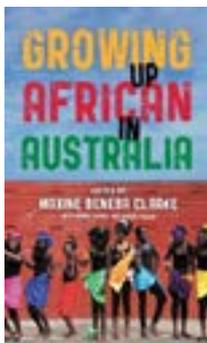
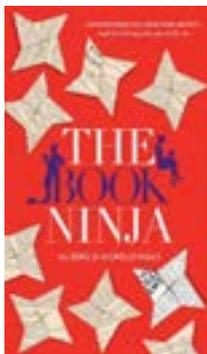


Welcome to our Staff Picks newsletter where we will share with you what we are reading, listening to or watching.

Mrs Wilson

Format: DVD

Based on an incredible true story of love, espionage, and its necessary betrayals, this three-part series is set in England during the years before and after WWII. When the devoted wife of divorcee Mr Wilson discovers, after his death, that her husband lived a surprising life as a spy for the British government, she endeavours to make sense of the truth as the contented family life she knew unravels. This story could be the poster-child for the saying that truth is stranger than fiction, and at the final credits the real life family members of Mr Wilson are shown. If you enjoy this, you might try reading Transcription by Kate Atkinson, the story of Juliet, a transcriber in the British war efforts during WWII. Her job is to type transcripts of meetings between a British agent posing as a German agent, and German sympathisers; the meetings are recorded, with much lost in shuffling of papers, a barking dog belonging to one sympathisers, and technical hitches. For a time, she is even required to do some spy work herself. The wartime story is woven around parts of her later story, and bumping into former colleagues from that earlier time. I enjoyed the gentle intrigue and character development. You can read more about the life of Alexander Wilson in The secret lives of a secret agent : the mysterious life and times of Alexander Wilson by Tim Crook.



Such a Fun Age

Author: Kiley Reid

Format: eBook

When Emira is apprehended at a supermarket for 'kidnapping' the white child she's actually babysitting, it sets off an explosive chain of events. Her employer Alix, a feminist blogger with the best of intentions, resolves to make things right.

But Emira herself is aimless, broke and wary of Alix's desire to help. When a surprising connection emerges between the two women, it sends them on a crash course that will upend everything they think they know – about themselves, each other, and the messy dynamics of privilege.

The Book Ninja

Author: Ali Berg and Michelle Kalus

Format: Book

Frankie Rose is desperate for love. Or a relationship. Or just a date with a semi-normal person will do. It's not that she hasn't tried - Frankie is the queen of online dating. Named after the Frankston train line she was conceived on, Frankie feels like she was born to be hopeless at love. But she's over it. She decides to embark on the ultimate love experiment, inspired by her job at The Little Brunswick Bookshop. Frankie plants her favourite books on trains with her contact details in order to meet the sophisticated and charming man of her dreams. Enter Sonny, and one spontaneous kiss later, Frankie begins to fall for him. But there's just one problem - Frankie is strictly a Jane Austen kind of gal, and Sonny is really into Young Adult. Like really. It's a bridge too far for Frankie, and she secretly continues with her experimental dating. Then Sonny finds out, and Frankie's world falls apart. A witty, booky, sweet story about discovering who you really are.

Growing Up African in Australia

Author: Maxine Beneda Clarke

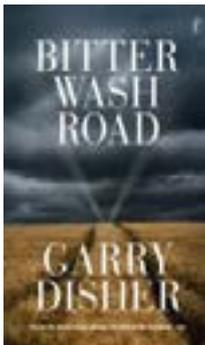
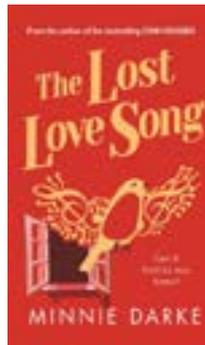
Format: eBook, eAudiobook

Having lived in country areas most of my life, my exposure to people from other backgrounds has been a bit limited, so this title seemed like a good way to learn more about the experience of growing up African in Australia. This is a collection of stories told by migrants from many African countries which helped me to see their perspective of learning to live in a new - and often unfriendly - country.

The Lost Love Song

Author: Minnie Darke
Format: eBook

This is the story of a love song . . . And like any good love song, it has two parts. In Australia, Arie Johnson waits impatiently for classical pianist Diana Clare to return from a world tour, hopeful that after seven years together she'll finally agree to marry him. On her travels, Diana composes a song for Arie. It's the perfect way to express her love, knowing they'll spend their lives together . . . Won't they? Then late one night, her love song is overheard, and begins its own journey across the world. In Scotland, Evie Greenlees is drifting. It's been years since she left Australia with a backpack, a one-way ticket and a dream of becoming a poet. Now she spends her days making coffee and her nights serving beer. And she's not even sure whether the guy she lives with is really her boyfriend or just a flatmate. Then one day she hears an exquisite love song. One that will connect her to a man with a broken heart . . .



Bitter Wash Road

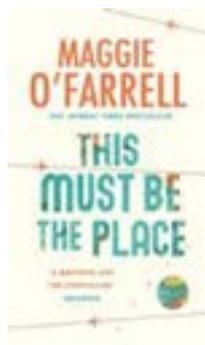
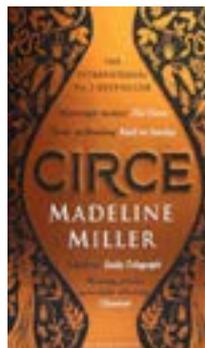
Author: Garry Disher
Format: Book

When Hirsch heads up Bitter Wash Road to investigate the gunfire he finds himself cut off without back-up. A pair of thrill killers has been targeting isolated farmhouses on lonely backroads, but Hirsch's first thought is that back-up is nearby and about to put a bullet in him. That is because Hirsch is a whistleblower. Formerly a promising metropolitan officer, now demoted and exiled to a one-cop station in South Australia's wheatbelt. Called a dog by his brother officers. Threats; pistol cartridge in the mailbox. But the shots on Bitter Wash Road don't tally with Hirsch's assumptions. The truth turns out to be a lot more mundane. And the events that unfold subsequently, a hell of a lot more sinister.

This Must Be The Place

Author: Maggie O'Farrell
Format: Book

Daniel Sullivan, a young American professor reeling from a failed marriage and a brutal custody battle, is on holiday in Ireland when he falls in love with Claudette, a world famous sexual icon and actress who fled fame for a reclusive life in a rural village. Together, they make an idyllic life in the country, raising two more children in blissful seclusion until a secret from Daniel's past threatens to destroy their meticulously constructed and fiercely protected home. What follows is a journey through Daniel's many lives told in his voice and the voices of those who have made him the man he is: the American son and daughter he has not seen for many years; the family he has made with Claudette; and irrepressible, irreverent Claudette herself. Shot through with humor and wisdom, This Must Be the Place is a powerful rumination on the nature of identity, and the complexities of loyalty and devotion a gripping story of an extraordinary family and an extraordinary love.



Circe

Author: Madeline Miller
Format: eBook, eAudiobook

Circe is a beautiful fleshing-out of the story of mythological goddess-witch Circe, daughter of sun god Helios, and ocean nymph Perse. Banished to the island Aea, Circe developed her skills with herbs and witchcraft, and is well-known for stories in which she turned sailors, who washed ashore seeking help, into swine. In this version, Circe endures exile, the unreasonable expectations of visitors to her island, and her own immortality. Miller has a beguiling way with retelling mythology, and I previously enjoyed her novel The Song of Achilles. Also recommended: The Silence of the Girls by Pat Barker, a Trojan War novel.

The Rover

Format: DVD

Set in a world 10 years into the general collapse of society, The Rover follows hardened loner Eric (Pearce) as he travels the desolate towns and roads of the outback. When a gang of thieves steals his car, they leave behind a wounded Rey (Pattinson). Forcing Rey to help track the gang, Eric will go to any lengths to take back the one thing that still matters to him.