



VERVE
BOOKS

**NEW
TITLES**

2027

& backlist

VERVE BOOKS

Launched in 2018, VERVE Books is an independent publisher of page-turning, diverse and original writing penned by fresh and impactful voices.

Our books are connected by rich storytelling, vividly imagined settings and unforgettable protagonists. The list is tightly curated by a women-led team of passionate book lovers whose hope is to bring together an eclectic collection of titles for modern readers.

SIGN UP TO OUR TRADE & CONSUMER NEWSLETTERS



Join our growing community of readers and follow us on social media to hear the latest updates from the VERVE team, including cover reveals, event information and exclusive author content.

We also have a separate bookseller newsletter if you are keen to sign up for trade news.

SHE'S A LAMB!

MEREDITH HAMBROCK

A darkly comic suspense about one woman's delusional quest for stardom, in the vein of *All's Well* by Mona Awad, *My Husband* by Maud Ventura and *Yellowface* by R F Kuang

Jessamyn St Germain is destined to be a star – a musical theatre legend – not some lowly usher at one of Vancouver's smallest regional theatres. So when the role of Maria from *The Sound of Music* is up for grabs, Jessamyn knows the part is hers...

Except it's not. Instead she is relegated to the position of childminder for the little brats playing the von Trapp children. But it's so obvious she's there for a different reason: to usurp the role from the incompetent lead and take her place in the spotlight.

This must be it. Because if it isn't, then every skipped meal, every brutal rehearsal, every inch won against a man attempting to drag her down will have all been for nothing.

'Sunset Boulevard for the next generation. Exploring ego, trauma and the brutal pursuit of great art, this book is hilarious until it's terrifying, maddening until it's tragic. Hambrock is a star'

– AINSLIE HOGARTH

'Dark, hilarious and thought-provoking, *She's A Lamb!* is a biting satire about a deluded woman's quest for stardom.

A wildly entertaining ride!'

– ROBYNN HARDING

JANUARY 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Shes-A-Lamb

PBO 978-0-85730-708-8 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)

PAGE EXTENT 304pp // EB 978-0-85730-709-5 **£6.99**

CATEGORY Contemporary Fiction

RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada

OTHER PUBLISHERS ECW – North America

AUTHOR LOCATION Saskatoon, Canada



MEREDITH HAMBROCK is the author of *Other People's Secrets* and *She's A Lamb!* She has been a finalist for the CBC Short Story Prize and worked extensively in television, most recently in the writers' room for the Canadian Screen Award-winning sitcom *Corner Gas Animated*. She currently lives and writes in Saskatoon, in Treaty Six Territory, on the traditional homeland of the Métis People.

meredithhambrock.com
[@meredithhambrockbooks](https://twitter.com/meredithhambrockbooks)

TASTES LIKE SEEING GOD

NINA MICHIKO TAM

A poignant story of loss and coming of age that will make you hungry – for food, for life, for forging your own path

In the days following the accidental death of her brother, Jessie Wong is adrift and angry: at Tommy, an up-and-coming chef, for dying; at her parents for their silence; and at the confines of her conservative Christian Chinese upbringing. Then Jessie finds a list, in Tommy's handwriting, of five meals that 'taste like seeing God'. Was his phrasing blasphemy, or a nod to some hidden belief? Is fate offering her the chance to know her brother in a new way?

Breaking from her parents for the first time, Jessie embarks on a whirlwind pilgrimage to taste the five foods on the list. In the gritty bars of New York City, the lively markets of Dakar, the art world of Paris and even a three-Michelin-starred restaurant on a tiny German island, Jessie meets the people who loved and inspired her brother. As she gets to know the sibling she lost and realises how much more of the world is out there, a future she'd never dared to envision for herself is now within her grasp.

Flavoured with illegal French delicacies and famed Senegalese dishes, *Tastes Like Seeing God* explores the transcendent power of food, life's sorrows and its sublime joys with poignancy and surprising humour.

'A canon-expanding odyssey of place, taste and the infinite space a heart can hold'

– BRYAN WASHINGTON

'This novel had me craving my favourite dishes while longing to call my loved ones...

Tam is a new talent to watch'

– QIAN JULIE WANG

FEBRUARY 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Tastes-Like-Seeing-God

PBO 978-0-85730-710-1 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 X 129mm)

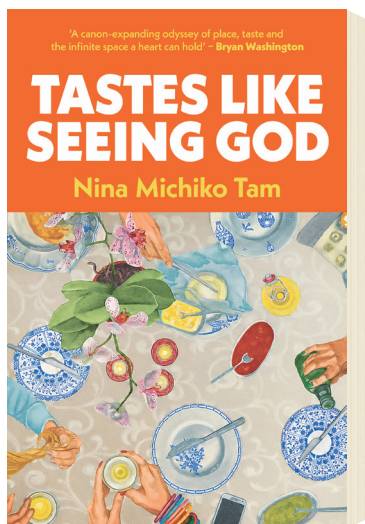
EXTENT 288pp // EB 978-0-85730-711-8 £6.99

CATEGORY Contemporary Fiction // RIGHTS UK & Comm ex ANZ

OTHER PUBLISHERS Pamela Dorman PRH – North America;

Ultimo – ANZ // AUDIO RIGHTS Available

AUTHOR LOCATION Houston, USA



Perfect for fans of Alison Espach's *The Wedding People* and Michelle Zauner's *Crying in H Mart*.



NINA MICHIKO TAM has lived or studied in New York, Germany, Paris and Dakar: all the settings in the novel. Tam graduated from Yale Law School in 2022 and works as a civil-rights lawyer in Houston. *Tastes Like Seeing God* is her debut novel.

**ninamichikotam.com
@ninamichikotam**

VERVE BOOKS

OLD WIVES' TALES

JULIE ZHOU

In this brilliant sliding doors debut, a Chinese American couple's love story is told and retold

Elizabeth and Simon are newly married. Elizabeth is waiting for her green card and spends the winter in Chicago staining her fingers with pomegranate seeds, dreaming of home.

Elizabeth and Simon can't get pregnant, and something unseen is leaving bruises on Elizabeth's body as she sleeps, making rest impossible.

Elizabeth and Simon are having a new baby, and as they convert a closet into a nursery, Elizabeth is cursed with a magical second sight.

In these ten linked stories, echoing oral traditions from around the world, Julie Zhou re-spins old wives' tales: from Chinese folklore to nursery rhymes, from the myth of Persephone to 'The Princess and the Pea'. The result is an astonishing feat of storytelling that reimagines fairy tale and reality, bringing both to exuberant life on the page.

For fans of *Her Body and Other Parties* by Carmen Maria Machado, *Normal Rules Don't Apply* by Kate Atkinson and *Salt Slow* by Julia Armfield.

MARCH 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Old-Wives-Tales

PBO 978-0-85730-720-0 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 X 129mm)

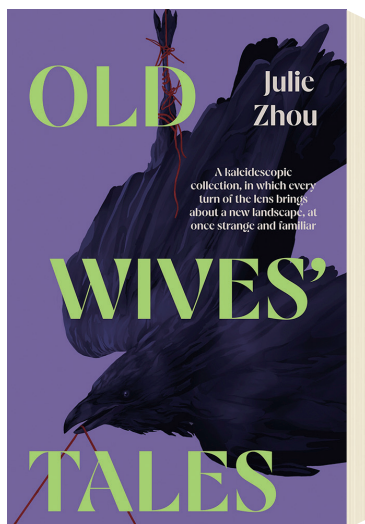
EXTENT 192pp // EB 978-0-85730-721-7 £6.99

CATEGORY Fiction/Magical Realism

RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada

OTHER PUBLISHERS Cardinal – North America

AUDIO RIGHTS Available // AUTHOR LOCATION Minnesota, USA



JULIE ZHOU was born in Madison, Wisconsin, and despite summers spent in Shanghai and a fleeting love affair with New England, she has always found her way back to the Midwest. These days, she lives with a household of chosen family in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where she serves as a freelance writer for organizations working toward reproductive and gender justice, food justice, prison abolition and the many intersections of those movements. She cultivates plants poorly, recipes well, anxieties often and social media not at all.

vervebooks.co.uk/Julie-Zhou

CRINGE

SAMANTHA DOOEY-MILES

Set in the author's hometown of Hamilton, Scotland, *Cringe* follows the defining experiences of shame throughout the lives of three women, depicting the impacts of these moments on their characters and friendship

Ruth, Kirsty and Fiona have had a lifetime of shameful and embarrassing moments. Some painfully public, others privately devastating, but each one shaping their identities and influencing every decision they make.

Told through vignettes of these cringe-inducing memories, the three friends' interconnected narratives shift in and out of focus from youth to adulthood and beyond, exposing the ripple effects of shame throughout women's lives.

A poignant and darkly funny conversation starter of a novel that will do for women's shame and embarrassment what Lisa Taddeo's *Three Women* did for female sexuality and desire. Perfect for readers of Sheena Patel's *I'm A Fan*, Emma Jane Unsworth's *Adults* and Kirstin Innes's *Scabby Queen*.

MARCH 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Cringe

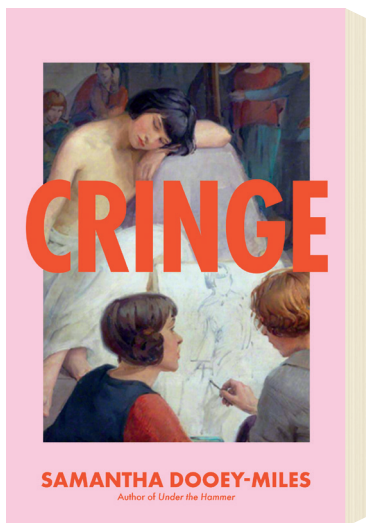
PBO 978-0-85730-714-9 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 X 129mm)
EXTENT 288pp // EB 978-0-85730-715-6 **£6.99**
CATEGORY Literary Fiction // RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada
AUDIO Rights Available
AUTHOR LOCATION Hamilton, UK



Also **AVAILABLE**

UNDER THE HAMMER

PB 978-0-85730-938-9 **£10.99**
EB 978-0-85730-939-6 **£6.99**



PROVISIONAL JACKET IMAGE



SAMANTHA DOOEY-MILES'S

fiction focuses on first-person, female voices. Her work explores rage, shame, embarrassment and the significance seemingly small moments can hold. Her stories have been published in *New Writing Scotland*, *Gutter* and *Postbox* among others. In 2021 she won a Scottish Book Trust New Writer Award. Her debut novel, *Under the Hammer*, was published by VERVE Books in 2026.

samanthadooeymiles.com
@samanthadooeymiles

SURRENDER ON DEMAND

NADIA DE VRIES

(TRANSLATED BY SARAH TIMMER HARVEY)

A biting tale about class and destiny – told through an endearing anti-hero named Shellfish

Shellfish grows up in a Dutch coastal village polluted by the local steel plant. The factory or the distribution centre: these are the choices ahead. Both are work in places without windows, dictated by the clock. But Shellfish dreams of a different future: to no longer serve, but be a master.

Will Shellfish succeed in breaking free? If we cannot outgrow the circumstances we were born in, does that mean we've failed at life? *Surrender on Demand* is about the difference between people who get to choose their future and those who have to suffer their fate. About villagers and day-trippers. About casual violence. And about seagulls. A carnivalesque, satirical, intense, big, small novel about class and destiny.

'Get ready to fall in love with de Vries's playful pen and unrelenting view of mankind. *Surrender on Demand* is gorgeous and strange and somehow familiarly human,

Dickens in a sharp modern jacket'

– YAEI VAN DER WOUDE

APRIL 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Surrender-On-Demand

PB0 978-0-85730-722-4 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 X 129mm)

EXTENT 192pp // EB 978-0-85730-723-1 £6.99

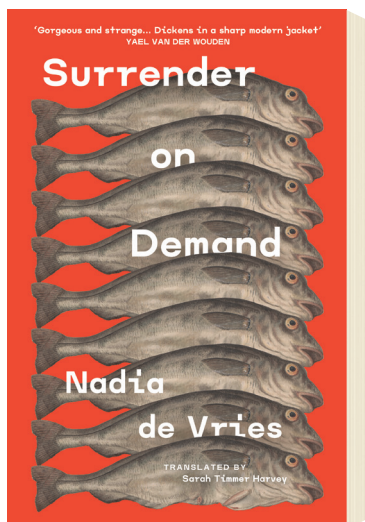
CATEGORY Literary Fiction/Translated Fiction

RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada

OTHER PUBLISHERS Bloomsbury US – North America

AUDIO RIGHTS Available

AUTHOR LOCATION Amsterdam, The Netherlands



NADIA DE VRIES is a bilingual author based in Amsterdam. Originally published as *Overgave op commando* in 2025 in the Netherlands, *Surrender on Demand* was shortlisted for the Libris Literature Prize, the most prestigious award for Dutch literature. De Vries also writes poetry in English. Her collected works, *All My Dead Jesters*, were published by Tenement Press in 2026. *Surrender on Demand* is her UK prose debut.

SARAH TIMMER HARVEY

is a translator and writer currently based in New York. She holds an MFA from Columbia University and a BA from Southern Cross University. Born in Australia, she lived and worked in the Netherlands for 14 years before moving to New York in 2013.

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VIRTUE

ALICE ROGERS

True Grit by way of Sarah Waters, *Virtue* considers the origins of a cowboy, and what it takes to become one, in the dying years of the Wild West

1892, New Mexico. Clementine Hollow stands over the body of her murdered brother. Since before she can remember, she has watched the horizon and fantasised about what form her freedom might take – now it's here, in blood and violence.

Disguised as a boy in her dead brother's clothes, Clem flees her family's ranch, taking with her the money his killers are chasing. For the first time in her life she's alone in the world, until she meets seasoned cowboy Connie Glass.

Connie takes Clem under his wing and teaches her the skills she needs to survive. Together, they traverse the open plains and mining towns of New Mexico, ending up in a small haven called Virtue.

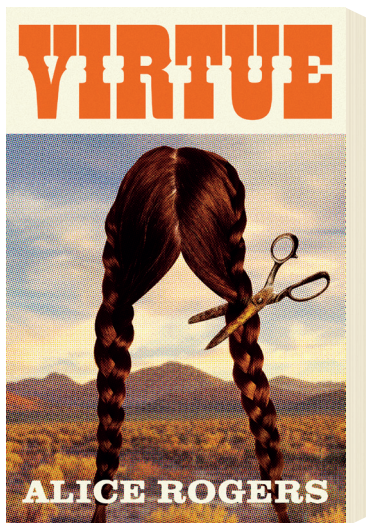
There, as Connie settles back into old habits, Clem finally finds a sense of belonging, and maybe even a chance at love. But she soon discovers what Connie already knows well: the past isn't so easy to leave behind and where cowboys go, trouble always follows.

A powerful exploration of gender, found family and identity, this sweeping character-driven debut heralds the arrival of an imaginative new voice in fiction.

MAY 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Virtue

PBO 978-0-85730-706-4 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)
EXTENT 304pp // EB 978-0-85730-707-1 £6.99
CATEGORY Historical Fiction // RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada
AUDIO RIGHTS Available
AUTHOR LOCATION Edinburgh, UK



The perfect next read for fans of Claudia Craven's *Lucky Red* and Anna North's *Outlawed*.



Photo: Zach Emerson

ALICE ROGERS is a Welsh writer currently living in Scotland. In 2020 she graduated from the University of Edinburgh with a first-class degree in Creative Writing. In her free time she enjoys collecting antiques, watching *Seinfeld* and walking loops of botanical gardens. *Virtue* is her debut novel.

vervebooks.co.uk/Alice-Rogers

THE GALLOWS BRIDE

A Lizzie Hardwicke Mystery #5

GEORGINA CLARKE

A gripping and vividly imagined historical mystery set between eighteenth-century London and rural Worcestershire

Why disturb the past, when the story is best left untold?

Worcestershire, September 1759. Lizzie Hardwicke, former harlot, travels to her childhood home with her beloved William Davenport ahead of their marriage, happy to leave behind the sordid streets of Soho and the thieves and murderers that inhabit them. The only problem she anticipates is how to restore her relationship with her estranged father.

As the wedding approaches, the death of one of the household's maids is of little interest to anyone except Lizzie, even though it's clear she's been poisoned. Then, when a travelling accountant is found dead the following night, sharper questions are asked, not least by the local justice of the peace who had employed him.

With William recalled to London to tend to a case of his own, Lizzie, increasingly stifled by village life, begins to investigate alone. Her curiosity leads her through layers of deceit, until she unearths long-buried secrets that leave her questioning everything she believed about the place she grew up – and that put her father's life in danger.

'Lizzie Hardwicke is an endearing, smart female sleuth you cannot fail to love'

★★★★★ **READER REVIEW**

JUNE 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/The-Gallows-Bride

PBO 978-0-85730-724-8 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 X 129mm)
EXTENT 352pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-725-5 **£6.99**
CATEGORY Historical Crime // RIGHTS World English Language
AUDIO RIGHTS Available // AUTHOR LOCATION Worcester, UK



Also **AVAILABLE**

A KISS FOR THE DEVIL
A LIZZIE HARDWICKE MYSTERY #4

PB 978-0-85730-930-3 **£10.99**
EB 978-0-85730-931-0 **£6.99**

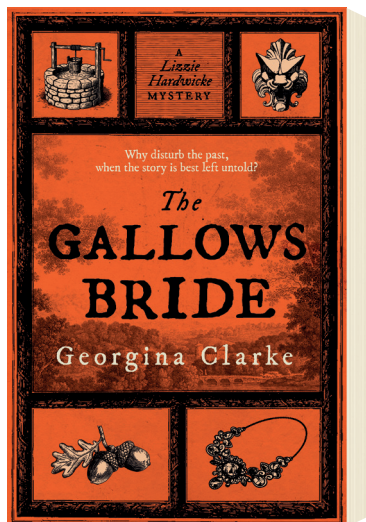


photo: Anastasi Johnson

GEORGINA CLARKE has a degree in theology and completed a PhD in history part-time, while working as a parish priest. Her love of the past is at the heart of her fiction: her Lizzie Hardwicke crime series is set in the mid-eighteenth century, and her standalone novel – *The Dazzle of the Light* – unfolds in 1920s London. Clarke is currently a tutor at the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham. When she's not working, she enjoys dressmaking, running and mooching around old houses. She lives in Worcester with her husband, son and two lively cats.

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SALT

OLIVIA DOUGLASS

**A stunning meditation on race, class, first love
and how to truly live when you have spent so
long trying to survive**

*This summer will end, it must, but already she feels it echoing
through her whole life.*

A bleak future of working in a fish and chip shop is what awaits Osaze Wilde if she is unable to leave her small coastal town. Subjected to relentless scrutiny, she exists on the periphery, isolated, until Tobi breezes in with the yearly flock of tourists. Instantly, they are drawn to each other, but looming over Osaze is her unstable mother, threatening to ruin their just-blooming bond.

Years pass, and for the first time, as an aspiring painter in London, Osaze can breathe. But chaos has become her comfort: amid the turbulence of the art world, political unrest and a burgeoning desire burning inside her, Osaze struggles under the weight of constant pressure. And this time, Tobi might not be the one to save her.

With the smooth lyricism of Caleb Azumah Nelson and the precise racial and class explorations of Liv Little, *Salt* places Black queer perspectives at the centre of a bittersweet love story.

JUNE 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Salt

PBO 978-0-85730-712-5 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)

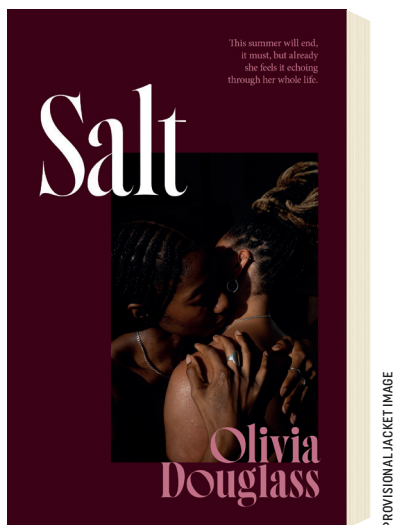
EXTENT 288pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-713-2 **£6.99**

CATEGORY Contemporary Fiction

RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada

AUDIO RIGHTS Available

AUTHOR LOCATION London, UK



OLIVIA DOUGLASS is a British Nigerian writer and artist born in Lewisham, South London to an English mother and Nigerian father. Douglass grew up between Wiltshire and West Somerset, before returning to London. Their writing navigates themes of desire, memory and experiments in living. Douglass is the author of poetry pamphlets *Unruly Blood* (2024) and *Slow Tongue* (2018). Their short story 'Ink' won the *Guardian* and 4th Estate 4thWrite Prize in 2022, marking a transition into fiction.

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[@oliviaddouglass](https://twitter.com/oliviaddouglass)

MAN AND WIFE

SETH INSUA

**An electric reimagining of Du Maurier's
Rebecca that unearths the darkest anxieties
haunting modern relationships**

After years of pining for men who would never choose him, the thirty-something narrator of *Man and Wife* is swept off his feet by the advances of Adam Hunt – handsome, wealthy and unapologetically romantic. Their whirlwind love story takes them from London to rural Kent in a matter of weeks as they plan to start their life together at Hunt's house, Iden Hall – a glass-and-steel mansion constructed around a crumbling old water tower.

Except Hunt is still grieving Fiadh, the wife he buried two years prior, and he's not the only one. To the village, Hunt's second chance at love is not a happy ending but a betrayal. Gone is the family man, faithful to his wife's memory; now an imposter plays her role in the home she designed. And in Iden Hall's annexe, Hunt's controlling elderly father watches on, still in the dark about his son's new relationship.

Hunt's new love works hard to mould himself into a worthier partner. Yet, as rumours swarm and Iden Hall tightens its grip, he begins to wonder: did Fiadh ever truly leave the house she built?

Elegant and psychologically acute, *Man and Wife* is a ghost story, a love story and a possession. In a world made for husbands and wives, what becomes of a man cast as both?

'Gorgeous, tender, raw and real'

– LUCY ROSE

'Gripping and wickedly gothic'

– TOBI COVENTRY

JULY 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Man-and-Wife

PBO 978-0-85730-716-3 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)

EXTENT 288pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-717-0 **£6.99**

CATEGORY Contemporary Fiction/Gothic

RIGHTS World English Language // AUDIO RIGHTS Available

AUTHOR LOCATION Newcastle, UK



Also AVAILABLE

HUMAN, ANIMAL

PBO 978-0-85730-889-4 **£10.99**

EB 978-0-85730-890-0 **£6.99**



**'Rebecca – but gay! A smart, fresh
and unexpected take'**

– KIRSTY LOGAN



SETH INSUA is an Anglo-Spanish writer and artist. He was born in Kent in 1989. He graduated from the University of Oxford with a First in English Language and Literature. He lives with his husband, David, between Newcastle upon Tyne and Madrid. His debut novel, *Human, Animal*, was shortlisted for the Discover Award at the 2026 British Book Awards, shortlisted for the 2025 New Adult Book Prize and was a BBC Radio 2 Book Club pick.

sethinsua.com

@sethinsua

THE SEPARATION

The Cycle Series #1

MAAME BLUE

A sweeping speculative saga about power, inherited trauma and the architecture of division

In a world built on a lie, who gets to be loved?

It's been seventy years since the Separation – a bill that dictates who will be protected and accepted and who will be oppressed and feared. As a ToBeLoved, Antoinette Boateng exists in the latter. She spends her days assisting in a hospital, waiting for her comatose mother, Alberta, to wake up and longing to become more than what the state has planned for her.

But when new government initiatives threaten the life of her mother and many others, Antoinette is forced into a hidden world where the rules no longer apply, uncovering a secret that could topple the very foundations of society.

With the weight of a distorted history on her shoulders, Antoinette must decide whether she will reveal an earth-shattering secret in order to give herself and her people a better future.

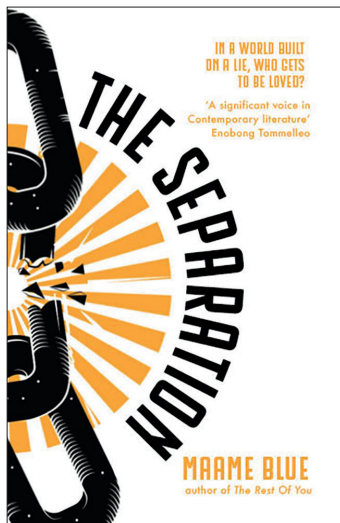
Perfect for fans of NK Jemisin, Margaret Atwood and Malorie Blackman, *The Separation* is a searing collation of our past mistakes, an unforgiving reflection of our present choices and a startling warning about our future.

**** The second novel in Maame Blue's Cycle Series will be published by VERVE Books in 2028 ****

AUGUST 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/The-Separation

PBO 978-0-85730-726-2 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)
EXTENT 320pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-727-9 £6.99
CATEGORY Speculative Fiction // RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada
AUDIO RIGHTS Available
AUTHOR LOCATION London, UK & Melbourne, Australia



PROVISIONAL JACKET IMAGE



MAAME BLUE is a Ghanaian-Londoner and part-time Melbourne resident. She is the author of two novels: *Bad Love* (Jacaranda) which won the 2021 Betty Trask award, and *The Rest of You* (VERVE Books) which was shortlisted for the 2025 Jhalak Prose Prize. Her short stories have appeared in five anthologies, she writes for *The Bookseller* and *Writers Mosaic* and she has been a judge for multiple writing competitions.

maamebluewrites.com
[@Maame_Blue](https://twitter.com/Maame_Blue)

LOVERS, REVERSED

GENEVIEVE JAGGER

Set in Glasgow and inspired by 21st-century 'bedroom pop culture', *Lovers, Reversed* is an entrancing love story about witchcraft, autism and desire – and how it feels to live at the edges of a world that you struggle to understand

Mara Catchdark is an online sex worker, a loner and a virgin. Though she has performed all kinds of bizzaro internet sex acts, she has given up all hope of ever finding a physical lover. That is until she takes a walk on the night of a full moon in a dark Southside park, where she meets a stray cat who leads her towards her fate: an imposing old tree and a forgotten deck of tarot cards.

Enthralled by the cards, Mara quickly discovers how much power they possess. Maybe, with a little magick, they can give her what she wants: a lover. All she has to do is summon them.

Enter Adrienne the witch and Arthur the tattoo artist, two people Mara feels an instant, cosmic, connection with. Now Mara finds herself with an entirely new problem on her hands – what does she want and who is she being led towards? Reality is rarely as simple as magick.

'To read Jagger's prose is to be riven; like the call of the ocean, one gazes into the story and becomes engulfed'

– ELLE NASH

SEPTEMBER 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/Lovers-Reversed

PBO 978-0-85730-728-6 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)
EXTENT 288pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-729-3 **£6.99**
CATEGORY Magical Realism/Romance
RIGHTS World All Languages
AUDIO RIGHTS Available // AUTHOR LOCATION Glasgow, UK



Also AVAILABLE

FRAGILE ANIMALS

PBO 978-0-85730-700-2 **£11.99**
EB 978-0-85730-701-9 **£6.99**



PHOTO: RHIANONNE STONE

Big Swiss meets The Love Witch.

GENEVIEVE JAGGER is a queer, autistic witch from Scotland. Her debut novel, *Fragile Animals*, was shortlisted for the Betty Trask Prize, a Saltire Award and a British Book Award. Jagger is a tarot reader, dealing fortunes across Glasgow with her small tarot company, Two for Joy. She loves stuffed animals and farming video games with romanceable characters. Her favourite tarot card is The Star.

genajag.com
@underworldgurl

IN RESIDENCE

JESSICA WIDNER

A literary ghost story in the vein of Pola Oloixarac's *Mona* with a Shirley Jackson twist, for fans of Jordan Peele

When Eva and Elliot receive a vast inheritance from Elliot's mother, it is as welcome as it is troubling. Middle aged, without children and already leading a comfortable middle-class life in Edinburgh, they decide to use the money to launch a fully funded residency for emerging artists.

Yet, as soon as the money arrives in Elliot's account, a strange atmosphere converges around the couple. It follows them to the Yorkshire Dales, where they renovate a large property ahead of the inaugural residency. They each begin dreaming of a presence, a dark and inescapable creature, and whispers seem to linger in the air even after they wake.

When the first batch of guests arrives – a dancer from Busan, a mixed-media artist from Los Angeles and a writer from Toronto – they too are caught up in the increasingly terrifying happenings. Tensions escalate as they all suspect each other of foul play, but the true culprit is a legacy that extends far into the past, surfacing to remind Eva and Elliot of the full extent of their inheritance.

Perceptive and piercing, Widner spins a story of patronage, privilege, class and complicity, and the small compromises we make with ourselves every day, until its dark heart emerges.



PHOTO: ADAM FARLIE

OCTOBER 2027

vervebooks.co.uk/In-Residence

PBO 978-0-85730-730-9 **£11.99** // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm)

EXTENT 288pp TBC // EB 978-0-85730-731-6 **£6.99**

CATEGORY Horror/Literary Fiction

RIGHTS UK & Comm ex Canada

OTHER PUBLISHERS Mariner – USA; Anansi – Canada

AUDIO RIGHTS Available

AUTHOR LOCATION Glasgow, UK

JESSICA WIDNER is a writer and literary scholar. Her novel, *Interiors*, was released by the87press in 2022. She is a lecturer in English and Creative Writing at the University of Strathclyde. Originally from Toronto, she now lives in Glasgow.

jessicawidner.com

GUILLOTINE

CURTIS GARNER

**A searing examination of a marriage in crisis,
from the author of coming-of-age hits
*Isaac and Orange***

In North London, design-agency owner Elliott and novelist Sonny have the lives they always wanted – prestigious careers, money, a beautiful home. But their relationship is failing.

After the recent death of his father and years of writer's block following the publication of his debut novel, Sonny is sinking into a depression he cannot name nor escape. Meanwhile Elliott – ambitious and increasingly estranged from his husband – becomes obsessed with a younger man he employs.

Inspired by *Revolutionary Road*, *Guillotine* is a ruthless and often satirical portrait of middle-class London, skewering its comforts and hypocrisies while exposing the cost of a life built to look perfect.

**'Garner writes like a queer, twenty-first century
Richard Yates: honest, uncompromising, fearless,
and completely engrossing'**

– ALEX PHEBY

'Garner is clearly one to watch'

– PATRICK GALE

NOVEMBER 2027

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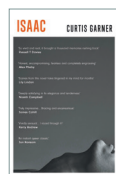


PHOTO: ADAM DIXON

CURTIS GARNER is the author of *Isaac and Orange*. He was born in Cornwall in 1996 and moved to London when he was eighteen to study Creative Writing and English Literature. He graduated in 2017 and has been working in publishing since. In 2020 he also received an MA with Distinction from Manchester Writing School, where much of his debut novel was written. In his spare time he reviews novels on Instagram (@queer_novels).

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After being met with suspicion from most of the locals, the family are thrilled when they're taken under the wing of their well-respected neighbours, Bill and Betty Nevan, who offer them work, companionship and an opportunity to fit in.

But for one of the O'Learys, this new friendship sparks an intense attachment that makes the dynamic dangerous for all. It's difficult to bury secrets, but almost impossible to bury feelings...

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CHLOE MICHELLE HOWARTH

was born in July 1996. She grew up in the West Cork countryside, which has served as an inspiration for her writing. Howarth currently lives in Brighton. Her debut novel, *Sunburn*, was nominated for numerous awards including the 2024 Book of the Year: Discover Award at the British Book Awards and the 2023 Nero Book Award for Debut Fiction.

chloemichellehowarth.com
[@chloemichelleh](https://twitter.com/chloemichelleh)

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DIVYA MANIAR

A piercing debut exposing the toxicities of reality TV and influencer culture

Grace is no longer famous. She sits alone in her New York apartment, endlessly watching reruns of herself on the reality TV show *Speed Daters*. Then, one evening, a man breaks in through her window. A rare, still-obsessed fan or raging incel – Grace is unsure. Before she can find out, he disappears.

That same night, the world is rocked by the news that Anoushka, Grace's onscreen rival, has taken her own life. Suddenly thrust back into the public eye, Grace is thrilled to be relevant again.

But fame is fickle, and when the fans begin to turn on her, Grace escapes with her unreliable boyfriend and *Speed Daters* co-star Cal to his isolated cabin in the woods. With nothing but each other, can they mend what's broken without destroying what little is left?

'A compelling and perceptive exploration of the dangers of seeking validation in a society that increasingly mistakes a carefully constructed existence for reality... Wholly absorbing'

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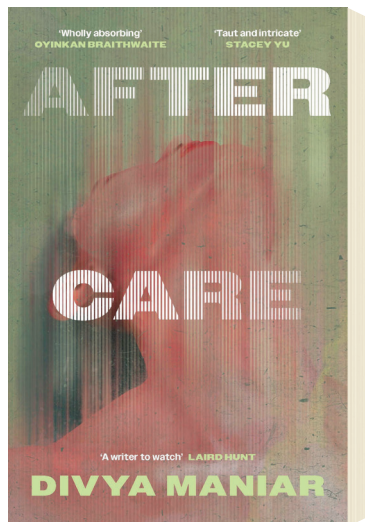
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AUDIO EDITION W F Howes // AUTHOR LOCATION London, UK



'Bold and haunting'

– STACEY YU

'A writer to watch'

– LAIRD HUNT



DIVYA MANIAR is a writer and dancer from Singapore. She studied Comparative Literature and Philosophy at Brown, and holds an M.Phil in English Literature from Cambridge. Her writing has appeared in *Joyland*, *The Rumpus* and elsewhere. *After Care* is her debut novel.

divyamaniar.com
@divyamaniar

2026 HIGHLIGHT

PLEASE DON'T TOUCH THE BODY

EMILY DOYLE

By turns tender and irreverent, these eleven genre-bending stories revel in the devastation – and power – of being alive today

Is there solace to be found in a secret life as a sex columnist? Is a hypochondriac new graduate dying of stomach cancer, or is she just struggling to navigate the responsibilities of adult life? And what would happen if Ronald Reagan were reincarnated as the much-loved puppy of a young queer girl?

Doyle envisions answers to all of this and more. Preoccupied by the bizarre realities of modern life – from loneliness and community, to religion and repression, to the pleasure and pain of womanhood – this rich collage of stories reveals an original mind and a bold new talent.

'A magnificent debut... Messy, horny, funny and ultimately profound... Doyle is a rising star'

– LAILA LALAMI

'Doyle is a knockout writer'

– DEBUTIFUL

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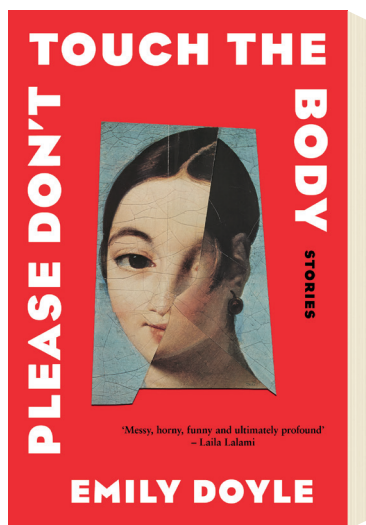
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CATEGORY Short Stories

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OTHER PUBLISHERS Bloomsbury US – North America

AUDIO RIGHTS Available // AUTHOR LOCATION Los Angeles, USA



EMILY DOYLE is the author of the debut collection *Please Don't Touch the Body* and her forthcoming debut novel, *Encounter*. Her work has appeared in *Ploughshares*, the *Kenyon Review*, the *Sun* and elsewhere, and she has received numerous awards, including the Abraham Lincoln Polonsky Endowed Award and the Bread Loaf-Rona Jaffe Foundation Participant Scholarship. She lives in Los Angeles and teaches at UC Riverside.

emilydoylewriter.com
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2028 PREVIEW

THE ASHES

SPRING 2028
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DYLIN HARDCASTLE

A sweeping dual timeline narrative, from the acclaimed author of *A Language of Limbs*, examining transmasculinity from the twentieth century to the present day, set between Australia and the UK.

Perfect for fans of Douglas Stuart, Michael Cunningham, Torrey Peters and Nicola Dinan.

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TONGUE TIDE

SPRING 2028
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KATHRYN ALDRIGE-MORRIS

As a young mother seeks to get to the root of her son's language loss and help him speak again, she explores and marvels at the emotional and linguistic forces that bind us all together – as well as those which keep us apart.

A powerful and poignant literary memoir, *Tongue Tide* will appeal to fans of Jenny Offill's *Weather*, Octavia Bright's *This Ragged Grace* and Claire Kilroy's *Soldier Sailor*.

PBO 978-0-85730-736-1 £11.99 // FORMAT B (198 x 129mm) // EXTENT TBC // EB 978-0-85730-737-8 £6.99
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ENCOUNTER

SUMMER 2028
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EMILY DOYLE

An offbeat queer love story about a young Neanderthal woman and exiled Homo sapiens woman fighting for survival during an ice age.

***Encounter* asks what it means to pursue hope in the face of extinction. For fans of Lauren Groff's *The Vaster Wilds*, Diane Cook's *The New Wilderness* and Samantha Leigh Allen's *Patricia Wants to Cuddle*.**

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SETH INSUA

On a remote island, a young man's life is upended by a newcomer whose strange predictions stir forbidden desires and force him to question everything he once knew.

A speculative novel about gender, queerness and family as well as the intersections of love and power and our relationship with nature. For fans of *The Overstory* by Richard Powers and *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy.

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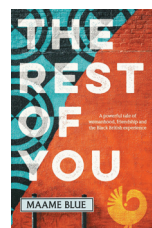
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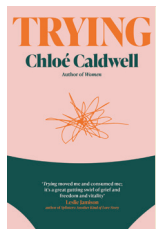
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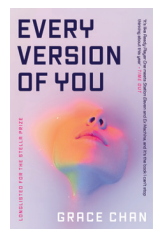
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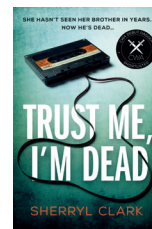
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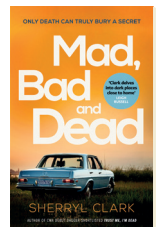
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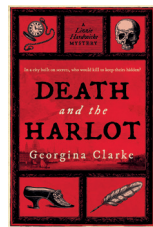
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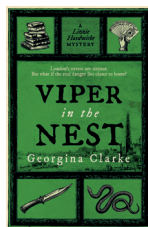
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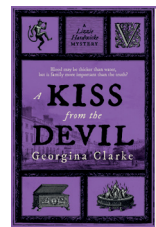
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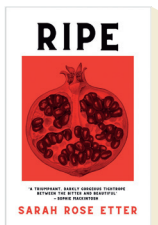
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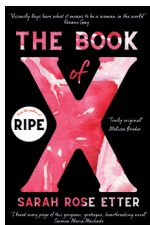


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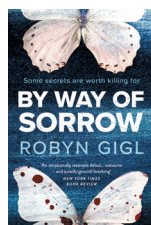
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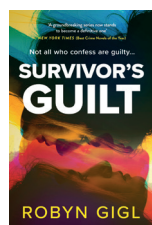
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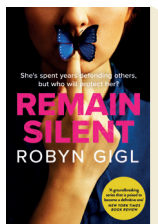
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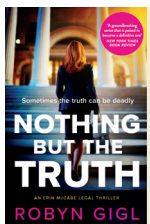
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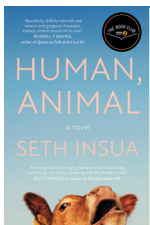
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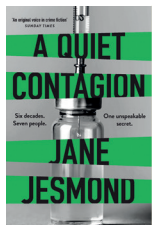


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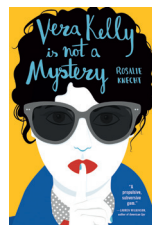
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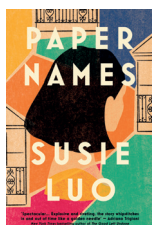
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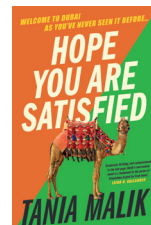
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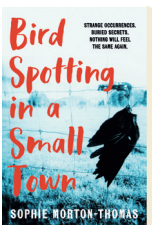
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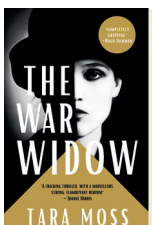
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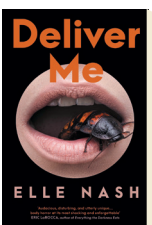
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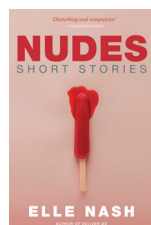
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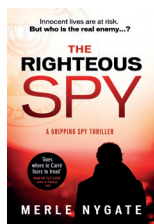
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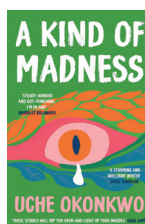
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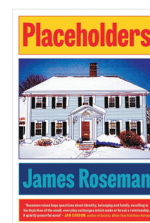
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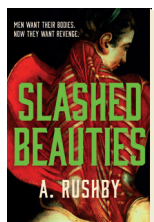
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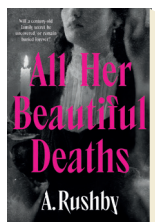
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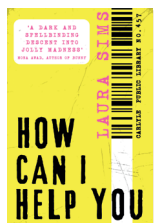
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