

# Christmas Wish list

## Term Four, 2003

Contributors to this booklist are – Kerry Aluf, Carol Ardern, Helen Beckingsale, Anne Coppell, Bronwyn Fox, Julie Harper, Ann Luxton, Susan McIntosh, Wayne Mills, Sandra Morris, Lorraine Orman, Frances Plumpton, Colleen Taylor, Rosemary Tisdall.

# booklist

### **I'm Hungry!**

Rod Campbell.

Campbell Books, 2003.

Hb, ISBN 1405032456

Caterpillar is eating leaves, mouse is eating cheese, bird is eating worms, rabbit is eating carrots, monkey is eating bananas, but what does the hungry tiger like to eat? There's something for babies to explore on each page of the touch-and-feel book and a wonderful surprise at the end. Rod Campbell's clear pictures in this sturdy book will hold the interest of the very youngest readers. Be prepared to read this over and over. FP

### **The Mick Inkpen Treasury.**

Hodder 2003

Pb, ISBN 0340860529.

This sturdy paperback contains four favourite Inkpen stories. Lullabyhullabaloo! – A wakeful princess is lulled to sleep by remarkable choir; Nothing – a long discarded soft toy is eventually lovingly restored to former glory for a new owner; Bear – The bear that appears in the family is a companion, not a soft toy; Billy's Beetle – Billy has lost his beetle, and no-one can find him – no-one except the children looking carefully at all the detail on each page. These whimsical stories are just perfect for sharing with toddlers. FP



### **Little Humpty**

Margaret Wild

Illustrated by Ann James

Little Hare 2003

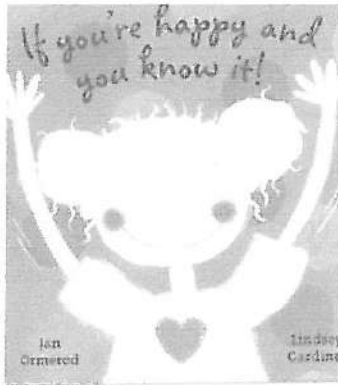
HB 1877003166

Little Humpty is ready to expand his horizons and the time has come for Big Humpty to take him to the Great Waterhole where he will make friends of his own.

A delightful tale of two camels (mother and son) a journey of anticipation "Are we there Yet?" and the changes involved in growing up. The warmth and aridity of the desert is well portrayed in the illustrations.

A great book to share with 2-5 year olds. CT





**If You're Happy and You Know It!**

Jan Ormerod

Ill Lindsey Gardiner.

Oxford, 2003

Pb, ISBN 0192725513

It's almost impossible not to sing the title and the accompanying text of this cheerful picture book which offers a delightful extension of the well loved children's action song. Here, an assortment of creatures join in; the dog wagging its tail, the elephant flapping its ears, the toucan clacking its beak, the crocodile snapping its teeth and many more. Children will love joining in the chorus, and, no doubt, adding additional animal actions as well. The illustrations add to the fun here. FP

**Grandpa and Thomas**

Pamela Allen

Viking 2003

Hb ISBN 0670 04 157 2

Set at the beach this delightful book shows Grandpa and Thomas enjoying each others company as they dig in the sand, build and decorate a sandcastle, feed the seagulls and take a walk along the beach.

With carefully chosen words and a shift in illustrative style that includes wider seascape views (rather than the character and action focus of many of her other books), Pamela Allen creates a warm gentle feel. A family focused summer story that everyone will love. 2-5yrs. CA

**Diary of a Wombat**

Jackie French

Ill Bruce Whatley

Harper Collins 2003

Hb ISBN 0207199957

Pb ISBN 0207199957

A delightful picture book about a wombat who decides to adopt the

family which moves in to his territory. For 3-7 and hard -to-buy- for adults with a sense of humour. HB



**The Choosing Day**

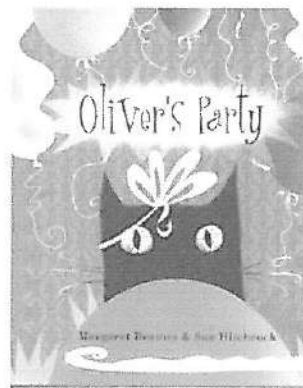
Jennifer Beck

illus Robyn Belton.

Scholastic 2003 (new ed),

Pb, ISBN 1869435737

It's Briar's birthday and she gets to choose exactly what she wants to do for the entire day. She has her favourite food and her favourite dress up clothes and even her mother joins in the fun wearing the wedding dress that Briar has found in the back of the wardrobe. Robyn Belton's whimsical illustrations capture the events of this special day. A welcome return of the picture book that inspired many families to institute their own Choosing Days. FP



**Oliver's Party**

Margaret Beames

Ill Sue Hitchcock.

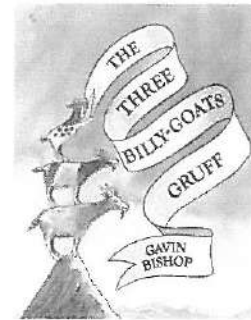
Scholastic,2003

Hb ISBN 1869435796

Pb ISBN 1869436105.

The inquisitive cat that first appeared in Oliver's Garden is back, and just as curious as ever! Oliver can't understand what is happening – Mrs Bundy growled at him when he went to chase some colourful shapes that were bobbing

up and down; she put him outside when he ran off with a ball of twisty, curly string and again when he investigated the wonderful food smells on the table. But true to his nature Oliver sneaked back inside again when the visitors arrived. Why didn't Mrs Bundy growl at them when they played with the balloons, and ripped open the paper? It was too much for Oliver, but this time when he joined in the fun, everyone cheered him on. Sue Hitchcock's bright cheerful computer generated illustrations show an enticing world for a curious cat. FP



**The Three Billy Goats Gruff**

Gavin Bishop.

Scholastic,2003,

Pb ISBN 1 86943 587 7

This lovely version of the old familiar nursery story has the three billy goats climbing up a steep mountainside that may well be in the Southern Alps. The rickety bridge is guarded by a fierce troll with eyes as big as dinner plates and a nose as long as a ski pole (and a wealth of ear piercings), who hurries off the two smaller billy goats who have trip trapped, clippity- clopped and hopped and skipped over his bridge with a 'Scram!' The fierce troll is vanquished by the Big Billy Goat Gruff, and the tale ended with the very satisfying traditional 'snip snap snout, this tale's told out.' Great for sharing with the preschoolers in your family as well as for reading aloud to junior classes. A real gem from Gavin Bishop. FP

**The Ravenous Beast**

Niamh Sharkey

Walker Books, 2003

ISBN 0744592658

The Ravenous Beast proclaims that he is the "hungriest animal of

all". This claim is disputed by a range of animals from mouse to whale, each one arguing its unique ability to eat more than the previous animal. Such boasting is finally put to rest by the Ravenous Beast's re-assertion "I AM THE HUNGRIEST OF ALL!" His appetite includes all the animals. The story ends with a double-paged spread of him lying on his back with a gorged belly. The whimsical stylized illustration supports the humorous text, and both include concepts of size, shape, and colour.

Recommended for read aloud to groups, as well as one-on-one reading.

Ages 3-7years. BF

### A Kiwi Night Before Christmas

Yvonne Morrison

Ill Deborah Hinde

Scholastic 2003

Pb ISBN 1 86943 564 8

Strong summer colours give this book an eye catching cover. Kiwi icons are evident in the bold, colourful double page illustrations. Despite some scansion and rhyme irregularities I think that this Kiwi innovation on Clement Moore's traditional poem will be a popular stocking filler for 4-7 year olds. Also a good nostalgia gift for family living overseas. CA



### Angelina's Christmas

Katharine Holabird,

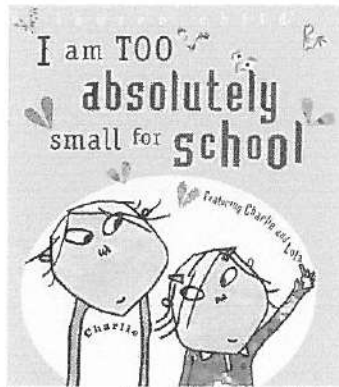
illus Helen Craig

ABC Books, 2003

Pb ISBN 0733312772

Angelina and her friends are working hard preparing for their school Christmas Show when she discovers that the old retired village postman is all alone. The Mouseling family decide to take Christmas goodies to the lonely old man, and on hearing his tales

of days past invite him as a special guest to the concert. Helen Craig's carefully detailed illustrations add perfectly to the warmth of this story. FP



### I Am Too Absolutely Small For School

Lauren Child

Orchard Books, 2003

ISBN 1841213543

Lola is apprehensive about starting school. Big Brother Charlie tries to allay her fears by telling her about all the things that she will learn, like counting, writing and reading. Lola dismisses each of these in turn with a reason not to go to school. Charlie gently counters her with something useful that she will need these skills for – like writing notes to Santa Claus at Christmas because he is not on the telephone, counting treats for elephants, and reading bedtime stories to ogres. She is afraid of losing her identity "I absolutely will NOT ever wear a schooliform", of being by herself, and having no friends. In the end Lola agrees to go to school as long as her invisible friend, Soren Lorensen, can go with her. Despite his assurances, Charlie worries about Lola on her first day, but then finds that she has made a friend.

Illustrated in Child's trademark collage style, with font size and shape an integral part of the story. The story speaks with a child's voice and successfully captures the universal fears about starting school.

Highly recommended

4-6 years. BF

### Gentle Giant

Michael Morpurgo

Illustrated by Michael Foreman

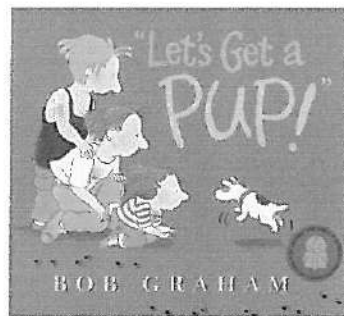
HarperCollins 2003

HB 0007110642

A sad young man is feared because of his giant-like size and the only friends he has are the wild creatures around him. That is until he saves a young girl from drowning and she changes his life forever.

Michael Morpurgo uses traditional storytelling to weave a delightful tale of love, compassion and the healing power of nature, which is enhanced by Michael Foreman's evocative and atmospheric illustrations. A hardback to keep and treasure

4-7 year olds. CT



### Let's Get a Pup

Bob Graham

Walker Books, 2003 paperback edition

ISBN 0744594413

This is a warm story that will appeal to all dog lovers. Kate misses her cat, Tiger, who died last winter "so there were only Kate's two feet to keep each other company". She suggests getting a pup and meets with an enthusiastic response from her parents. They locate the address of the Animal Rescue Centre and, "with breakfast uneaten, they dress and leave immediately". From the many dogs there, they choose Dave. He is small, cute and brand new. They also see Rosy, who is "old and grey and as broad as a table". But they leave without her. However, after a sleepless night, not helped by Dave's crying, they return to the Shelter and take Rosy home too. Now, "Kate's feet are no longer lonely under the blankets. It seems like Dave and Rosy have always been there".

Bob Graham's illustrations capture the nuances of family life and enhance the overall mood of the story.

Ages 4-8 years. BF

### **Queen Munch and Queen Nibble**

Carol Ann Duffy

Ill. Lydia Monks

MacMillan 2003

ISBN 0 333 96066 1

Queen Munch is noisy and fun and likes nothing better than a big breakfast. Sunday is her favourite day of the week when she breakfasts on the Royal Balcony watched by crowds of people. After breakfast one Sunday she wonders about the other Queen who lives on the other side of the Big Dark Forest and decides to invite her for a visit.

Queen Nibble is nothing like Queen Munch. She is pale and quiet and doesn't like food one bit. She enjoys rainy days best and the one thing that makes her really happy is making rain jewellery.

Queen Nibble does not want to visit with Queen Munch, but she knows it would be very rude to refuse, and she is most concerned that she will be expected to eat a lot. A wonderfully funny longer picture book about two very different people and how they become good friends. JH



### **Albert**

William Taylor

Ill Ross Kinnaird

Puffin (Kiwī Bites), 2003

ISBN 0 14 331813 6

Albert invites himself home from the Albert Road Refuse Transfer Station on one of the family's regular trips to the dump. Albert is a cat with attitude and the family quickly find themselves fitting in with the cat rather than the cat fitting in with them. One day Albert disappears and Joey is determined to find him. For readers with growing confidence. 6-8yrs. KA

### **Wait for Me!**

poems and stories

Margaret Mahy

illus Peter Bailey.

Dolphin,

Pb ISBN 1842550926

I have long had a quote from Margaret Mahy - 'Imagination is the creative use of reality' and that is the essence of these stories for young children. This anthology includes stories of ordinary children with extraordinary adventures – an orphan girl adopted by birds, a rather forgetful boy sent on a shopping trip, and of course Leaf Magic and the Tin Can Band, which like several other stories and poems, became lead titles in other anthologies. Originally published in 1973 as *The Second Margaret Mahy Storybook* and now in paperback with new pencil illustrations, this collection will enchant readers of six to ten years. FP

### **Wonderful Me**

Margaret Mahy

Dolphin 2003,

ISBN 1842550918

This collection of short fantasy stories and poetry was originally published as the First Margaret Mahy Storybook. As with all Mahy stories they are good to read aloud, with wonderful imaginative language and plenty of fun for 7+. HB

### **The Gargling Gorilla**

Margaret Mahy

Ill Tony Ross

Collins 2003

ISBN 0 00 714840 2

This is Margaret Mahy at her witty and inventive best!!

Two of the stories included in this first chapter book were originally published in 1991 in the anthology *Bubble Trouble* and it is great to see them back in print.

In *The Gargling Gorilla* a young boy has an interesting experience when he helps his neighbour look after her rather unusual pets.

In *The Dog-Magician* a very quiet, conservative street is thrown into a happy chaos when Dory Shuttlewing and his dog, Merlin, move into the neighbourhood.

And two neighbours have a rather unusual problem in common when they are each left a large reptile to

look after in the final story

*Runaway Reptiles.*

Just marvelous! JH

### **Going Bananas**

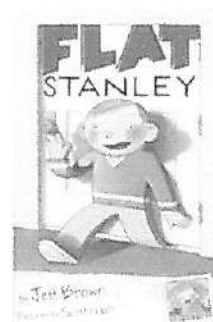
Bill Nagelkerke

Ill. Ant Sang.

Puffin, (Kiwī Bites), 2003

Pb ISBN 0143318144

Younger brothers can be so frustrating and Reuben's not at all pleased that he has to take younger brother Matt along to buy some bananas at the supermarket in the shopping mall. Reuben wishes that Matt would get lost, and then when they go to watch the magic show performance at the mall, things go horribly wrong. This easy to read story resonates with the humour and drama of sibling relationships. For readers of seven years onwards. FP



### **Flat Stanley**

Jeff Brown

Ill by Scott Nash.

Egmont, 2003

Pb 1405204176

Hooray! Flat Stanley is back! The adventures of the boy who was squashed to ½ inch flat by a bulletin board and then found he could slide under doors, rescue his mother's ring when it fell through a street grating, fly like a kite, be posted to a holiday in America and even help catch two art thieves delighted kids when they were first published in 1968. The new edition has been illustrated by Scott Nash with all the charm of the original Jeff Brown illustrations – except – Stanley is shown with shoelaces still in his shoes when he is lowered through the grating. Also available Stanley and the Magic Lamp (ISBN 1405204184) Stanley Flat, Again! (ISBN 1405202386) Great fun for seven to ten year olds. FP



### **Judy Moody Predicts the Future**

Megan McDonald  
Ill Peter H. Reynolds  
Walker 2003  
ISBN 0 7445 8343 8

In this latest Judy Moody adventure, Judy munches her way through bowls and bowls of breakfast cereal so she can find the free gift. And the moody girl is ecstatic when it turns out to be a mood ring! She is not happy for long however as the ring just won't change colour and, according to the ring, she is in a black mood, grouchy and impossible!

But Judy is sure the ring has special powers and she is convinced she will be able to predict the future. Will this help her with the Spelling test? And is her teacher really in love? Judy Moody is fast becoming a huge success with 7-10 year old girls. JH

### **30 Weird & Wonderful New Zealand Stories**

Edited by Barbara Else  
Ill Philip Webb  
Random House, 2003

Hb ISBN 1-86941-565-5

A new anthology for primary and intermediate-aged readers which offers a selection of crazy, funny, clever and/or exciting stories.

Lots of top children's writers are included, such as Ken Catran, David Hill, Margaret Mahy and Jack Lasenby, as well as excellent stories from authors who are not so well-known. An excellent present for children who like their reading in small easily-digestible doses. LO

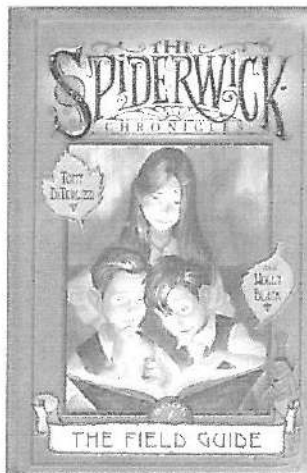
### **Utterly Me, Clarice Bean**

Lauren Child  
Orchard Books 2003  
Pb ISBN: 1843623048

Clarice Bean documents her trials with her family, problems with her irritating teacher Miss Wilberton, her relationship with best friend Betty Moody, her class project, and her fascination with storybook heroine, Detective Ruby Redfort, whom Clarice considers to lead a perfect life. Clarice's story is interwoven with the adventures of Ruby Redfort. Clarice and Betty Moody collaborate on a school project

based on the Ruby Redfort books. When Betty fails to return to school, Miss Wilberton pairs Clarice with Karl Wrenbury, the worst boy in the class. However, as they work together, Clarice realizes that Karl has really good ideas and isn't such a bad guy. When Betty comes back (from having been whisked off to Russia with her parents), she feels left out. Then Karl is wrongly accused of stealing a trophy cup. Clarice turns detective, and uses Ruby-like investigative skills to solve the mystery of the missing trophy, complete their project, and repair a misunderstanding with Betty Moody.

Written in the first person, this story speaks directly from a child's inimitable point of view. It presents the fun and frustration of childhood with wit and understanding. The author's inventive use of font shape and size enhance the mood and character of the story. Clarice's age is cleverly never stated making her more accessible to a wide age group. Good for reading aloud Recommended 8-11 years BF



### **The Spiderwick Chronicles:**

#### **Book 1 The Field Guide**

Holly Black & Tony DiTerlizzi  
Simon & Schuster 2003  
ISBN 0 689 85936 8 Hb

Inside an old Victorian mansion accessed only by a dumb waiter or a secret door, the Grace children discovered a library of amazing books. It was Jared Grace who had initially found Arthur Spiderwick's *Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You* by following clues to a riddle; and it's this book that sets the reader up for the next four in the series. Check out the

quality of the book's production. This will be a popular new series for ages 8-12. You read it here first! WM



### **Molly Moon Stops the World**

Georgia Byng  
Macmillan, 2003

Pb, ISBN 0330415778

Who else but Molly Moon could investigate the nefarious activities of the master hypnotist Primo Cell? Molly and her friends travel back to America to investigate whether there is a link between the mysterious disappearance of the child star Davina Nuttall and the Hollywood celebrities who seem to be under the billionaire's spell. An exciting adventure, full of humour and drama, with a young heroine of exceptional talents. A welcome sequel to Molly Moon's *Incredible Book of Hypnotism*. A fun fantasy for readers of nine onwards. FP

### **Love That Dog**

Sharon Creech

Publisher: Harper Trophy;  
Reprint edition March 2003  
ISBN: 0064409597

Written in free verse, this is a compellingly simple story about love and loss, a boy and his dog, and poetry. Jack is reluctant to take part in Miss Stretchberry's poetry study: "*I don't want to / because boys / don't write poetry.*" But his curiosity grows as Miss Stretchberry shares a variety of poems with the class. Jack keeps a journal of his thoughts and reactions, and slowly begins to see connections between his personal experiences and poetry, and in particular Walter Dean Meyer's poem *Love That Boy*. The story culminates in a moving poem about his profound grief over the death of his dog.

Highly recommended  
9 years – adult. BF



### **Dragon's nest.**

Deltora Quest 3

Emily Rodda

Scholastic 2003

Pb ISBN 1865046132

The first two Deltora Quest series have been extremely popular so the first in a new series is bound to be greeted with enthusiasm. If you know any 9-11 years olds who haven't already read these books you could always go for all 8 books in the first series. HB



### **Lion Boy**

Zizou Corder

Penguin 2003

Pb ISBN 0 14 131727 2

This novel has been set slightly in the future at a time when pharmaceutical companies are bigger and more important than governments. Charlie Ashanti's parents are clever, his mother has a PhD in chemistry and his father was a doctor of Endoterica and Tropical diseases. It's their knowledge that's led to them being kidnapped.

Charlie just manages to avoid the same fate. He sets off to rescue his parents with help from both domestic and wild felines, as he is able to speak Cat.

He hitches a ride on a circus ship to look after the lions but discovers that they want their freedom. There are adventures all along the way but be prepared for the sudden ending. 9-12yrs. WM



### **The Serpents of Arakesh**

V.M. Jones

Harper Collins 2003

Pb ISBN 1 869 50 4771

Hot off the press is another book by the NZ Post 2003 Best First Book award winning author of Buddy, and Juggling with Mandarins. The new book is Book One of the Karazan Quartet. Five children are chosen to test drive a top secret computer game which allows them to enter a thrilling fantasy world. 10+. LO

### **Trickster's Choice**

Tamora Pierce

Scholastic, 2003

Pb ISBN 1865045926

A welcome return to Tortall. This is one of two (proposed) stories about Aly, Alanna and George's teenage daughter. Aly's been caught up in a battle between gods. Chosen by Kiprioth, the Trickster God, she is captured and sold as a slave. Her mission – to protect three children until summer. It sounds easy, but those godsent missions can be a curse. It's interesting to see Alanna as a middle-aged mother struggling with her headstrong teenaged daughter, who has a different worldview (sound familiar, anyone?) Less sword and sorcery than other Pierce titles, and more strategy and intrigue. 10+. AC.

### **Rodzina**

Karen Cushman

Clarion Books 2003

Hb ISBN 0-618-13351-8

In America from 1850 to 1929, orphan trains took thousands of children westwards in the hope they would find a better life. Twelve year old Rodzina is one of those children. In 1881, on a journey from Chicago to

California, she draws on all her resourcefulness as she cares for the younger children, escapes from dangerous situations and finally is able to influence her own destiny by choosing someone to belong to. An amazing and engrossing story. 10-14yrs. SMC

### **Dancing in Cadillac Light**

Kimberly Willis Holt

Puffin, 2002

Pb ISBN 0698119703

In 1968 Jaynell's world changes when her Grandpap moves in, a year after his wife's death. Jaynell's father sets her the task of following Grandpap around – to see whether he's crazy or not. Jaynell comes to learn more about her family's history and herself. One of Grandpap's regular stops is the Pickens' house, and the Pickens are the poorest of the poor, looked down upon by everyone. Jaynell's sister, Racine, is a real girly girl – into nail polish and dancing. When she has the chance to realise her dream of attending dancing lessons, she has to have the courage to stand up to the snobby girls. Then there's the girls' mother, who finds the courage to face her past, accept it, and then make the future she wants. These females exhibit courage in many forms. Recommended for ages 10+. AC

### **Holes**

Louis Sachar

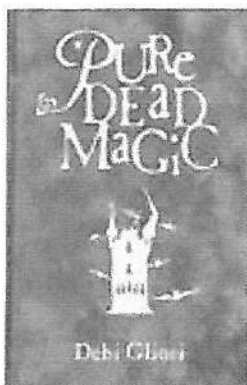
Bloomsbury 2003

(film tie-in edition)

Pb ISBN 0747563667

Stanley Yelnat's family has a history of bad luck originating with his 'no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather'. Stanley has been sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile correctional facility for boys. There is no lake, only dry, flat, desolate wasteland and each day the summer temperature soars. Every day the boys must venture out and dig a hole – each hole must be five feet deep, and five feet wide. Only the Warden seems to know why they must dig these holes and she is not a person to tangle with. Intermediate age. KA

For fans of Harry Potter, these three books blend magic and technology, fantasy and fun.



### **Pure Dead Magic**

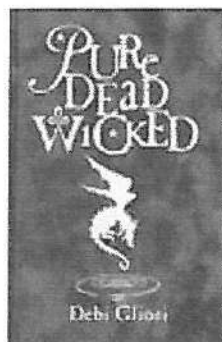
Debi Gliori

Doubleday, 2001.

ISBN 0385601549 HB

ISBN 0552547573 PB

Take one Scottish castle, one slightly unusual family (consisting of a Mafia-related father, an apprentice-witch mother, Titus, Pandora and a baby called Damp), their assorted pets (a dragon, a gryphon, a crocodile and a yeti), a desperately-trying-to-be-normal witch nanny, a talking spider and an illiterate rat. Add technology. The result is a hilarious brew of misadventure and magic. Highly recommended for ages 10 and up. LH



### **Pure Dead Wicked**

Debi Gliori

Doubleday, 2002.

ISBN 038560159X HB

ISBN 0552548472 PB

In the sequel to Pure Dead Magic, the Strega-Borgia family must relocate to a local hotel while their castle is undergoing renovations. Bored, Titus experiments with cyber-cloning, and accidentally created 500 micro editions of himself and his

sister Pandora. Meanwhile, the pets (Fup the dragon, Sab the gryphon, Tock the crocodile and Knot the yeti) make plans to run away, because they feel they are unloved. Very funny book. Ages 10 and up. LH

### **Pure Dead Brilliant**

Debi Gliori

Doubleday, 2003.

ISBN 0385602529 HB

The newest book in the Strega-Borgia family misadventures. Signora Strega-Borgia has invited her fellow apprentice witches for a 'study break' in their family castle, while Titus is planning to spend the Mafia millions he has inherited. Baby Damp is exhibiting a tendency to turn people into fairytales and Pandora has taken up time-travel. Another thoroughly enjoyable, but slightly wacky fantasy. Ages 10 and up. LH

Note: Pure Dead Magic and Pure Dead Wicked are both available in paperback, but for a real treat, buy the hardback versions which are covered in addictively stroke-able velvet.

### **Tuck Everlasting**

Natalie Babbitt

Bloomsbury Publishing 2003

ISBN 0-7475-6417-5

First published in 1975, this book has fortunately been republished. Winnie, 10, stumbles across a secret the Tuck family have been living with for years – 87 years to be exact. Eighty seven years ago they drank from a hidden spring in the woods. They discovered that they did not age at all, and have eternal life. Sounds wonderful, but the Tuck family discover what it is like to lose friends either because they die or because their friends become suspicious of them not aging. They live a lonely life – they don't want others to share their fate. So they keep the spring hidden – until Winnie comes along. They have to try to persuade her that it is not a good idea to drink from the spring (she thinks they are just being selfish and don't want anyone else to benefit from this wondrous thing).

A thought-provoking book – the author really makes you understand how important the natural cycle of life is. Ages 10+. RT



### **The Same Stuff as Stars**

Katherine Paterson.

Oxford 2003

Pb, ISBN 0192753118

When Angel and her younger brother are dumped on their frail great grandmother by their fickle mother, Angel's role as the caregiver for their dysfunctional family is crucial. However, as she struggles to meet their basic needs and cope with the demands of her very disaffected brother, she gets emotional support when she is unexpectedly introduced to the stars that flood their rural sky. Katherine Paterson has a remarkable ability to write about resilient children who cope in quite desperate situations, and although their lives are grim they are able to face it with humour and guts. These are children who stay in the mind far past the reading of their stories.

Intermediate readers upwards. FP

### **Gyrfalcon**

Grace Wells

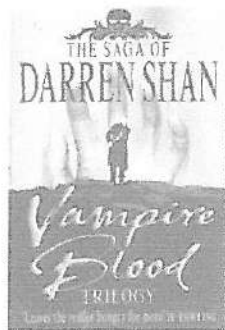
O'Brien, 2002

ISBN: 0862787653

Gyr has a secret place in a hidden ravine that he longs to show his father who is away in England. When he does show his father he feels bewildered and betrayed when his father breaks the news that he is not coming back to live with them- he has fallen in love with someone else in England. Finn, a hero from another time enters into Gyr's shattered life, and through his gentle and patient teaching about power, energy, truth and honour, he helps Gyr to become less judgemental and more forgiving.

For readers 11+. SM





**Vampire Blood Trilogy  
The Saga of Darren Shan**

Darren Shan  
Collins 2003

ISBN 0 00 714374 5

*Cirque du Freak, The Vampire's Assistant & Tunnels of Blood*, the first three books in the Darren Shan series, are now in one volume. There are 10 books in this popular series with more to come. They follow the adventures of schoolboy Darren Shan, who has to become a vampire to save the life of his best friend. Thrilling reading for boys 11+. KA

**Mister Monday (Book 1 Keys of the Kingdom)**

Garth Nix  
Allen & Unwin 2003  
ISBN 174114213X

This is the first in a series of 7 so if you know someone with a penchant for scary fantasy it could be good for several Christmases and birthdays. Arthur, an asthmatic schoolboy, finds himself in possession of a magic key, which saves his life when he has a serious asthma attack. Unfortunately a number of nasty types, who smell bad and have dog faces, also want the key. This is a great action story and will be enjoyed by anyone who has already read the Seventh Tower series or the Abhorsen trilogy. **Grim Tuesday** is due out early in 2004 so not too long to wait for Book 2. 11+. HB



**The Amulet of Samarkand**

Jonathan Stroud  
Doubleday 2003  
ISBN 0 385 60667 2

At the age of five Nathaniel is apprenticed to Arthur Underwood a middle-ranking magician working for Ministry of Internal Affairs. Underwood does not want an apprentice and he is certain Nathaniel is a no hoper. But Nathaniel becomes determined to learn all he can, secretly, and seek his revenge.

At the age of twelve he summons the Djinni Bartimaeus, well before his master believes he is even ready to summon a lowly imp.

Bartimaeus is a powerful djinni who is more than a little surprised when the boy summons him.

Over time the two strike an uneasy respect for each other and work together to thwart the evil plans of Simon Lovelace, the egotistical magician who first ridiculed and embarrassed Nathaniel.

Set in a parallel London where magicians hold political and economic power, this is a sophisticated, fast paced read that would suit a wide-age range. Capable 11 year olds to adults. JH

**The Divide**

Elizabeth Kay  
Ill Ted Dewan  
The Chicken House, 2003  
Hb ISBN 1903434963

If we have an imaginary world populated with mythical creatures, what imaginary world do those creatures have? Felix is about to find out. He is not your usual hero, he is 13 years old, frail, and learning to accept he could die at any time from a very rare heart condition. When he collapses across the Continental Divide and wakes up in another world, without his medication, he knows he is in serious trouble. From the creatures Felix meets on the other side of the Divide he learns the importance of trust and friendship, but as they help him find a cure for his illness and return him home, they also have to overcome the dastardly japegrin Snakeweed. .AL

**A Charm of Powerful Trouble.**

Joanne Horniman  
Allen and Unwin 2002  
ISBN 1-86508-837-4

A beautiful evocative account of two sisters, Laura and Lizzie, growing up and their relationship with each other and their parents and friends.

The writing is rich in vivid images and covers themes of love and guilt.

A wonderful account of growing up and growing old.  
For readers 12+. SM

**The Kite Rider**

Geraldine McCaughrean  
Oxford University Press 2002  
ISBN: 0-19-275157-3

Haoyou a young Chinese boy witnesses the death of his father who is sent up into the clouds strapped to a giant kite.

To save his mother from marrying the man who sent his father to his death, Haoyou also becomes a kite rider, but he is a kite maker so he understands how to ride the kite without killing himself. He is eventually offered a job with the Jade Circus as a kite rider and travels throughout China. He builds a reputation for himself and amasses a small fortune intended for his mother but squandered by his pompous and ignorant uncle. Because of his uncle's careless bragging to the Mongols, Haoyou finds himself involved in a kite fighting duel where he narrowly escapes death and as a result is ordered to fly for the mighty Kublai Khan.

Packed with action and intrigue.  
For readers 12+. SM.

**The Moon Riders**

Theresa Tomlinson  
Corgi, 2003  
Pb ISBN 055254910X

Myrina is one of the nomadic Thracian peoples. She is about to become a Moon Rider, a priestess, prepared to dance and hunt and fight – if necessary. She will be an Amazon, a priestess for seven years, but a warrior always. Into her life appears Cassandra, priestess of Apollo, and daughter of Priam, King of Troy. The lives of the two young women intersect as the Trojan War begins, and ends. This is a gripping tale, and wonderfully researched. A worthy gift for a young woman finding her own identity. 12+. AC.



### **A Gathering Light**

Jennifer Donnelly  
Bloomsbury, 2003  
Pb ISBN 074756888X

Based on a true story – the murder of a young (pregnant) woman by her lover – this novel weaves together the story of the victim and that of the young woman, Mattie, who is the unwilling recipient of the letters between victim and murderer. Mattie feels trapped by the realities of her life – her mother is dead and she is struggling to run the house and raise her younger brothers and sisters. It is a warm and accomplished novel. 12+. AC.

### **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time**

Mark Haddon  
David Fickling Books 2003  
ISBN 0-385-60587-0

A powerful book. Told from the point of view of 15 year old, Christopher, who has Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism. He made me laugh, he made me cry. He made me understand what it must be like for children with Asperger's – why they behave the way they do. Christopher is very keen on Sherlock Holmes and goes about his investigation into who killed the next door neighbour's dog in a very detective-like manner. In fact, the title comes from within "Silver Blaze" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1894):

Quote: "Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

"To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."

"The dog did nothing in the night-time."

"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes."

(read that book to find out why that was curious...!).

Who will want to read this book? Compassionate people, people interested in autism for whatever reason, people for whom mathematics fascinates them (my father is one – I gave the book to him to read and he was immediately fascinated by how the chapters were numbered). Anyone who wants to feel changed after reading a book.

Recently awarded the Guardian Award. RT



### **Predator's Gold**

Philip Reeve  
Scholastic, 2003  
Pb ISBN 043996850X

The much awaited sequel to *Mortal Engines*. Tom and Hester are fleeing from Anti-Tractionists, and the Green Storm, who are even scarier. A battle damages the Jenny Haniver's engines, and they drift over the ice wastes until they come across Anchorage. A city once beautiful, now crippled and barely surviving, led by the teenage margravine, Freya, who hopes to bring her people to the fabled continent of America. With them travels Professor Pennyroyal, whose books detail his adventures in America, and who has his own reasons for running. It's thrilling and action-packed, but also focuses on the characters' relationships. It lives up the expectations (high though they are) developed after reading *Mortal Engines*. Bring on the third one (he's working on it)! 12+. AC.

### **Fragile Cargo**

Bill O'Brien  
Series: Crime Waves  
Lothian Books 2003  
ISBN 0 7344 0567 7

Ricky and Duncan have moored in a quiet bay while out practising for a regatta, but have their peace disturbed by screams coming from a nearby launch. As no-one is on board they investigate, and what they discover leads them into an adventure to stop the smuggling of endangered birds and animals. How they and their friends manage to deal with a dangerous situation and save the creatures makes a good read for intermediate school age and over. Bill O'Brien worked in the New Zealand Police for many years, and

this is his second story in the Crime Waves series. AL

### **Alex**

**Alex in Winter**  
**Alex in Rome**  
**Songs for Alex**

Tessa Duder  
Penguin 2003 (reprint)  
ISBN 0143318047, 0143318063,  
0143318055, 0143318071.  
These award winning stories about Alex Archer, champion teenage swimmer, were first published in the 1980s. Set in New Zealand in the 1950s they are just as relevant and readable for today's teenagers as when they were first published and it's great to see the whole quartet back in print. 12+. HB

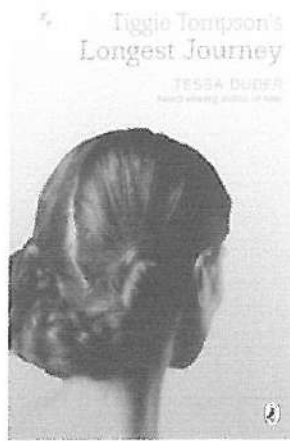


### **Juggling With Mandarins**

V.M. Jones  
Harper Collins 2003  
Pb ISBN 1869504623

Guilt, aggression, love, resentment, all these emotions swirl within the mind of Philip McLeod, commonly known as Pip. Striving to be as good at soccer as his father expects, Pip is constantly mortified by his parent's barracking from the sidelines. Nothing Pip does is right, and he has the added burden of having a perfect older brother. Pip's only escape is rock-climbing at the local sports centre, an activity done furtively, without the knowledge of his parents. Can Pip ever achieve, in his own right?

V.M Jones' first book, *Buddy*, astounded us with her sensitive portrayal of a teenage boy with a soul-eating secret. This one, *Juggling with Mandarins*, explores the adolescent mind further. Recommended, for ages 13 and above. LH



**Tiggie Tompson's Longest Journey**

Tessa Duder  
Penguin 2003  
ISBN 0143318128

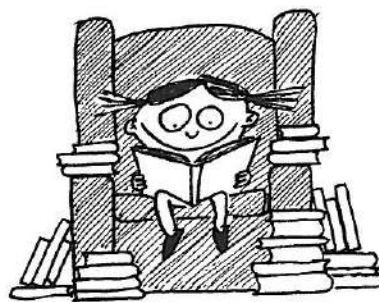
Tiggie Tompson, in her previous two books, has already traveled far - from fat teenager to receptionist in the TV series *Shapers* and then winning the part of Eliza in the television drama, *The Longest Journey*. Now she must play the part of a fifteen year old from a privileged 19<sup>th</sup> Century family impregnated by a predacious uncle, fleeing towards an uncertain future by emigrating with a group of single women to the colonies: all this a counterpoint to the turmoil in her own life. She travels to Australia with her father to her mother, who has startling news of her own, meeting with her long estranged grandparents, Vita has disappeared from the clinic treating her anorexia, and Tiggie is desperate to find her. Back in Auckland, the filming starts. There is a fascinating account of the drama of the business end of shooting a television drama, the need for speech coaching, emotional diaries of her character, coping with scenes shot out of sequence, of the interaction with the other actors, especially dealing with the rape scene, and the impact on her relationship with her would be boyfriend Gareth. Tiggie Tompson, like her character Eliza, is just as wilful, outspoken and stubborn; capable of great loyalty and deeply felt emotions. FP



**The Reading Bug ...and how you can help your child to catch it**

Paul Jennings  
Penguin Books, 2003  
ISBN 0-14-300087-X

Every parent should read this book. As I read it, I felt privileged, as if Paul Jennings was letting me in on all his secrets. He will reassure any parent who is feeling that his/her child is not reading. He will teach you how to get that child reading. He will show you what is important and what isn't in the whole process of children and their reading. He will help you understand why some children may not be reading. He may surprise you with some of his thinking. He will suggest some books to try with your child. The most fabulous book – it should be on every household's shelf where there are children or where there are adults who spend time with children. RT



**Children's Book Covers: Great Book Jacket and Cover Design**

Alan Powers  
Mitchell Beazley, 2003  
Hb ISBN 1840006935

Finally, a book just for you – the children's literature fan – and not for children. Arranged chronologically, this treasure details the development of children's book cover design from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century until the present day. Colour reproductions of the covers festoon the pages, making this a visual, as well as educational, feast. The information is divided into five chapters: Chapbooks to gift books; Precious children: the '20s and '30s; Wartime and reconstruction: the '40s and '50s; When we all dressed up: the '60s and '70s; Cold War to globalization: the '80s and '90s. Within each chapter is a selection of feature articles, for example "English bears: Winnie the Pooh & Rupert," "The Ahlbergs & Jan Pieńkowski," and, of course "Children's books make news: The Harry Potter phenomenon." A fantastic gift for any children's literature buff. One quick proviso – there is a lack of New Zealand material, but do not be too offended, it is a very English-based publication. AC.