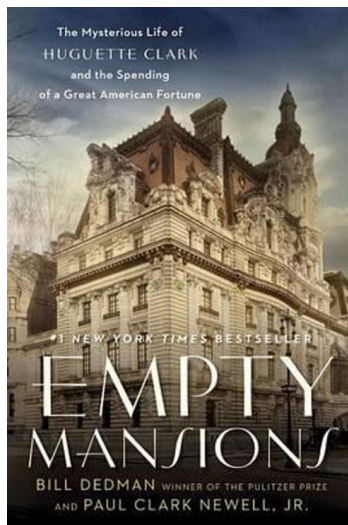


RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER READERS

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

Empty Mansions : the mysterious life of Huguetta Clark and the loss of one of the world's greatest fortunes. / Bill Dedman and Paul Clark Newell Jr. Non Fiction 2013

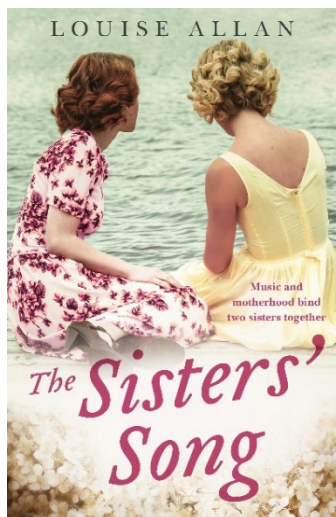


When Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Bill Dedman noticed in 2009 a grand home for sale, unoccupied for nearly sixty years, he stumbled through a surprising portal into American history.

Empty Mansions is a rich mystery of wealth and loss, connecting the Gilded Age opulence of the nineteenth century with a twenty-first-century battle over a \$300 million inheritance.

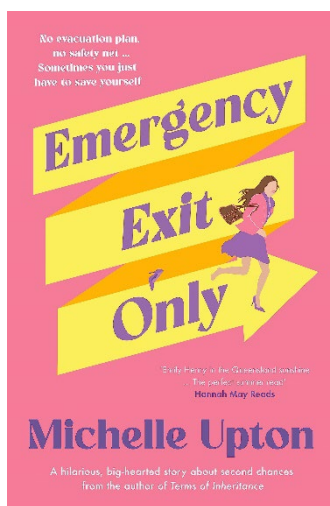
At its heart is a reclusive heiress named Huguetta Clark, a woman so secretive that, at the time of her death at age 104, no new photograph of her had been seen in decades. Though she owned palatial homes in California, New York, and Connecticut, why had she lived for twenty years in a simple hospital room, despite being in excellent health? Why were her valuables being sold off? Was she in control, or controlled by those managing her money?

The Sisters' Song / Louise Allan Fiction 2018



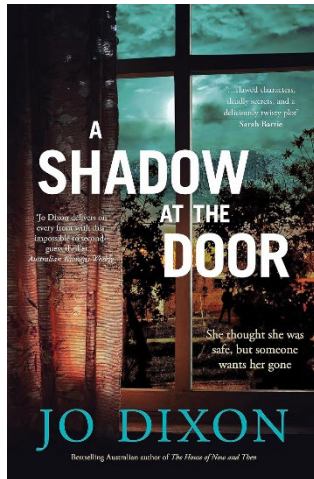
Set in rural Tasmania over a span of seventy years. As children, Ida loves looking after her younger sister, Nora, but when their beloved father dies in 1927, everything changes. The two girls move in with their grandmother who is particularly encouraging of Nora's musical talent. In Nora, she sees herself, the artist she was never allowed to be. As Nora follows her dream of a brilliant musical career, Ida takes a job as a nanny and their lives become quite separate. The two sisters are reunited as Nora's life takes an unwelcome direction and she finds herself isolated in the Tasmanian bush saddled with a husband and children. Embittered and resentful, Nora welcomes Ida's help with her chaotic household. When Ida marries Len, a reliable and good man, she hopes her dreams of a family will be fulfilled. Unfortunately, it becomes clear that this is never likely to happen. In Ida's eyes, Nora possesses everything in life that could matter yet she values none of it.

Emergency Exit Only / Michelle Upton Fiction 2023



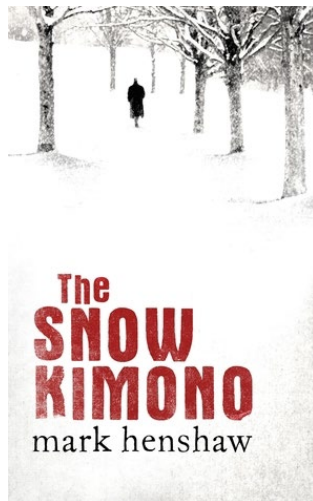
No evacuation plan, no safety net. Amelia's quitting the daily grind to find her fantasy job. But a shocking secret from the past shows her that where there's smoke, there's fire ... And sometimes you just have to save yourself. Amelia Harris has played it safe all her life - but when a minor accident lands her in hospital, she dramatically quits the tedious office job she's had for a decade. At a loss at what she wants to do next - and fast running out of cash - Amelia tries her hand at the dream jobs she's always fantasised about. Soon she's shadowing a thrilling cast of characters and professions - as a journalist, a florist, a wedding planner, a zookeeper, and more. Life couldn't be more exciting, especially when she meets the man of her dreams. But when her mother, Toni, drops a truth bomb about their family, Amelia's whole world tilts on its axis. Meanwhile, each new job starts taking on a life of its own. Has she created a monster?

***A Shadow at the Door* / Jo Dixon Fiction 2024**



After a brutal attack and the breakdown of her marriage, life has taught former TV star Remi Lucan that it's safer to not rely on anyone. Instead, she's buried herself in Hobart, transforming her dilapidated sandstone house back to its former splendour, and it has been her proudest achievement. Better than her short-lived acting career. Definitely better than being a smile-on-command trophy wife. But when she runs out of money, her wealthy ex-husband tries to force the sale of the property and Remi realises her only option is to lower her defences and take in tenants. At first her biggest problem is adjusting to the intrusion of two unlikely housemates, but when a series of 'accidents' turns ugly, it becomes clear these incidents are more than pranks. Someone is out to get Remi, and they won't stop until they destroy her.

***The Snow Kimono* / Mark Henshaw Fiction 2014**



On the same day that retired police inspector Auguste Jovert receives a letter from a woman claiming to be his daughter, he returns to his Paris apartment to find a stranger waiting for him.

That stranger is a Japanese professor called Tadashi Omura. What's brought him to Jovert's doorstep is not clear, but then he begins to tell his story - a story of a fractured friendship, lost lovers, orphaned children, and a body left bleeding in the snow.

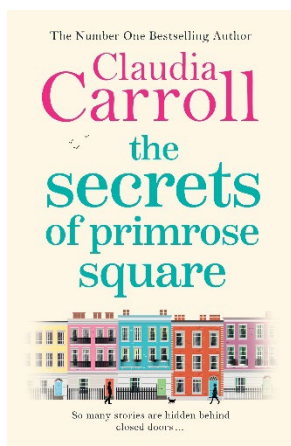
As Jovert pieces together the puzzle of Omura's life, he can't help but draw parallels with his own; for he too has led a life that's been extraordinary and dangerous - and based upon a lie.

***In Ascension* / Martin MacInnes Fiction 2023**



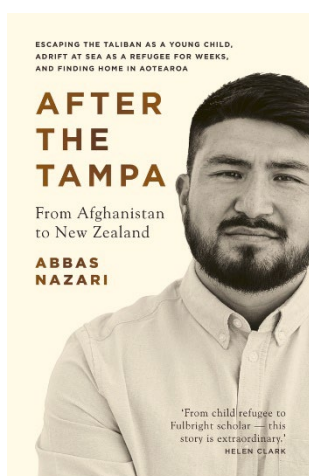
Leigh grew up in Rotterdam, drawn to the waterfront as an escape from her unhappy home life and volatile father. Enchanted by the undersea world of her childhood, she excels in marine biology, travelling the globe to study ancient organisms. When a trench is discovered in the Atlantic ocean, Leigh joins the exploration team, hoping to find evidence of the earth's first life forms - what she instead finds calls into question everything we know about our own beginnings. Her discovery leads Leigh to the Mojave desert and an ambitious new space agency. Drawn deeper into the agency's work, she learns that the Atlantic trench is only one of several related phenomena from across the world, each piece linking up to suggest a pattern beyond human understanding. Leigh faces an impossible choice: to remain with her family, or to embark on a journey across the breadth of the cosmos.

***The Secrets of Primrose Square* / Claudia Carroll Fiction 2018**



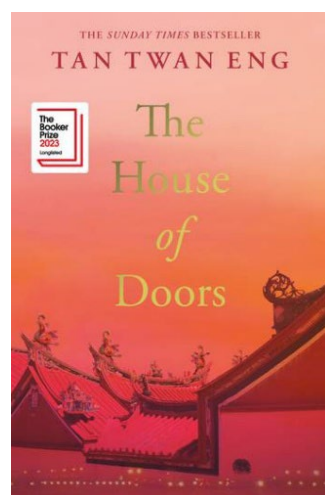
So many stories hidden behind closed doors . . . It's late at night and the rain is pouring down on the Dublin city streets. A mother is grieving for her dead child. She stands silently outside the home of the teenage boy she believes responsible. She watches . . . In a kitchen on the same square, a girl waits anxiously for her mum to come home. She knows exactly where she is, but she knows she cannot reach her. A few doors down, and a widow sits alone in her room. She has just delivered a bombshell to her family during dinner and her life is about to change forever. And an aspiring theatre director has just moved in to a flat across the street. Her landlord is absent, but there are already things about him that don't quite add up . . .

***After the Tampa : from Afghanistan to New Zealand* / Abbas Nazari Non Fiction 2021**



Escaping from Taliban persecution in Afghanistan, Abbas Nazari's parents fled the country in 2001 to find a safe place in which to bring up their children. Their six-month journey through Pakistan and Indonesia searching for asylum culminated in being crammed onto a small fishing boat with 426 other asylum seekers. When that boat started to sink in the Indian Ocean, they were mercifully rescued by a Norwegian cargo boat, the Tampa. The Tampa owners expected to deliver the refugees to Australia but were told they were not welcome there. This sparked an international incident between Australia, Norway and Indonesia over responsibility for these people, leaving them stranded on the boat and eventually being sent to Nauru Island. New Zealand offered to take 150 of them, including Abbas and his family. It's now 20 years since this happened and Abbas tells his story.

***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. An intriguing and imaginative walk through history.

Catching the Linville train : a journey through history / Everald Compton NF 2022

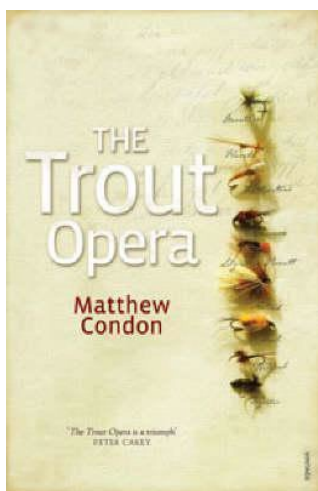


A fascinating story of a boy from the bush who had no money, nor a university degree, but found a challenging place in the huge world.

Everald Compton is a 91-year-old Australian who has led a high-profile life as an advocate of public issues and community service, particularly in rural Australia.

This book tells the story of his life experiences, all since his first train journey from his home village of Linville in the Brisbane River Valley in 1937. They include his perspective on world events, impressions of people he has met, nostalgic memories of pleasant experiences and reflections on his life's achievements.

The Trout Opera / Matthew Condon F 2007

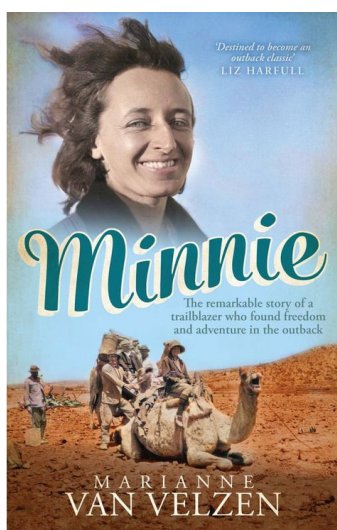


A stunning epic novel that encompasses twentieth-century Australia.

Opening with a Christmas pageant on the banks of the Snowy River in 1906 and ending with the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics in 2000, it is the story of simple rabbitier and farmhand Wilfred Lampe who, at the end of his long life, is unwittingly swept up into an international spectacle.

On the way he discovers a great-niece, the wild and troubled young Aurora, whom he never knew existed, and together they take an unlikely road trip that changes their lives.

Minnie: the remarkable story of a trailblazer who found freedom and adventure in the outback / Marianne van Velzen NF 2023



Only a slip of a girl, Minnie could match any man in stamina, perseverance and strength.

She arrived in Coober Pedy when camels still brought in essential supplies, and water was so scarce that no-one washed. Together with the other miners, she braved the heat, the flies and the dust. Every day she waited for that special sound the pick made when it cracked opal.

The first woman to dig her own shafts in the Australian opal fields, Minnie began her working life as a typist in London. But she and her younger brother, Victor, sought freedom and adventure in the 1920s and found plenty of it in the outback.