

Staff Picks

November 2020

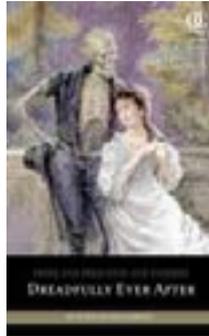
Welcome to our Staff Picks newsletter where we will share with you what we are reading, listening to or watching.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies

Author: Steve Hockensmith

Format: Book

Four years after Elizabeth and Fitzwilliam Darcy marry, Fitzwilliam is infected with a zombie bite, and Elizabeth must find a rumored antidote soon—or face beheading her beloved.

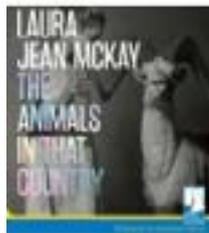


Animals in That Country

Author: Laura Jean McKay

Format: eAudiobook

Imagine there is a pandemic (that shouldn't be difficult), and it's affecting your work life. For Jean, her job at a Northern Territory animal park has just become more interesting than she could possibly have imagined: people start contracting a virus known as 'zoo flu', and they start to hear what the animals are saying. Wouldn't that be amazing? Well, in this case, it gets weird fast, as people start releasing animals all over the country, and Jean finds herself on the road with a Dingo named Sue (who bit her hand, and now it's infected), looking for her kidnapped grandchild. I loved this quirky tale, which reminded me faintly of the film *The Rover*, set in a similar countryside and time.



Beneath the Skin

Author: Melissa James

Format: eBook, Book

Flying Doctor Elly Lavender has spent years on the run from a violent stalker. Her obsessive former patient will do anything and threaten anyone in his campaign to force her to love him. When her most recent cover is blown, she runs for help to the childhood friend she could never get out of her mind—outback cop Adam Jenson. Isolated, hurting, all Adam wants is to forget. After the deaths of his wife and son three years before, he's moved to the outback with his young daughter, Zoe, to put the past behind him for good. But when Elly walks into his station, she reminds him of all the childhood joy and love he'd forgotten. Soon, he's lost in a desire he never knew could exist. And while his guilt at leaving Elly behind years ago and the vow he made to his dying wife means he can never be the man she needs, he can't stop caring, can't stop trying to make Elly's life right. Though the whole town seems against them, he can't stop wanting the forbidden. But when anonymous harassment escalates to murder, Elly knows her presence in Macks Lake has put Adam and Zoe's lives at risk. Everyone's safer if she remains alone—a fact that her stalker is very much counting on as he gets ever closer to his prey.



Keep Your Eyes on Me

Author: Sam Blake

Format: eBook, Audiobook

When Vittoria Devine and Lily Power find themselves sitting next to each other on a flight to New York, they discover they both have men in their lives whose impact has been devastating. Lily's family life is in turmoil, her brother left on the brink of ruin by a con man. Vittoria's philandering husband's latest mistress is pregnant. By the time they land, Vittoria and Lily have realised that they can help each other right the balance. But only one of them knows the real story.

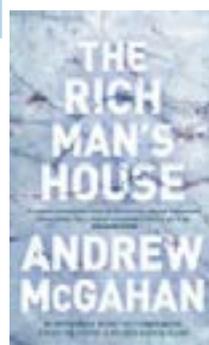


Rich Man's House

Author: Andrew McGahan

Format: eBook, eAudiobook, Book

McGahan's final book, written during a terminal illness; it's an enormous and fascinating tale of a giant mountain which rises to 25,000m out of the southern ocean, between Tasmania and Antarctica, and the man who creates a home at the top of a much smaller island mountain nearby. Whatever you might think of fantasy novels, this is utterly believable.



The Guest List

Author: Lucy Foley

Format: eBook, Large Print

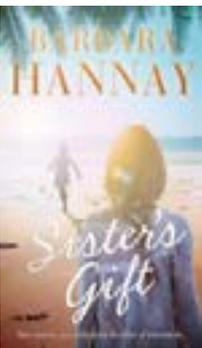
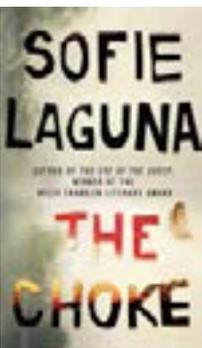
It starts with a party. On a remote island, guests gather for the wedding of the year - the marriage of Jules Keegan and Will Slater. Old friends. Past grudges. Happy families. Hidden jealousies. Thirteen guests. One body. The wedding cake has barely been cut when one of the guests is found dead. And as a storm unleashes its fury on the island, everyone is trapped. All have a secret. All have a motive. It'll end in murder.

The Choke

Author: Sofie Laguna

Format: eBook, eAudiobook, Book, Audiobook

Laguna's third novel for adults again focuses on the world of a child: Justine Lee, 10 year old half-sister to her older brothers Kirk and Steve, abandoned by her mother, left largely alone by her father, and raised by her grandfather. Justine's life is difficult: she can't read or write, so school is incomprehensible; her widower Pop suffers from PTSD as a Burma Railway survivor and does the best he can for her, but is beset by his own demons; her womanising, careless father engages in shady deals and ends up in prison. In short, there doesn't seem much hope for Justine, but she is kind and lovable, and finds hope in friendship with Michael, a classmate with seemingly-insurmountable problems of his own. The entire story is told through Justine's eyes at ages 10 and 14, and Laguna writes so believably from the child's perspective that it haunted me for days after I finished. Also try: *The Eye of the Sheep*, Laguna's Miles Franklin Literary Award winning novel.



The Sister's Gift

Author: Barbara Hannay

Format: Book

Two sisters, one baby and the best of intentions... As a vibrant, young woman with a lifetime of possibilities ahead of her, Freya grants her sister, Pearl, the ultimate gift of motherhood. However, this comes at a hefty price - an unexpected rift in her family and the loss of the man she loves. Decades later, Freya is divorced, childless and homeless, at rock bottom after losing everything she's worked for. When her estranged niece, Billie, offers sanctuary, managing the family restaurant on beautiful Magnetic Island, Freya can hardly refuse. Billie has never understood the tension between her mother and her aunt and now, with a newly broken heart, she is nursing a family secret of her own. All three women come together under the tropical Queensland skies, but can they let go of past regrets, or will old tensions tear them further apart?

Truganini: journey through the apocalypse

Author: Cassandra Pybus

Format: eBook



HRT: Husband Replacement Therapy

Author: Kathy Lette

Format: eBook, Book

Ruby has always been the generous mediator among her friends, family and colleagues, which is why they have all turned up to celebrate her 50th birthday. But after a few too many glasses of champers, Ruby's speech doesn't exactly go to plan. Instead of delivering the witty and warm words her guests are expecting, Ruby takes her moment in the spotlight to reveal what she really thinks of every one of them. She also accuses her husband, Harry, of having an affair, and reads to the audience the evidence she found on his phone that very morning. Saving the best till last, Ruby lambasts her calculating octogenarian mother for a lifetime of playing her three daughters against each other. It's blisteringly brutal. As the stunned gathering gawks at Ruby, the birthday girl concludes her bravura monologue with the throwaway comment that she has terminal cancer. She has cashed in her life savings and plans on taking her two sisters cruising until she dies. Courageous? Or ruthlessly selfish? But, do they even want to go with her? And, was it her medical results she read?

Pybus' ancestor was the recipient of the largest grant of Truganini's tribal lands on Bruny Island, and in this astonishing re-telling of the events which led to the swift demise of Tasmania's original people, the author attempts to right some of the wrongs of a history which she knew nothing of as a child growing up. Truganini was a striking woman, who engaged with her own people and white settlers alike, assisting to locate various tribes as part of the government-sanctioned eradication; she was known as a supremely confident swimmer, diving for seafood (a woman's task) and towing boats to safe moorings for those she helped. Truganini married a number of times, with probably little say-so; attempts were made to convert her to Christianity, but the only spirit she seemed to respect was the devil 'Raegewarrah'. In reading this historical account of her life, I was often brought to tears by the actions which cancelled-out many thousands of years of culture which prevailed before white settlement. This engrossing story includes various maps, illustrations from the period, and accurate timelines and biographies of the original people who feature.