer's Wife : My Life in Days / Helen Rebanks Non Fiction 2024

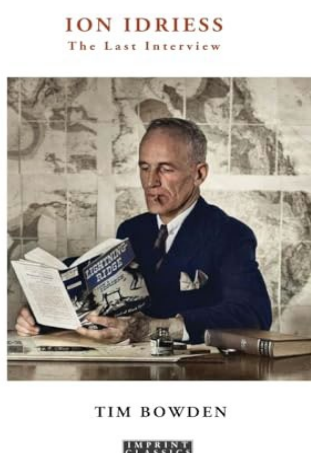


As dawn breaks on the farm, Helen Rebanks makes a mug of tea, relishing the few minutes of quiet before the house stirs. Within the hour the sounds of her husband, James, and their four children will fill the kitchen. There are also six sheepdogs, two ponies, 20 chickens, 50 cattle and 500 sheep to care for. Helen is a farmer's wife.

Weaving past and present, Helen shares the days that have shaped her. This is the truth of those days: from steering the family through the Beast from the East and the local authority planning committee, to finding the quiet strength to keep going, when supper is yet to be started, another delivery man has assumed he needs to speak to the 'man of the house', and she would rather punch a cushion than plump it.

This beautifully-illustrated memoir, which takes place across one day at the farm, offers a chance to think about where our food comes from and who puts it on the table. Helen's recipes, lists and gentle wisdom helps us to get through our days, whatever they throw at us.

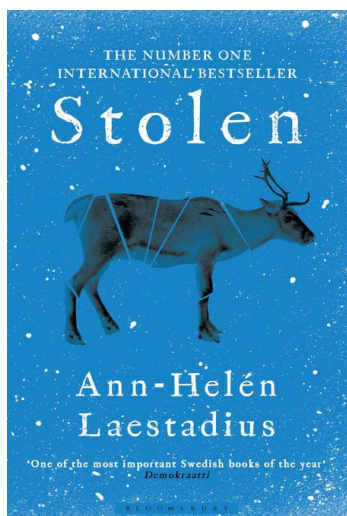
Ion Idriess - The Last Interview / Tim Bowden Non Fiction 2024



Ion "Jack" Idriess (1889 - 1979) is recognised as one of Australia's great storytellers, having published over 50 books including the *Outback Tales of Lasseter's Last Ride*, *Flynn of the Inland*, and *The Cattle King* alongside major histories of Broken Hill, Broome and Cooktown.

This book is his last interview in 1975, prompted by the then-young Tim Bowden, for a possible ABC Radio program that did not eventuate due to Idriess's fading voice. Within this book Idriess talks of his early years in Broken Hill, he tells of his earliest writing for the *Bulletin*, on living and photographing Aboriginal tribes in the Kimberleys and Cape York; on the writing of his books like *Madman's Island* and *My Mate Dick*; his life with the pearlers of Broome and Thursday Island; on the joys of prospecting, living in the Wild, and on Lasseter and his diary.

Stolen : a novel / Ann-Helén Laestadius Fiction 2023



Nine-year-old Elsa lives just north of the Arctic Circle. She and her family are Sámi – Scandinavia's indigenous people - and make their living herding reindeer.

One morning when Elsa goes skiing alone, she witnesses a man brutally killing her reindeer calf. Elsa recognises the man but refuses to tell anyone - least of all the Swedish police force - about what she saw. Instead, she carries her secret as a dark weight on her heart.

Elsa comes of age fighting two wars: one within her community, where male elders expect young women to know their place; and one against the ever-escalating wave of prejudice and violence against the Sámi.

When Elsa finds herself the target of the man who killed her reindeer calf all those years ago, something inside of her finally breaks. The guilt, fear, and anger she's been carrying since childhood come crashing over her like an avalanche, and will lead Elsa to a final catastrophic confrontation.