



MUSWELL PRESS

RIGHTS GUIDE 2026

USA & Translation Rights represented by Andrea Joyce
andrea@joyceliterary.com

Audio Rights contact Kate Beal
kate@muswell-press.co.uk

An independent publisher of compelling books: crime, contemporary fiction, lgbtqi, travel and biography.

Finalist British Book Awards 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Winner of Polari First Book Prize 2023 and Polari Book Prize 2024.

www.muswell-press.co.uk

@muswell-press



FICTION/THRILLER



Our Shadow Selves

VG Lee

World, audio, 240pp, March 2026

'Lee writes with unfailing warmth and wisdom about the comedy and complexity of childhood and family life'

Sarah Waters

'A light touch, a wonderful laconic style and spot-on humour'

Andrea Levy

Award winning, critically acclaimed author joins the Muswell list

A gripping psychological thriller about trauma, revenge, and the price of reinvention

Regular readings at Polari Salons and festivals UK & Europe

Shona Blake thought she'd left her violent past behind. But when she moves in with Richard, the man who once exploited her darkest moments for his own success, old wounds are reopened.

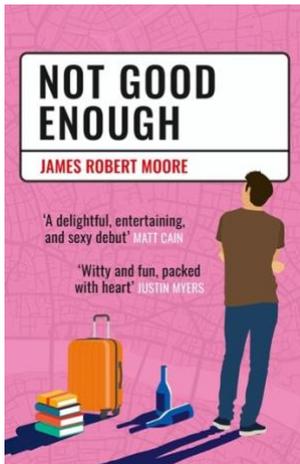
In the crumbling seaside town of Hawksbridge, Shona finds kinship with the eccentric Gifford family living illegally in a derelict building. Their stories of survival give her the courage to paint again—until she discovers a body wrapped in carpet, and everything starts to unravel.

Richard knows her secrets. He's documented every shameful detail of her childhood, from the fire she set at fifteen to the deaths that followed. Now he's weaponising that knowledge, jeopardizing her relationships and her future. But Shona has learned something important from the misfits of Hawksbridge: sometimes the only way to break free is to embrace the darkness you've been running from.

As New Year's Day dawns, Shona faces a choice that will define who she really is. Because some shadows can't be escaped—they can only be owned.

VG Lee is the author of five novels and a collection of short stories. She was shortlisted for a Stonewall Award and has won the Ultimate Planet Award. She is a judge for the annual Polari Prize. She lives on the South Coast of England.

FICTION



NOT GOOD ENOUGH

James Robert Moore

RIGHTS: World, audio, July '25, 242pp

'A delightful, entertaining and sexy debut, with a strong, likeable central character and a wonderfully drawn supporting cast of charming queer friends' **Matt Cain**

'Witty and fun, packed with heart and many touching moments' **Justin Myers**

'I loved it! A reminder that out of the darkest moments can come the most beautiful beginnings' **Frankie Bridge**

A gay rom com, perfect for fans of Matt Cain and Justin Myers

Funny, romantic and a little bit spicy

A fresh take on dating and self-discovery

After his boyfriend of nine years betrays him, Charlie's carefully constructed world crumbles. At thirty-something, he's never navigated London's queer scene alone – and he's terrified. No relationship experience, no dating app knowledge, and absolutely no idea if he's an otter or a bear. Why isn't there a gay manual for this?

But sometimes devastating endings force beautiful beginnings. As Charlie stumbles through awkward first dates and a new flatshare, he discovers there's more to life than being someone's other half. The queer community he never dared explore beckons, promising friendship, adventure, and maybe even love. If only he can silence the nagging voice telling him he's Not Good Enough.

A heartwarming, story about finding yourself when life forces you to start again – because it's never too late to come out of your second closet and embrace who you truly are.

James Robert Moore is a Director, Writer and Actor, originally from Essex, UK. His directing credits include Greatest Days: The Official Take That Musical, and the award-winning Beauty and the Beast at the Swansea Grand Theatre. In 2025 he will be working on the stage adaption of The Hunger Games. This, his first novel, was shortlisted for the Penguin Random House WriteNow competition.



MISS VEAL AND MISS HAM **Vikki Heywood**

RIGHTS: World, audio, July '25, 242pp

'The moving and surprising story of a discreet love, put to its greatest test' **The Reverend Richard Coles**

'A gloriously warm-hearted tribute to the courage of hidden lives' **Francis Spufford**

'Touching, dramatic and wholly authentic' **Greg Mosse, Author of *The Maisie Cooper Mysteries***

- **Perfect for fans of Sarah Waters and Barbara Pym**
- **A tender, witty lesbian love story spanning four decades from the suffragette movement through two world wars to the early '50s**
- **Rich historical detail including London's underground gay clubs in the 1920s-30s and life during the Blitz**

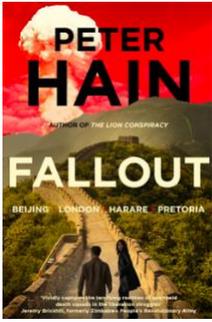
Public companions, private lovers....

It is 1951 and behind the counter of a modest post office in a leafy Buckinghamshire village Miss Dora Ham and Miss Beatrix Veal maintain their careful facade as respected local spinsters. But their true story is one of passion: suffragist activists who fell in love at a rally in the 1900s, danced in London's secret gay clubs between the wars, and comforted one another during the first night of the Blitz. Together they have built a life of quiet dignity and service in rural England.

Now over the course of one pivotal day their carefully constructed world begins to fracture. Through Beatrix's wry perspective we witness the severe impact of post-war changes on their peaceful existence. Changes that will lead to heart-breaking decisions for Miss Veal and Miss Ham.

At the heart of this intimate, moving and witty novel is a story of resilience, the dignity of love that cannot be spoken, and the challenges that come when the future no longer feels safe.

(Dame) Vikki Heywood was Executive Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 2003 until 2012 and before that Joint Chief Executive of the Royal Court Theatre. She has been an executive producer of many West End and Broadway productions, including *Matilda the Musical*. She served two terms as Chairman of the RSA and completed a nine-year term as Chairman of Mountview Drama Academy, formally in Crouch End, where I led the campaign to build a new state of the art facility and re-establish it as a world leading Drama School in Peckham. In 2023 she chaired *Unboxed, Creativity in the UK* and in 2020 was awarded a Damehood for services to the Arts. This is her first novel.



FALLOUT

Peter Hain

RIGHTS: World, Audio, July '25, 322pp

'Brilliant, part crime thriller and part political manifesto'. **Book of the Week, Sun**

'Brave, riveting and terrifyingly relevant' **Sarah Sultoon**

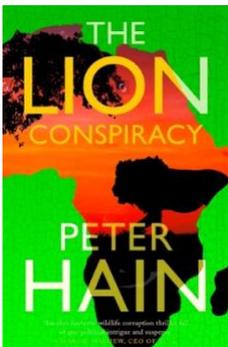
South Africa, Zimbabwe, China and Britain - In the shadow of the Cold War, a deadly secret connects three continents - and time is running out.

When a mild-mannered scientist accidentally uncovers a web of international espionage during a routine visit to Beijing, he's thrust into a deadly game of cat and mouse. His only ally? A magnetic anti-apartheid activist who may have secrets of her own.

As they race to expose the truth, a veteran South African intelligence operative moves through the streets of newly-independent Zimbabwe, his mission intertwined with the machinations of a mysterious Chinese power player from Mao's inner circle. Meanwhile, a sinister collaboration between apartheid forces and rogue British intelligence agents works in the shadows to keep their nuclear conspiracy buried - at any cost.

From the backstreets of Beijing to the wild, untamed lowveld where Zimbabwe meets South Africa, this explosive thriller weaves together Cold War tensions, political intrigue, and the threat of nuclear devastation. As these disparate threads converge, our unlikely heroes find themselves at the centre of a plot that could reshape the balance of power in the Southern Hemisphere - if they can survive long enough to expose it.

Peter Hain lived in South Africa until his parents were forced into exile in 1966. He was involved with the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Anti-Nazi League during the 1970s. He was a senior minister for 12 years in Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's governments. He is a lifelong Human Rights campaigner, and currently a Labour member of the House of Lords. Hain has written or edited twenty-one books including *Mandela*, *Outside In*, *Pretoria Boy*, *The Rhino Conspiracy*, *The Lion Conspiracy* and *The Elephant Conspiracy*.



THE LION CONSPIRACY

Peter Hain

RIGHTS: World, March 2024, 320pp

Leading politician and anti-apartheid campaigner turns the spotlight on to Lion poaching in South Africa

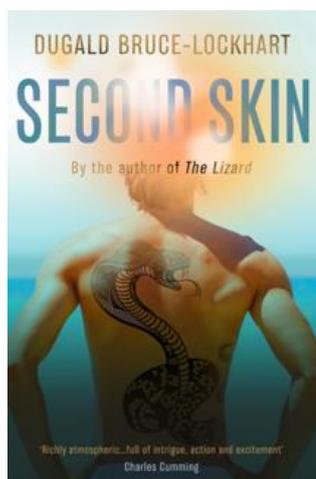
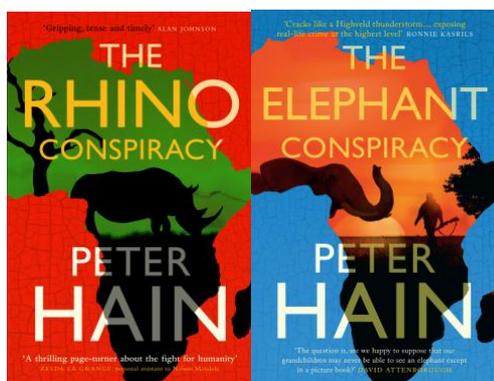
Gripping and pacy, the final book in the acclaimed *Conspiracy* trilogy, grounded in real-life experience, and endorsed by global conservationists.

Having thwarted murderous poachers in *The Elephant Conspiracy*, the Veteran, Thandi and Mkhize are back battling to save lion prides from being killed for their claws, teeth and bones. As the demand for lion parts soars, impoverished local communities are being incentivised to poach, and the fight against this illegal plunder becomes ever more vicious.

Struggling to defeat the international criminal syndicate responsible for poaching, the team find themselves embroiled in mafia-style smuggling, illicit night flights, tense shoot-outs, and an encounter with a protégé of Vladimir Putin.

Peter Hain was brought up in South Africa and moved to the UK when his parents were forced into exile. He was involved with the Anti-Apartheid Movement during the 1970s and '80s. Hain was the Labour MP for Neath 1991-2015 and a senior minister for 12 years in Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's governments. He chaired the UN Security Council and negotiated international Treaties curbing nuclear proliferation and banning the trade in blood diamonds. Hain has written or edited twenty-one books – including *Mandela* (2010), memoirs *Outside In* (2012) and *Pretoria Boy* (2021). His conspiracy series of environmental thrillers have been published to great acclaim.

Previous titles: *The Rhino Conspiracy*, 2020, *The Elephant Conspiracy* 2022



SECOND SKIN

Dugald Bruce Lockhart

RIGHTS: World, June 2024, 320 pp

'Much praised...the smells, tastes and surrounds of Greece rise off the pages like the heat on a midday beach.' **Financial Times, Best Thrillers**

'Thrilling espionage...high octane' **Sunday Post**

'I am not alone when I say that I have been waiting for this book to hit my desk since turning the final page of Bruce-Lockhart's debut, The Lizard. It's genius and a sinfully good read' 5 Stars **Scottish Field**

'Pleasingly brutal... break out the retsina' **The Times**

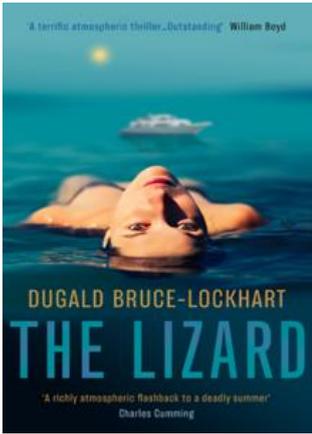
'Accelerates into a fast and twisty thriller' **Sun**

Five years after a murderous encounter on the island of Paros, Alastair Haston's world is upended by a startling discovery: a son he never knew existed.

Desperate to learn more, he travels to Athens, but his pursuit is intercepted when MI6 intervenes, coercing him into a high-stakes espionage mission – to infiltrate a suspected mafia operation intent on abducting his son,

As the chase unravels across the Mediterranean, Alistair has a chilling revelation, could the spectre of his past be returning to taunt him? Could the answer lie in that fateful, deadly summer on Paros five years ago?

Dugald Bruce Lockhart is an actor who trained at RADA and has worked extensively with the RSC, the National Theatre and the Old Vic. He has appeared in many productions on stage and TV including, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *Mama Mia* and *The Crown*. His debut novel, *The Lizard* was published to great acclaim in 2020. He lives in South London with his family.



THE LIZARD

Dugald Bruce Lockhart

RIGHTS: World, June 2020, 320pp

'This impressive debut is written with huge verve'
The Daily Mail

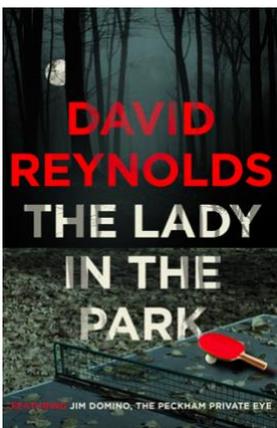
'It is an incredibly gripping tale...I await the sequel with anticipation. **The Field**

'An impressive debut...this riotous chase through the glories of the Greek Islands is entertaining'
Best Thrillers, Observer

ONE DEADLY, SUN-DRENCHED SUMMER....Alistair Haston heads off to Greece to track down his ex-girlfriend. Mugged on arrival in Paros, he loses everything. So, when Ricky, a charming Aussie, shows up and offers Alistair a live-in job he accepts with alacrity.

But the job is not quite what he'd expected. Swept along on hedonistic tide of wild parties, wild sex and plentiful drugs, Alistair revels in the pursuit of pleasure. But then the body of a missing tourist is found, and the evidence points to him. As the body count piles up and Haston finds himself on the run, by land and by sea, on a journey more frightening than he could ever have imagined.

Dugald Bruce Lockhart is an actor who trained at RADA and has worked extensively with the RSC, the National Theatre and the Old Vic. He has appeared in many productions on stage and TV including, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *Mama Mia* and *The Crown*. His debut novel, *The Lizard* was published to great acclaim in 2020. He lives in South London with his family.



The Lady in the Park

Featuring Jim Domino, the Peckham Private Eye

David Reynolds

RIGHTS: World Eng, audio ex NA, June '25, 256pp

'Clever, humane, affectionate and realistic – crime writing at its best' Maxim Jakubowski

When a woman is found unconscious on a ping-pong table in Peckham's Warwick Gardens, it looks like a case of mistaken identity. Why would anyone want to injure this popular local mum of six? But Jim Domino, retired CID detective turned private eye, keeps asking questions.

As the crime escalates to murder, Domino's investigations take him to the leafy Thames Valley, and plunge him into a dark world of ruthless people-traffickers and drug dealers. How might these sinister activities be linked to the Peckham murder?

Assisted by sharp observations from his six-year-old grandson, Danny, Domino finds that important clues can come from unexpected sources.

The Lady in the Park is about the good in most people, and about love, grief and childhood. The first in an exciting new crime fiction series, it weaves a diverse cast of characters into a twisty immersive plot that will leave readers craving for more investigations featuring the inimitable Jim Domino and his young sidekick, Danny.

David Reynolds was a co-founder of Bloomsbury Publishing in 1986. His non-fiction has been widely reviewed, *Swan River* (Picador, 2001), was shortlisted for the PEN/ Ackerley Prize. He lives in Putney, South London, and knows Peckham well, having spent time there looking after his grandchildren. *The Lady in the Park* is his debut novel and the first in the Peckham Private Eye

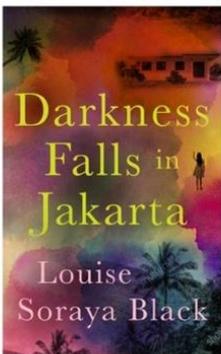
Previous Reviews for David Reynolds

'Swan River stood head and shoulders above every other book this year' **Jonathan Coe**

'Reynolds is a writer of calm, quiet brilliance' **Daily Express**

'What a joy of a book...it makes me cry with pleasure' **Lucinda Lambton, The Oldie**

FICTION



DARKNESS FALLS IN JAKARTA

Louise Soraya Black

RIGHTS: World English+ audio, Jan '24, 272pp

Virginia Prize winner for Pomegranate Sky

The death of Claire's parents triggers haunting memories of her past life in Jakarta, a time that Claire has been running away from her whole life. Forced to leave the city she loved, and packed off to school in the UK, by her disappointed parents, Claire is racked with guilt about the agonising event she'd become embroiled in.

Twenty years later, with husband and son in tow, she decides to travel back in the hope of finding answers and perhaps forgiveness. Is confronting her past the key to her deliverance?

Louise writes beautifully and her seductive descriptions of Jakarta are mesmerising. Her previous book, *The Water Garden* (2021) was described by Fay Weldon as 'very attractive, beautifully written' and by Ella Berthoud as 'a deeply seductive read'. She has a British mother and Iranian father and spent part of her childhood in Indonesia where her father worked for UNICEF. She currently lives in Ibiza.

Previous Reviews for Louise Soraya Black

'Very attractive, beautifully written' **Fay Weldon**

'Seductive' **Ella Berthoud**

'Drama and menace, sensuality and enchantment' **Patricia Wastvedt**

BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR



A Beer in Cornwall

Tommy Barnes

World, 240pp, integrated photos, June 2026

'A candid, brilliantly human book full of laugh out loud moments. And lots of beer' Rosie Birkett, *Sunday Times*

'Tommy's antics are hilarious. Like Brewing meets *Bake Off* in rural France' James Dowdeswell

'Delicious' *Daily Telegraph*

Confessions of a misfit entrepreneur

With the wit and warmth that suffused *A Beer in the Loire* and *Trouble Brewing in the Loire* comes a sequel, celebrating beer, Cornwall, family and friendship.

Previous titles *A Beer in the Loire* and *Trouble Brewing in the Loire* shortlisted Fortnum & Mason's food and drink award

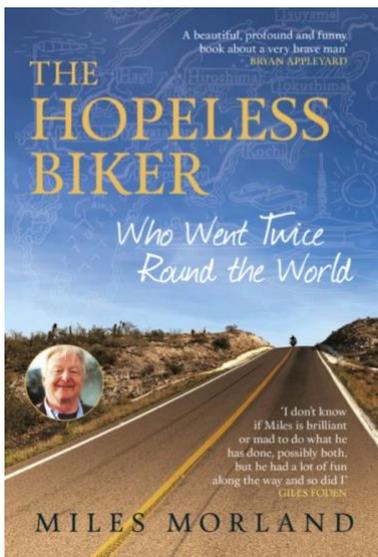
Four years after establishing Braslou Bière, a British microbrewery in the heart of French wine country, Covid hits and Tommy and Rose Barnes are forced to make the agonising decision to return to England.

Landing in a cramped cottage in scenic Padstow, their animals are rehomed, and their children confused. Tommy mourns the loss of his old life. After winning and losing several jobs, not least at the legendary St Austell Brewery, he realises that it is he who is the problem not the work.

With that insight, and the kindness of friends, and a rival brewer he sets about launching Braslou Bière in Cornwall. Yes, there are disasters aplenty, but with his new self-knowledge and energy, life begins to look up. He launches Surfer Beer to celebrate.

Told with biting wit and poignant reflection, this is a story of escape and exile, of finding freedom and losing it again, and of how the places we leave behind often haunt us more than we expect. It's a deeply human tale about identity, home, and the weight of nostalgia—laced with beer, animals, and a truly indestructible dog.

Tommy Barnes is the author of two previous books, *A Beer in the Loire* and *Trouble Brewing in the Loire*, both shortlisted for the Fortnum & Mason food and drink award. He lives in Padstow, Cornwall with his family.



The Hopeless Biker – Who Went Twice Round the World

Miles Morland

World, 240pp, Maps and photos, Nov 2025

'I don't know if Miles is brilliant or mad to do what he has done, possibly both but he had a lot of fun along the way and so did I.' **Giles Foden, author of the Last King of Scotland.**

'You don't have to be a biker to be captivated by Miles's adventures' **Jim Rogers, author of Investment Biker**

'A beautiful, profound and funny book about a very brave man' **Bryan Appleyard**

From *Sunday Times* bestseller Miles Morland comes a gripping tale of life on the road.

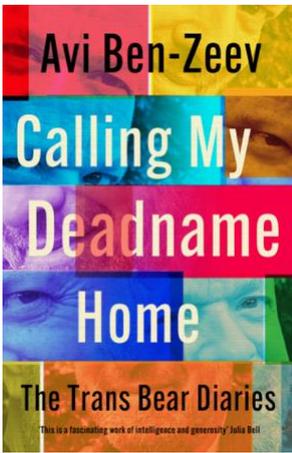
Author of the *Man Who Broke Out of the Bank and Walked to France*

Over five Continents, armed with nothing but stubborn determination and tatty maps Miles Morland trades deskbound comfort for breakneck adventure on the road, in a series of helter-skelter journeys that take him around the globe twice.

In his mid-sixties, with zero mechanical knowledge and maximum audacity, he leaves the comfort of his desk and rides from London to Istanbul, then traces Che Guevara's legendary path across the Andes. No technical skills, no backup plan—just raw courage and an insatiable hunger for the unknown. On to India, Sri Lanka, Japan, New Zealand and Australia and Iceland, frequently on solo trips and usually straddling a large BMW.

This isn't a book about motorcycles; it's a testament to the art of embracing uncertainty, surviving against impossible odds, and finding yourself in the most unexpected places with the most interesting people. Morland's entertaining book proves that life is about taking that risk, true adventure starts where preparation ends.

Miles Morland is the author of three books, the best-selling *The Man Who Broke out of the Bank* about giving up a high-paying job and walking across France. *Cobra in the Bath* adventures in less-travelled lands, and *Red-Eye Coq and 77 Other Delicious Things* a collection of recipes. Miles spent his childhood in India, Iran, and Iraq and now lives by the Thames in Battersea.



Calling My Deadname Home:

The Trans Bear Diaries

Avi Ben-Zeev

World, audio, 340pp, Nov 2024

'Early in my gender transition, I tried killing off my female past. But my deadname, Talia, fought back. She kept barging into consciousness, insisting on being seen and integrated into the man I was becoming. This is our story, and it goes beyond gender to explore what it means to come home.' Avi Ben-Zeev

'A fascinating work of intelligence and generosity, which gives voice to the synthesis that is necessary to achieve lasting personal change' Julia Bell

Brilliantly tackles contemporary gender and other social issues; class, race through the lens of a gay trans man

Calling My Deadname Home: Trans Bear Diaries is the story of Avi Ben Zeev's transition from a heterosexual, feminine-looking woman into a bearish, gay man. It explores what it means to come home to oneself with brutal honesty, humour, and self-compassion.

The book follows Avi's journey from early transition (San Francisco, 2003-2008), to later transition (San Francisco, 2009-2014) and then returns to where it all started with his female past in Talia's story (Israel, Italy, USA; 1973-2001) told in third-person. In the last chapter, *Fucking Myself Goodbye*, he makes love to a woman who roleplays Talia, eroticizing and celebrating parts that had once brought shame.

While gender transition takes centre stage, other changes in Avi's life are woven in—from growing up in a working-class right-wing Israeli family and barely finishing high school to becoming a pro-Palestinian activist and avoiding military service by faking madness to receiving a Yale Ph.D.

Avi Ben Zeev is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at London's Metropolitan University, and a recent Birkbeck, University of London's Creative Writing MFA graduate. Avi received a PhD from Yale in Cognitive Psychology and became a faculty member at Brown University, Williams College, and San Francisco State University where he attained full professorship. In 2022 he moved to London.

He is passionate about applying a psychological lens to memoir and fiction. *Angel*, a chapter from *Calling My Deadname Home* won the 2023 UK's Transgender Short Story Prize. In addition, he edited an anthology, *Trans Homo ... Gasp!*, which was a Lambda Award Finalist, authored nonfiction books, including *Complex Cognition* (Oxford University Press), published high-impact articles, and is a speaker at leading settings (e.g., George Lucas' Skywalker Ranch).

Karen McLeod



Lifting Off



A Life in Freefall

LIFTING OFF
A Life in Freefall

Karen McLeod

Rights: World, audio, 272pp, June 2024

Winner of the Betty Trask Award for *In Search of the Missing Eyelash*

'Lifting Off is an entertaining and enlightening read' **Mail on Sunday**

'Atmospheric and idiosyncratic, this is a memoir that entertains and emboldens' **Observer**

'A beautiful, wise and funny exploration of love and how to be a whole person on solid ground. I really did love it' **Evie Wyld**

'Such an enchanting and moving book, the horror of the corporate scrunchie was never better expressed' **Susie Boyt**

'[An] absorbing and often hilarious account of the author's 12 years as closeted cabin crew. It's a story of love, creativity, acceptance, and more' **Bookseller, Editor's Choice**

Brimming with vertiginous loops and extreme globe-trotting. *Lifting Off* is a memoir about flying as cabin crew for British Airways and the profound impact that experience had on Karen MacLeod's life.

When a colleague suggests to Karen that she should hide her sexuality to make others feel comfortable, she has no idea what the personal cost will be. Having come out as a lesbian, she goes back in. Whilst gay male cabin crew are accepted in the job, gay women are seen as unnatural and forced to hide their true identity. Against a backdrop of exotic locations, hotel bars and nightclubs, Karen slowly unravels as the inability to truly be herself begins to make an impact.

This is a narrative of anxiety with a backdrop of liminal spaces around the globe. It is a story of seeking identity and taking solace in alcohol. It is also about familial ties and the fear Karen has of following in the footsteps of her alcoholic father. Redemption is found in love and creativity: unconventional love for her gay best friend, the rarity and yet transformation of lesbian love, and the impact of her dad's death.

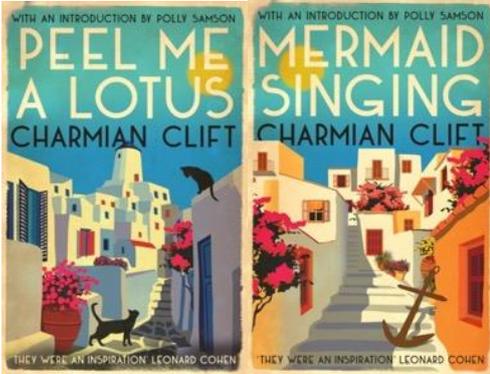
Ultimately this is the story of how Karen finally learned to be herself, to look after herself and to discover her true strength.

In Search of the Missing Eyelash will be reissued simultaneously by Muswell Press

Karen McLeod is a writer, performer, and creative writing tutor. Her debut novel, *In Search of the Missing Eyelash* (Jonathan Cape) won the Betty Trask Award and was shortlisted for the *Best First Novel Award*. Her work has been widely published. Barbara Brownskirt, her comic creation, performs as a stand-up comedian. Karen lives in south London.

Classics

Travel/Memoir



PEEL ME A LOTUS and MERMAID SINGING– Charmian Clift With introductions by Polly Samson

212pp each, 2021

**Rights: World (inc audio) ex
ANZ: HarperCollins
Greece: Metaichimio
Spain: Gatopardo iEdciones
Poland: 77 Press**

'Clift's writing is an honest depiction of the ideal to which we all aspire, to live the dream. What a delight that she should have been discovered again' **The Times**

'Clift's immersive 1950's memoirs capture the magic, and the menace of Greek island life' **Daily Telegraph**

'Her bold beautiful writing endures' **Daily Mail**

'The Australians drank more than other people, they wrote more, they got sick more, they got well more, they cursed more, they blessed more, and they helped a great deal more. They were an inspiration'

Leonard Cohen on Charmian Clift and George Johnston

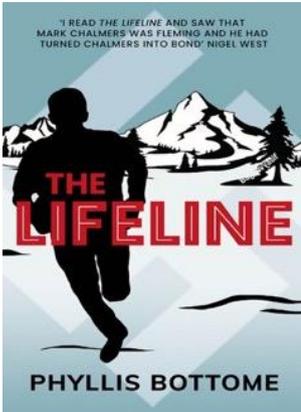
In 1951 the Australian writers Charmian Clift and George Johnston left grey post-war London for Greece with children in tow. Their plan was to live simply and cheaply, to focus on their writing away from the noise and distractions of the city.

The result is two of Charmian Clift's best known and most loved books. *Mermaid Singing* (1956) and *Peel Me a Lotus* (1959) paint a vivid picture of the characters and sun-drenched rhythms of traditional island life, long before mass tourism descended. Now published in the UK and Australia for the first time in 20 years.

Settling first on the tiny sponge-fishing island of Kalymnos, *Mermaid Singing* relays the culture shock and the sheer delight of their first year in Greece. *Peel Me a Lotus* relates their move to Hydra where they bought a house and grappled with the chaos of domestic life whilst becoming the centre of an informal bohemian community of artists and writers including the then unknown Leonard Cohen who lodged with them, and his future girlfriend Marianne Ihlen.

Charmian Clift (1923-69) was an Australian writer and columnist she wrote two novels, many essays and was a much-loved columnist for The Sydney Morning Herald. She collaborated with her husband, the award-winning writer George Johnston, best known for *My Brother Jack*, on several works.

CLASSIC ESPIONAGE



THE LIFELINE

Phyllis Bottome

Introduction by Miles Jupp and David Stenhouse

RIGHTS: World English, audio

Translation: AM Heath

April 2024, 320pp

'The British novelist Phyllis Bottome is almost forgotten but Bond fans owe her a debt...The Lifeline is still a cracking read. Top marks to Muswell Press for bringing the book back' **Financial Times, Best Thrillers**

'Try the latest James Bond spin off ...a reissued 1946 adventure by Phyllis Bottome, a mentor to Ian Fleming. A well-wrought period piece that Fleming completists will enjoy' **The Times**

- **The real James Bond - Phyllis Bottome taught Ian Fleming to write**
- **Available for the first time in 30 years**
- **Miles Jupp's *The Woman Who Invented James Bond* available on iPlayer**
- **Published 7 years before Fleming's *Casino Royale***

Mark Chalmers, 36, dark haired, athletic, keen on skiing and winter sports, speaks fluent French and German and has a taste for wine, food and women. Sounds familiar?

It is 1938 and as Europe prepares for war Chalmers is asked by an old friend at the Foreign Office and introduced to his boss 'B'. Chalmers reluctantly agrees to take on a covert mission for British Intelligence – to parachute into Nazi-occupied Austria and pass on information to a British agent. In case of trouble he is given a suicide pill.

Chalmers has no intention of committing himself beyond this one job but once he reaches his destination, he finds himself sucked into the cause, fighting fascism with the Austrian-German Underground - until there is no turning back.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-38227724>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b084t5dy>

Phyllis Bottome was a highly regarded prolific author in the mid 20th century. With her husband Ernan Forbes Dennis, a former diplomat and spy, she set up a school in Kitzbühel, Austria and it was there, after he was thrown out of Eton, that she taught Ian Fleming to write. Amongst her many bestsellers was *The Mortal Storm* (1937) made into a prescient anti-fascist film which became a Hollywood blockbuster starring James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan. She died in London in 1963.

QUEER CLASSIC



User
Bruce Benderson

World inc audio: ex US/Can/France,
286pp, June 2023

'Establishes Benderson as the most important literary chronicler of New York's lumpen proletariat – in all its polymorphous perversity - since William Burroughs, John Rechy and Hubert Selby Jr' **Newsday**

'User is unmistakably brilliant' **Los Angeles Times**

'Impressive, startling and eerie...hypnotically descriptive and powerfully rhythmic' **Kirkus**

'Benderson's noxious, Baudelairean pen revives bohemia for one last time, in all its destitution and strangeness'
Claude Arnaud, Le Point

A New York City hustler with a special gift for reeling in customers, Apollo, 'a pale skinned mulatto with a mournful mouth' strips at a gay sex theatre in Times Square. He is one of the most seductive and disturbing creations in recent American fiction.

Unflinchingly describing the lives of hustlers, pimps, drug-addicts and transsexuals in 1990s Times Square, **User** speaks with the authentic voice of characters from the edge. This is a world filled with stark, hypnotic eroticism and mined with terrors peculiar to the subterranean city in the hours after midnight.

Bruce Benderson is a novelist, essayist, journalist and translator who lives in New York. He teaches creative writing, urban culture and French literature. He won the Prix de Flore for *The Romanian*.



QUEER LIFE, QUEER LOVE 3 - Nov '25
ANTHOLOGY

Editors: Matt Bates, Sarah & Kate Beal, Karen McLeod

Rights: World, £9.99, 278pp

Anthology 1 – Nov 2021

Anthology 2 – May 2023

Anthology 3 – Nov 2025

'Celebrating queer love...multiple, fleeting, varied' Kevin Brazil, TLS

'Beautiful writing, original ideas and a few surprises' Matt Cain

These collections features voice across all narrative forms with stories, poems, essays, and flash-fiction, capturing the very best of international queer writing today. Please see the contributors list below. This is writing that explores characters, stories, and experiences beyond the mainstream; works that celebrate the fascinating, the forbidden, the subversive, and even the mundane, but, in essence, works that express the view from outside.

Humorous, serious, autobiographical, and revelatory – all aspects of the queer experience are reflected in this sparkling collection.

Contributors Anthology 1:

Rosy Adams Julia Bell Wayne Blackwood Tom Bland Kesiena Boom Libro Levi Bridgeman Cathleen Davies Dale Booton Manish Chauhan Leon Craig Isabel Costello Margot Douaihy Nathan Evans Fox Francis Honor Gavin Andrew F Giles Erica Gillingham Aoife Hannah Sal Harris Kathryn Hemmann Kay Inckle Jonathan Kemp Katlego Kai Kolanyane-Kesupile Debra Lavery Cal Legorburu Fran Lock Len Lukowski Rosanna McGlone Giulia Medaglini Tanaka Mhishi Serge Neptune Claire Orrange Tony Peake Jon Ransom Harry Rey Victoria Richards Richard Scott Marilyn Smith Laura Vincent Paul Whittering David Woodhead

Contributors Anthology2:

Garr Adams Avi Ben-Zeev Martha Benedict Betty Benson Sophia Blackwell Tom Bland Dale Booton Libro Levi Bridgeman Amelia Brown Swithun Cooper Isabel Costello Emilija Ducks Nathan Evans Lukas Georgiou Kath Gifford Rab Green Max Hartley George Hodson Divin Ishimwe Stanley Iyanu Sarah Keenan V.G. Lee Karen McLeod Peter Mitchell Jonathan Pizarro Reanna Valentine Amy Ridler J.P. Seabright Sharon Shaw Ben Skea Marilyn Smith Tom Spencer J.D. Stewart Jerl Surratt Virna Teixeira Brian Thorstenson Piero Toto. Nikki Ummel William Wyld L.E. Yates Adam Zmith

AUDIO RIGHTS AVAILABLE

Fiction

Not Good Enough – James Robert Moore, July 25
Miss Veal and Miss Ham – Vikki Heywood, July 25
Out of the Dark – Heidi Amsinck, April 25
Best Friends – Andrew Meehan, May '25
The Lady in the Park – David Reynolds, June '25
The Gallopers – Jon Ransom, Jan '24
The Lifeline – Phyllis Bottome, April '24
In Search of the Missing Eyelash – Karen McLeod, June '24
Darkness Falls in Jakarta – Louise Soraya Black, July 24
Lost Women – Neil Humphreys, April '23

Biography

Calling My Deadname Home: The Trans Bear Diaries: – Avi Ben-Zeev, Nov '24
Lifting Off: Life in Freefall – Karen McLeod, June '24
You Will Feel it in the Price of Bread: A Love Letter to Ukraine – Katya Hudson, Feb '23
Meet Me in Buenos Aires: Life of a Wife in History – Marlene Hobsbawm, Nov '19

History/Politics

Time Bomb: Irish Bombs, English Justice and the Guildford Four – Ros Franey and Grant McKee – Sept '24

Anthology

Queer Life, Queer Love 1, 2021
Queer Life, Queer Love 2, 2023
Queer Life, Queer Love 3, 2025