



2026 FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR
BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS
RIGHTS GUIDE



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For further information please contact Carey Schroeter at
careys@allenandunwin.com

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Allen & Unwin (A&U) is Australia's leading independent book publisher and we're regularly voted "Publisher of the Year" at the Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIAs). To date, we've won 15 times in 34 years including the inaugural award in 1992! Last year, **A&U Children's** won ABIA's inaugural Children's Publisher of the Year award, and in 2015 we won the newly established Bologna Book Fair Publisher of the Year (Oceania) award.

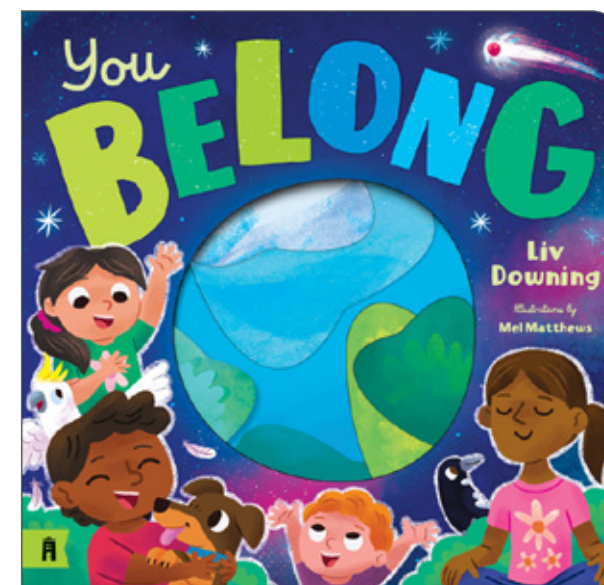
A&U Children champions leading and emerging Australian, First Nations and New Zealand authors and illustrators. We publish approximately 70 new titles per year, from quality commercial through to literary fiction, narrative non-fiction and graphic novels, board books through to titles for young adults. Our list is internationally renowned and sought for its charisma, quality, vision and courage. We always publish with purpose ensuring our books have depth and worth, yet also inspire, inform and delight.

Our **Albert Street** imprint, for readers 0 to 12 years, has a keen commercial focus. Albert Street titles are best described as warm and charming, funny and friendly and ideal for repeat reading.



YOU BELONG

Liv Downing, illustrated by Mel Matthews

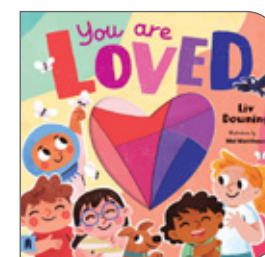


A heartfelt and timely celebration of compassion and connection from the best-selling creators of *You are Loved*. Die-cut pages form a beautiful globe, making this book a special treasure to share and inspire.

*You belong to the earth.
You belong to the sea.
The sun kisses your face.
The trees help you breathe.*

*We belong to each other, you and I.
The same way the clouds belong to the sky.*

This meaningful book reassures children that love extends beyond themselves – to others, their communities, and the Earth.



On *You Are Loved*:
"This book is so heartwarming. It impressed me as being like a mantra meditation with the mantra being 'you are loved'."
Professor Craig Hassed,
author of *Mindful Learning*.

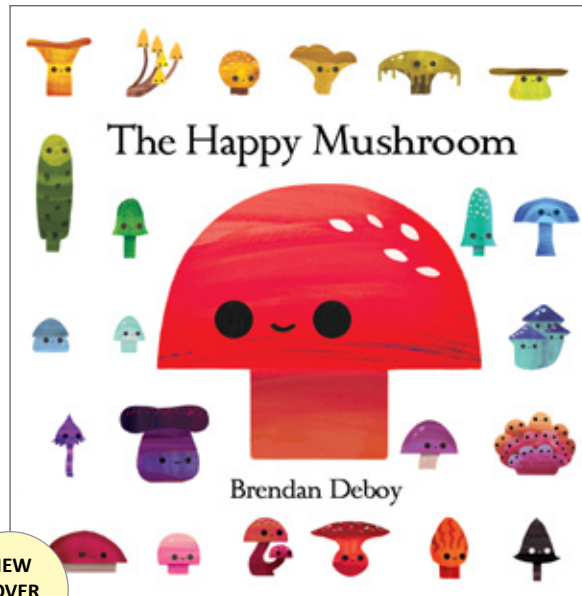
Liv Downing is a registered psychologist, mindfulness educator, meditation teacher and parent. She has a podcast called *You Are Loved*. www.livmindfully.com
Mel Matthews is an illustrator and artist who lives by the beach and is inspired by the natural world.
www.meldraws.com



September 2026 • 250x260mm • BOARD BOOK with die-cut
Full Colour Throughout • 32pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**

THE HAPPY MUSHROOM

Brendan Deboy



Help your kids catch the reading bug with this delightfully funny rhyming picture book about a jolly mushroom and his chipper friends – the most upvoted book ever shared on Reddit's r/childrensbooks.

Meet the Happy Mushroom, a cheerful little wanderer with a knack for making friends whether they are Lumpy, Stumpy, Big or Small, Wide or Thin or Round or Tall.

Short, rhythmic and utterly charming, *The Happy Mushroom* sticks around long after kids, mushrooms – and a carrot – have all gone to sleep.

Brendan Deboy is a writer, artist and animator from Adelaide, South Australia. He has spent much of his career creating characters, stories and artwork for games and TV, on projects such as *Bluey*, *Fruit Ninja* and *Star Wars*. When he's not writing or drawing, Brendan can usually be found wandering around outside, looking for mushrooms, going camping, or starting some new hobby he doesn't have time for.



THE BABY SLEEPS

Lisa Dick, illustrated by Laura Bee



Beautiful, sweet, simple text that tugs at the heartstrings and has all the hallmarks of a classic.

In her pram, the baby sleeps.
Amid the city's busy bustle, the baby sleeps.
On an island in an ocean, the baby sleeps.
On our blue and spinning planet, the baby sleeps.

But when she wakes ...

She doesn't need the stars.
She doesn't need the sky.
She doesn't want the towers,
Or the cars cruising by.
Not her soft little rug.

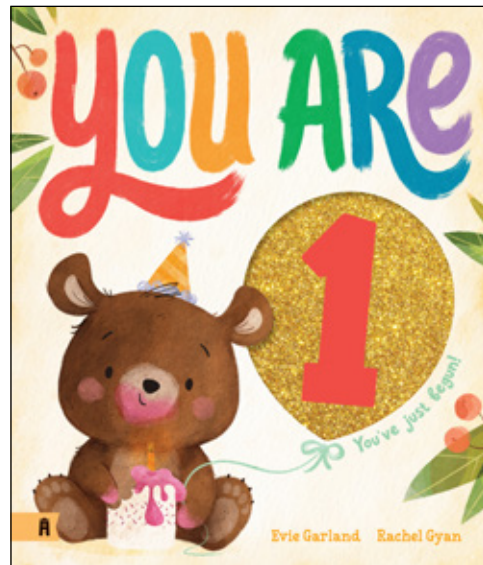
She just wants ... your hug.

Lisa Dick is currently studying creative writing under Liam McIlvanney at Otago University, works at the university part-time and has five children. She is very committed to her writing career. **Laura Bee** is an illustrator and graphic designer. She has illustrated *Whatever the Weather We're in this Together* and several other books for children. When she's not working you can find her spending time with her loved ones and cats, sewing, baking and making things with her hands!



YOU ARE 1

Evie Garland, illustrated by Rachel Gyan



The perfect book to celebrate a little one's first birthday, and all the miraculous things they have done in their first year.

*What a special year it's been.
So many things you've done and seen.
You grabbed my finger, then you squeezed
And something in my heart was eased.*

*Our first snuggles, skin to skin,
I could feel the world begin.*

With its gorgeous illustrations and gentle rhyme, this book is the perfect addition to any nursery library and bedtime routine.

Rachel Gyan is an illustrator passionate about artful storytelling. Her heart-warming characters are empowered by whimsy, texture and vibrant colour palettes. Rachel enjoys studying Australian flora and wildlife, drawing inspiration from her surroundings to capture the beautiful and sometimes quirky nature of Australia in her work.



WONDER WALK

Jo Pearson



A stunningly illustrated story of a day in the life of a small child and her mother.

A child and her mother walk through the neighbourhood, counting all the things they see from one to 10.

From fire trucks to dog poo to creepy crawlies to cakes with cherries on top, plus much more.

Until there is one HUGE thunderstorm and they rush back home.

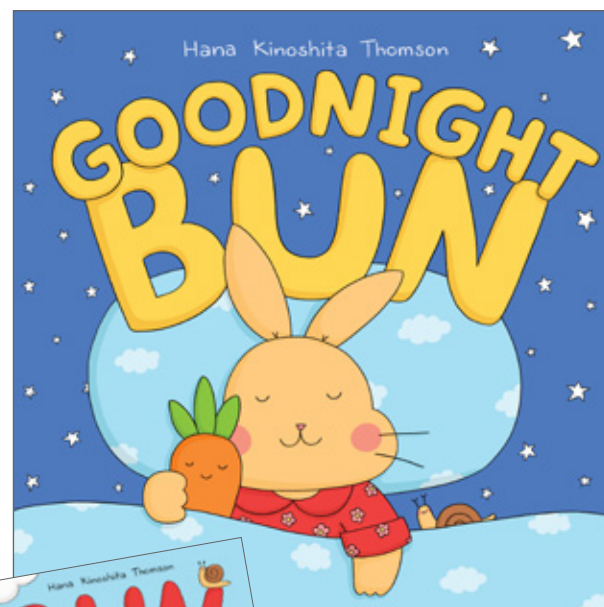
This child-centric story is loaded with learning opportunities and offers a sweet, loving and gently humorous reflection on the relationship between a child, her mother and the world around them.

Jo Pearson lives in Dunedin, New Zealand and works as a freelance illustrator. She illustrated *Five Wee Putekeke*, *All Good* and *All Things Nice*.



GOODNIGHT BUN

Hana Kinoshita Thomson



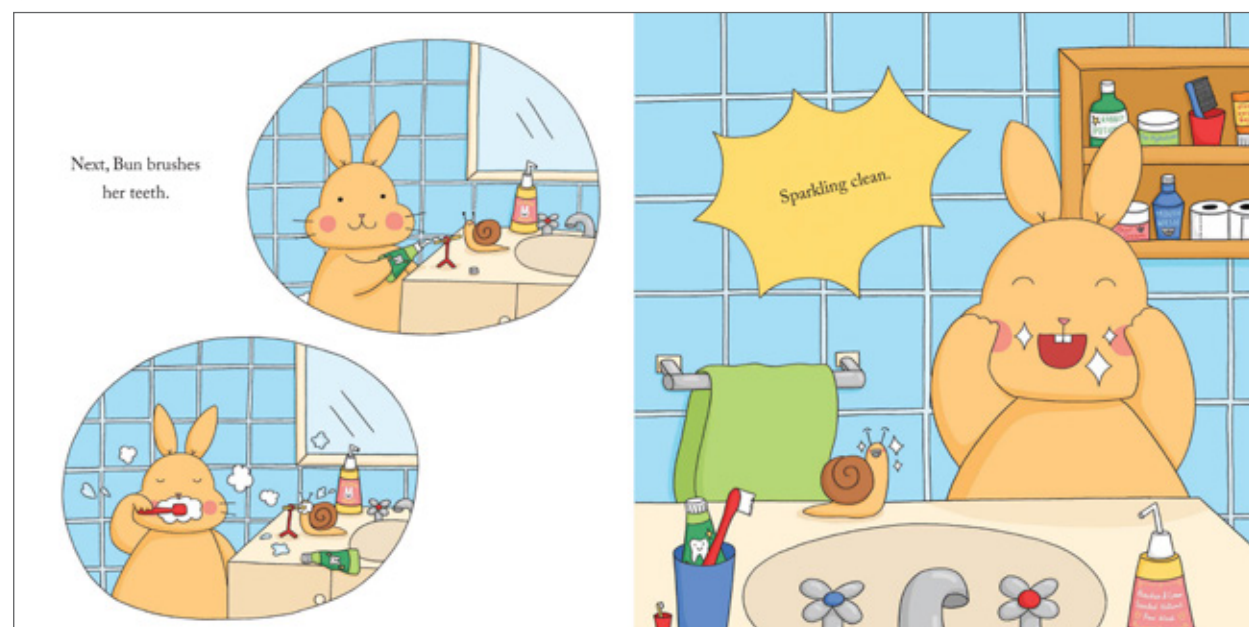
Another Bun in our series! From baking to bedtime this heartwarming series features a very sweet bunny who loves gardening, baking and visiting her friends. For fans of *Goodnight Moon* and *Spot*.

After another busy day *Goodnight Bun* invites you to share her cosy bedtime routine: brush your teeth, have a warm bath, put your pyjamas on, sing a lullaby... and drift into dreams.

With its relatable and reassuring story accompanied by an original lullaby (via QR code) *Goodnight Bun* will gently ease children to sleep, again and again.

Keep an eye out for Bun's snail friend who has a cameo on every page.

Hana Kinoshita Thomson is a Japanese-American-Australian illustrator, designer and author. She has a background in psychology and graphic design, and is passionate about mental health, the Japanese language and culture, diverse storytelling, and rabbits.



SPLISH, SPLASH, SPLOSH!

Renae Hayward, illustrated by Briony Stewart



A delightful picture book with a rollicking rhyming text about the joy of splashing about in the water, and intergenerational family.

What's the best on a summer day?

Grandpa knows – it's water play!

From sprinklers to mud pies to paddling pools, there's nothing kids love better than messing around with water. Three delightful children splish, splash, splosh through the day with their Grandpa in this charming picture book.

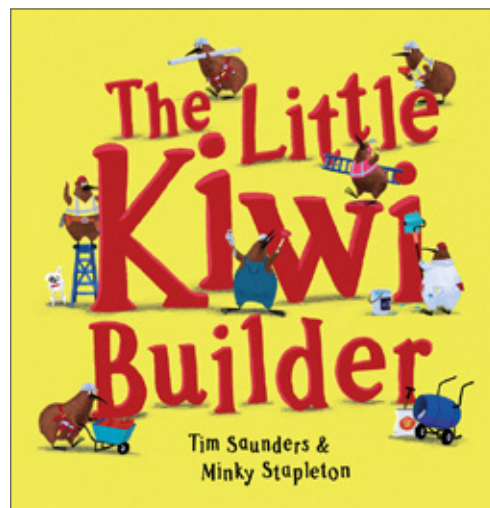
Renae Hayward has authored several books for children including *Say Hooray*, which was shortlisted for the Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Awards. She has also contributed as a poet to *The School Magazine* and the children's anthology *Right Way Down and Other Poems*. Renae lives near Fremantle with her husband James, their two children and Frankie the Labrador. www.renaehayward.com.

Briony Stewart is an illustrator and writer from WA, whose bestselling and award-winning books include *Bedtime Sorted!* by Jimmy Rees, *Mina and the Whole Wide World* by Sherryl Clark (Winner of the 2022 Prime Minister's Literary Award), *Accidentally Kelly Street* and *We Love You, Magoo*. www.brionystewart.com



THE LITTLE KIWI BUILDER

Tim Saunders, illustrated by Minky Stapleton



Join the little kiwi builder and his tradie friends as they work together to fix his house.

Oh no, the little kiwi builder's house is falling down!

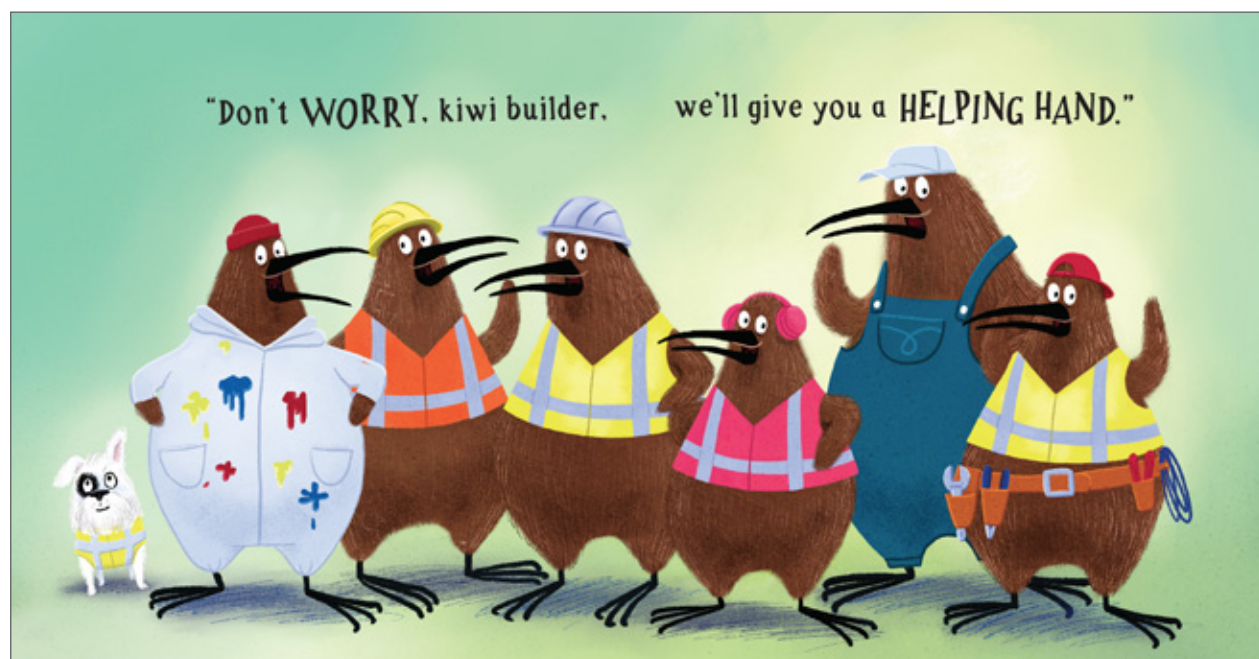
His screws have all come loose – what can he do?

When the brickie, the plumber, the roofer, the electrician and the painter all come to help, it's looking good!

Until, that night ... uh-oh!

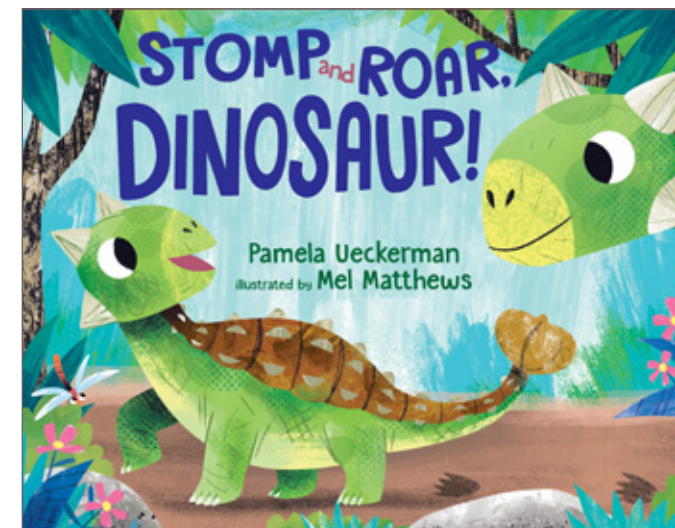
Tim Saunders farms and is the author of adult non-fiction titles *This Farming Life* and *Under a Big Sky*. He was shortlisted for the prestigious Commonwealth Short Story Prize in 2021 for his story *Carved*; and won the 2018 *MindFood* Magazine Short Story Competition and was joint winner of the Caselberg Trust International Poetry Prize in 2023. He performs poetry around the Manawatu and beyond.

Minky Stapleton has been an award-winning Art Director and Creative Director, working in advertising agencies. She now works as an illustrator and creator of children's books, many of which are best-sellers and have won awards. She moved from Johannesburg to New Zealand, where she now lives.



STOMP AND ROAR, DINOSAUR!

Pamela Ueckerman, illustrated by Mel Matthews



A delightful rhythmic read aloud story that invites movement and dinosaur identification. Perfect for the preschooler or the budding palaeontologist!

*Great big slow feet,
Room to grow feet,
Stomp and roar, Dinosaur!*

Follow the fun parade of dinosaurs – from the baby ankylosaurus to the large T-Rex – as they walk, scamper, run, dig and stomp. Until, finally, it's time for bed.

Yawn and snore, Dinosaur!

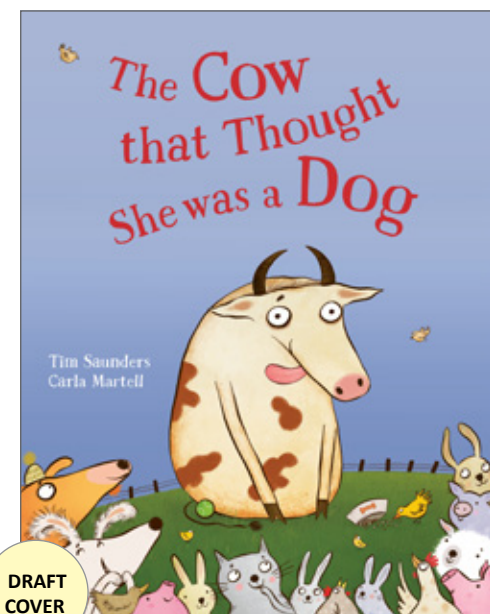
A celebration of dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes and a warm reassuring story to read before bedtime from an exciting new voice in children's picture books, illustrated in a cacophony of colour by Mel Matthews, the brilliant artist of *You Are Loved*.

Pamela Ueckerman is a British-born Australian children's author, poet and podcast host. She co-hosts and edits the podcast *Middle Grade Mavens* for which she has interviewed some of the UK and Australia's most successful children's authors. Her poetry and short stories have appeared on the Australian Children's Poetry website and in *The School Magazine*. **Mel Matthews** is an illustrator and artist who lives by the beach and is inspired by the natural world. Her books include *You Belong* and *You Are Loved* (page 1 of this guide), both authored by Liv Downing.



THE COW THAT THOUGHT SHE WAS A DOG

Tim Saunders, illustrated by Carla Martell



DRAFT
COVER

The cow is finding it hard to work out who she is. Her friends come to the rescue!

From the award-winning team behind *The Tractor has a Wobbly Wheel* and *The Sheep that Stole the Farmer's Hat*.

Cow is confused – is she a dog, a chicken, a duck, a pig, a sheep, a horse, a cat, a goat, a rabbit or a sparrow? She tries to work out which one she is, but nothing fits, nothing is right.

She's sad but her farmyard friends help her out because they know exactly who she is!

Tim Saunders farms and is the author of adult non-fiction titles *This Farming Life* and *Under a Big Sky*. He was shortlisted for the prestigious Commonwealth Short Story Prize in 2021, won the 2018

MindFood Magazine Short Story Competition and was joint winner of the Caselberg Trust International Poetry Prize in 2023. **Carla Martell** worked in the animation industry until illustrating her first children's book in 2020, *Tulip & Doug* by Emma Wood, and is currently working on her fourteenth book. Her recent collaboration with author Juliette MacIver, *Duck Goes Meow*, won Best Picture Book in the 2023 New Zealand Book Awards.



DRAFT
SPREAD



A SIMPLE ACT OF KINDNESS

Bob Graham



A tender ode to small kindnesses, and a tribute to the power of noticing, by internationally renowned, much-loved creator Bob Graham.

One Sunday morning, a church bell chimes. People bustle along wet streets, caught up in their own lives. A man watches from a bus, and on the busy footpath outside the fogged windows a small act of kindness will be seen only by him.

Multi-award-winning author-illustrator Bob Graham celebrates the simple joy of a kind act and the moments that spark imagination. *A Simple Act of Kindness* encourages readers – young and old – to pause, look around at the world and delight in the tender moments unfolding in our midst.

Bob Graham is a Kate Greenaway-winning author-illustrator who has written and illustrated many acclaimed children's picture books including *How to Heal a Broken Wing*, *How the Sun Got to Coco's House*, *Max*, *Jethro Byrde: Fairy Child* and *April Underhill: Tooth Fairy*. His 2011 title, *A Bus Called Heaven*, is endorsed by Amnesty International UK and was the winner of the 2012 Children's Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year Award – a prize Bob has won an unprecedented six times. In 2014, *Silver Buttons* was awarded the prestigious Prime Minister's Literary Award. Bob lives in Melbourne.



Windows steam up, the bus waits at the stop.
Down in the back there's a man with a hat.

He's just happy to sit, look out the window –
rubs a small circle with the sleeve of his coat.

ALL THE WAYS I SEE

Nas Campanella and Eliza Hull, illustrated by Sophie Beer



RIGHTS SOLD: Nth American English (PRH/GP Putnam's Sons BFYR); Korean (Sowonnamu)

This joyful lyrical story vividly evokes a blind child's experience of a day at the beach – the baking heat, the sticky sand, the hum of the ocean, the smell of hot chips, the splash of the waves.

*I can't see summer, but it's clear in my mind.
I hear it, I feel it, in my heart all the time.*

Our edition of *All the Way I See* includes innovative accessibility features for blind, low-vision, D/deaf or hard of hearing audiences such as easy-to turn pages, a round corner for book orientation, and links to audio and sign language interpreted readings. It's also perfect for readers looking for stories about mindfulness, living in the moment, and the experience of living with disability.

Nas Campanella is the National Disability Affairs Reporter for ABC News and has worked as a reporter and presenter for more than a decade. She is passionate about supporting people with disabilities to tell their own stories. **Eliza Hull** is a musical artist, writer, journalist and disability advocate. She has edited a collection of essays about parenting with a disability called *We've Got This* and co-authored the picture book *Come Over To My House* with Sally Rippin and Daniel Gray-Barnett. **Sophie Beer's** books including *Love Makes a Family* have sold into many languages and close to one million copies. In 2016, Sophie underwent surgery for an acoustic neuroma, a brain tumour that affects balance, the facial nerve and hearing, and she is subsequently hard of hearing. *Thunderhead*, her first novel, was inspired by this transformative event.



October 2026 • 250x250mm • HB • Full Colour • 24pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**
RIGHTS SOLD: Nth American English (PRH/Putnam's BFYR); Korean (Sowonnamu)



BAH HUMBUG!

Andy Geppert



In the tradition of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* comes a funny feel-good festive story about everything we love (and hate!) about Christmas, from the bestselling creator of *Backyard Birdies*.

Humbug does NOT like Christmas. (BAH!)

He doesn't like the lights. He doesn't like the songs. He doesn't even like the food.

But when everything he does to destroy Christmas accidentally makes the celebrations even better, maybe he's not such a humbug after all!

Andy Geppert is an Australian illustrator based in Brisbane. A recipient of the CBCA New Illustrator Award, Andy's passion for picture books and art led him to create the SQUIGL CLUB in 2025, a unique online space connecting kids from regional communities across Australia through the joy of picture books and artistic expression. This vibrant club offers young artists the chance to dream, learn, and celebrate every SQUIGL they make. Andy is the creator of *Australian Backyard Birdies*, *Australian Backyard Buddies* and the picture book *Meep*, which was a CBCA Notable Book. Andy is also an award-winning marketing designer.

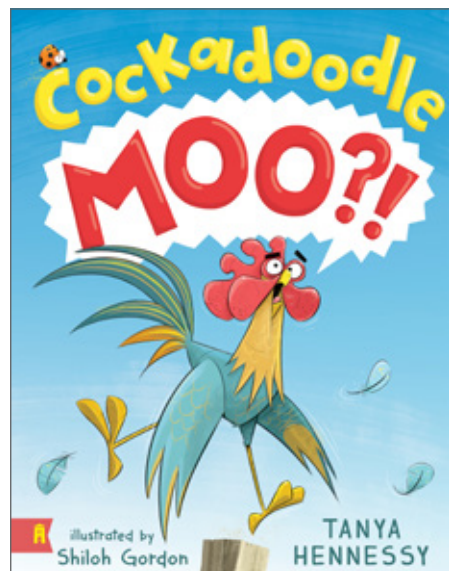


September 2026 • 230x230mm • HB • Full Colour • 32pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**



COCKADOODLEMOO

Tanya Hennessy, illustrated by Shiloh Gordon



RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (Sourcebooks)

A rooster only has one line – how hard can it be to get it right?

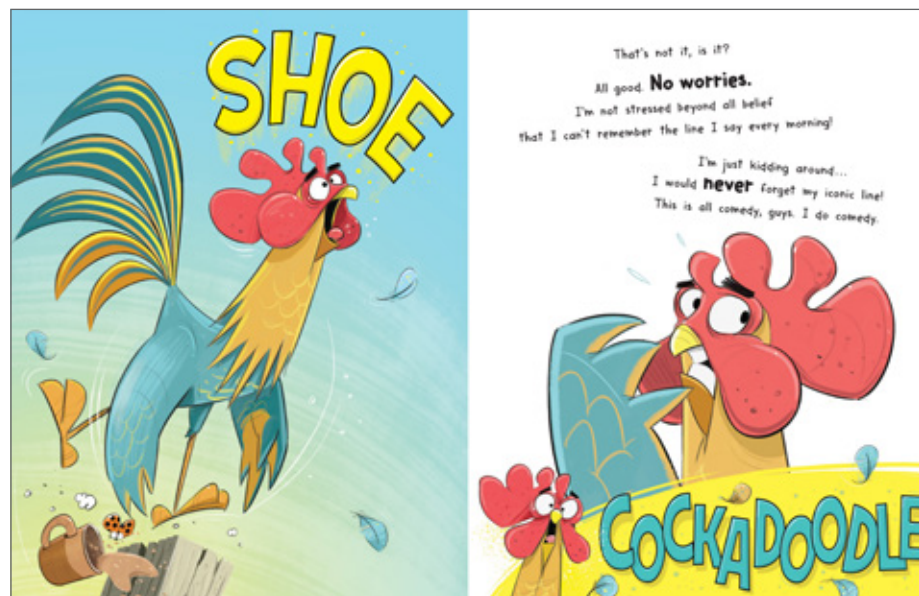
Okay, there's the sun. That's my cue. My time to shine. Get excited, a master is at work! COCKADOODLE ... MOOOOO!

UH-OH!

The rooster can't remember his line! It looks like it's all up to you, dear reader, to come to the rescue ...

This hilarious picture book from bestselling writer and comedian Tanya Hennessy will appeal deeply to kids who love a bit of silliness ... and a chance to Cockadoodle ...!

Tanya Hennessy is a multimedia FORCE. She's one of the OG internet comedy creators in Australia, an AACTA nominated comedian, a two-time ACRA winning radio announcer, a TV presenter, a bestselling author and a social media sensation with over 2.3 million followers. Tanya writes for adults and children and her books include *Am I Doing This Right?*; *Help Self*; *Drum Roll Please*; *It's Stevie Louise*; *Pink Santa*; and *Pink Easter* (page 13 of this guide). **Shiloh Gordon** has a passion for creating lively, engaging illustrations that are full of character and fun. He graduated with a BA in animation from the Queensland College of Art and has worked as a professional illustrator for over 20 years.



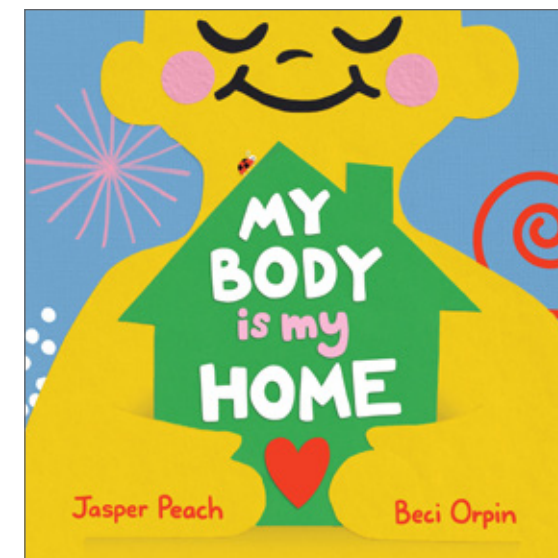
Pink Santa rights sold:
North American English
(Macmillan/Henry Holt BFYR)

August 2026 • 280x216mm • HB • Full Colour • 28pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**
RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (Sourcebooks)



MY BODY IS MY HOME

Jasper Peach, illustrated by Beci Orpin



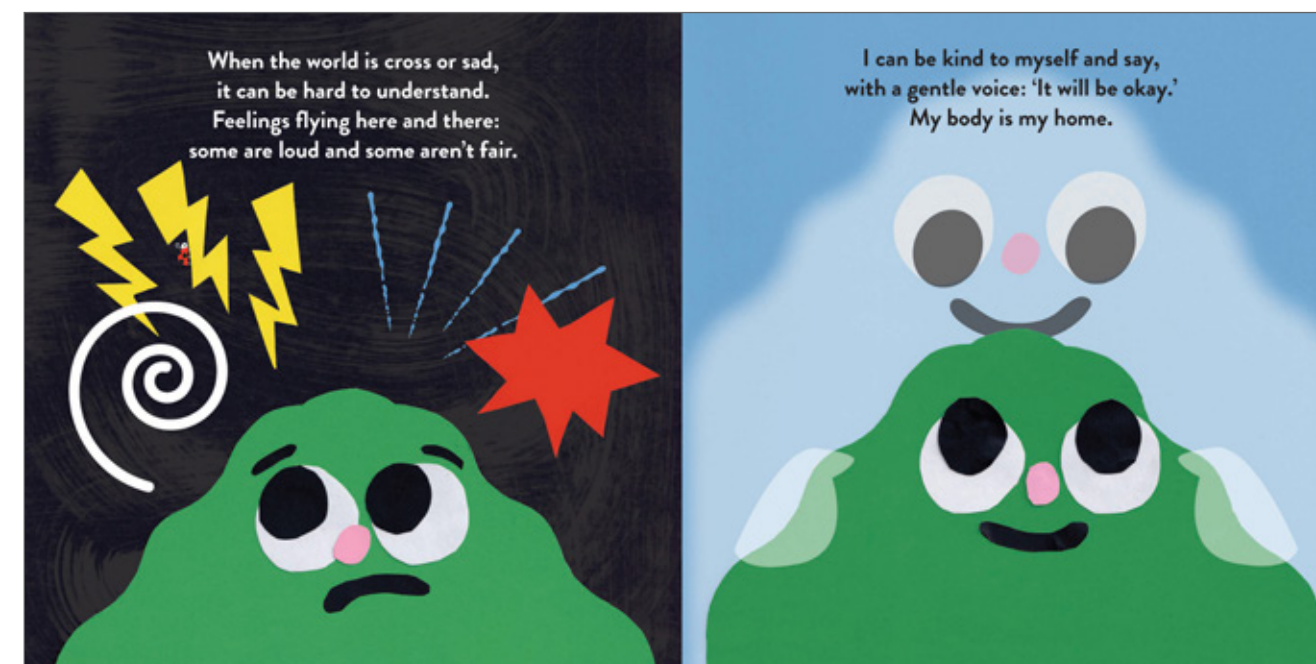
A joyful celebration of bodies of all shapes and kinds, with a gently inclusive message about being at home in your own skin.

*This is my body. It's my home.
I will live here my whole life long.
Every part of me belongs.*

This heartwarming picture book is an empowering exploration of the ways we belong in our bodies. With vibrant illustrations and rhythmic language, *My Body is My Home* fosters confidence and self-love for young readers.

'Full of affirming language perfect for starting (or reinforcing!) conversations about empowerment, confidence, autonomy, consent, and inclusion.' **READINGS**

Jasper Peach is a trans, non-binary and disabled writer, speaker and parent. They are passionate about equitable access and inclusion. Their first book, *You'll be a Wonderful Parent*, was published in 2023 and is a celebration of rainbow families of all kinds. **Beci Orpin** is a Melbourne-based designer, artist and maker.

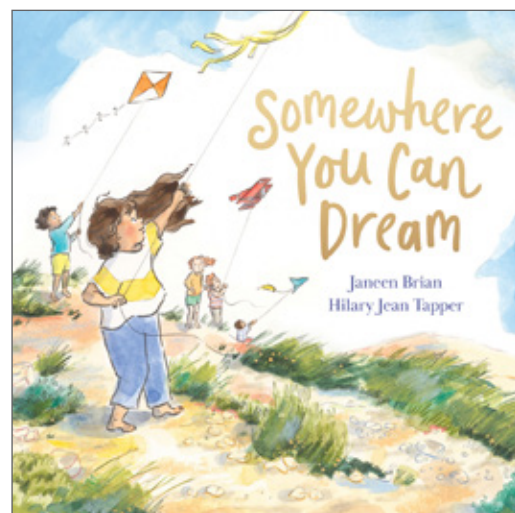


May 2026 • 250x250mm • HB • Full Colour • 32pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**



SOMEWHERE YOU CAN DREAM

Janeen Brian, illustrated by Hilary Jean Tapper



From the smallest cubby to the highest hilltop, this heart-warming, read-aloud picture book is all about finding your own special place in the world.

Do you love shadowy secret nooks or cosy hideaways? Leafy, shady trees or sheltered, rocky bays?

A beautiful, lyrical story that asks readers to consider where in the world they feel most at home, exploring safe spaces and cosy feelings, self-awareness and belonging. Perfect for reading at bedtime, with dreamy illustrations by award-winning Hilary Jean Tapper.

'This book is perfect for: starting discussions with kids about belonging and exploring their place in the world, kids with big imaginations, cosy bedtime reading, and fans of *All the Ways to be Smart* and *The World Needs Who You Were Made to Be*.' **READINGS**

Janeen Brian is an award-winning children's author and poet, with over one hundred published books. She enjoys writing picture books, junior fiction, poetry, novels and non-fiction. **Hilary Jean Tapper** is an award-winning illustrator based in New Zealand. She creates picture books, and works as a lecturer and researcher. Her awards include the ABIA Children's Picture Book of the Year, Storylines Noteable Award, and Forevability Book Award.



PINK EASTER

Tanya Hennessy, illustrated by Sophie Kent



This year Easter is going to have a major glow-up! A joyous celebration of the season, and the power of community and cooperation, from bestselling children's author Tanya Hennessy!

*'Twas the night before Easter,
the workshop was busy,
Baskets to fill,
eggs to make pretty!*

When one plucky duckling steps up to help out the Easter Bunny, no one expects the outcome to be quite so eggsplosive! Now Easter has gone from pastel to pink in a split second! Oh no! But sometimes a mistake is just what you need to see the world in a whole new rosy light. Easter has never been so fabulous!

Tanya Hennessy is a multimedia FORCE. She's one of the OG internet comedy creators in Australia, an AACTA nominated comedian, a two-time ACRA winning radio announcer, a TV presenter, a bestselling author and a social media sensation with over 2.3 million followers. Tanya writes for adults and children and her books include *Drum Roll Please*, *It's Stevie Louise* and *CockadoodleMOO* (page 7 of this guide). **Sophie Kent** is a British illustrator based in Australia, known for her playful characters, vibrant colour palettes and design-led compositions. Sophie can often be found travelling, experimenting in the kitchen, or tending to her growing collection of plants.

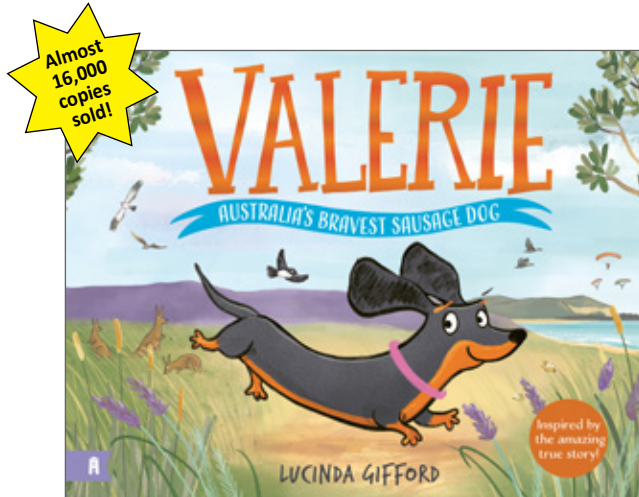


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North American English
(Macmillan/Henry Holt BFYR)



VALERIE

Lucinda Gifford



The bold and true(ish) adventures of Australia's Bravest Sausage Dog!

Living the beach life and riding the swells, practising backstroke and digging up shells. Dining on oysters and fancy icecream ... Valerie knew she was living the dream.

All around the world, people fell in love with Valerie – the bold-hearted dachshund who escaped a campground on Kangaroo Island and roamed the wilderness for over 500 days before being reunited with her loving owners.

In this gloriously warm-hearted romp of a picture book, Lucinda Gifford has imagined Valerie's adventures and brought them to vivid and hilarious life, as she befriends dolphins, eats her fill, and explores the wilds ... before finding her way safely home again.



Lucinda Gifford studied architecture but moved into creating well-loved books for kids. She has illustrated over 40 books, ten of which she has also written. She works from her studio in Melbourne and especially enjoys making books about chickens, wolves, dogs, cats and magical creatures.



ZAATAR: ESSENCE OF HOME

Jemima Shafei-Ongu, illustrated Phoebe Zeng



A glorious, lyrical, multilayered story about a child connecting to her rich culture and traditions through cooking with her grandfather.

*We cook together, Jiddo and me.
We mix zaatar with olive oil.
Our roots run old and deep.
We remember all we are.*

A poetic tale of a tender relationship between Jiddo and his granddaughter, whose love and stories weave time, place and memory.

Zaatar: Essence of Home is sweeping, original, lyrical and unforgettable. With a rich illustrated glossary, including Jiddo's unique Zaatar Puffs recipe, this is a moving story about the ways in which food and traditions can connect us to our heritage, across oceans and generations.



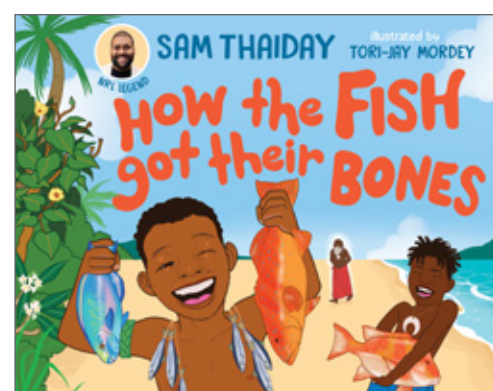
Jemima Shafei-Ongu is a Sydney-based writer, psychologist and teacher, with a passion for picture books and a strong commitment to inclusion and diverse representation in children's literature. **Phoebe Zeng** is a self-taught illustrator specialising in illustrations for children. She was born in beautiful southern China and now lives on Australia's sunny west coast.

GRANDMOTHER TURTLE'S ISLAND HOME and HOW THE FISH GOT THEIR BONES

Sam Thaiday, illustrated by Tori-Jay Mordey



DRAFT
COVER



Passionate about showcasing Torres Strait Islander storytelling, NRL Broncos legend Sam Thaiday shares two engaging stories, each imparting underlying messages important for us all.

*Stories are our history
Passed on down the line
But sometimes they get lost
And jumbled over time*

*This story is how I remember it
And how I think it's told –
How Grandmother Turtle became an island
When she was tired and old*

Grandmother Turtle's Island Home shares the enduring importance of family across generations.

How the Fish Got Their Bones carries a powerful message about sustainability, respect and balance in the natural world.

Sam Thaiday is a hugely popular NRL legend of Torres Strait Islander and Australian descent who now has a career in media, and sports commentary for the NRL. **Tori-Jay Mordey** is a First Nations Australian artist. Her Torres Strait Islander and English heritage is often reflected in her contemporary Indigenous art practice.



March 2027 & August 2026 • 216x280mm • HB • Full Colour • 24pp
WORLD RIGHTS



DOG STAYED

Tammy Forster, illustrated by Margeaux Davis



'There's a Raymond Briggs feel to this lovely picture book.'
THE AGE

RIGHTS SOLD: Korean (TheBookInMyLife); French (D'Eux)

Best New Books For March 2026 – The Age
Picture Books Of The Month – The Observer, UK
Kids' Book Of The Month – Collins Booksellers
Picture Book Of The Month – Lamont (School Library Provider)
Book Of The Week – Your Kid's Next Read (Podcast)

A tale of love, loyalty and the changing seasons of life. Mr Hindbottom does not want Dog, but Dog isn't going anywhere ... A heartwarming story about two grumpy but loveable characters and their journey of hope and renewal.

When Dog turns up one day and stays – despite Mr Hindbottom's protests – they gradually find a comfortable way to get along. Life is good, but of course life doesn't stand still ...

When Mr Hindbottom is gone, can Dog ever love again?



Tammy Forster has a BA in Communication and a Bachelor of Business, and she's had fun executing launches, presenting at conferences, and delivering training workshops. She lives in the US. **Margeaux Davis** illustrates books and makes cloth toys using discarded fabric scraps. Her background is in environmental education, working as a National Parks ranger.

March 2026 • 280x216mm • HB • Full Colour • 32pp • **WORLD RIGHTS**
RIGHTS SOLD: Korean (TheBookInMyLife); French (Editions D'Eux)



KUPE AND THE GREAT OCTOPUS OF MUTURANGI

Mat Tait



This is the story of Kupe, who in Māori legend discovered Aotearoa while hunting a wheke (octopus), told and illustrated by award-winning author Mat Tait.

Kupe found that a huge, fearsome wheke was taking all the fish in the ocean and the people of Hawaiki had nothing to eat.

So Kupe chased that wheke across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean).

Finally Hine-te-Aparangi, Kupe's wife, saw land and a long white cloud: Aotearoa!

Find out what happened when the wheke and Kupe had a massive battle ...

WINNER: Russell Clark Award for Illustration, NZ Book Awards for Children & Young Adults 2026

Mat Tait is a South Island-based illustrator of European and Māori descent. He gained a BFA in painting from Ilam School of Arts and now lives and works in the Motueka area. He's the author of *Te Wehenga*, which won the Margaret Mahy Book of the Year and the Elsie Locke Non-Fiction Award at the 2023 NZ Book Awards for



Children and Young Adults, and Best Children's Book at the 2023 PANZ Book Design Awards. He illustrated *The Adventures of Tupaia*, for which he was the recipient of the Russell Clark Award for Illustration at the 2020 NZ Book Awards for Children and Young Adults. His comics work has been published widely both locally and internationally.

MR BADGER AND THE BOUBLES GRAND HOTEL

Leigh Hobbs



A delightful, classic picture book, showcasing the olde worlde charm of one of Leigh Hobbs's most beloved characters, amidst all the fun and adventure of a grand hotel.

Mr Badger is the Special Events Manager at the Boubles Grand Hotel.

It is the hotel's one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary, and the owners are having a special birthday party to celebrate. Their granddaughter, Sylvia Smothers Carruthers, wants very much to attend, but it is a party just for grown-ups. Everything has to be just right, and things have a way of going wrong when Sylvia is around. Fortunately she is far away at summer holiday camp ... or is she?

All sorts of disasters happen in the lead up to the party – the doorman loses his pants, the famous Boubles biscuits are burnt – and a human fly has taken up residence in the Deluxe Suite! Mr Badger must use all of his charm and ingenuity to solve the mystery and put things right.

Leigh Hobbs is a star in Australian children's publishing. His subversive humour has delighted children for almost three decades and he has won every major Australian children's choice award. Leigh was the 2019 Australian Children's



Laureate and was one of five Australian Legends of Children's Literature featured by Australia Post on a stamp. His best-known children's books feature Old Tom, Horrible Harriet, Mr Badger, Mr Chicken and more, many of which have been adapted for screen or stage.

THE NIGHT TIGER

Sherryl Clark, illustrated by Hannah Sommerville



A beautiful, evocative picture book about a child gathering their courage and activating their imagination to explore the night as a tiger might, prowling through the back garden with the family cat. Perfect bedtime reading for little children with big imaginations.

*I arch my back high, feel my night tiger paws
and night tiger claws stalk across the grass,
flick my tiger tail, twitch my tiger ears
growl my night tiger groooooowwwwwl.*

After the sun sets, the night creeps in and it's time for bed. But darkness shrinks as the full moon springs up above the trees, lighting the garden and inviting a child to take on an intrepid night-time adventure. A glorious celebration of imagination, courage and daring.

Sherryl Clark has published more than 40 books, from picture books to novels. Her novel *Farm Kid* won the 2005 NSW Premier's Literary Award, her verse novel, *Sixth Grade Style Queen (Not!)*, was a CBCA Honour Book in 2008, and many of her titles are Notable Books. *Mina and the Whole Wide World* won the 2022 Prime Minister's Award for Children's Literature. She writes both fiction and poetry, and works as a freelance editor.



Hannah Sommerville creates enchanting picture books using watercolour, gouache and digital illustrations. She has won multiple awards including CBCA 2022 Book of the Year – Early Childhood for *Jetty Jumping*, written by Andrea Rowe.

ONCE UPON A HARBOUR

Fiona Farrell, illustrated by David Elliot



An extraordinary collection of funny inventive stories with charming illustrations from the internationally acclaimed David Elliot and Fiona Farrell.

Set in a harbour that could be anywhere in the world, *Once Upon a Harbour* shares stories of fantastical characters like Mr and Mrs Drizzle, who 'drench the world till it's puddle and slush'; big hearted sea monsters Craig and Shirley (who perhaps don't exist); plantation trees who party, bored of their plantation rows; and Piggy Bill and his little piggies 'as happy and as grubby as can be'.

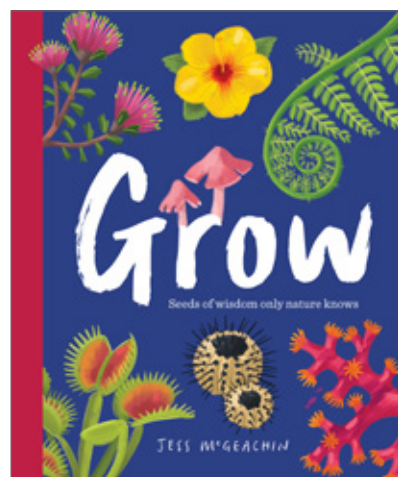
With its stunning, strange and charming illustrations (think a blend of Shaun Tan and Dr Seuss) and bouncy rhythmic text, *Once Upon a Harbour* delivers a classic story arc of build-up, excitement, climax, resolution and a sweet 'go to sleep' ending.

Fiona Farrell is one of New Zealand's leading writers. Her first novel, *The Skinny Louie Book*, won the 1993 NZ Book Award for fiction. Other novels, poetry and non-fiction books have been shortlisted for the Montana and NZ Post Book Awards, with four novels nominated for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. In 2007 she received the Prime Minister's Award for Fiction, and in 2012 was appointed an Officer of the NZ Order of Merit for services to literature. **David Elliot** is an award-winning illustrator and writer for children. He has provided illustrations for authors on the local and international stage, including Brian Jacques, T.A. Barron, Margaret Mahy, Joy Cowley and Janet Frame, and produced ten picture books of his own. In 2017 his book *Snark* won two national awards and a White Raven.



GROW

Jess McGeachin



RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (Orca)

A fascinating exploration of the plant life wonders of the natural world, and what it means to grow, from one of Australia's most talented picture book creators and the award-winning author of *Kind*.

Watch flowers bloom and ferns unfurl and discover how earth's garden grows and changes every day.

Featuring flowers, fungi, moss, corals, seaweeds, succulents, grasses, trap plants, trees and so much more, *Grow* is a beautifully evocative exploration of the ancient, fragrant, spiky, hidden and vibrant wonders of the natural world.

Readers will learn about many kinds of growing things on the earth – and also come away with a gentle message about the importance of growth and change in their own lives.

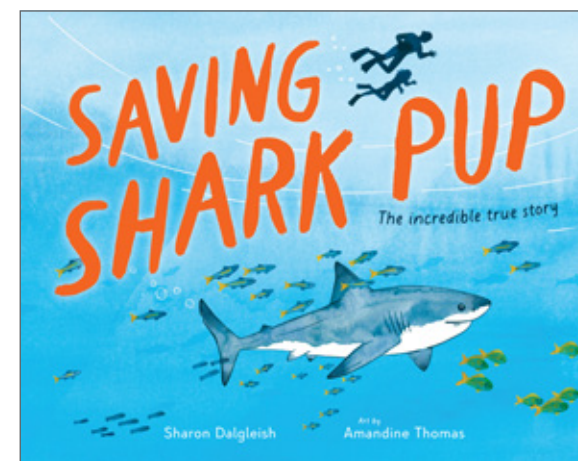
Nature's secrets are revealed in this joyful exploration of growing up.

Jess McGeachin's debut picture book, *Fly*, was published in 2019 and was shortlisted for the Children's Book Council of Australia and Queensland Literary Awards. His first two non-fiction books, *Deep* and *Kind*, were published in 2022. *Deep* was the winner of the 2023 CBCA Eve Pownall Award. *Kind* and *The Tree at Number 43* were the co-winners of the 2023 Environment Awards for Children's Literature, and *South with the Seabirds* was a 2025 CBCA Honour Book. www.jessmcgeachin.com



SAVING SHARK PUP

Sharon Dalgleish, illustrated by Amandine Thomas



The true story of a great white shark pup who washed up on the beach and was rescued by the local community.

When a great white shark pup washed up on Sydney's Manly Beach, the local community rushed to the shark's rescue, eventually releasing him back into the ocean.

Great white sharks are vital for the ocean ecosystem, and yet despite this, their beauty and mystery are rarely celebrated. This glorious picture book is a lyrical and emotive account

of the shark pup's journey back to the ocean, interspersed by fascinating facts about great white sharks. The two narratives work together to inspire compassion and hope for one of the ocean's most feared and misunderstood creatures.

A fascinating true story perfect for shark-obsessed young readers and all animal lovers.

Sharon Dalgleish worked for many years as a librarian, and then a teacher. She now spends her days writing stories, non-fiction and poetry for children. She has published over fifty books for the education market, as well as numerous textbooks and resource books for primary school teachers. Sharon lives in Sydney with Maisie, her rescue dog/office assistant. Amandine Thomas is an award-winning author and illustrator based in the leafy Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne, Australia. Her vibrant watercolour illustrations have featured in children's books and magazines, and she has worked with a variety of clients from across the globe, sharing stories of positive change for people, for communities, and for the planet. www.amandine-thomas.com



STORM

Claire Saxby, illustrated by Jess Racklyeft



A storm is brewing. From the first puff of wind to a howling gale, this beautiful non-fiction picture book offers a deeply researched exploration of the effects of wind and weather.

A storm is rising.

It begins with a puff. Then another.

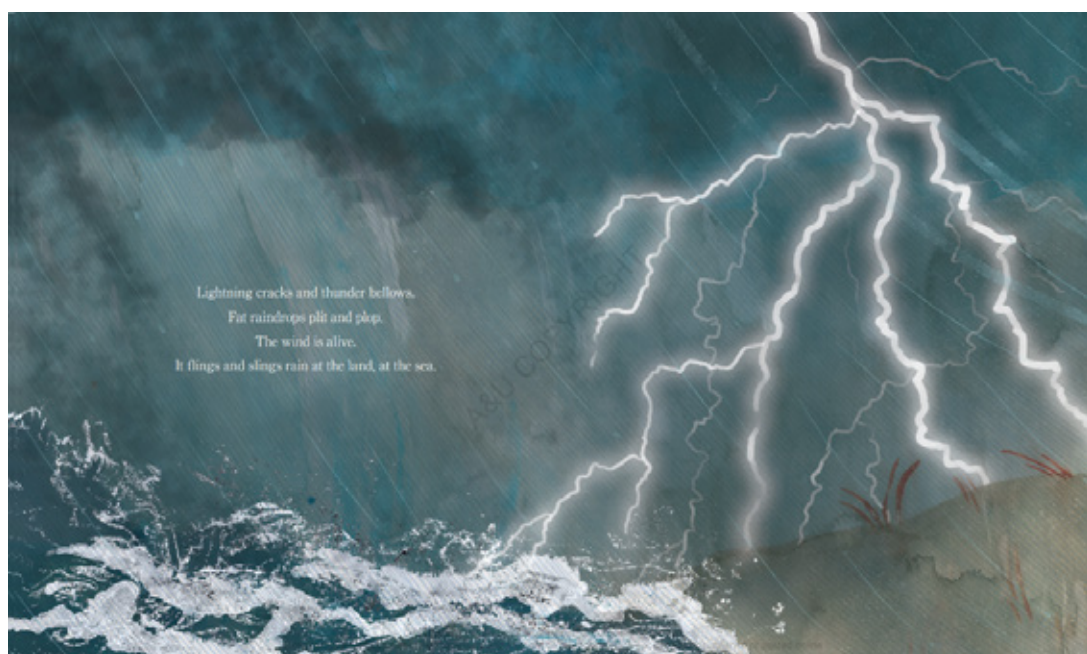
A flutter, a ripple, a shiver show where the breeze blows.

An evocative exploration of the birth of a thunderstorm from the creative team behind CBCA Picture Book of the Year *Iceberg*. It concludes the series: *Iceberg*, *Tree*, *Volcano* and *Storm*.

ICEBERG: RIGHTS SOLD: NA English and French (Groundwood); **WINNER:** 2022 CBCA Picture Book of the Year; **SHORTLISTED:** 2022 Children's Literature Award – Adelaide Festival Awards. **VOLCANO: RIGHTS SOLD:** Korean (Kyowon)

Claire Saxby's work has won several awards including CBCA Honour Book, a NSW Premier's Literary Award, a SCBWI Crystal Kite Award, an Environment Award for Children's Literature, an Educational Publishing Award and the Whitley Award multiple times.

Jess Racklyeft has written and/or illustrated over 40 titles and won several illustration accolades including CBCA Picture Book of the Year for *Iceberg* and a CBCA Honour Book for *Australia: Country of Colour*.

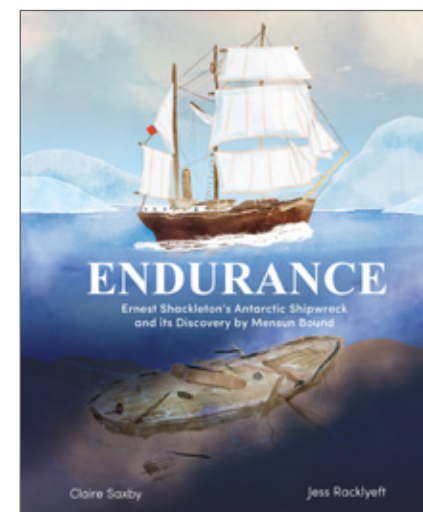


Lightning cracks and thunder bellows.
Fat raindrops pelt and plop.
The wind is alive.
It flings and slings rain at the land, at the sea.



ENDURANCE: ERNEST SHACKLETON'S ANTARCTIC SHIPWRECK AND ITS DISCOVERY BY MENSUN BOUND

Claire Saxby, illustrated by Jess Racklyeft



The definitive account of the sinking of Ernest Shackleton's *Endurance* in Antarctica and its discovery by Mensun Bound a century later, by the award-winning creative team behind CBCA Picture Book of the Year *Iceberg*.

In 1914, Ernest Shackleton was determined to make the first-ever land crossing of the Antarctic continent, from sea to sea. His ship *Endurance* was crushed in heavy sea ice, but against all odds Shackleton and his crew survived. A century later, Mensun Bound set out to find *Endurance*, and in 2022 discovered the underwater wreck.

An incredible tale of old and contemporary exploration in the wildness of the Weddell Sea told through split-page lyrical dual narratives and stunning illustrations by Jess Racklyeft.

Author and illustrator details on previous page.



Winds blow, seas thrash the ship. Ice stacks on ice and scrapes both sides of *Endurance*. It strains against the ice-laden current. They move slower and slower until they are stuck, adrift in the Weddell Sea. Shackleton knows that an explorer needs to be optimistic and patient. Summer is coming. Things will be easier soon.

Winds blow, seas thrash the ship. Ice stacks on ice and scrapes both sides of *Aguilhas II*. It moves slowly through the converging ice. Bound knows that an explorer needs to be optimistic and patient. He checks and rechecks his research, determined to make the most of their short search time.

BEFORE IT WAS CALLED SCIENCE

Corey Tutt, illustrated by Jaelyn Biumaiwai



Bestselling author Corey Tutt is back to share more incredible stories of how Australia's First Peoples practised science long before it carried that name.

Across Australia's vast land and skies, the First Peoples have walked with Country for thousands of years. They read the land and waters like a book. They knew the winds, watched the stars, and listened deeply to the environment around them. They understood that to take care of Country is to take care of yourself, your family, and the generations yet to come.

Organised into two main sections – BEFORE and NOW – Corey shares case studies from various communities, presented to suit kids aged 7–12 years. Did you know that the first scientists invented sustainable ways of carrying food and water, unlike the single-use plastics and packaging we see today? Or that the first scientists could remove salt from seawater?

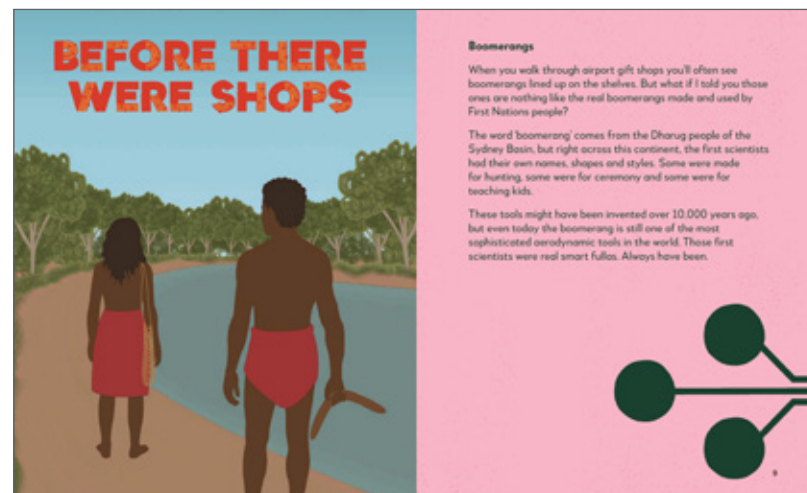
This is the perfect book to get kids excited about science and sustainability. Together, we can walk towards a better future, caring for Country as the first scientists always have.



SHORTLISTED:
2026 Victorian
Premier's Literary
Awards

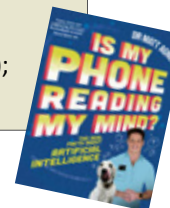
NOTABLE BOOK:
2026 CBCA Book
of the Year, Eve
Pownall Award

Corey Tutt OAM is a Kamilaroi man, and the CEO and founder of DeadlyScience, a not-for-profit organisation that aims to provide science resources to remote schools in Australia and connects young First Nations people with mentors in STEM. He was born on Yuin Country on the New South Wales south coast, and now lives on Birpii/Dhungatti Country. In 2020, Corey was named the NSW Young Australian of the Year and a Human Rights Hero by the Australian Human Rights Commission. In 2022, Corey received an OAM for service to Indigenous STEM education. He is an A/Professor at Western Sydney University. This is Corey's fifth book.

THE KIDS' GUIDE TO SPEAKING YOUR MIND
WITHOUT LOSING YOUR COOL Dr Matt Agnew

IS MY PHONE READING MY MIND?

RIGHTS SOLD: Chinese
Simplified (Hunan);
Korean (Prunsoop/Lime);
Vietnamese (Kim Dong)



RIGHTS SOLD: Turkish (Ketebe)

Sharpen up thinking and debating skills with this fun and engaging book that includes imaginative activities to encourage cool, calm and rational thinking, from one of Australia's most popular scientists.

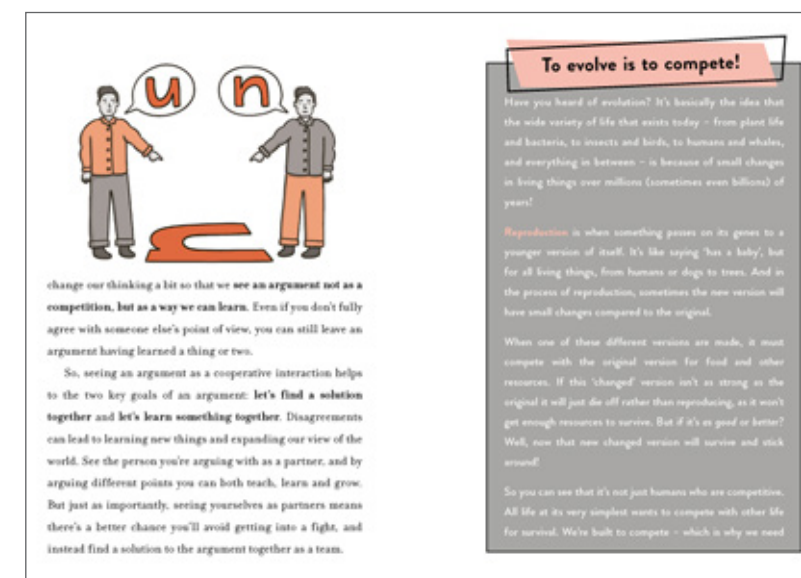
How do we end up with different ideas and opinions? How can we talk about these ideas and opinions to each other even when we disagree?

When I read, see or hear something, how do I know if it's true or false? What if I'm right and my friend's wrong? How do we stay friends? Is it okay to change my mind?

Dr Matt explains how to avoid confirmation bias, us-vs-them thinking, how to stay calm and show respect to others in the heat of an argument, along with tips on how to debate like a pro! Included are some thought experiments to do at home or in the classroom that will help kids speak their mind without losing their cool.

'Fabulously informative... In a world full of misinformation, this book is a terrifically valuable tool for all ages.'

Good Reading Magazine



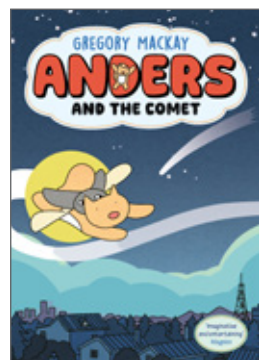
Dr Matt Agnew is more than a scientist; he's an edutainer who helps make science, maths and technology fun and accessible. With academic credentials spanning the STEM portfolio, myriad appearances across a variety of media channels, including TV and radio, and a social media profile for reaching a wide and varied audience, Matt is a qualified, passionate and engaging scientist. Matt has worked as an engineer, an artificial intelligence expert, data scientist, and astrophysicist and his breadth of technical knowledge, combined with an approachable manner and palatable way of explaining ideas, positions him as a go-to expert for engaging with the public about the latest happenings in the world of science.

ANDERS SERIES

Gregory Mackay

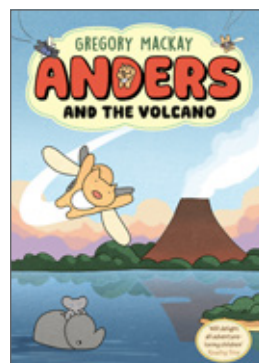
RIGHTS SOLD: French (The Hoochie Coochie)

Introducing, in full colour, the lovable Anders and his band of intrepid friends, Bernie, Eden and Veronica, who are always on the lookout for action-packed adventures. These are warm, charming stories that spark the imagination and perfect for the newly-independent reader wanting an adventurous as well as emotionally safe book to read on their own.



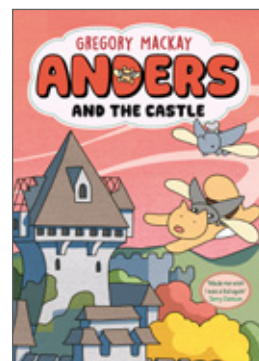
ANDERS AND THE COMET

It's the school holidays, and there are comics to make, cubbies to build, ice cream to eat, and rhinos to impress at Wekiwa water park. Then Anders and his friends meet the Green Grabber and things take on a whole new twist. Comets are discovered, Anders meets Skip who becomes his flying pet, and the friends get stuck in a storm in a jumping castle. A dramatic sky-high rescue ensues! An endearing story of fun, friendship and unexpected courage.



ANDERS AND THE VOLCANO

Anders is on holiday again. He flies everywhere with his pet beetle Skip and hangs out with Bernie and Eden. They play in Eden's new cubby house, try to build a pond and go to Whump class. When they all head off together to Camp Canvas at Mount Tremble, they make new friends and discover new things about themselves. That's lucky, as they'll need everything they've got when Mount Tremble – an extinct volcano – starts to rumble ...



ANDERS AND THE CASTLE

School's out and there are flying races to have, acrobatics to learn and excursions to take. Then Anders and his friends discover a map of an old castle and plan to take a look. The friends set out together but the mist rolls in and they lose each other on the way. Luckily they've planned to meet in the castle's middle, but it's not so easy to find! The castle is full of twists and turns and unexpected surprises – things they've never seen before. Some are fantastic and some are just a little bit spooky ...



SHORTLISTED: 44th Angoulême International Comics Festival
Anders and the Comet

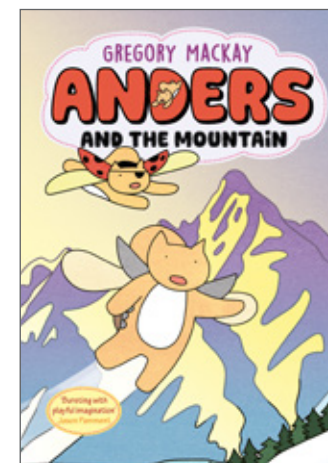


SHORTLISTED: 46th Angoulême International Comics Festival
Anders and the Volcano



WINNER:
Gold Ledger, The Ledger Awards
The Adventures of Anders

April 2026 • 208x148mm • PB • Full Colour • 160pp, 176pp, 128pp, 128pp



ANDERS AND THE MOUNTAIN

The school holidays kick off with a magical trip to the lolly factory. However, the next morning Anders and his friends awaken to find that their beetles have vanished!

They all set out for Mount Rumble where they hope to be reunited with their pets. When they spot some mysterious beetle carvings, the gang heads high into the mountains. But then there's an avalanche! Will they find their beetles – or will they be the ones who need rescuing?

Alongside a brand new Anders story, *Anders and the Mountain*, this is a relaunch of the *Comet* and *Volcano* titles that were first published in black and white in 2015 and 2016, just slightly too early for the graphic novel boom! With this relaunch these four Anders titles are available for the first time as individual volumes in full-colour with a fresh new look. The perfect cosy graphic novel series for young readers.

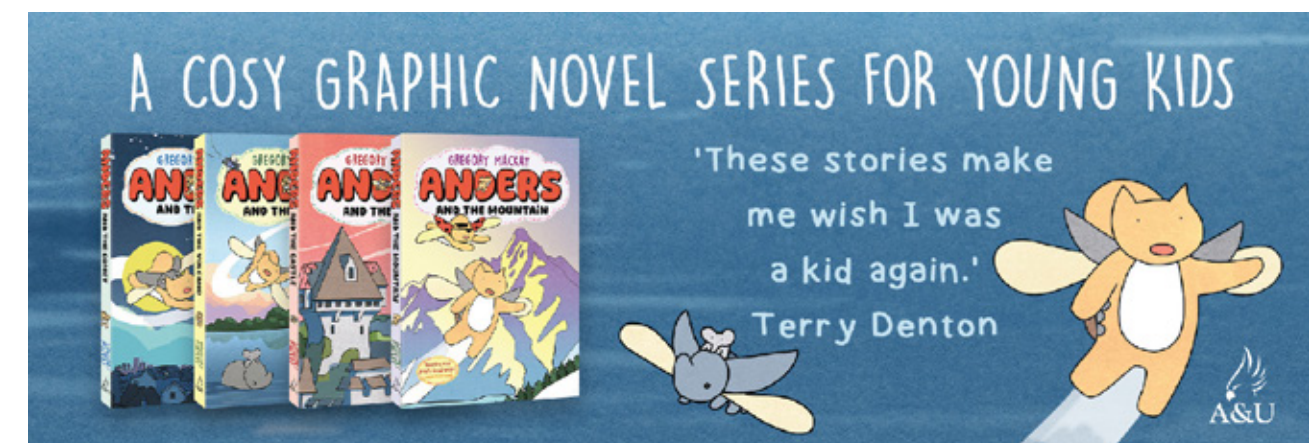
'A delightful graphic novel.' **Good Reading**

'Imaginative and entertaining.' **Magpies**

'A sweet, funny ... graphic novel that champions friendship, creativity and imagination ... perfect for comic fans or reluctant readers.' **Readings**

'The combination of congenial friendships, playful worldbuilding ... and fantasy-tinged action should easily win this quirky crew some fans.'

Publishers Weekly, UK



Gregory Mackay has been making comics since school. He enjoys drawing and watercolour painting. He likes drawing aeroplanes and machines, as well as building models and painting pictures. Gregory's books have received much acclaim including being shortlisted for the Angoulême Festival, the most prestigious comics awards in Europe. www.anderscomics.com

WORLD RIGHTS • RIGHTS SOLD: French (The Hoochie Coochie)



NICO AND THE WILD WATERS

Sarah Laing



Set in a vividly imagined post-climate-change world, this original graphic adventure combines humour, heart and hope in an compelling story brought to life with brilliant illustrations.

Twelve-year-old Nico lives with his nan on a boat in a flooded harbour. When she suffers a serious injury and falls gravely ill, he sets out on a dangerous quest to find the medicine that could save her.

His journey takes him across leviathan-infested waters, through a perilously overcrowded port, and into a world of striking contrasts. Along the way, he's helped by his resourceful neighbour Mirabelle, glimpses the luxurious pleasure domes where the wealthy live in comfort, encounters a growing resistance fighting the powers that be, and meets the unforgettable Gang of Nans, whose warmth, wit and mischief provide plenty of laughs.

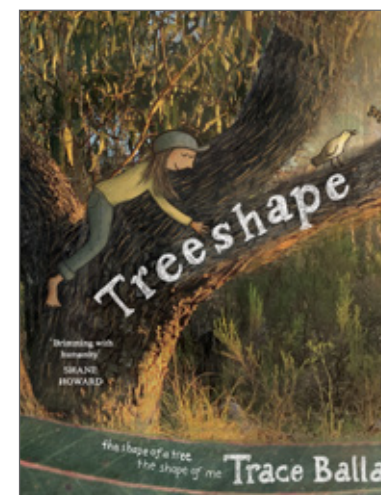
THEMES: independence, facing up to fears, being brave, apocalyptic world, authoritarian control, inequality, climate change, humour



Sarah Laing is a writer and cartoonist who lives on the Kāpiti Coast of New Zealand. She has published a book of short stories, two novels, two graphic memoirs, and has illustrated children's books, most recently *Sylvia and the Birds*, which was shortlisted for the New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults. She won the Sunday Star Times Short Story competition in 2008; was awarded the Sargeson, Michael King and University of Auckland fellowships, and was longlisted for the Ockham book awards in 2017. Her book covers have won prizes at the PANZ book design awards.

TREESHAPE

Trace Balla



Trace Balla's stunning graphic novel memoir reveals her personal and life-changing experiences of place, her understanding of the natural world and her relationship to Country. An extraordinary, inspiring and hope-filled graphic novel from the multi-award-winning creator of *Rivertime*, *Rockhopping*, *Landing with Wings* and *Leaf-light*.

This beautiful book tells the story of young Trace's awakening to the preciousness of the environment, including her participation in the protests against uranium mining at Jabiluka in the 1980s. Channeling her gift for visual storytelling, Trace reveals emotional truths, shares her commitment to environmental activism, highlights trees that have been meaningful in her life, and explores her deep appreciation of place and connection with First Nations peoples.

Trace's delicately detailed artwork, distinctive approach to storytelling, passion for the protection of the planet and heartfelt messages of kindness will resonate and inspire graphic novel readers of all ages.

THEMES: community activism, protest, Jabiluka, artistic practice, environment, community, connecting with country, nature



Almost
20,000
copies
sold!



Trace Balla is a well-loved Australian children's book author and illustrator who lives on Dja Dja Wurrung Country. She has won the CBCA Book of the Year Award, the Readings Children's Book Prize, the Wilderness Society's Environment Award for Children's Literature, a Comic Arts Awards of Australia Bronze Ledger, and an Honour Award for the inaugural SCBWI Australian Picture Book Illustrator Awards. www.traceballa.com

BRAVEPAW SERIES

L.M. Wilkinson, illustrated by Lavanya Naidu

RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (S&S BFYR); French (Eilean); Czech/Slovak (Bookmedia); Norwegian (Fontini); Russian (Goodwin)

An epic Tail of Adventure! Can one gallant mouse find the Heartstone and save her homeland from destruction? A fully illustrated and brilliantly readable series full of magic and prophecy, quests, heroism and loyal friendship – the world of Bravepaw will hook young readers until the very last page.



BRAVEPAW AND THE SONGSTONE OF THE DEEP: BRAVEPAW 4

The final battle is upon us – can one small mouse stand against what rises from the deep? The epic conclusion to the beloved and bestselling Bravepaw quartet.

Titch knows that there are many ways to be brave, and she has friendship, brave and true, on her side – but will that be enough to stand against the forces of darkness, when all of Alluria is cracking open?

Now, at the final hour, will the prophecy be fulfilled? Can Bravepaw unite the Gems of Harmony and save the world?



BRAVEPAW AND THE FANGSTONE OF FLINTFALL: BRAVEPAW 3

Titch is on the hunt for the gemstones missing from Bravepaw's staff. But the world is wide and full of danger...

It's one small mouse, and one epic quest!

Can Titch tell friend from foe in time to unite the Gems of Harmony and save her homeland from destruction?

Sept 2024 (Book 1); March 2025 (Book 2); March 2026 (Book 3); Sept 2026 (Book 4)
198x128mm • PB • B&W Illustrations Throughout • 192pp, 192pp, 208pp, 224pp



Over
10,500
copies
sold!

BRAVEPAW AND THE CLAWSTONE OF ROTWOOD MIRE: BRAVEPAW 2

Titch and Huckleberry are on an epic quest. They have followed their hearts ... right into the path of a terrifying swamp monster, and a village full of brainwashed squirrels!

Maybe their hearts aren't to be trusted? Maybe Titch is just an ordinary little mouse and not Bravepaw after all ...?

But Bravepaw or not, Titch is not about to give up. Can she defeat the greedy turtle controlling the squirrels, and discover what his glowing green gem has to do with the legend of Bravepaw and her quest to save Alluria?



Over
15,000
copies
sold!

BRAVEPAW AND THE HEARTSTONE OF ALLURIA: BRAVEPAW 1

Titch has always longed for adventure – just like the gallant mouse hero Bravepaw in all her favourite stories. But she is the smallest mouse in her family, living in a peaceful little village where nothing exciting ever happens ... until DIRE TROUBLE comes to the Plateau!

Titch and her best friend Huckleberry must set out on a DANGEROUS QUEST to take the Heartstone to repair the crack in the heart of Alluria before the whole world breaks apart.

Can Titch ever hope to live up to the legend of Bravepaw?

SHORTLISTED: 2025 ABIA, BOOK OF THE YEAR FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

SHORTLISTED: 2024 BEST CHILDREN'S FICTION, AUREALIS AWARDS

SELECTED: 2024 ONE OF THE BEST MIDDLE GRADE BOOKS – READINGS BOOKS

L.M. Wilkinson is the award-winning author of more than twenty books for children and teenagers, including *A Hunger of Thorns*, which won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award and was a CBCA Honour Book. Lavanya Naidu is a storyteller with a passion for building worlds and developing characters with heart. She is a graduate in animation film design and has illustrated several children's books and worked on games and animation production (television and film). Lavanya grew up in Kolkata, India, and now lives in Melbourne.

WORLD RIGHTS • RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (S&S BFYR); French (Eilean); Czech/Slovak (Bookmedia); Norwegian (Fontini); Russian (Goodwin)



STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Anton Clifford-Motopi



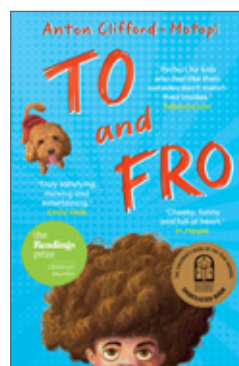
A delightfully funny novel about what it's like to be the middle child of a big, raucous and loving family in a small house with only one toilet, from the CBCA shortlisted author of *To and Fro*.

Dad likes rules. Mum likes order. My siblings like breaking both.

Leon is having a bad time – his best friend Jacob has moved to Alaska, he's not allowed to look after Jacob's cat, he has to be a buddy to the weird new kid and no one in his family listens to him. The only place he feels calm is under his bed, listening to cat-themed songs.

When Leon encourages his parents to help out the new kid, his problems get worse. Everyone in Leon's family seems to like Victor better than him. He tries to tell them how he's feeling, but how can a quiet person like Leon make himself heard in such a loud family?

THEMES: Humour, middle-children, family, friendship, school, homelessness and home insecurity, siblings



TO AND FRO
Awards:

SHORTLISTED:
2025 CBCA
BOOK OF THE
YEAR, YOUNGER
READERS

SHORTLISTED:
2024 READINGS
CHILDREN'S PRIZE

'Perfect for fans of Andy Griffiths, Paul Jennings and Morris Gleitzman.' **Books+Publishing**

'A warm, laugh-out-loud funny, purring fuzzball of a book.'
Sophie Beer, award-winning author of Thunderhead

'Perfectly captures the chaos of large-family dynamics with humour, warmth and compassion.'

Nathan Luff, bestselling author of the Nerd Herd series

'Six siblings and one bathroom - it's a recipe for high drama!'
RA Spratt, bestselling author of the Friday Barnes series

Anton Clifford-Motopi's passion is writing funny and thought-provoking stories for children. His stories explore themes of self-identity, family relationships and friendship, drawing from his experiences of being black with light skin, growing up in a large adoptive family and raising four children. Anton's debut novel, *To and Fro*, was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards and the Readings Children's Prize. He lives in Brisbane with his family. www.antoncliffordmotopi.com

ANA & FROG SEARCH FOR MINTY THE MISSING HORSE

Shelley Burne-Field, illustrated by Story Hemi-Morehouse



A funny middle grade story of two cousins turned junior detectives on the hunt for their aunty's horse.

Best-friend cousins Ana and Frog learn that Minty, Whaea McCready's beloved horse, is missing.

Ana loves that horse more than anything. More than hip-hop. Much more than homework.

And her cousin is right by her side.

So Ana and Frog set out on a spy mission around their small town, searching for any clues that might lead them to Minty, and to whoever might have taken her.

Find out if the cousins can solve the mystery!

THEMES: Friendship, mystery, family, bullies, difference

'Fun-to-read mystery with a surprising but satisfying ending.'
Adele Broadbent, What Book Next?



BRAVE KĀHU & THE PŌRANGI MAGPIE
Awards:

SHORTLISTED: 2025
NZSA BEST FIRST
BOOK AWARD,
NEW ZEALAND
BOOK AWARDS FOR
CHILDREN AND YA



Shelley Burne-Field (Sāmoa, Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Rārua, Pākehā) is a kaituhituhi from Te Matau-a-Māui Hawke's Bay. She writes articles and creative non-fiction as well as fiction of all sorts, including short stories. 'Speaking in Tongues' was the only New Zealand Finalist in the 2022 Commonwealth Short Story Prize. Her work is now in print in anthologies around the world, and has appeared in Newsroom and on RNZ.

NERDS VS ALIENS!

Barry Jonsberg



Aliens are on their way to Earth, but never fear – the future of our world rests in the hands of three eleven-year-old nerds. What could go wrong? A laugh-out-loud alien adventure novel from internationally acclaimed Australian author Barry Jonsberg.

'The world will end at ten thirty-six in the morning, on the fourteenth of March this year.'

This is the message aliens send to eleven-year-old nerds Harrison (Aitch), Ally and Mo. How do they send it? Via the magnetic letters on Mo's fridge, of course.

Aitch and Ally aren't sure what to believe, but soon they're in an alien spaceship travelling at lightspeed to Jupiter's icy moon Europa. Mo is worried his mum will be furious that he boarded an alien craft with strangers. And Aitch is not too happy that they've kidnapped his dog.

But maybe the aliens aren't that scary after all? They say they want to save the planet. It's only humans they're not so impressed by ...

Nerds vs Aliens! is high interest, low word count, engaging, smart speculative fiction and includes fun narrative commentary on storytelling techniques from one of Australia's best storytellers.

'This is enormous fun.'
Good Reading

THEMES:

Aliens, friendship, creative writing, storytelling, climate change, conservation



Barry Jonsberg is the internationally popular author of over 22 novels which have attracted numerous awards around the world including CBCAs, Prime Minister and Premiers' awards, German Readers' Choice Leserpreis and Children's Peace Literature Awards.

THE WITCHES OF WINDERRY SPIRES

Karen Foxlee



Praise for Karen Foxlee:

'Karen Foxlee is skilled at writing brave yet vulnerable young characters who steal readers' hearts forever.' **Books+Publishing**
'Foxlee's writing is infused with a hint of magic.' **SLJ**
'Foxlee crafts stories that read like classics.' **Booklist**
'Karen Foxlee is a master storyteller' **Good Reading**

RIGHTS SOLD: North American English (S&S BFYR)

An unforgettable and heartwarming quest fantasy from the award-winning and bestselling author of *Lenny's Book of Everything* and *A Most Magical Girl*.

No one ever knows what happens to the Clock Tower Girls...

The last thing Lucy Broadmeadow expected was to become the Clock Tower Girl and be sent to live with the witch at faraway Winderry Spires.

But when she arrives the witch is missing, the clock won't stop chiming and an injured winged wolf-pup appears – all signs that there is a Rift tearing the world apart.

Lucy might not be magical, but she is kind and brave. And she does have the help of her new companions – Sig the water dragon and Mustard the gloomy Pegasus.

Can Lucy and her friends find the witch, save the wolf-pup and heal the Rift before time runs out?

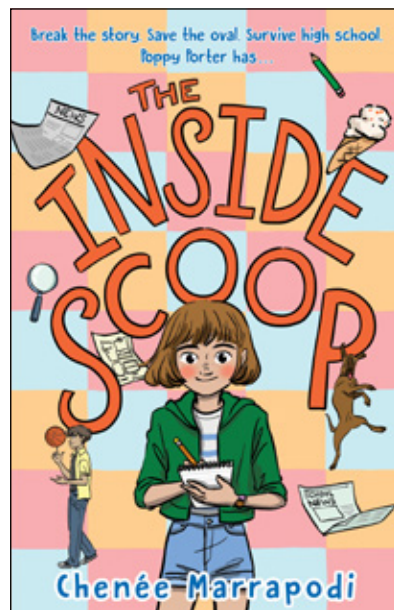
THEMES: Magic, adventure, animals, friendship, kindness, responsibility, family, identity, (nice) witches



Karen Foxlee is an Australian author who writes for both children and young adults. Her multi-award-winning books include *Ophelia and the Marvellous Boy*, *A Most Magical Girl*, the Miss Mary-Kate Martin's Guide to Monsters series, *Lenny's Book of Everything*, *Dragon Skin* and *The Wondrous Tale of Lavender Wolfe*.

INSIDE SCOOP

Chenée Marrapodi



Fun and accessible with chapter headings in the style of newspaper headlines!

A sweet-natured contemporary novel about facts, friendship and finding your tribe suitable for readers who love Kayla Miller's *Click* or Nova Weetman's *The Edge of Thirteen*.

Twelve-year-old Poppy Porter feels like she has to hide who she really is if she wants to survive high school with her best friend – and that means talking about the news is 100% off limits!

But when Poppy accidentally finds out the school oval is about to be dug up and replaced by a new classroom block, she thinks she's struck gold and found a massive scoop to break on the school news website. However, the principal has a hidden agenda. When Poppy finds herself banned from reporting on negatives like the loss of green space, she decides to take matters into her own hands. She forms an underground news team to report the truth in order to save the oval and hopefully, her friendship.

THEMES: Friendship, moving from primary/elementary school to secondary/junior high school, disinformation, journalism, courage, student activism, dementia, family, extended family

Chenée Marrapodi is an Australian writer and podcaster. She has worked in media for many years, currently for Channel Nine News, and formerly as a reporter for Channel Seven's *Today Tonight*, as well as online news and radio. She is also the author of two middle grade books about ballet *One Wrong Turn* and *Breaking Pointe*.

LAST CHANCE CHARLIE

Paul Jennings



'Arguably Australia's greatest living children's author...'
Australian Book Review

On the edge of a desert, Last Chance is lonely, but it's where Charlie belongs with his Gramps – until a bully tries to push them out. A classic Aussie bush tale of standing up and finding new friends, from master storyteller Paul Jennings.

Charlie lives with Gramps in a tiny cottage in Last Chance, on the edge of the Little Desert. It's just the two of them since the death of Charlie's mother.

Bethany is Charlie's only friend. She lives at the servo with her dad, but her dad can't pay the bank.

Ralph lives at his mum's health resort, but his bullying father wants to buy out the servo and the cottage before the new road goes through town.

When one of the kids drives the school bus into the dam, it sets off a chain of events that can only be undone when Charlie decides to right a wrong, Bethany embraces Charlie's friendship, and Ralph stands up to his father.

A poignant and funny tale of outback characters, resilience and the power of friendship from a legend of Australian children's fiction.

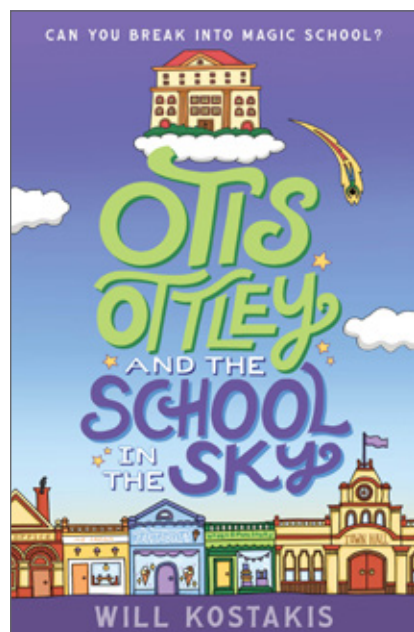
THEMES: Friendship, mystery, family, bullies, standing up for yourself



Paul Jennings has written more than one hundred stories and sold over ten million books. He was made a Member of the Order of Australia for services to children's literature in 1995, was awarded the prestigious Dromkeen Medal in 2001 and was made a Fellow of Monash University in 2010. In 2019 he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Children's Book Council of Australia.

OTIS OTTLEY AND THE SCHOOL IN THE SKY

Will Kostakis



Otis Ottley is an ordinary boy who yearns to go to the magic school in the sky. And he will stop at nothing to make it happen. A funny and warm middle-grade novel about finding the magic in everyday life, from a much-loved, award-winning Australian author.

Otis Ottley lives in the shadow of the Manor School for Magic. Literally. It's an island hovering over his town, and he's determined to reach it.

While many kids dream of roaming the prestigious institution's halls, casting spells and conjuring spectacles, Otis has a specific mission: to seek magical help remembering something extremely important.

The odds are stacked against him, but Otis will break into magic school. Or at the very least, he will break a few rules trying.

A wonderful middle-grade novel, brimming with magic, from a much-loved Prime Minister's Literary Award-winning author.

THEMES: Fantasy, family, magic, humour, friendship, grief, memory

'Kostakis writes with seamless charisma and wit, infusing Otis's voice with an infectious energy that will keep kids reading (and laughing).'

Books and Publishing

**WE COULD BE SOMETHING Awards:**

WINNER: 2024 Prime Minister's Literary Awards, YA Literature

NOTABLE BOOK: 2024 CBCA Book of the Year, Older Readers

SHORTLISTED: 2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards; 2024 NSW Premier's Literary Awards; 2024 Queensland Literary Awards, YA Book Award

Will Kostakis splits his time between writing for young adults and touring Australia to inspire young adults to write stories of their own. First published at nineteen, he is best known for writing whip-smart comedies that break (then mend) hearts. His previous novel, *We Could Be Something*, won the 2024 Prime Minister's Literary Award for Young Adult Literature. An advocate for young readers and writers, he was awarded the 2020 Maurice Saxby Award by the School Library Association of New South Wales for service to children's and young adult literature.

IN THE EYES OF THE HAWK

Kiri Lightfoot



What happens when your family is blown apart by a deep secret that suddenly comes to light?

This heartwarming story from the author of the award-winning *Bear* tells how 12-year-old Miles deals with the revelation that he has an older brother, Edward, who he's never heard of before.

Edward's arrival in town causes Miles's parents to split. Miles notices that a hawk appears to be always watching him – is it sending him warnings of danger?

What's more, Miles's grandad has dementia and Miles has to do a school project on him.

Then the hawk gets injured and Edward also gets injured! What will be the outcome of all this chaos?

THEMES: Family, extended family, secrets, anxiety, dementia, natural world

Themes of family, anxiety and the natural world weave together into an uplifting and positive read.

**BEAR Awards:**

WINNER: 2026 NZ Booklovers Award for Best Young Adult book; 2024 Storylines Tessa Duder YA Award

NOTABLE BOOK: 2025 NZ Listener 50 best books for children & YA; 2025 Auckland council libraries top 10 for teens; 2025 Storylines Notable Book Award

SHORTLISTED: 2026 West Australian Young Readers' Book Award; 2025 YA Book Award, New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults

On BEAR:

'A darkly funny, haunting tale of finding a way through darkness to hope. A fresh and powerful take on an all-too-common teenage experience, this deftly executed story is both confronting and validating.' **NZCYA judges**

'Tender and wickedly humorous - such an important story.' **Karen Foxlee**

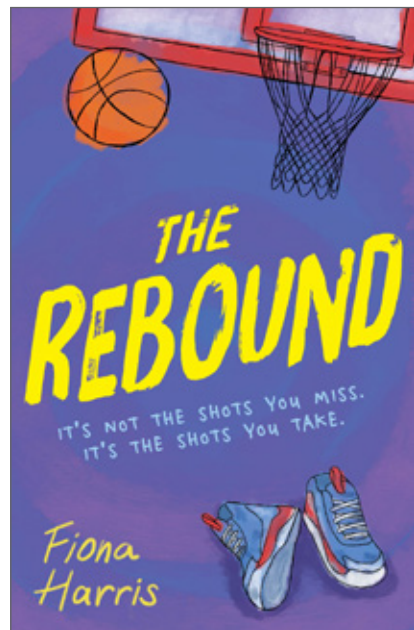
'A must-read for teenagers. Dark, funny, and deeply unsettling, *Bear* is a book that crawls under your skin and stays there.' **Imogen Gadd, Kete**

'Lightened by humour and Jasper's own observations and opinions. A must-read for both teenagers and the parents of teenagers.' **NZ Booklovers Award judges**

Kiri Lightfoot is an NZ-based author and actor. She has worked as a scriptwriter in children's television and as an actor both for theatre and screen. She continues to work part-time in television and also runs poetry reading sessions in aged-care homes and hospitals with charity 'Active Arts'. Kiri worked for many years as a telephone counsellor with Youthline and as a volunteer mentor in an alternative education school. *Bear* was her first novel for young adults and was inspired by working with young people at this time.

THE REBOUND

Fiona Harris



A BASKETBALL BOOK
WITH HEART –
A MIDDLE GRADE
TED LASSO

THEMES:

Overcoming adversity,
team sport, competitiveness
resilience, grief, friendship,
self development

Fiona Harris is an award-winning author, scriptwriter, and actor with over twenty years of experience across publishing, television and theatre. Over the past few years, she has penned forty-three books, including two adult fiction novels *The Drop-off* and *The Pick-up*; the junior fiction series, *Sleepover BFFs*; Holocaust survivor Abram Goldberg's memoir, *The Strength of Hope*; five books in Liz Watson's junior fiction series, *Diary of a Netball Star*; three books in the *Trolls* series for Dreamworks; and two picture books for footballer Marcus Bontempelli. Fiona co-created the award-winning comedy web series, *The Drop Off*, with her husband, Mike McLeish, which aired on Channel 9, and in 2025 they co-adapted the script for the Dolly Parton musical, *Here You Come Again*, for Australian audiences. Fiona is currently working on three new books and a play.

'Hoop wizard' Harry is relegated to his school's worst basketball team when he misses tryouts, but his new team has some surprises for him in this triumph-over-adversity story. Perfect for sports-mad kids and readers of series such as *Patty Mills' Game Day*.

After missing his eagerly awaited trial to play for the Under Sixteens Firsts, fourteen-year-old Harry Portelli has no choice but to play with the worst training team in the school.

The Redbacks are a mess. They can't pass. They can't shoot. They can't win.

This is not the future either Harry or his dad imagined. Harry has to dig deep to work out what basketball means to him and, with the help of surprising new friendships, he rediscovers his love for the sport as the Redbacks start to play like a team.

And then the school arranges a derby, the Redbacks against the Firsts, and Harry's heart sinks – the Redbacks are bound to be destroyed. But is winning all that matters? Harry learns that sometimes the sweetest shot is the one you get on the rebound.

A fast-paced feel-good story guaranteed to capture the imagination of readers of all levels by the bestselling author of Liz Watson's *Diary of a Netball Star* series and Sam Kerr's *Kicking Goals*.

THE RAVEN'S EYE REBELLION

Claire Mabey



A gripping adventure filled with fantasy and magic. Rich with wonder and a thirst for justice, *The Raven's Eye Rebellion* is the unmissable sequel to the award-winning *The Raven's Eye Runaways*.

When Getwin, Lea and Buckle – with the help of Sharp the raven – unearth the trickster *Book of Blacke*, they embark on a quest to undo the controls on their world, seeking justice for the Scribes who are forced to work and for those who have never been allowed to read or write.

The city of Wyle comes alive with danger and intrigue as our heroes contend with the secrets of the Scholar's Library, a magical boat, curious creatures, a secret reading and writing society, sleeping trees and the twists and turns of the ancient city.

Can the friends stay safe? Will they be able to free the Scribes? Will they make enough trouble to shake the foundations of their world?

THEMES: Challenging authority, discovering inner magic, power of friendship, being different, resilience

THE RAVEN'S EYE RUNAWAYS Awards:

WINNER: 2025 NZSA BEST FIRST BOOK AWARD, NZ BOOK AWARDS

WINNER: 2025 NZ BOOKLOVERS AWARD FOR BEST JUNIOR FICTION

SHORTLISTED: 2025 ESTHER GLEN JUNIOR FICTION PRIZE, NZ BOOK AWARDS

NOTABLE: 2024 STORYLINES BOOK AWARDS

On THE RAVEN'S EYE RUNAWAYS:

'The work of a writer who wields her words with exquisite care and understands the power of great storytelling.'
NZCYA judges

'You'll be transported to a heady, haunting world where words are a currency reserved for the few, and paid with the price of spilled blood.' **Graci Kim**

'A bewitching story that will captivate readers. There's twists and turns aplenty, and magic too, with Mabey setting a cracking pace. The characters are full of vigour and personality, and flaws too.' **Rebekah Lyell, NZ Booklovers**

'With a gorgeous turn of phrase, unique characters and an exciting plot ... is worth a read no matter your age.'

Kristin Stefanoff, Glam Adelaide

'The world she has created, and the characters that reside there, feel authentic and inevitable as if they have lived with her for a long time. The story is translated onto the page with wit, restraint and confidence. It's a talented rendering of a beautiful world and I instantly capitulated to the reality of it.' **Hera Lindsay Bird**

Claire Mabey is the founder of Verb Wellington, LitCrawl Wellington and Lōemis. She is also books editor at *The Spinoff*, book critic at RNZ and a regular guest on ABC's *The Bookshelf* podcast.

TEN THOUSAND PITCHES

Amy Martin



A page-turning, clean, coming-of-age novel that tackles cancer, sport, first love, friendship, bullying and blended families with warmth, authenticity and hope.

Sixteen-year-old Angus has plenty on his plate: he's a dedicated softball player, a bit of a nerd, fiercely loyal to his best friend Michael, and constantly sparring with his younger sister, Kyla. Oh, and his mum is dating his softball coach – awkward!

Then Angus discovers a lump in his shoulder and he faces an agonising wait to find out whether it's cancer.

Trying to focus on something he can control, Angus sets himself an extraordinary challenge: to pitch 10,000 softballs in 24 hours and raise money for a cancer charity. What begins as a personal mission grows into something much bigger as friends, teammates and the wider community rally behind him ... apart from his bullying nemesis.

Along the way, something shifts between Angus and Lydia – Michael's younger sister. It used to be all teasing and jokes but things are changing. Could they be developing feelings for each other?

Will Angus succeed? Will Angus be OK? And what will happen between him and Lydia?

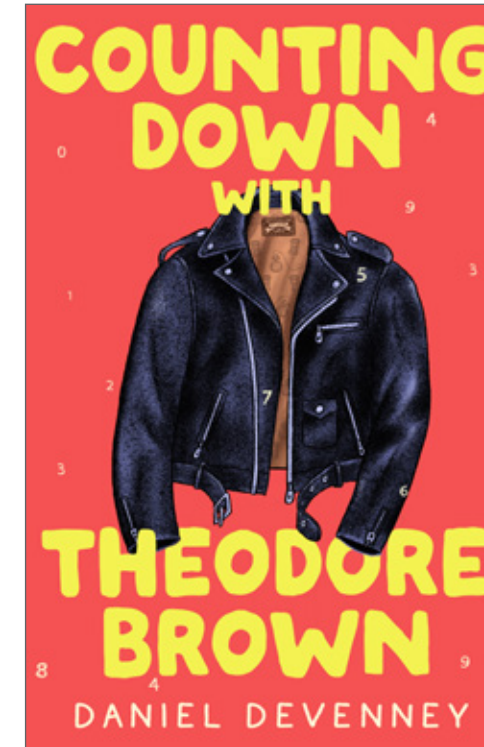
Page-turning, clean teen romance for fans of *The Summer I Turned Pretty* by Jenny Han and *I Hope This Doesn't Find You* by Ann Liang, *Ten Thousand Pitches* is a satisfying read.

Amy Martin lives just out of Hamilton and works from home as a website developer. She has two teenage girls, and has been writing for about 10 years. Just like Angus, she found a lump in her shoulder when she was 17. It turned out to be a tumour but not one that spreads. This is an ongoing situation for her.

**WINNER: STORYLINES TESSA
DUDER YA AWARD 2025**

COUNTING DOWN WITH THEODORE BROWN

Daniel Devenney



A fantastic coming-of-age story and a compelling love story with a twist.

Theo has crippling social anxiety – understandable, given that when he looks into people's eyes he sees a number which is the number of days until they die or disappear from his life.

He's kept everyone at a safe distance since his dad died. But now that he's in college, he fears he's missing out. Even his stuffy English professor thinks he needs to get a life. So, to improve his mental health and sharpen his writing skills, he decides to do just that.

Enter the tidal wave that is Lil Sanchez. She may only be around for the summer, but Theodore can't help but wonder if the pleasure of knowing her, might be worth the pain of losing her. Only time will tell, and the clock is ticking ...

Counting Down with Theodore Brown explores our basic need for connection. Theo's journey highlights the joy connection brings to our lives and the dangers we face without it. It's a story about mental health, identity, friendship, sexuality, love, loss, and the impermanent nature of the human condition. It's a story about life.

THEMES: mental health, identity, friendship, sexuality, love, loss, music

Daniel Devenney is a bookseller and writer based in Auckland, New Zealand, by way of Ireland and the United States. A vocal advocate for mental health and Queer representation, Daniel currently works at Unity Books, reviews YA fiction for *The Spinoff*, and contributes author interviews, poetry, and reviews to *Express Magazine*. *Counting Down with Theodore Brown* is his debut novel.

GOOD YOUNG MEN

Gary Lonesborough



'... [a] powerful story exploring events that draw young men together and drive them apart.'
Books+Publishing



Gary Lonesborough is a multi-award winning Yuin writer, who grew up on the Far South Coast of NSW as part of a large and proud Aboriginal family. He has experience working in youth work, Aboriginal health, child protection, the disability sector and the film industry.

A brilliant contemporary YA coming-of-age novel about three three small-town Aboriginal friends finding their way towards adulthood, from multi-award-winning author, Gary Lonesborough.

In the idyllic coastal town of Carraway's Point, four Aboriginal boys grew up together, carefree and close. But they drifted apart in high school, and everything changed forever the night Brandon was killed by a white cop.

Now racial tension is brewing, and each boy must wrestle with grief and their own complicated lives.

Kallum has lost his sport scholarship and must return from Sydney. Jordy contends with family responsibilities and a closeted boyfriend. Dylan was the only witness to Brandon's death and must testify in court.

Struggling to contain their emotions and process the murder of their friend, Kallum, Jordy and Dylan must navigate explosive events in a way that opens up a future they can't yet see.

THEMES: First Nations Australians; community; family; friendship; belonging; racism; LGBTQIA+; inequality; injustice

AWARDS

GOOD YOUNG MEN

Currently SHORTLISTED: 2026 QLD Literary Awards, Young Adult Book Award

I'M NOT REALLY HERE

WINNER: 2025 CBCA Book of the Year, Older Readers

SHORTLISTED: 2025 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, Writing for Young Adults

WE DIDN'T THINK IT THROUGH

WINNER: 2024 MARION ACT Book of the Year, Books for Older Readers;
 2024 Readings Young Adult Prize

SHORTLISTED: 2024 Prime Minister's Literary Awards, Young Adult Literature; 2024 NSW Premier's Literary Awards; 2024 NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Indigenous Writers' Prize

NOTABLE BOOK: 2024 CBCA Book of the Year, Older Readers

THE BOY FROM THE MISH

WINNER: 2022 IBBY Australia Ena Noël Award;

2021 Favourite Australian Debut Book, Booktopia FAB Awards

HIGHLY COMMENDED: 2022 Book of the Year for Older Children, ABIA's

SHORTLISTED: 2022 NSW Premier's Literary Awards; 2022 CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers; 2022 Young Adult Book of the Year, Indie Book Awards; 2022 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards; 2021 Readings YA Book Prize

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