



DIAMOND KAHN & WOODS
LITERARY AGENCY

LBF Rights Guide 2019

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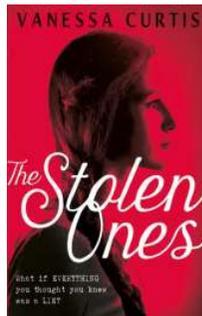
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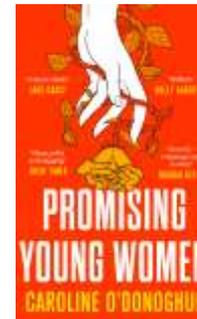
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DIAMOND KAHN & WOODS
LITERARY AGENCY

◆ CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT FICTION ◆





VANESSA CURTIS

Vanessa is the award-winning author of five novels for children, including *Zelah Green* which won the Manchester Children's Book Prize and was shortlisted for the Waterstones Prize 2009, and *The Haunting of Tabitha Grey*, a contemporary ghost story with a shocking twist.

Vanessa originally trained as a pianist and went on to play in various rock bands. She still teaches the piano when she's not writing novels. She reviews books for the national newspapers and has worked as a literary consultant. Vanessa is also the co-founder of the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain and has written two biographies on Virginia Woolf.

THE STOLEN ONES by Vanessa Curtis

UK Publisher: Usborne (World English), January 2019

Age Group: YA 13+

Rights Sold: Audio (WF Howes), via Publisher

My name is Inge. I am sixteen.

I live with Mama and Papa in Munich. Food is still rationed, though the war ended over ten years ago.

My boyfriend is Jewish. I have to hide this from my parents.

Sometimes I think they are hiding something from me, too. Letters arrive every year on my birthday, but they are not addressed to me.

They are for a girl named Kasia.

This is her story.

Exploring the secretive and disturbing legacy of the Nazi's Lebensborn programme, under which Polish children were stolen from their families to be brought up in the Aryan ideal, it's an emotive, powerful story with a strong element of mystery.

Extract:

Papa is attempting to shut the door on whoever is outside.

He appears to be winning. But then I see it.

A small, narrow foot in a cracked black leather shoe. It slides past my father's leg and plants itself firmly in the middle of our front doormat.

There's a tussle, but the foot stays in place.

Mama looks back at me, mute and in fear.

Her face has unravelled from its usual smooth completeness into a mass of jagged angles and lines which don't seem to fit together.

'Inge,' she says again, but this time her voice is broken. 'You really should go upstairs.'

But it is too late.

The black-leather shoe has been followed by a body.

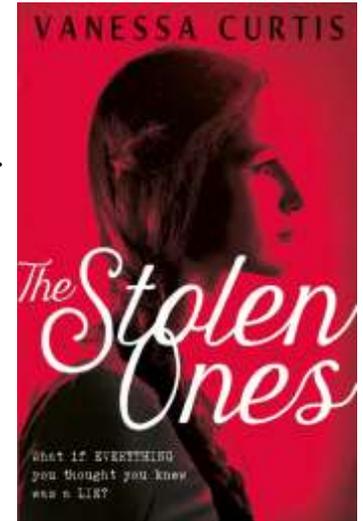
A small, thin woman in a grey headscarf and a non-descript long black dress has slid into our hallway and is standing in front of me.

She holds out her hands towards me.

'Kasia,' she says. I shake my head, confused.

'Inge,' I say. 'My name is Inge.'

She speaks, in a faltering voice and a language I don't understand. Except there is one word I already know. One word I hear every night in my bad dream. A word that somehow I knew was going to come from her mouth even before she said it, pointing at herself the whole time: Matka.



Also by Vanessa Curtis:

"A tragic, harrowing and **deeply moving** account of the Holocaust from the perspective of an ordinary girl" – Fiona Noble, *The Bookseller*

"The novel's power comes from its focus on Hanna's feelings as she struggles with her Jewish-identity, as well as from its **strong sense of place** and details such as the food, from yomtov feasts to desperate, mouldy scraps." - Angela Kiverstein, *The Jewish Chronicle*

Publisher: Usborne, 2015 Rights sold: Danish (Forlaget 5)



VIRGINIA MACGREGOR

Virginia Macgregor was brought up in Germany, France and England by a mother who never stopped telling stories. From the moment she was old enough to hold a pen, Virginia set about writing her own.

Her debut novel for adults, *What Milo*

Saw (Little, Brown, 2014) was published to great acclaim and has so far been translated into 12 languages. Her second novel, *The Astonishing Return of Norah Wells*, was published in January 2016, and her third, *Before I Was Yours*, in January 2017. Her debut YA novel, *Wishbones*, was published by HQ HarperCollins in 2017. *As Far As The Stars* is her second novel for YA readers.

AS FAR AS THE STARS by Virginia Macgregor

UK Publisher: HQ (WEL), April 2019

Age Group: 13+

Rights Available: Translation

Two teenagers wait at Dulles International Airport, Washington D.C. Air is there to meet her brother Blake who is flying in from London. Christopher is waiting for his father, who is on the same flight.

But the plane never arrives.

With their worlds crashing down around them, Christopher and Air find themselves on a fast-paced road trip to Nashville—Air trying to convince herself that her brother must miraculously still be alive. That somehow he'd got on a different plane. Her wonderful, infuriating brother can't possibly be gone.

Christopher, meanwhile, can't tell Air his biggest secret—that his father was the pilot of the missing plane. And that he knows her brother isn't coming home. Because how can you tell someone something so terrible when you're falling in love with them? And how can he possibly be falling in love, when his world is falling apart?

AS FAR AS THE STARS is the powerful new YA novel from Virginia Macgregor, perfect for fans of Non Pratt, John Green and Jennifer E Smith.

Extract:

Where the hell are you, Blake?

I go up to a guy wearing what I recognise as a BA uniform:

'Excuse me –'

He spins round. His eyes are wide and kind of jumpy. BA officials have this way of looking totally calm. Like even if the airport was on fire every hair would stay in place. Mom says it's a British thing. But this guy doesn't look calm, not at all. Which is strange. Like it's strange that everyone around me is acting so stressed out. It's not like they've all got weddings to go to – or Moms like mine. Planes get delayed all the time.

'The plane – the one that's been delayed,' I say to the BA guy. 'I was meant to pick someone up.' I pause. 'Or I think I was. It's kind of complicated. Could you check the passenger list for me?'

He stares at me and blinks like I'm not speaking English.

I try again, trying to calm myself down enough to get the words out in the right order:

'I need to check whether my brother was meant to be on the plane that's been delayed.'

'I'm afraid we can't release that information.'

'I'm his sister.'

'We still can't release that information. Not at this point.'

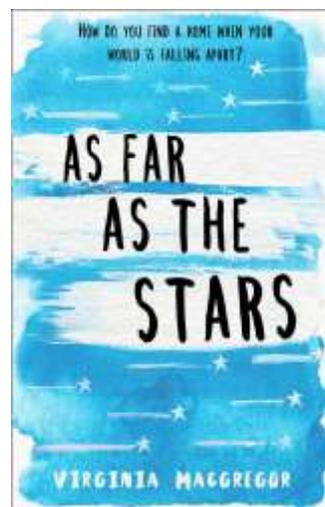
'What point?'

He looks at me like I'm about two years old – or totally crazy – or both.

'I'm sorry I can't help,' the guy says, his eyes still darting around. 'I've got to go.'

My heart starts doing this weird arrhythmic pounding thing.

This can't be happening.



Praise for *Wishbones* by Virginia Macgregor:

"A hugely enjoyable read." - TES

"Compelling, gritty and suffused with promise, this is a true triumph of contemporary YA" - lovereading4kids.co.uk

"A heartbreaking but hugely important read"

- Laura Patricia Rose Blog

"A great book that should be read by adults and kids alike."

- A Bookworm's Guide To Life



DAVID OWEN



David resents the fact that he was not raised by wolves and was therefore robbed of a good story to tell at parties. He achieved 1st class honours in BA Creative Writing and MA Writing for Children at The University of Winchester, where he went on to teach on the BA Creative Writing course for three years.

He is the Deputy Editor for gapyear.com and a former freelance games journalist, contributing to review sites including *IGN*, *Rock Paper Shotgun* and *Polygon*. He

has been published as a poet in journals such as *Agenda* and *Seam*. David spends most of his time thinking about biscuits.

ALL THE LONELY PEOPLE by David Owen

UK Publisher: Atom (UK & Commonwealth ex. Canada)

January 2019

Age Group: YA/Crossover

Rights Available: US & Translation, Audio (direct)

Everyone tells Kat that her online personality – confident, funny, opinionated – isn't her true self. Kat knows otherwise. The internet is her only way to cope with a bad day, chat with friends who get all her references, make someone laugh. But when she becomes the target of an alt-right trolling campaign, she feels she has no option but to *Escape, Delete, Disappear*.

With her social media shut down, her website erased, her entire online identity void, Kat feels she has cut away her very core: without her virtual self, who is she?

She brought it on herself. Or so Wesley keeps telling himself as he dismantles Kat's world. It's different, seeing one of his victims in real life and not inside a computer screen – but he's in too far to back out now.

As soon as Kat disappears from the online world, her physical body begins to fade and while everybody else forgets that she exists, Wesley realises he is the only one left who remembers her. Overcome by remorse for what he has done, Wesley resolves to stop her disappearing completely. It might just be the only way to save himself.

ALL THE LONELY PEOPLE is a timely story about online culture – both good and bad – that explores the experience of loneliness in a connected world, and the power of kindness and empathy over hatred.

Extract:

Kat stumbled into the toilets and threw her bag onto the mucky tiles. The dizziness was passing, but every atom in her body seemed to shake like they were breaking their bonds. The smell of bleach scorched her nostrils, stinging eyes already raw with tears.

'Stop crying,' she whispered to herself. They had taken away everything, and she hadn't even put up a fight.

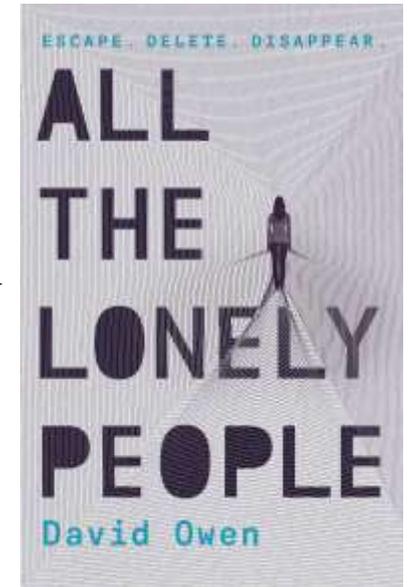
She clenched her eyes shut before she could catch sight of herself in the mirror. Back in the classroom, as she'd gripped the edge of the desk, there had been something wrong with her hands. It was like she had seen through them, through skin and flesh and bone. A trick of the light, surely, tears in her eyes blurring her vision.

So why was she so frightened to look again?

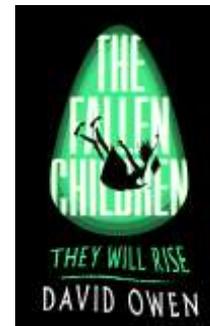
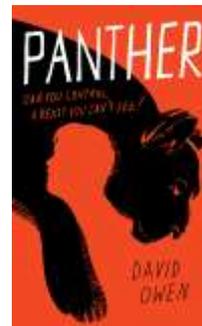
Kat wiped her eyes with trembling hands – she could still feel them, solid against her skin. She turned towards the mirrors and forced herself to look.

A ghost peered back. Kat's reflection was where it should be, but it was faded somehow, a sunblind spectral afterimage. Slowly she turned her head side-to-side and the reflection followed. The toilet stalls behind her bore cleaning notices, and she saw them through herself, too hazy to make out the words.

Irrationally she spun around, expecting to find her body lying on the tiles – she had died and become a wayward spirit – but there was nothing.



Also by David Owen:



"YA is in great hands with Owen ... he will be an author to watch."

- *We Love This Book*





EMMA PASS

Emma is the award-winning author of *Acid* (Random House, 2013) and *The Fearless* (Random House, 2014).

She worked as a library assistant for 11 years and now runs regular creative writing workshops in schools and community settings, as well as writing and printmaking workshops with her husband, artist Duncan Pass.

In summer 2018 she and Duncan were chosen as author and artist in residence with Inspire: Nottinghamshire Libraries.

She is the co-founder of the UKYA and Children's Extravaganza, a large-scale regional author event which has taken place in Birmingham, Nottingham and Newcastle, featuring almost 100 authors across 4 events.

Emma has been a First Story Writer-in-Residence and a Patron of Reading, and runs a Writing East Midlands young writers group.

DEAD LETTERS by Emma Pass

Age group: YA (13+)

Status: On UK Submission, full MS available

Rights Available: All

1915: Jack Trow, just 15 years old, lies about his name and age to join the British Army. He's one of thousands of underage soldiers the military, desperate for men, have turned a blind eye to. But nothing can prepare him for the reality of war, and after the Battle of the Somme a year later, Jack is subjected to a brutal 'cure' for the illness every soldier dreads: shell shock. He knows that when he recovers he will be sent back to the front – a horror almost too great to bear. So Jack decides to take drastic action...

2015: 15-year-old Grace Tate is still dealing with the fallout from the death of her older brother Charlie three years earlier. Having joined the army straight out of school, the traumas he suffered in Afghanistan led him to commit suicide, and his death tore the family apart. On the third anniversary of his death, Grace pours her heart out to her brother in a letter which she leaves in a 'dead letterbox' behind a loose brick in their garden wall – where they used to leave each other secret messages as kids.

The next day, she finds a reply – from Charlie. At first, Grace thinks it's someone playing a sick joke, but the letter-writer remembers details about her life no one else could possibly know, so she realises that her brother must be very much alive. But where has he been all this time – and why did he fake his own death?

Extract:

As I latch the gate closed behind me, my head still full of Milo, something catches my eye in the flowerbed under the rhododendron beside it. I blink, and rub my eyes, convinced I'm seeing things.

But when I look again, it's still there.

A little arrow, made of sticks.

I swing round, prickles going up and down my spine.

The garden is empty, the lane quiet. There's no one there.

My heart pounding, I step across to the loose brick in the wall. It's sticking out slightly, as if someone shoved it back in a hurry. With trembling fingers, I pull it out.

My first thought is shit, someone's read my letter. It's not neatly folded any more; it's been screwed up.

Then I realise it's not my letter.

It's a piece of paper torn from the back of an envelope, roughly twisted into kind of narrow tube shape. On the outside of the tube, someone's written GRACE.

I stare at the piece of paper for a long, long time without unfolding it. I'm hallucinating. I must be. It's the only possible explanation. Why else would the handwriting be the same as on the note I found in the dead letterbox three years ago?

Because it's identical.

It's Charlie's handwriting.

Praise for *Acid* by Emma Pass:

“Emma Pass has written with **great suspense**, creating **excellent characters** and gripping action. **I would recommend this book to anyone as I really enjoyed it.**”

- *The Guardian*





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◆ ADULT FICTION ◆





JOANNE BURN

A lover of words, food and the wild outdoors, Joanne lives in the Peak District where she coaches creativity, and blogs about the joys and challenges of writing at www.notawritersgroup.com.

Her debut novel, *Petals and Stones*, was published by Legend Press in September 2018.

THE THORNAPPLE PLAGUE by Joanne Burn

Genre: Upmarket Historical Suspense
Status: Full MS due Summer 2019
Rights Available: All

It is autumn 1665, and a bolt of flea-infested cloth from London has brought the Black Death to Eyam in Derbyshire: burning heat, black boils, and agony.

Yet at night, as my little mouse sister listens to the church bells marking the hours untouched by sleep, it is Father she fears as he moves through the house, fanatical and fierce, more real than any distemper. A pious puritan, and master of medicine, he serves the village with his tinctures and decoctions. The apothecary is full of secrets, weary beneath the shadow of witchcraft, and even as the plague isolates the village without, Mae understands the greater danger that awaits her from within.

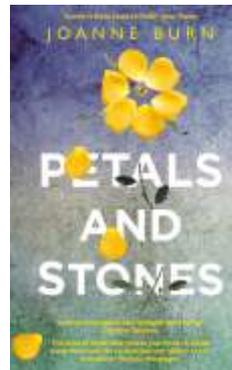
But who would believe the tales she could tell? Where can she turn? And what good am I from the grave?

Extract:

They kneel and pray and Mae finds, as she often does, that her prayers are not to God at all, but to Mother. They stop at the graves on their way home, and scrape away the snow and ice - Mae's fingers numb with cold, her coif fastenings chaffing beneath her chin. She holds her cloak about her with one hand and brushes the simple stones with the other, revealing our names one by one: Florence, Leah, Penelope and Phillis: Mother, myself and the twins. Just as she is lingering, forgetting herself, fingertips tracing the perfect lettering, Father grasps her elbow and lifts her to her feet. His hand is heavy on her shoulder. These graves can be peaceful, gladdening her soul at times, but only when she is here alone, kneeling in the soil and getting her stockings dirty, bringing us to mind: a spatter of freckles, the curve of an eyelash, the smell of warm milk. Little mouse.

With Father towering over us there is only one kind of remembering - I can almost taste the bitter tincture he'd prepared with care. How easily I took his medicine, weak as I was with the coughing sickness; like a baby bird, opening my throat.

He has always underestimated Mae. And at the same time he imagines her soon to be capable of preposterous feats and trickery of the likes a sane person could hardly fathom. She is nothing: girl-child, daughter. But as a woman she will be everything that he fears. And the only safe place for that kind of riddle is cold in the ground.



Praise for *Petals and Stones*:

"The kind of book that makes you want to sneak away from real life so that you can return to its characters." - Virginia Macgregor

"Loved it from start to finish." - June Taylor

"Lyrical, perceptive, and thought-provoking." - Christine Poulson





NICOLE BURSTEIN

Nicole has worked as a Toy Demonstrator at Hamleys, Visitor Guide at the London Eye, Audience Researcher on the X Factor, Phone Producer at Classic FM and a Travel Broadcaster on various London radio stations. None of these jobs quite fit, so in 2009 Nicole quit her latest job in PR and went to do her MA in Creative Writing at Birkbeck College whilst also working as a children's bookseller for Waterstones. She has published two YA novels with Andersen Press, in

2015 and 2016.

ADULT VIRGINS ANONYMOUS is Nicole's first novel for adult readers.

ADULT VIRGINS ANONYMOUS by Nicole Burstein

Status: Full MS due March 2019

Rights Available: All

Genre: Romantic Comedy

Are you still a virgin?

Want to talk about it in a safe space?

Meetings every other Tuesday.

You're not alone.

Kate Mundy's life is not going to plan. Nearing thirty, she's been made redundant from her job, her oldest friends have quietly left her behind, and she can barely even admit her biggest secret: she's never even been on a date.

Freddie Weir has spent most of his twenties struggling with OCD and agoraphobia, and now his only social interactions consist of comic book signings and fending off intrusive questions from his weird flatmate Damian. There's no way Freddie could ever ask a girl out. Is there?

A self-help group for self-confessed adult virgins is the last place either expect to find love...

ADULT VIRGINS ANONYMOUS is the heartwarming new novel from Nicole Burstein.

Extract:

Freddie's eyes fell on a nearby cork board, and seeing as Carmen didn't seem to be hurrying back to him, he wandered over to see what was going on. There was a poster for the Rocking Horse's monthly karaoke night, and a couple of those posters with tabs at the bottom, some already torn off, advertising english language tutoring and guitar lessons. Then a few boring business cards, a couple of less boring ones hinting at some adult services, and finally a pink notecard, the kind Freddie used to use when he was revising for exams, with a title that hit him like a punch to the gut.

ADULT VIRGINS ANONYMOUS

He looked around him. Was this a joke? Had his friends done this? Or Damien somehow? No, Baz and Wayne didn't have any idea, couldn't possibly, as they'd never talked about this kind of thing before. Their chat was strictly nerd-orientated, always. Damien then? They didn't talk about this kind of stuff either, but was it possible that somewhere down the line, in the process of living together, that Damien had figured it out? No, even if there was the chance he had, Damien didn't know about this pub, and had no idea that Freddie would be here at this exact time and place to see this.

Are you still a virgin?

Want to talk about it in a safe space?

Meetings every other Tuesday.

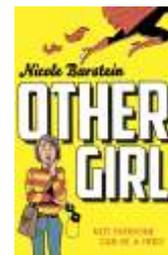
This was ludicrous. A practical joke. Maybe in the future time travel was a thing, and some stupid future Freddie had come back in time to plant this pink notecard, knowing that he'd be here, knowing that it would fuck him up to high heaven. That must be it. There was no other rational explanation.

You're not alone.

That was the bit that got him. The bit that made his stomach attempt to twist inside out, made the back of his neck sweat, made him look around nervously to check for the secret cameras. Because Freddie had always been alone. Presumed that he was always going to be alone. Couldn't possibly entertain the thought of anything being otherwise. He was the last virgin left in the entire world, and it was his deepest, most shameful secret.

Freddie heard some movement behind the door, and figured that Carmen must be making her way back. After checking over his shoulder one more time, Freddie pulled his phone out of his pocket and snapped a quick picture of the card.

Also by Nicole Burstein:



Praise for Othergirl:

"Just as **fabulous** as I thought it would be. Can't wait for everyone else to read it."

- Keris Stainton



NATALIE HART

As a teenager Natalie worked in her local independent bookshop in East Sussex. She still can't believe that someone actually paid her to drink tea and talk about books.

Now she specialises in public opinion research in conflict and post-conflict environments. She has spent three years in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan as a researcher, where the idea for PIECES OF ME began to form.

Natalie has a BA in Arabic and Spanish from the University of Cambridge and recently completed a distance learning MA in Creative Writing at the University of Lancaster. She has also completed online fiction courses with Faber Academy and the Gotham Writers' Workshop, and in April 2016 she won the London Book Fair's 'The Write Stuff' competition with her powerful and moving pitch for PIECES OF ME.

PIECES OF ME by Natalie Hart

UK Publisher: Legend Press (World English), October 2018

Rights Available: US (via Publisher), Translation

Rights Sold: Audio (W.F. Howes)

Genre: Upmarket Women's Fiction

*** SHORTLISTED FOR THE COSTA FIRST NOVEL AWARD ***

Emma did not go to war looking for love, but Adam is unlike any other.

Under the secret shadow of trauma, Emma decides to leave Iraq and joins Adam to settle in Colorado. But isolation and fear find her, once again, when Adam is re-deployed.

Torn between a deep fear for Adam's safety and a desire to be back there herself, Emma copes by throwing herself into a new role mentoring an Iraqi refugee family. But when Adam comes home, he brings the conflict back with him.

Emma had considered the possibility that her husband might not come home from war. She had not considered that he might return a stranger.

This is a novel about absence, loss and silence. How do you live a normal life, while constantly wondering whether the person you love is in danger? What do you do when they come home different, broken, and push you away?

Extract:

Iraq has invaded our home.

It is the images that flash into our living room each evening, with close-ups of stomping military boots. It is the burning metal wreckages that used to be cars. It is the grieving women who beat faces streaked with tears.

Iraq has invaded our kitchen. It is the fridge full of the foods he will miss when he leaves. It is the cover of Time magazine with the face of General Petraeus and the question 'How much longer?' It is a photo in a newspaper of a coffin, draped in a flag.

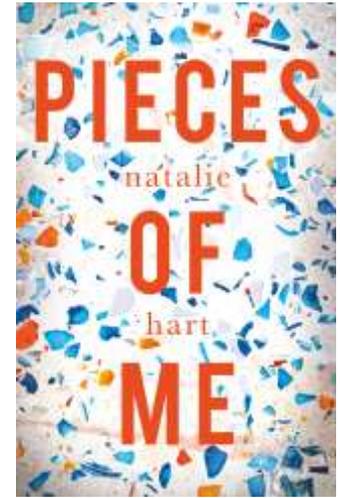
Iraq has invaded our bathroom. It is the long hot showers he takes while he still has privacy. It is the almost empty tube of toothpaste that he is eking out until he leaves. It is the hair from the fresh buzzcut that didn't quite wash down the sink.

Iraq has invaded our bedroom. It is the dust coloured boots and desert camo uniform now in the wardrobe. It is the heavy box of possessions that is waiting to be shipped. It is the piles of unidentifiable equipment that I trip over on the bedroom floor.

Iraq has invaded our bed. It is the cool space next to me when he leaves early for work. It is the way I explore his body, mapping it into my mind for when he is gone. It is the unexpected desire to conceive.

Iraq has invaded our conversations. It is the casual queries that cannot be answered. It is the plans we cannot make. It is the questions I am too scared to ask.

Iraq has invaded. The space between us has been occupied.



Praise for PIECES OF ME:

"An **astounding debut** ... Its characters and story tugged at my heart with every turning page." - *Nina Pottell, Books Editor Prima Magazine and Costa Book Awards Judge*

"Heart-wrenching and heart-warming in equal measure, PIECES OF ME is an **incredibly moving tale** of love and conflict... **I couldn't put it down.**" - *Harper's Bazaar*





S E LISTER

Sophie Lister grew up in Gloucestershire, and is a graduate of the prestigious Creative Writing programme at Warwick University. She has been reading stories since she was old enough to pick up a book, and writing them almost as long. Now 29, she has published two novels: *Hideous Creatures* (2014), which was shortlisted for the Edinburgh First Book

Award, and *The Immortals* (2015).

Alongside her creative writing, she has written for various magazines and websites about philosophy and film.

Sophie loves vintage clothes, art-house cinemas and growing her own courgettes.

AUGURY by S E Lister

UK Publisher: Old Street Books (UK/Comm), Spring 2020

Rights Available: US, Translation, Audio

Genre: Literary/Magic Realism

The people of an ancient city awaken one night to find the earth beneath them trembling. But only the Augur, a fearless prophetess who was once the power behind the throne, sees the fate that awaits them.

As the skies darken and portents threaten, a handful of people are drawn to do the Augur's bidding. Fierce Saba and pale-haired Aemilia, her young acolytes, stolen from their homes long ago. Myloxenes, gentle son of the savage High Priest; and crippled Antonus, the man who should have been Emperor. In the city's last days, each will be tested.

Their dearest hopes may not survive the fire that is to come.

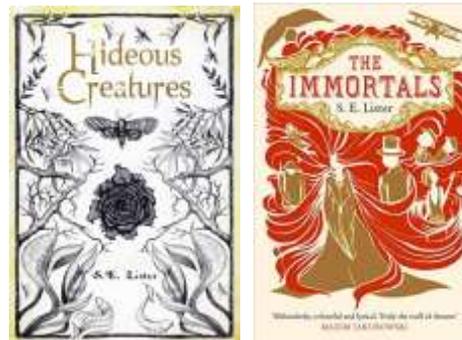
Extract:

Saba wakes in darkness. She knows at once that the Augur has not yet returned from the mountain. She lies on her back, senses suddenly sharp. And then the earth begins to move.

It is over in a moment, a shift so low and deep that it might be mistaken for a noise imagined in sleep. The tremor is felt by hundreds in the city below who open their eyes in the dark and turn in their beds and forget by morning. Saba sits up, wide awake. Stones rattle into stillness in the courtyard below. The flames of the torches fixed to the temple gate waver and flare. By their light Saba spies three or four long shadows, men lurking on the steps outside the gate.

Aemilia mutters fretfully, but does not wake. Saba slips barefoot from bed, shrouds herself in her cloak, hood raised over her head. Palm of one hand against the wall to guide her, she climbs to the Augur's quarters, to be certain of her own intuition. When she pushes open the door at the top of the narrow stairwell, the moonlit chamber is empty. Loose leaves of parchment are strewn across the floor. Saba stands for a moment in the doorway, hearing her own heart beat harder. She feels a shadow pass over her, as though a flock of birds has winged overhead. Saba, who barely has it in her nature to worry or to fear.

Also by S E Lister:



"Grips and enchants and you never want it to end. A seductive new voice."

- Lovereadings.co.uk





S E LISTER & JENNIFER MCLEAN

S E Lister is the author of *Hideous Creatures* (2014), *The Immortals* (2015) and the upcoming *Augury*. She has been reading stories since she was old enough to pick up a book, and writing them almost as long. Her work is literary fiction with a touch of the macabre and the magical.

Jennifer McLean is a poet and fiction writer whose work has appeared in *Acumen*, *Under the Radar* and various anthologies. In 2016 she was selected for Writing West Midlands' Room 204 programme, and she has run a range of creative writing workshops for young people. The rest of the time, she is an English teacher working in Warwickshire.

The two met at Warwick University in 2006, where they studied creative writing together and lived in a house with crooked walls. In the years since, their wide-ranging conversations about fiction gave rise to an idea: why not collaborate to create the sort of books they'd always wanted to read?

TRAP STREET PECULIAR by S E Lister & Jennifer McLean

Status: On UK Submission, full MS available

Rights Available: All

Genre: Historical/Detective/Magic Realism

London, 1912

A government official has been murdered. Rumours of political discontent are spreading across Europe. And now the bodies of the drowned are starting to crawl from the Thames.

Valentine Peach, investigator and self-taught scientist of the praeternatural, is already neck-deep in mystery when Constance Adderley arrives at her premises on Trap Street, demanding answers about her husband's murder. But as the two women join forces to uncover the truth, the mystery only deepens. How could Arthur Adderley's work have led to his untimely demise?

Who is the man with no shadow haunting their every move?

And can they uncover a plot that will surely lead to a war unlike any the world has ever known?

Extract:

It had already been late in the day when Valentine arrived at the station, and by the time Pike had finished noting the particulars of their encounter with Mr Kash, it was getting dark. Once again it was raining, and she and Constance both paused in the doorway of the station to put up their umbrellas. Businessmen hurried home clutching their briefcases, hats held low over their foreheads. The lights of a motorcar swept across the shining pavement.

"A fruitful visit," said Valentine, with satisfaction.

Constance still seemed a little shaken from fighting her corner against Pike: or perhaps it was from having been so closely adjacent, once again, to the subject of her husband's death. She stood back from the door, unmoving, even as Valentine made to leave. "Thank you," she said suddenly.

"For what?"

"For believing me."

Valentine turned, surprised. "Your story seems logical enough, at this point."

"That isn't what most people seem to think. Just..." Constance made an odd gesture, as though her gratitude was waging war with an urge to shake Valentine in frustration. "Just accept it, Miss Peach. My thanks. I know that circumstances like this are all in a day's work to you, but for me this has been a frightening and a lonely time. I am grateful simply to be believed."

Before she could reply, Pike, who had escorted them out of the station just minutes before, made a reappearance. He had on his hat and coat, and was looking harassed. "Sorry, ladies. Miss Peach, may I speak with you a moment? Our – other problem - has reared its head once again..."

"Take constables with strong stomachs," advised Valentine. Pike glanced at Constance, hesitant. "Oh, you can speak freely in front of her. She won't be inclined to scoff at you."

"They crawled out of the river near the docklands. More than one report, since the rain started. Will you come?"

"I don't have my equipment with me."

"Then hurry home and get it. I've already called you a cab. Meet me at this address as soon as you can. And don't bring that blessed dog this time, it attracts too much attention." He scribbled on a piece of paper, pressed it into Valentine's palm, then turned up his collar against the weather before hurrying out into the night. As they watched him leave, two constables pushed past them to follow suit.

"What was that about?" Constance stared after them.

"Another case of mine. The cause of my connection with Sergeant Pike. You had best catch your own cab, Mrs Adderley, if you're going back to Westminster."

"Who crawled out of the river?" Constance was slightly breathless. She followed Valentine out into the street, their umbrellas jostling against each other.

"The animated bodies of the drowned," said Valentine calmly.

"Don't spread that amongst your society friends. Hysteria would only make things worse."





CAROLINE O'DONOGHUE

Caroline O'Donoghue is an Irish writer, musician and person living in South London. She has written for *Glamour*, *The Irish Times*, *Buzzfeed* and *Vice* among others, and was previously a Contributing Editor at *The Pool*. She hosts the popular podcasts *School for Dumb Women* and *Sentimental Garbage*.

She is a singer/songwriter for the band Greyhounds Greyhounds Greyhounds, and you should not add her on Facebook unless you want to be invited to all her gigs, forever.

PROMISING YOUNG WOMEN is her first book.

PROMISING YOUNG WOMEN by Caroline O'Donoghue

UK Publisher: Virago (UK & Comm, ex. Canada), June 2018

Genre: Literary/Commercial Fiction

Rights Sold: Polish (Świat Książki)

"Why do younger women get involved with older men?" Jolly Politely, online agony aunt, asks her readers. She is usually the one with all the answers. But not today: today it's her turn to ask questions.

Jolly Politely, known for her insightful and often cutting responses, is something of an enigma to her readers. But behind the screen name, she is Jane: a recently dumped twenty-something marketing professional attempting to rebuild the shattered pieces of her life. Newly single and struggling to navigate a city that suddenly feels alien to her, at first she doesn't notice the attentions of her older, married boss, Clem. But his advances soon become impossible to ignore, and as their affair takes a darker turn and the disastrous consequences become clear, Jane begins to question everything: her past, her present and even her sanity.

PROMISING YOUNG WOMEN is the novel for every young woman who has ever made mistakes, fallen for the wrong person at the wrong time, or for those who are simply still wondering about the person they will one day become.

Extract:

I slot into his arms easily, the right sized shoe for the right sized box. I breathe in.

Two weeks ago I brought home a new brand of fabric conditioner that my company are working with. We're supposed to use the products at home if we can, to have a better idea of how to sell them.

This has the faint, slightly urine-y smell of lilies with something else – cherry blossom? – beneath it. I can smell its cheap, powdery fragrance on his body and suddenly everything feels very funny, and very sad.

The man who used to kiss me on the nose before I

went to sleep is using the same fabric conditioner as the man who sleeps on my couch. The man who now goes out of his way to avoid my gaze. I wonder what I smell like. Cigarettes, probably. Vodka. Chips.

Somewhere in the darkness, our mouths find one another. I push myself up against him, wanting him to remember what my body feels like. I snake a hand up his side, pull him toward me, and I know he's thinking about it. Think about it.

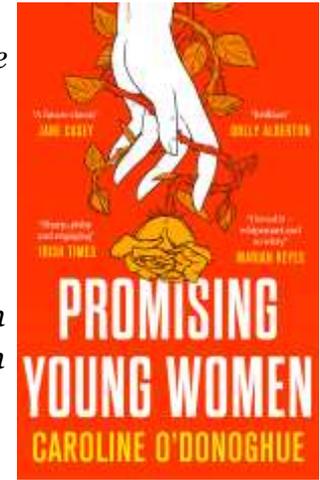
He snatches his mouth away. "Go back to your room."

"Our room," I stress.

"Go back to our old room," he replies, reasonably.

I get into bed, and sleep naked in case he changes his mind.

He doesn't.



Praise for PROMISING YOUNG WOMEN:

"I loved it... A fabulous and timely novel."—Marian Keyes

"Promising Young Women is funny, clever, upsetting, fierce and absolutely of its time. A future classic."—Jane Casey

"This is the cleverest, funniest and most assured debut novel I've ever read. It's bold, knowing and so smart - fans of Nancy Mitford or Jay McInerney will adore this, but **O'Donoghue's voice is absolutely her own.**"—Daisy Buchanan

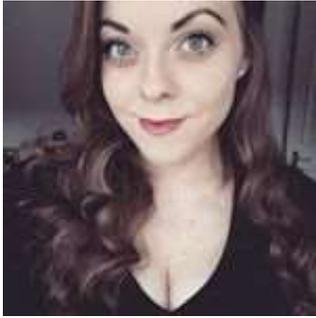




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◆ NON-FICTION ◆





KATHY BROWN

Kathy works as a Communications Manager in a hospice and blogs in her free time on iamkb.co.uk.

She uses her blog as a platform to talk about mental health, self-care, life in the hospice, love, adventures and even writes a bit of poetry from time to time.

Kathy is based in Brighton, and is a self-proclaimed lover of toast, olives, sunsets and petting dogs.

DYING TO TELL YOU is her first book.

DYING TO TELL YOU by Kathy Brown

Status: On UK Submission, full MS available

Rights Available: All

Genre: Memoir

*Did I really want to watch someone die? Somebody I hadn't ever met?
Would it not be an intrusion?*

'Could I.... Could I come back a bit later?' I asked weakly, knowing full well what was about to happen.

'Oh, Kathy,' Dr Brooks smiled softly. 'Death doesn't wait.'

DYING TO TELL YOU is a memoir-meets-manifesto, born in the 'quiet room' of a hospice that was anything but, to a woman who tells stories of the dying for a living.

From candid cancer tales to compelling, often-witty inspiration, to staggered breaths and raw human courage, this book is a touching exploration of life, love and loss inside a British hospice, from blogger and hospice worker Kathy Brown.

Extract:

Twenty minutes is all it took to know I'd never forget her.

I'd first heard about Sadie through Jane, one of the hospice counsellors, who was supporting her with weekly sessions. Jane was every bit as gentle and approachable as you'd expect a counsellor to be, but she was far from the head-tilting, retiring stereotype I had imagined might end up helping people through bereavement or loss or their last days on earth. In a word, she was sunshine: warm and bright and the epitome of joy; funny too. I got the impression that Jane was a woman who could read a room. She knew when to listen, when tenderness and patience were needed, sure, but I bet she could also bring humour as quickly as humility, challenging questions to balance comforting answers. Her honesty – the ordinary humanness of her - put everyone she encountered at ease. She'd become a friend to me in my first weeks, easing my new girl nerves with the gift of her immediate interest and respect, making a conscious effort to find out more about me and brightening up my mornings with tales of her weekend adventures and gin cocktail recommendations.

We'd talked about Sadie on a couple occasions as she often popped up on the hospice's Facebook page, leaving kind comments about her latest counselling session and asking me how she could use her experience to help others. I knew that she was a young mum, a hairdresser at the best-rated salon in town, and I knew that she had metastatic breast cancer. I also knew that she likely had less than six months to live.





Brenna Hassett

Dr Brenna Ryan Hassett is a bioarchaeologist whose career has taken her around the globe, researching the past using the clues left behind in human remains. She has a PhD from University College London, gained from looking very intently at the 500 year old teeth of London children; she has excavated at the Pyramids in Giza and the much smaller shell mounds of Malibu. As a scientist, she has years of research expertise in child health, and specialises in identifying the microscopic growth patterns that are

locked into the tooth enamel of growing children. She has worked at London's Natural History Museum and at University College London, unravelling the mystery of 5,000 year old death pits and how best to get two-inch thorns out of army boots.

She is 1/4 of the team behind TrowelBlazers, a wide ranging project that does everything in its power, from designing dolls to creating art exhibits shown in the Houses of Parliament, to bring the lost stories of women in the digging sciences back to light.

Her first book with Bloomsbury Sigma – *Built on Bones: 15,000 Years of Urban Life and Death* – was well received by critics at the LA Times, the Guardian, and the Times (UK), which named it one of the top 10 science books of 2018. The book has so far been translated into both German and Chinese with the vast majority of Monty Python jokes intact.

GROWING UP HUMAN by Brenna Hassett

Genre: Pop Science Non-Fiction

Status: Proposal due late Spring 2019

Rights Available: All

This book will be a unique offering bringing together the science of human evolution and evidence from archaeological discoveries to put forward a new paradigm for how we became the species that we are. GROWING UP HUMAN will follow in the lines of popular anthropology books such as *Guns, Germs, and Steel* and *Sapiens* by providing a scientific approach to one of life's enduring mysteries: why are humans the way we are? What is it about the human condition that has seen us go from tiny bands to dominating the planet – and perhaps, eventually, beyond?

(Cont.)

One of the things that makes our species unique among all others living on the planet is the vast investment it takes to grow a human being. Humans have the longest childhoods on the planet. We invest intensely in our children, from when they are born helpless and squidgy to well beyond the point at which they reach physical maturity. This book brings the science of physical anthropology to bear on understanding how our evolutionary history has shaped the phenomenon every reader will have experienced – growing up. Beginning with how the differences between humans and our primate cousins lead to our difficult births, it moves through the science of how our unlikely babies have spurred social and cultural adaptations, right up to things like the invention of 'teenagers' less than a century ago.

Our journey begins before any of us were even born – deep in our hominid lineage, where we begin to diverge from other primates; having fatter, more helpless infants. Palaeoanthropological science reveals the developmental clock locked in the remains of our ancestors, allowing us to peer into ancient lives with synchrotron beams and see evidence that one of our species' most striking adaptations is the evolution of childhood; a long period of dependence and social learning that makes us the animals we are today.

This fundamental question of the nature and purpose of childhood is explored through both anthropological and archaeological science. We learn how anthropologists can interpret the physical evidence of the experience of childhood, including the very real risks that children faced in the past. We also look at the archaeological remains that tell us about how our societies have treated children over the ages, from evidence of ancient toys to the grim evidence of human sacrifice.

This book looks at every aspect of human development, from the evolution of our large headed, helpless, and high fat babies right through to the social importance of childhood and adolescence, and how it has changed over the millennia. Tracing evidence from tiny lives in the archaeological record brings to light the changing nature of childhood, and the singular experience of growing up human.

This book will look at childhood as an evolutionary adaptation that has made us the most successful primates on the planet. It will go even further by looking at the rapid expansion of childhood in the modern day, and asking if our increasing period of dependency is a good thing – or a bad one. It asks if the mid-twenties offspring mooching about the family home, eating the biscuits and running up the heating, should be considered a 'failure to launch'... or potentially, the future of our species.





Sarah Jane Page

Grammar geek and word whizz Sarah-Jane Page is the founder and Director of eastuition, a private tutoring agency based in Suffolk. With over seventeen years' experience of teaching teens and adults, and thirteen years as an Examiner, Sarah-Jane brings a fresh and exciting approach to learning, making the impossible possible.

Once a tour leader in South America, an interpreter in Spain, and private tutor for a renowned billionaire, when she's not making words jump off a page for

students, she's getting words down herself as a writer. Sarah-Jane also loves cycling, beach walks, cooking and making pictures out of buttons. She thinks tea tastes best from a white cup and she can't watch anyone eat a lolly from a wooden stick.

YOUR TEEN, THEIR BEST by Sarah Jane Page

Genre: Self-help Parenting Advice

Status: UK Submission and Proposal due March 2019

Rights Available: All

A positive guide to help parents navigate adolescence and empower their teen.

Times for teens are tougher than ever. In an education system that rewards achievement over effort, and a social world that now sees interaction online, today's teens face increasing pressure. And parents cannot even look back to their own adolescence as a reliable point of reference.

For twenty years, I have worked with adolescents in schools and on a one-to-one basis as a personal tutor. Ever frustrated that I could not give students the individual support they really needed in the classroom, six years ago I launched a tuition company, offering tailored help to teens and their parents.

Every day, teens let me into their personal and academic worlds, sharing fears and dreams, failures and wins. Their narratives differ, but the theme is always the same: in trying to satisfy parents, peers and teachers, and meet academic targets, teens are stressed and lost. With honest and open dialogue, and a focus on personal strengths, I help them untangle limiting beliefs so they can reach their potential.

(Cont.)

To ensure teens are as supported as possible, I work closely with their parents too. When teens are overwhelmed, they act out their feelings in negative behaviour, but when parents react to that behaviour from a place of fear or anxiety, shame is triggered in their teen, bringing on more extreme responses and perpetuating a negative cycle. However, once parents are set up with knowledge and strategies, they are able to respond to the need behind the behaviour and accept their teen as a growing adult, not an overgrown child. Only then does positive change occur.

As a result of success in bettering the lives of those I work with, I've felt driven to write an encouraging guide for parents that brings out the best in teens without singling out the worst. And this project seems timely. With an ever-increasing number of media articles discussing the topic in the first few weeks of this year alone, from the *Economist* to *Good Housekeeping Magazine*, the government has released official guidance for parents on screen time and social media usage. Attitudes to parenting adolescents are fast evolving yet the majority of published books on the subject still cast teens in a gloomy light, generating more concern for already-worried parents.

That is where this book is different.

Rather than closing in on the problems that teens bring to a *parent's* world, the book opens up to the solutions parents can find in a *teen's* world, with school as its axis.

The book is structured around an academic year with guidance over three terms and a focus on personal and academic issues that teens face at each stage. Topics are addressed in a 'what', 'why' and 'how' format, with practical tips and clear guidance so parents can boost their teen's confidence and achievement. The book is intended for prevention not cure, and chapters can be read sequentially or in isolation.

To convey the message in a highly accessible and appealing way, the book is envisioned as an illustrated go-to guide, reminiscent of a hardback cookbook. A magazine-style design will help parents grasp difficult topics quickly and easily, in a book that will invite not intimidate.

When parents are properly equipped, they can give their teens the tools they need to build a stronger future, and as today's teens are tomorrow's world, *Your Teen, Their Best* will make their teens our best too.





Calum McSwiggan

Calum McSwiggan is an LGBT+ writer and advocate who is passionate about gender and sexuality, queer politics, and LGBT+ history. Whether sharing his own personal experiences or using his platform to tell the stories of others, meaningful storytelling is at the heart of everything he does.

Having built a substantial audience online and achieved over 7,000,000 views on [YouTube](#), Calum shares the most personal details of his life intimately and honestly.

Calum hosts a weekly [radio show](#) and has produced award-winning [videos](#) and [documentaries](#), he has worked in TV with the likes of the BBC and Channel 4, and has worked closely with many charities including Stonewall, Cancer Research UK, and the Terrence Higgins Trust.

He has a first class honours degree in Creative Writing; has written for LGBT+ publications like Pink News and Attitude Magazine; has contributed to Hannah Witton's Sex Education book *Doing It*; and has written about his experiences from living in seven different countries on his blog *Eat Gay Love*.

You can follow him on Twitter and Instagram at @CalumMcSwiggan.

EAT GAY LOVE by Calum McSwiggan

Genre: LGBT+ Memoir

Status: Full MS and UK Submission due Summer 2019

Rights Available: All

From raising tigers in a Thai monastery to being confined to a Los Angeles jail cell, this epic memoir tells the story of LGBT+ writer and advocate Calum McSwiggan and documents his experiences travelling as a gay man.

The book has all the familiar musings of a travel memoir - love, friendship, adventure, and sex - but it also strikes deeper at the heart of the issues that affect the LGBT+ communities. These issues are explored through the real life characters who bring them to life - we see a teenage Italian boy subjected to homophobia from his father; a self-identified ladyboy struggling with her gender identity in Thailand; and a young homeless boy battle with HIV on the streets of London.

Extract:

"Davide!" Francesco exclaimed, rising to embrace him. "You must meet your new brother."

"Piacere," I said nervously, getting up out of my seat and holding out my hand.

"Really nice to meet you," he laughed, playfully slapping away my hand and pulling me in for a hug. "I don't know if my dad mentioned," he said in perfect english with a soft italian lilt. "But we'll be sharing a room together. I hope that's okay?"

"Fine with me," I gulped, my heart rate quickening and my skin turning flush.

"I'm going to be working in your school too, I'll be around to help out, whatever you need," he said, sitting down next to his father and snatching up a slice of the ridiculous pizza. Francesco began to speak quickly in Italian, warm and friendly at first, but then his tone gradually started to shift. His hand gestures got more erratic, his soft voice turned harsh, and suddenly it was clear he wasn't happy. It sounded like he was complaining, and I was afraid he was complaining about me.

"Tutto bene?" I said with a quasi forced smile. "everything okay?"

"It's fine, don't worry," Davide reassured me. "He's just complaining about how busy it is in town. It shouldn't have taken so long to pick you up." My mind immediately jumped back to the flourish of rainbow colours I'd seen on my arrival, and Francesco continued to complain, waving his hands with annoyance and repeatedly shaking his head.

"Dad. Basta," Davide said. "Stop."

"Do you like?" Francesco said harshly after a few moments of silence, pushing the plate of pizza towards me and looking me dead in the eye. He wasn't talking about the pizza. I said nothing and smiled uncomfortably as I reached for another slice. "I don't like," he continued before making some unfamiliar gestures and mumbling something in Italian.

"What did he say?" I asked, but the colour had already drained from Davide's face.

"It doesn't matter," he said, waving me away and trying to change the subject.

"No really, what did he say?" I pressed, and Davide sighed with deep sadness in his voice. "He said gay people make him sick."

