

## When Only One

By Meg Gatland-Veness  
Publisher: Pantera Press / Bloomsbury  
ISBN 9780648987666 SCIS: 5405305  
\$19.99

Secondary Book  
of the Month

### Blurb:

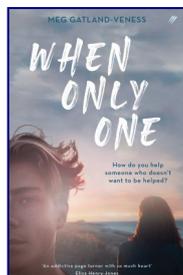
'There's someone in the school. They're holding something in their hands. Something terrifying.'

1984. Sam lives with his mum, dad and four brothers in a small farming town and life is pretty good. He works as a lifeguard at the local surf club, is saving to buy his first car, trains with his friends for the Ironman, and on Sunday afternoons he and his family take care packages to their less fortunate neighbours. Then, five years since they last spoke, Emily Burrow climbs through his bedroom window and back into Sam's life.

Emily's life couldn't be more different. She lives with her mother, who struggles with mental health, and sometimes her alcoholic father, but it's better when he's not there. There's no hope for Emily's future, and she seems to be the only one who both knows and accepts it. That's why, to Emily, help is just not necessary.

The new school year brings a heap of changes. Emily starts to hang out with Sam and his mates. A new girl arrives and Sam is smitten, but she brings with her unexpected adjustments. And Sam's friend Miles faces the biggest challenge of his life. When tragedy strikes one sunny afternoon, everything they thought they knew about growing up will change and they will be forced to face adulthood head on.

From the bestselling author of *I Had Such Friends* comes a gritty novel, full of heart, that shines a light on kids who are doing it tough in a rural Australian town.



### Lamont Review:

Sam is a seventeen-year-old country kid and a keen Ironman participant. Born into a strict Catholic family, with four younger brothers, his life is good. But this is not the case for everybody in his town.

It's not easy for people like his primary school best friend, Emily, who has just turned up and is back in Sam's life. Her Mum struggles with her mental health, and her Dad is an alcoholic with bikie connections who never wanted her.

Sam has a good group of mates, who are fellow Ironman competitors. But one of his friends is facing the toughest challenge - he has been left to care for his one-year-old sister after his Mum's suicide, and his Dad is constantly disappearing. The boys try to help him out, but life during the drought is not easy for anyone.

Then Sam falls for the new girl Rei, who brings a breath of fresh air into the school.

The reader knows throughout the story that there has been a shooting at their school, but the pieces do not come together until the end.

This is a thrilling read, with a close look at tough times in rural Australian towns. With themes of gun violence, families and their differing values, love, friendship, drought and grief, it is a terrific novel for those 14 and older.

Reviewed by Rob

## **My Spare Heart**

By Jared Thomas

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760631833 SCIS: 5405270

\$19.99

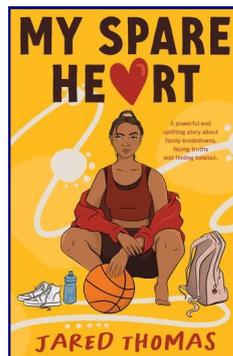
### *Blurb:*

I mean, Mum didn't drink that much. All of my friends' parents loved their champagne or whatever. Everyone drank in The Village, too. I'd only been there for about a month and there'd already been five wine and food festivals. Mum's drinking wasn't a big deal. Right?

Phoebe's non-Indigenous mother, a busy event manager, and her father, an Aboriginal man and uni lecturer, have split up and she's moved to sleepy old Willunga with him and his new health-obsessed girlfriend. It's only a few kilometres from Phoebe's old friends and the city, but it feels like another world.

Her new school is full of hippies, but some of the kids are cool and the local basketball team is tight, and before long Phoebe's fitting in. But as her mum becomes increasingly unreliable, Phoebe's grades begin to suffer, her place on the basketball team is under threat and her worries spiral out of control.

Phoebe can't tell her friends and is worried her dad will get angry, but pretending everything is fine is breaking her heart. How can she help her mum without tearing her family apart?



### *Lamont Review:*

Phoebe has just started at a new school. Her parents have split up, and Phoebe is living with her Dad and his new girlfriend Caitlin.

Phoebe knows her Mum is drinking too much, and now her Mum is becoming more and more unreliable. But what can Phoebe do? Who can she even tell?

Phoebe feels like her whole world crumbling around her, and she doesn't know where to turn. How can she help her Mum and keep it all together?

This is a wonderful book that I absolutely loved. It is full of characters that you will fall in love with — they are complex, raw and authentic, that it had me in tears at times.

It is an uplifting story of friendship, facing hard truths, growing up and learning to forgive yourself. Phoebe's story will stay with you long after you finish this book.

Perfect for students in Year 9 and up.

*Reviewed by Michelle*

## What We All Saw

By Mike Lucas

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9781761045936 SCIS: 5405254

\$19.99

### Blurb:

Witches only exist in stories. Everyone knows that. But what if the stories are real?

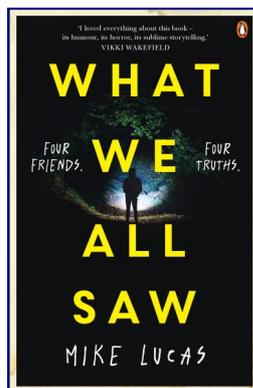
FOUR FRIENDS. FOUR TRUTHS. ONE NIGHTMARE.

If you wander into the wood ...

If you hear scratching sounds from the Old Quarry ...

If you go too close to the edge ...

WATCH. OUT.



### Lamont Review:

Set now, but looking back to the Summer of 1976, and four friends shared experiences in south-west England.

The main character is Sammy, and his best friends back then were the tough and moody Grey, the smart and intuitive blind girl Stella - who Sammy definitely had a crush on, and the storytelling, asthmatic Charlie.

Their adventures centre more and more around the woods near their home and the legendary quarry. In particular the top point, Hag's Drop, that has seen many young boys lose their lives falling from it over the years.

Could the legendary stories of the witches revenge, from many years ago, be true?

I can't give away the storyline, but I can tell you that it deals with reality versus perception, truth versus stories. Did you see or hear what you think you did? Was it real? Was it just a story? Or do you believe it out of fear? Or something else? Can any of you trust what you saw?

This is a real edge of your seat rollercoaster ride, with fear, death and suspense.

Full of themes of friendship, family dynamics, mystery, witches and storytelling, this is a terrific story that is best suited to anyone aged 13 and older.

Reviewed by Rob

## The Museum of Broken Things

By Lauren Draper

Publisher: Text Publishing

ISBN 9781922458537 SCIS: 5405257

\$19.99

### Blurb:

A humorous, beautifully observed YA novel about overcoming grief amid the vulnerability of high school relationships.

I didn't always live here. Not so long ago I was living in a thriving metropolis with more than one coffee shop on each block and four full bars of reception. I went to Heathmont High School, home to one thousand students, two best friends, a deeply average orchestra, and one cursed statue. Well, allegedly.

Reece still isn't used to living in the small beachside town of Hamilton - she misses her old school, her old friends and her old life. She can't go back and she can't move forward - nothing feels right anymore. Not that she's trying very hard - she hasn't even unpacked yet, and the only new friend she's made is a middle-aged barista.

But when Reece inherits a strange artefact that belonged to her beloved grandmother, she begins to unravel a mystery that might change the way she feels about everything around her, including her charismatic classmate Gideon...

A lively, witty novel about letting go of the past and finding your place in the world, *The Museum of Broken Things* introduces a dazzling new voice in contemporary fiction.



### Lamont Review:

This debut novel is all about growing up and finding your place in the world.

At first, we don't know why Reece and her family, her Mum, Dad and brother, have suddenly uprooted their lives in the city and moved to the small seaside town where Reece's Grandma lived.

But we slowly discover the terrible thing that happened, that Reece blames herself for.

She starts to heal, when she finally makes new friends in Ava and her brother Miles. And things heat when her relationship with Gideon becomes serious...

But they all have their own challenges. Gideon is looking after his Mum, who has Parkinson's Disease and is deteriorating quickly, at the expense of his own future. Miles is constantly trying to please others and do what is expected of him.

They discover that her Grandma, who was the town's doctor, surgeon and hero, has left her collection of priceless books and medical artefacts to Reece. But Reece is unsure what to do with them and soon discovers a dark mystery involving the disappearance of young women years ago. Does her Grandma really have a sinister past?

This book is a true coming of age story, and a fabulous debut novel, that brims with hope and enthusiasm and is best suited to readers 14 and older.

Reviewed by Rob

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

## Finding Jupiter

By Kelis Rowe

Publisher: Walker Books

ISBN 9781529500639 SCIS: 5400204

\$18.99

### Blurb:

What if Romeo & Juliet took place in Memphis in 2022?

Ray has no time for romance. She's queen of the roller rink, she writes found poetry, and she's got her eyes set on her own independent future. Besides, she's seen what loving someone too much – and losing them – can do to a person.

Orion, on the other hand, would like to be smooth with the girls. Just once. He looks like the jock his father wants him to be, but really he's a hopeless romantic. When he spots Ray at the rink, it feels like the stars have aligned.

But now it seems like something in their families' past will stand in their way, and cross their stars forever...

An honest, unpredictable, funny and heartbreaking dual-POV love story to fall head over heels for.



### Lamont Review:

Ray is actually seventeen-year-old Jupiter's third name, after her Dad who died in car accident on the day she was born. She finds it hard to open her heart, as she knows that loving someone can only lead to despair.

Then in walks Orion, and they connect instantly. But Orion is a national level swimmer, who is pushed by his Dad to achieve. According to his Dad, there is no time for distractions like girls for Orion! His Dad is against their relationship from the start.

But Ray's mum is also working against their relationship, with both families insisting that it is only a summer fling. Could this be true, or do they have an ulterior motive?

This is a classic love story, where both parties are initially reluctant, but realise that this could be the one...

With an explosive plot twist, could everything be ruined for Roy and Orion?

With themes of love, trust, vulnerability and family secrets, this is a spellbinding novel, best suited to those aged 14 and older.

Reviewed by Rob

## The Blood Traitor (The Prison Healer Book 3)

By Lynette Noni

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9781760897543 SCIS: 5405258

\$24.99

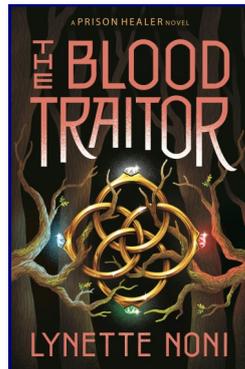
### Blurb:

The eagerly awaited finale of the *Prison Healer* trilogy, from Australia's #1-bestselling YA author Lynette Noni. She'd failed them. All of them. And now she was paying the price.

Kiva thought she knew what she wanted - revenge. But feelings change, people change... everything has changed.

After what happened at the palace, Kiva is desperate to know if her friends and family are safe, and whether those she wronged can ever forgive her. But with the kingdoms closer to the brink of war than they've ever been, and Kiva far away from the conflict, more is at stake than her own broken heart.

A fresh start will mean a perilous quest, forcing mortal enemies and uneasy allies together in a race against the clock to save not just Evalon, but all of Wenderall. With her loyalties now set, Kiva can no longer just survive - she must fight for what she believes in. For who she believes in. But with danger coming from every side, and the lives of everyone she loves at risk, does she have what it takes to stand, or will she fall?



### Lamont Review:

This is the thrilling third and final instalment in the wonderful *Prison Healer* series. Full of the action, adventure and magic we have come to expect, it is an absolute page turner!

After Kiva's betrayal in the huge final scenes at the palace in Book 2, can those she loved, particularly Jaren and Tipp, ever trust her again?

As her healing power grows and her friendships mend, we have many battles and challenges that face her group, as they try to save all of Wenderall from the evil and powerful dark magic possessed by her sister Zuleeka.

The series is wrapped up beautifully, however to avoid spoiling the ending for many, I can say no more, except read it. Read the whole series!

Full of magic, both good and evil, and themes of family, honour, trust and overcoming the odds, this is a great series for readers 14 and older.

Reviewed by Rob

## Demon's Land

By Sarah Ferguson

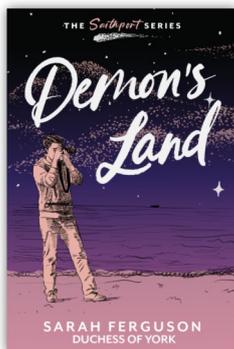
Publisher: Serenity Press

ISBN 9780645355987 SCIS: 5408661

\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

Jude loved photography. It captured the truth. It shone a light on what was hidden. It proved that every day was not the same, even though it felt like it. Every. Damn. Day. That is, until CeCe came into his life. Could this beautiful mysterious girl from the other side of the world be right about his potential to be a professional photographer or should he listen to his best friend Abel and not rock the boat? A poignant coming of age story set at the bottom of the world in the remote fishing village of Southport, the Southern most township in Australia. The first book in the Southport Series deals with ancestry, legacy and trauma that defines a generation.



### *Lamont Review:*

Set in the remote Southport, the Southern most township in Tasmania, Jude loves his photography. It shows something different in his life that feels the same every single day. But Jude also has his struggles.

His Mum left three months ago, and is divorcing his Dad - an alcoholic whose life is in tatters.

He isn't the only one. Abel, his best friend, is gay in a small community where both his family and everyone else are homophobic.

And then there is his beautiful piano teacher CeCe, a few years older than him, who has arrived in Southport on her travels. But CeCe has her own struggles too. She was sexually assaulted in her past, and is now struggling with an eating disorder.

Jude just doesn't see a way forward.

But through the wonders of modern technology, his friends set up a website and start selling Jude's photography globally for large sums of money. Maybe Jude does have a future after all...

In fact, with each others help, can they all face their own truths and find their place in the world?

A short and sharp story that look at the lives of three young people coming of age, that will appeal to reluctant readers in middle to upper secondary. I really enjoyed it.

*Reviewed by Rob*