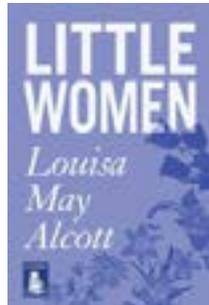


Welcome to our Staff Picks newsletter where we will share with you what we are reading, listening to or watching.

Little Women

Author: Louisa May Alcott
Format: eBook, eAudiobook, Book, DVD

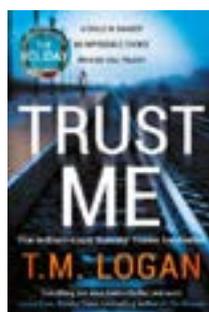
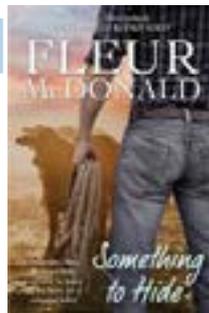
If, like me, you have read, watched and loved the original book (first published 1868) and various film adaptations of Louisa May Alcott's classic coming-of-age novel, then this movie is a real treat. Unlike other versions, the storyline is not a linear reproduction of Alcott's book, but begins in the future, somewhere in its sequel, *Good Wives*. With the *Little Women* plotline shown in flashbacks and memories, this format provides a much more dynamic viewing experience, which I don't think will be difficult to follow even if you haven't read the stories. As much as the film was a delight, the special feature film was just as fascinating, and showed the absolute dedication which the team had in creating something worthy of Alcott's semi-autobiographical tale.



The Handmaid's Tale

Author: Margaret Atwood
Format: eBook, eAudiobook, Large Print, Compact Disc, DVD

With the approach of Season 4 DVD of "The Handmaid's Tale" series, time to watch previous seasons of Margaret Atwood's speculative fiction of a near-future United States or 2-starred government state after a second American Civil War. A short and brutal uprising of a militarised, hierarchical regime of radical religious/political fanaticism that chose to interpret certain Old Testament passages, to create a totalitarian society. In newly created social classes, women are brutally subjugated, and fertile women, referred to as 'Handmaids' owned by their Commanders, bound to child-bearing servitude. In this Orwellian world, the strict and complex dress codes play a key role in imposing social control. The Eyes are secret police watching over the general populace for signs of rebellion, which is then brutally suppressed and condemned to the gibbet. Margaret Atwood has stated that the scenarios portrayed in the story are not invented, but do or have actually occurred somewhere in our world. Some of the scenes are brutal thence its MA rating. The tv series interpretation of the books, is firstly a lavish production to depict a utilitarian world - the use of classic New England buildings to show a regressive society, that has returned to 'the old ways' in more ways than one. A society that is continually juxtaposed against our current world in flashbacks. Secondly it is a graphic rendition of a repressive system's treatment of women as seen from Offred the narrator & protagonist's view. A prime example of a speculative Dystopian state.



Something to Hide

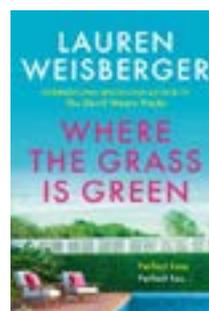
Author: Fleur McDonald
Format: eBook, Book, Compact Disc

With the sickening realisation that his cover has been blown, Detective Dave Burrows knows his family is in serious danger from the vicious stock thieves and murderers, Bulldust and his brother Scotty. Bent on revenge, Bulldust and Scotty are hiding out close to Dave and Mel's old home town of Barrabine. When devastating news brings Dave back there, he has to question his determination to stay in the police force. How could he face himself if anything happened to Mel and the kids? Mel, understandably frightened, must decide who she'll listen to. Can she live with this threat hanging over her family, or is her father right to argue that she should leave Dave immediately?

Where the Grass is Green

Author: Lauren Weisberger
Format: eAudiobook

Peyton Marcus is the woman New York wakes up to, anchor of the most-watched morning show in the city. With a husband who adores her and a daughter who's headed to one of the best Ivy League schools, Peyton Marcus is that woman, and she's damn good at it...



Trust Me

Author: T M Logan
Format: eBook, eAudiobook

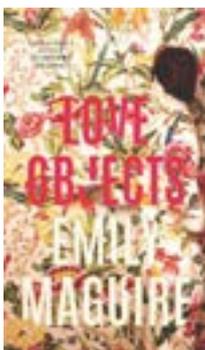
Ellen was just trying to help a stranger. That was how it started: giving a few minutes respite to a flustered young mother sitting opposite her on the train. A few minutes holding her baby while the mother makes an urgent call. The weight of the child in her arms making Ellen's heart ache for what she can never have.

Love Objects

Author: Emily Maguire

Format: eBook

Nic is a forty-five-year-old trivia buff, amateur nail artist and fairy godmother to the neighbourhood's stray cats. She's also the owner of a decade's worth of daily newspapers, enough clothes and shoes to fill Big W three times over and a pen collection which, if laid end-to-end, would probably circle her house twice. She'd put her theory to the test, if only the pen buckets weren't currently blocked in by the crates of Happy Meal toys and the towers of Vegemite jars, take-away containers and cat food tins.

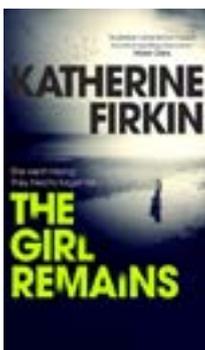


The Girl Remains

Author: Katherine Firkin

Format: eBook, Compact Disc

On the evening of September 22, 1998, three teenage girls venture out for a night of mischief in the coastal town of Blairgowrie. But only two return. For over 20 years the disappearance of 15-year-old Cecilia May remains a baffling cold case, until human bones are discovered on an isolated beach. Now it's up to Detective Emmett Corban and his team to dig up decades of trauma, and find the missing piece of an investigation that's as complex as it is tragic. Does the answer lie with the only suspect, a registered sex offender who confessed, then immediately provided a rock-solid alibi? Or with the two teen survivors, neither of whom can keep their story straight? But the police aren't the only ones hunting for the truth, someone else has arrived in the seaside town. And she's prepared to do whatever it takes to find her own version of justice.



The Summer House

Author: James Patterson

Format: eBook, eAudiobook, Book

Once a luxurious getaway for a wealthy Southern family, the Summer House has long since fallen into disrepair. Its fall from grace is complete when it becomes the scene of a horrific mass murder. Shocking evidence points to four Army Rangers recently returned from Afghanistan. The Army sends Major Jeremiah Cook, a war veteran and former NYPD cop, to investigate. As Cook and his team struggle to put together pieces of evidence that just won't fit, powerful forces rally against them to try to ensure that damning secrets are buried along with the victims.

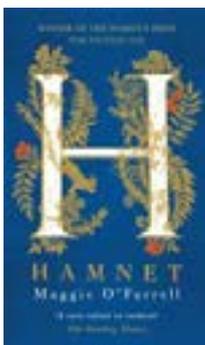
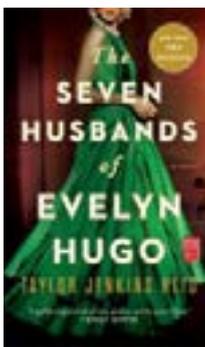


The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo

Author: Taylor Jenkins Reid

Format: Book

Ageing and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one in the journalism community is more astounded than Monique herself... Regardless of why Evelyn has chosen her to write her biography, Monique is determined to use this opportunity to jumpstart her career. Summoned to Evelyn's Upper East Side apartment, Monique listens as Evelyn unfurls her story: from making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave show business in the late 80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way. As Evelyn's life unfolds, revealing a ruthless ambition, an unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love, Monique begins to feel a very a real connection to the actress. But as Evelyn's story catches up with the present, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in tragic and irreversible ways.



Hamnet

Author: Maggie O'Farrell

Format: Book

Warwickshire in the 1580s. Agnes is a woman as feared as she is sought after for her unusual gifts. She settles with her husband in Henley street, Stratford, and has three children: a daughter, Susanna, and then twins, Hamnet and Judith. The boy, Hamnet, dies in 1596, aged eleven. Four years or so later, the husband writes a play called Hamlet. Drawing on her long-term fascination with the little-known story behind Shakespeare's most enigmatic play, Maggie O'Farrell writes Hamnet as a luminous portrait of a marriage and at its heart the loss of a beloved child.