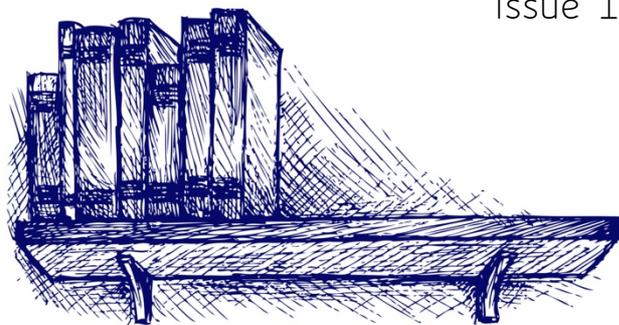


# SHELF LIFE

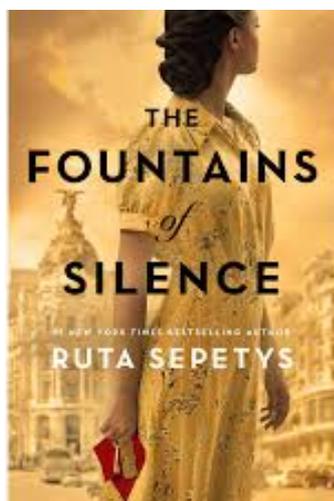


## What is the cost of Silence?

Although only 45 years ago I have to admit to having very little knowledge of Franco's dictatorship in Spain. Ruta Sepetys new book 'The Fountain of Silence' tells of the story of how it felt to live in 1950's Madrid during his reign. It is told through the eyes, Ana, who is a maid at a plush hotel in the city. At this time there was a large influx of Americans visiting Spain seeking investments. Ana meets a young Texan, called Daniel, who is an amateur photographer. Through his camera he captures the oppression and brutality in the past and present Franco's Spain. In the mid to late 1930s there was a civil war in Spain, Ana's mother and father fought during the war, opposed to Franco's Republican regime. Ana's cousin, Pura, is a nun, and through her eyes we find out about the child-snatching and adoptions that were carried out under

his rule.

As you can imagine this is not light reading. But it is an immersive read, and certainly one that will stay in your mind afterwards. And one that is based on real facts!



Hello and welcome to our very first edition of Shelf Life. This newsletter will provide you with news, reviews and chat about books. At this very moment you will be isolated in your homes. And with the surge of literary related news snippets on social media you will be bombarded on what you should read next. And that's when it gets really confusing!

As a School Librarian a big part of my job is to recommend books to both staff and students. Even though the School Library is under quarantine, that does not mean that I can carry on what I enjoy the most.

So, the aim of this newsletter is to pull together some of the best books I've enjoyed, that I guarantee you will love also! In addition to this there will be news and tit bits that may be of interest to you. But the main focus will be on recommending books.

I've pitched this newsletter so whoever you are, whether your student, staff or parent, you will find something that will appeal to you. Take care. I hope to see you all in person very soon.

Mr. Sheehan.

## National Shelf Service

CILIP, the UK's library and information association, has announced the launch of the **National Shelf Service**, a new daily YouTube broadcast featuring book recommendations from professional librarians. The National Shelf Service will feature one librarian and one book recommendation each day. The broadcast will start on Monday 6th April and continue every weekday at 11 a.m.

The initiative focuses on helping children and families discover new and diverse reading experiences.

The books themselves will be picked specifically to encourage children to enjoy diverse characters and authors from diverse backgrounds. The initiative will also support children's creativity and wellbeing as they build their literacy and confidence.

**You can access the National Shelf Service using the following link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPUlqIJM0aieXdq-LxKDvWA>

**Or just type in National Shelf Service on YouTube.**

## Mud Larking on the Thames

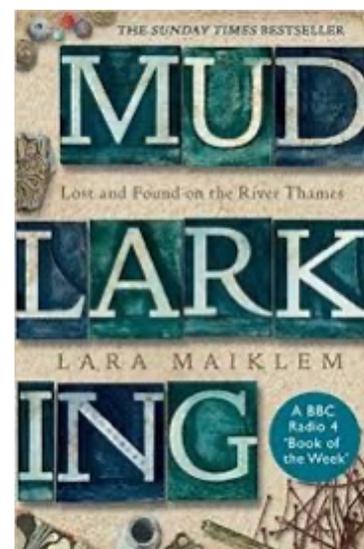
Sometimes when you down near the Thames you will see people, which I now know are called Mudlarkers, foraging for objects beneath its silt. But I have often asked myself what other than the odd bottle or coke tin would they find in this murkiness. A new book by Lara Maiklem titled 'Mudlark: In Search of London's Past Along the River Thames' looks at the authors past-time of trekking the shores of the river looking for treasures. Past finds include roman objects when the river was once a trading port, to the everyday sewing needles. But as the author explains in the book everything is valuable regardless of its age or monetary value. Every object found in the Thames has a story behind it. I loved how the author wove in stories, although speculative, into these objects. My favourite find is most certainly the printer's typeface block letters. Dove Press was a printing company situated along the Thames. When the owner retired he decided that he was uncomfortable with other people profiting from his typeface blocks, so he disposed of them in the Thames. And to this day his valuable typeface blocks can be found along its shores. This is a beautifully written book that will make you curious about what the River Mersey may reveal, other than the odd shopping trolley.

## CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Prize

The CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals are the UK's oldest and best-loved children's book awards, recognising outstanding reading experiences created through writing and illustration in books for children and young people.

Have a look at <https://carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/> to explore some of the amazing books that have been shortlisted for 2020.

The winners will be announced in Autumn 2020.

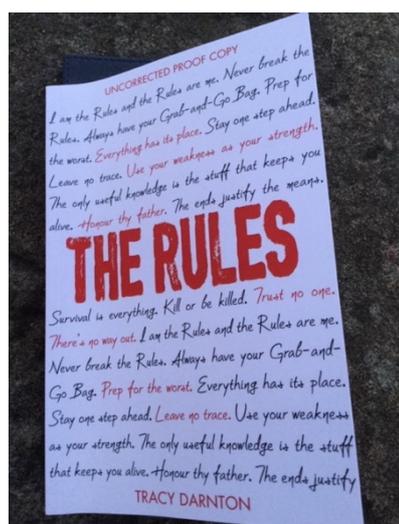


# Survival is Everything

Tracy Darnton published her full-length debut young adult novel 'The Truth about Lies' back in late 2019. This story is about a young girl living with a condition called Hyperthymesia, which is a condition that leads people to remember past life in detail. It was a thrilling but slightly dark read that left me with that dry angst feeling in my throat.

I am unsure how long it takes for an author to write a story however it is very timely that the publication of this book coincides with an apocalyptic virus that has decimated some of the world's population. The main protagonist is a fourteen year old girl called Amber. Due to the death of her mother she is currently in the social care system. Whilst out at the bowling plaza with her social worker she learns that her father has written a letter asking for her to get in contact. We learn that Amber (along with her mother) had to flee their home due to emotional and physical abuse by her father. The kind of abuse examined in this story is not one that is often examined in YA books, that being the impact of controlling personalities, that dictate how you act and feel. Her father is a survivalist, this means that he is preparing for some kind of disaster. This could include things such as a world war, bio-terrorism, chemical explosions. And in my opinion the Corvid virus could equally be included in this category, and this is why this story will speak to its readers and will blur the lines between fact and fiction.

Amber needs to go on the run as her father knows the whereabouts of where she is living. She was her father's closest ally and a recruit to his cause. And as Amber knows she needs to 'stay one step ahead' to prevent her father catching up with her.



Amber is well prepared for scenarios such as this, due to her strict training and instruction (from her father) she can survive in any situation. So with her 'Grab-and-Go bag' she disappears into the wilderness. Her first stop is 'The Haven' a holiday home owned by previous foster parents, and it is here that she meets Josh, another teenager with lots of personal baggage, who she reluctantly takes on her escapade, but it's clear that she can 'trust no-one'. It is only time before her father catches up on her, as her father knows her more than she knows herself!

## So what are my thoughts about this book?

Very much like Tracy's previous book it did leave me with that dry angst feeling in my throat! So much so that I had to take a Rennie and have a lie down. Perhaps I'm just a masochist but the books enjoy the most are those that impact me physically. This is not your average YA runaway/angst/dystopian story, like the finest Battenberg cake it has many layers. Initially I did not particularly like the character of Amber, but this do not make the reading experience less enjoyable. But it is clear that her disregard and respect for adults is due to her past experiences. It is only through her interactions with Josh that I began to warm and understand her a little. The story is brilliantly structured switching from the past to present. I loved how the Amber's recollections are told by examining each of the rules, this was very cleverly done, and helped you understand the systematic abuse that Amber faced. Some readers may initially judge this book as a dystopian fictional story, one that the circumstances touched in the book may not happen to them. But as we know there are **survivalists** alive and well today. Only weeks ago we learnt that people were stockpiling medicines and toilet paper due to the Corvid virus. What rules drove them to do this? Look after yourself and your own family first, perhaps? This does illustrate the powerful and dangerous voice of the media. The Rules is a real thought provoking piece of YA fiction. Brilliant!

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Tracy Darnton is our current author Pen Pal. Have Look at the following website to find out a little more about Tracy.

[http://littletiger.co.uk/authors?author\\_id=366](http://littletiger.co.uk/authors?author_id=366)

The Rules is released in July 2020.

# Book Quilts



‘Animals of Farthing Wood’

It is universally acknowledged that a person in possession of a good book must be in want of a place to read. And in the immortal words of Kirstie Allsop, sometimes it really is all about *location, location, location*. Because while we readers may love reading no matter where we are, there are still certain spaces that are conducive to good reading, and they’re different for all of us.

My favourite place to read is curled up in a handmade quilt. For the past two years I have teaching myself to use a sewing machine using YouTube. One of the things that I enjoy making the most are patchwork quilts. Back at primary school I remember a series of books written by Sheila McCullagh about a boy called Tim and a cat called Tobias.

What I envied most about Tim was not that he could ride to magical places on his broomstick but also that he possessed the most amazing patchwork quilts on his bed. So, I made myself some! I want to share with you some of the quilts that I have made in the past 18 months. Every quilt has a theme that links into books I enjoyed when I was at school. Perhaps I am a little biased however the books that I have enjoyed over my lifetime tend to be those from my formative years. Making quilts on these books celebrates and commemorates these stories.

So far, I’ve created four quilts (for each season), and I’m currently working on my fifth quilt based on a book Phillipa Pearce’s book ‘Tom’s Midnight Garden’, which should be finished by December 2020.

On this page you will see a couple of the quilts I have made. Once you learn the basics of a sewing machine it is extremely easy to piece together and sew these quilts. There are lots of free quilt patterns available on the internet. If I was to give you one bit of advice it would be to spend some time searching for fabric. In my opinion the best place for fabric is Patch Finders located in Poynton (that is after the lock-down). They also offer Saturday workshops where you can learn how to use a sewing machine. Go on and have a go!



‘Swallows and Amazons’

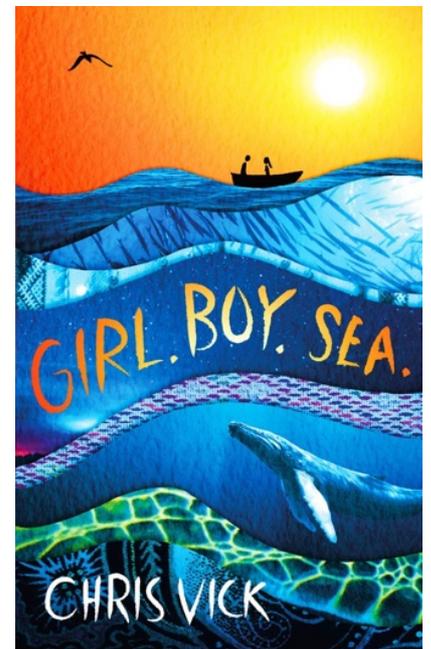
# Listen Up

It is impossible for many people to sit for hours reading a book, either due to concentration levels or due to having to complete other chores. One way around this is to listen to audio books. Your local library service offers a free audio book loan service for its borrowers. In this section I have pulled together some of the best audio books that I have enjoyed in recent months. Enjoy!

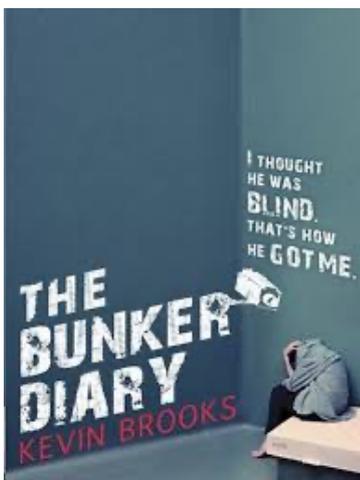


Carrie was the first horror book published by Stephen King. It follows the story of Carrie White, a ridiculed and bullied girl who in time discovers she has a secret power: a power she uses to devastating effect in a pulsating finale. This audio version is brought alive by Sissy Spacek (who also played Carrie in the film), and she really does immerse you into Carrie's world. It really is a good listen and will make you to explore more in this author's backlist.

**It's best to get permission from a parent/carer before reading this book.**

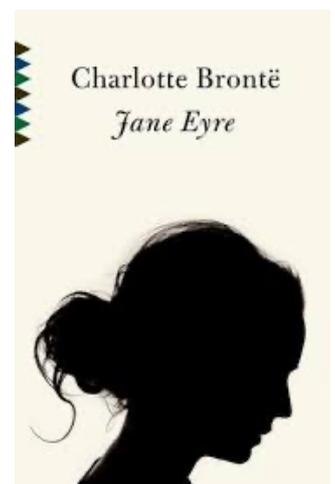


Girl. Boy. Sea is an adventure story that will appeal to all ages. It is a story of how the human spirit, faced with seemingly insurmountable odds, can overcome if they ignore differences like birth place and gender and work together. Which I feel is an important lesson right now. It also shows the importance of storytelling in helping us to overcome our differences. I thoroughly enjoyed Girl. Boy. Sea. and would recommend it to anyone who enjoys an alternative 'lost at sea' adventure story.



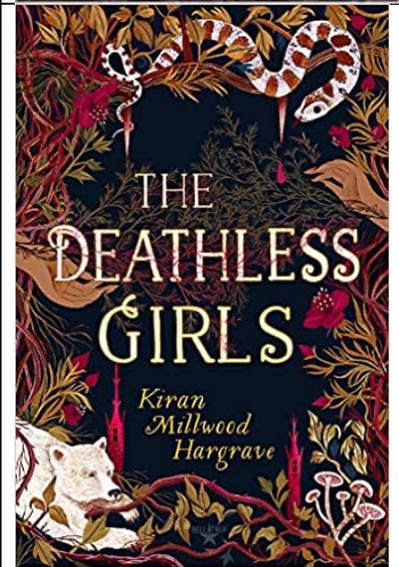
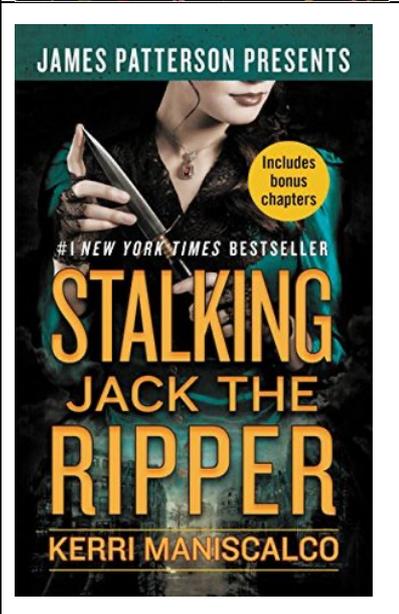
The Bunker Diary, to be completely honest, is a very odd children's book. In a nutshell it's a story about 6 people who have been captured and been placed into a bunker, with a cruel captor playing mind-games. The audio version makes it even more realistic and helps you envisage how the captors felt.

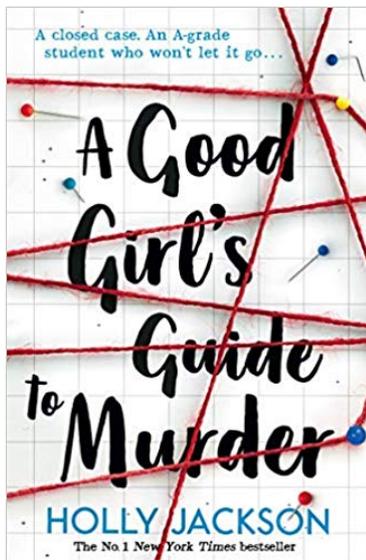
Jane Eyre is not the most accessible book for those who do not enjoy reading. The narrator (Thandie Newton) really does help immerse the listener into Jane's life from childhood to adulthood, and I would really recommend this book to anybody who has had problems reading this book in the past.



**All these books I enjoyed by subscribing to Audible.co.uk.**

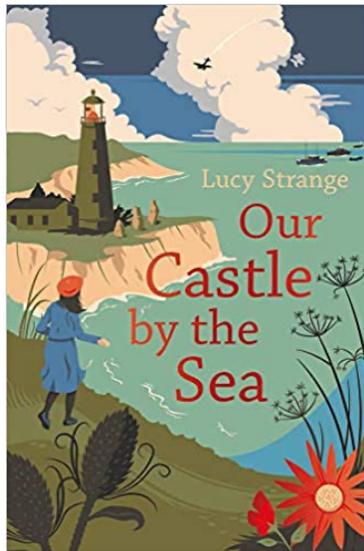
# Further Book Recommendations

	<p>In a post-apocalyptic America, a community survives in a national park, surrounded by water that keeps the Dead at bay. But when winter comes, there's nothing to stop them from crossing the ice.</p> <p>Then homebody Peter puts the camp in danger by naively allowing a stranger to come ashore and he's forced to leave the community of Wranglestone. Now he must help rancher Cooper, the boy he's always watched from afar, herd the Dead from their shores before the lake freezes over.</p> <p>But as love blossoms, a dark discovery reveals the sanctuary's secret past. One that forces the pair to question everything they've ever known.</p>
	<p><i>They say the thirst of blood is like a madness - they must sate it. Even with their own kin.</i> On the eve of her divining, the day she'll discover her fate, seventeen-year-old Lil and her twin sister Kizzy are captured and enslaved by the cruel Boyar Valcar, taken far away from their beloved traveller community. Forced to work in the harsh and unwelcoming castle kitchens, Lil is comforted when she meets Mira, a fellow slave who she feels drawn to in a way she doesn't understand. But she also learns about the Dragon, a mysterious and terrifying figure of myth and legend who takes girls as gifts.</p> <p>They may not have had their divining day, but the girls will still discover their fate...</p>
	<p>Seventeen-year-old Audrey Rose Wadsworth was born a lord's daughter, with a life of wealth and privilege stretched out before her. But between the social teas and silk dress fittings, she leads a forbidden secret life.</p> <p>Against her stern father's wishes and society's expectations, Audrey often slips away to her uncle's laboratory to study the gruesome practice of forensic medicine. When her work on a string of savagely killed corpses drags Audrey into the investigation of a serial murderer, her search for answers brings her close to her own sheltered world.</p> <p>The story's shocking twists and turns, augmented with real, sinister period photos, will make this dazzling debut from author Kerri Maniscalco impossible to forget.</p>

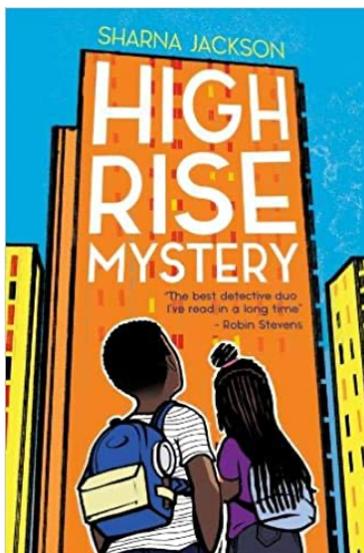


The case is closed. Five years ago, schoolgirl Andie Bell was murdered by Sal Singh. The police know he did it. Everyone in town knows he did it.

But having grown up in the same small town that was consumed by the crime, Pippa Fitz-Amobi isn't so sure. When she chooses the case as the topic for her final project, she starts to uncover secrets that someone in town desperately wants to stay hidden. And if the real killer is still out there, how far will they go to keep Pip from the truth...?



England is at war. Growing up in a lighthouse, Pet's world has been one of storms, secret tunnels and stories about sea monsters. But now the clifftops are a terrifying battleground, and her family is torn apart. This is the story of a girl who is small, afraid and unnoticed. A girl who freezes with fear at the enemy planes ripping through the skies overhead. A girl who is somehow destined to become part of the strange, ancient legend of the Daughters of Stone ...



The detective duo everyone is dying to meet! Summer in London is hot, the hottest on record, and there's been a murder in THE TRI: the high-rise home to resident know-it-alls, Nik and Norva. Who better to solve the case? Armed with curiosity, home-turf knowledge and unlimited time - until the end of the summer holidays anyway.