

Jessie Cole – STAYING: a memoir

People often proclaim that what's needed is a fresh start, and I understood the allure. The temptation to begin again, to wipe the slate clean. But sometimes you had to stick around to see things come to fruition. Some trees live hundreds of years. The magnitude of those lifespans are hard for the human mind to comprehend. How can we know, when we plant those seeds, just how extraordinary the trees might become?

Love can be ugly. Pain can be invisible. Children can be cruel. And, sometimes, people who live in the middle of an isolated forest can become writers of immense beauty, honesty and grace.

The first part of Jessie Cole's childhood was a wonderland. Her hippy-ish parents poured out their love on Jessie, her quiet, younger brother and her two mysterious, beautiful and clever half-sisters who came to visit every holidays. They lived in a magical place of their father's making: a property in a forest in Northern New South Wales and Jessie grew up feeling as though the plants and animals in and around her home were all an extension of herself. She had freedom, love, and happiness in abundance.

But when Jessie was on the cusp of adolescence a tragedy caused her father, her family and her world to unravel. It was many years before she understood how to put her sadness into words, and work towards a life that wasn't lonely, that wasn't quiet, that wasn't overcome by guilt and fear.

In this profoundly moving and compelling memoir, Jessie lays out the details of her life in order to understand the sadness of it. In doing so she gives us a story of beauty and hope, a story about the rivalries, pain and complicated love that is found in families.

Memoir

ANZ: Text Publishing, May 2018

Unedited manuscript available

Rights: Jenny Darling & Associates World ex NA; Text Publishing NA



Garry Disher - HER

Out in that country the sun smeared the sky and nothing ever altered, except that one day a scrap man came by.

You is worth less than the nine shillings and sixpence counted into her father's hand. Accompanying Wife, Big Girl and Sister, she travels the Australian outback in a nomadic, uncertain existence that often sees her beaten, starved and neglected.

But she bides her time. She does her work. Way back in the corner of her mind is a thought she is almost too frightened to shine a light on: one day she will run away.

HER is a dark and unsettling tale by a master of Australian literature, and crime, strangely full of hope.

Katherine England, *the Adelaide Advertiser*

'The pleasures of a book that depicts dusty poverty, drunken brutality and mendacious manipulation lie in the evocative writing, the fine detail of country life and personality over a period that encompasses World War I and the ravages of the Spanish flu, and an ending that leaves its patient, feisty young survivors on the threshold of hope.'

Kerryn Goldsworthy, *SMH*

'These female slaves are in thrall to their master, they provide him with food, sex, shoddy home-made goods for sale, and new children to train as thieves, until the flu epidemic of 1918 suddenly changes everything. This distressing but compelling book has echoes of the Barbara Baynton classic *Bush Studies*.'

Craig Buchanan, *Big Issue*

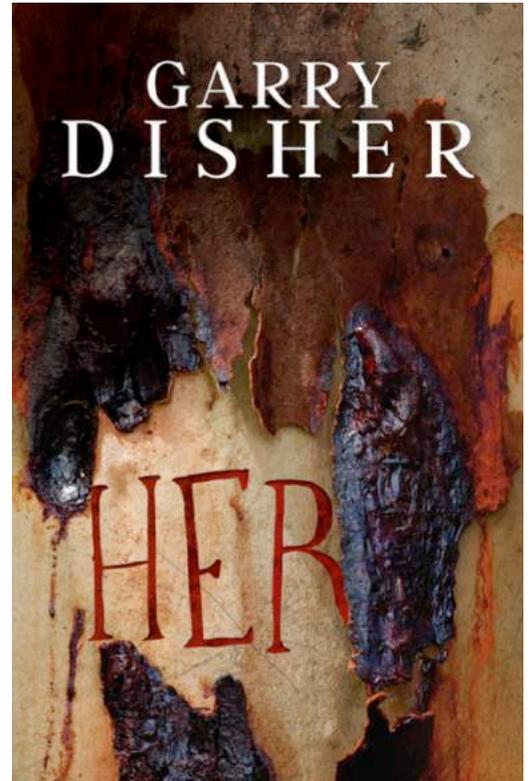
'Disher has lovingly crafted You's internal dialogues, allowing moments of beauty and touching descriptions of the harsh yet majestic Australian bush to rescue the narrative from any overbearing sense of despair.'

Fiction

ANZ: Hachette Australia, August 2017

Books available

Rights: Jenny Darling & Associates



Peter Pierce, *the Sydney Morning Herald*

For longevity and versatility, Garry Disher has few Australian equals. His tally of books is now more than 50. He has specialised in crime from both sides of the argument. Thus far, eight books feature thief and burglar Wyatt, while there are seven for police officers Challis and Destry. Disher's latest novel is a signal departure in one way, though lawlessness is central to its business.

Her is a historical novel, set in regional Victoria between 1909 and 1919, the second part of that decade shadowed by the Great War and the Spanish influenza epidemic that followed. Disher's title character is known for most of the book as You. It's the contemptuous name bestowed by the scrap man who purchased her as a three-year-old. She is his chattel and sexual victim. In the family from which she was bought, "her name was scarcely known or remembered".

In an act of private rebellion, she has christened herself Lily, a name she intends to take with her if ever she escapes into a wider, freer world.

Her is taut, often horrifying, at best ambiguous about any optimistic prospects for Lily or Hazel, youngest member of the scrap man's entourage that also includes Wife and Big Girl. Both also were purchased and much abused. Big Girl is Hazel's mother.

The novel begins when the scrap man, during their "long annual roaming of the back roads", pauses before the house of a ruined family in a poor country. From among her numerous siblings, "a child appeared, wearing a flour-bag dress and slipping soundlessly from beneath a sulky broken-backed in a collar of grass". She costs the man nine shillings and six pence.

Before she is much older, the girl who knows herself as Lily will be set to rabbit trapping and skinning. She also is trained to pick pockets, burgle unattended houses, forage in creeks where floods deposit many things the tinker may find of use. But she keeps for herself a nugget of gold that she hides in the wall of a house they are building, reserved for a purpose at which she could never have guessed.

The scrap man lives in terror of losing his child labour force through the intervention of "the Education", "the Social", or the police, clergy and some of the people along the road who are perturbed by Lily's plight. The solution of this man given to "slow horses and fast women and the last drop in any bottle" is to pass off You as half-witted (which she isn't) and therefore illiterate. The latter choice was not hers. Disher depicts a life of desperate scabbling in which the man takes advantage of the work to which his women are driven. At the same time, he makes clear that Lily has a sharp, sympathetic intelligence, for all that she has been tutored in theft, not letters. She has glimpses of other lives. Through a window (she has been outside stealing fruit) she sees "people in a house, with their own lights and ways, it was unimaginable, beyond her grasp". For — as she reflects later — she "had never been inside a house that lived and breathed with people, only houses abandoned for the day".

Instead, besides the hut on its 20 stony acres, Lily's home is the cart — on or under it. Disher shows us more of the load: "fence-wire toasting forks, some of which came apart as soon as they were moved, roofing-iron spatulas, calico and hessian skirts and aprons, potted jams and chutneys". After a day of rebuffs — from a woman who has lost her son in the war and who remembers the scrap man from a previous visit, then from two mounted gentry, one of whom is a scarred battle casualty — he is driven off when, for the only time

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in the book, and unwisely, he reveals his name. To those born to rule, Paddy Holman suggests both Irish and German. Thus “that night for the first time he turned to Lily in the dark and told her a man had needs”.

The sale of a child may remind us of Patrick White’s Hurtle Duffield, the young thieves of Charles Dickens’s Fagin, but the nightmarish scene where the scrap man drinks and gambles with two swagmen in an abandoned mill recalls the wrecked riverboat in Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn* where Pap Finn meets his long-deserved end.

It is to that great novel that Disher’s *Her* hearkens, with its heartbreaking portrait of a childhood irredeemably lost despite the child’s resilience in an often wicked adult world, and of no sure prospect that there is rescue at the end of the road. This is an accomplished, arresting, harrowing novel, replete with horrors even as it tempts us towards hope.

Nelika McDonald – DEEPER THAN THE SEA

Beth had known there were secrets folded inside Theo. But she didn't know they were secrets about her...

It's always been just Beth and her mother Theo. Until Beth is sixteen years old, and a stranger arrives in their small coastal town - a stranger with a claim that rips apart all Beth knows.

And what do you do when everything you thought you knew about yourself is based on a lie?

With sharp, evocative prose and utterly absorbing storytelling, McDonald takes the reader on a journey that makes us question what it means to be a mother.

Sally Hepworth, author of The Secrets of Midwives

REVIEW by Kerryn Goldsworthy

Deeper than the Sea

NELIKA MCDONALD
MACMILLAN, \$29.99

Theo and her daughter Beth live in a smallish Australian seaside town. Theo loves Beth more than anything, but one day, in an already traumatic situation, she unexpectedly comes face to face with her nemesis. Beth's birth mother, Alice, has come looking for Theo, after 16 years, to claim the daughter she abandoned as a baby. And she is having Theo charged with abduction. How this all came to pass is explained in a skilfully managed slow reveal. The book toggles between Theo's point of view and Beth's, and between the back-story from before Alice's return and the growing crisis after it. All of the main characters, even the stern local police officer and the irresponsible father, are drawn with detail and empathy, and McDonald almost obliges the reader to see and empathise with the situation's moral and emotional complexities.

REVIEW by Sydney's Child

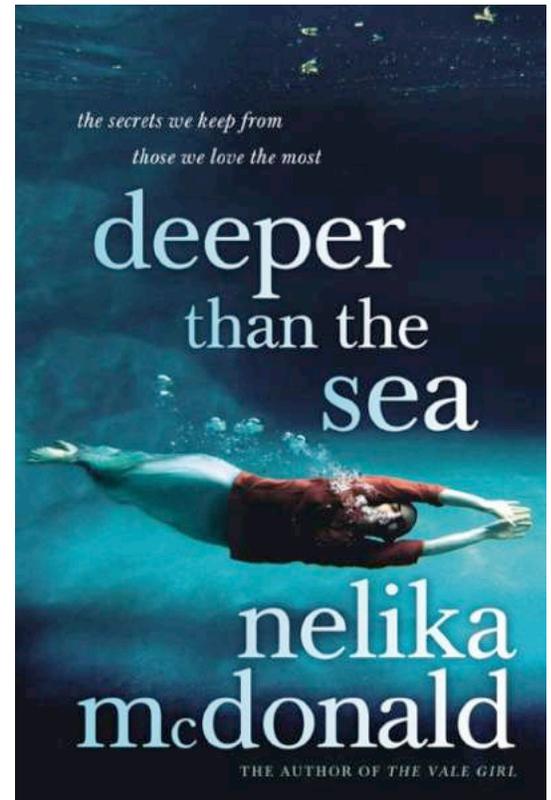
There is something so simple yet captivating about this book. We can't pinpoint it – maybe it's McDonald's gentle writing that draws the reader in slowly, or maybe it's her strong characterisation. The storyline is told from the point of view of a mother and daughter, and the big secret that threatens to destroy their lives as they know it.

Fiction

ANZ: Pan Macmillan, June 2017

Books available

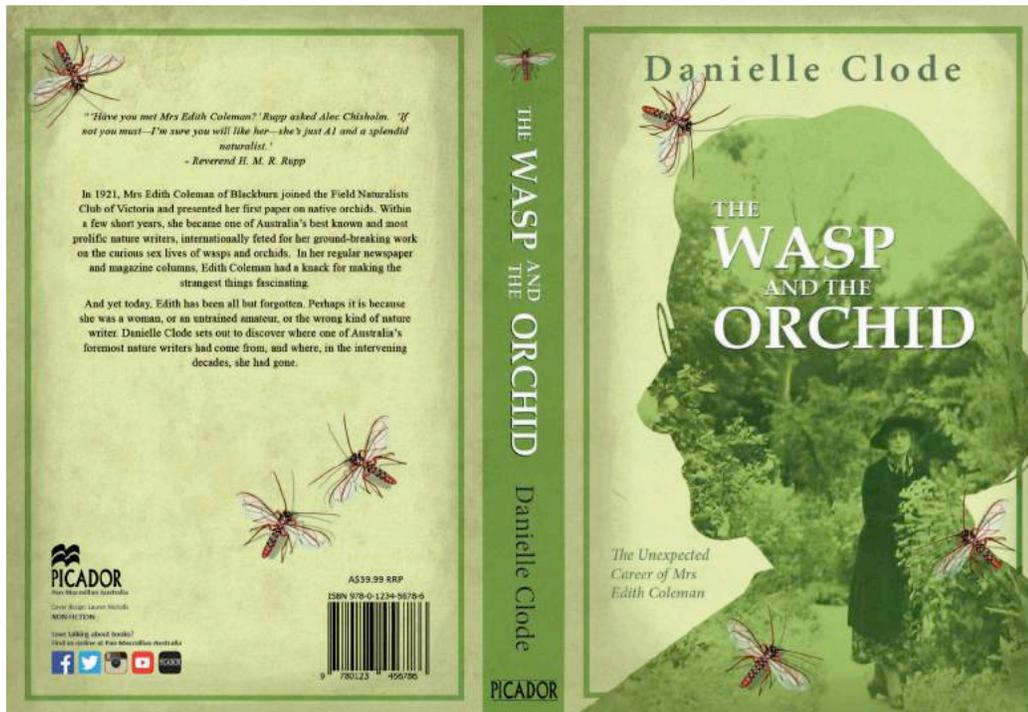
Rights: Jenny Darling & Associates



Danielle Clode – THE WASP AND THE ORCHID

In 1921, Mrs Edith Coleman of Blackburn joined the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria and presented her first paper on native orchids. Within a few short years, she became one of Australia's best-known and most prolific nature writers, internationally feted for her ground-breaking work on the curious sex lives of wasps and orchids. In her regular newspaper and magazine columns, Edith Coleman had a knack for making the strangest things fascinating.

And yet today, Edith has been all but forgotten. Perhaps it is because she was a woman, or an untrained amateur, or the wrong kind of nature writer. Danielle Clode sets out to discover where one of Australia's foremost nature writers had come from, and where, in the intervening decades, she has gone.



Non-Fiction

ANZ: Picador, May 2018

Unedited manuscript available

Rights: Jenny Darling Associates

Eva Hornung – THE LAST GARDEN

The settlement of Wahrheit, founded in exile to await the return of the Messiah, has been waiting longer than expected. Pastor Helfgott has begun to feel the subtle fraying of the community's faith.

Then Matthias Orion shoots his wife and himself, on the very day their son Benedict returns home from boarding school.

Benedict is unmoored by shock, severed from his past and his future. Unable to be inside the house, unable to speak, he moves into the barn with the horses and chooks, relying on the animals' strength and the rhythm of the working day to hold his shattered self together.

The pastor watches over Benedict through the year of his crazy grief: man and boy growing, each according to his own capacity, as they come to terms with the unknowable past and the frailties of being human.

Bernadette Brennan, *Australian Book Review*

There is a satisfying depth to this novel.... There is darkness, evil, and destruction, but there is also much beauty, goodness, and, ultimately, hope. ... *The Last Garden* is by no means a long read but it is a *big* novel. Hornung's characters, in all their flawed complexity, will stay with you long after the covers of this powerful book are closed.

Gretchen Shirm, *the Age*

'Hornung is a writer of extraordinary power, using her omniscient narrator to inhabit the minds of Benedict's father, the grieving child and the faltering pastor, following the flux of their thoughts with elegance and precision...An unusual and hypnotic novel.'

The Big Issue

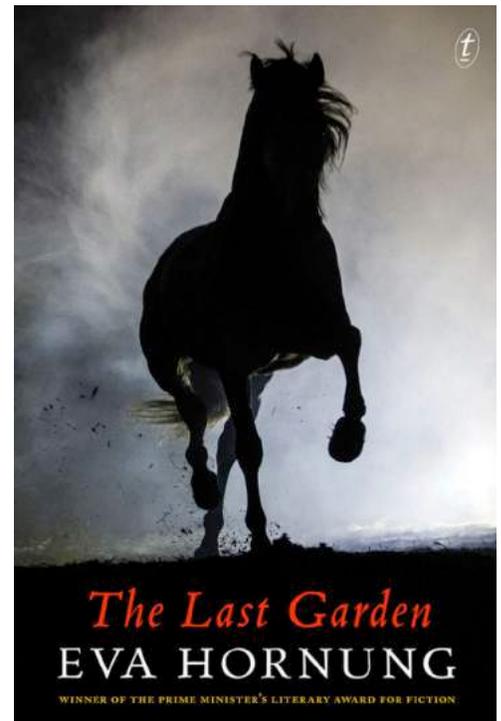
'Hornung's knowledge and deep respect for the spiritual and emotional relationships between humans and animals shine through in her exquisite, glittering prose'.

Fiction

ANZ: Text Publishing, May 2017

Books/PDF available

Rights: Jenny Darling & Associates



Charlotte Wood – THE NATURAL WAY OF THINGS

Two women awakened from a drugged sleep to find themselves imprisoned in a broken-down property in the middle of a desert. Strangers to each other, they have no idea where they are or how they came to be there with eight other girls, forced to wear strange uniforms, their heads shaved, guarded by two inept yet vicious armed jailers and a 'nurse'.

The girls all have something in common, but what is it? What crime has brought them here from the city? Doing hard labour under a sweltering sun, the prisoners soon learn what links them: in each girl's past is a sexual scandal with a powerful man. They pray for rescue - but when the food starts running out it becomes clear that the jailers have also become the jailed. The girls can only rescue themselves...

The Natural Way of Things is a gripping, starkly imaginative exploration of contemporary misogyny and corporate control, and of what it means to hunt and be hunted. Most of all, it is the story of two friends, their sisterly love and courage...

Fiction:

ANZ: Allen & Unwin

UK: Allen & Unwin

US: Europa Editions

Audio: Wavesound (World English)

French: J C Lattes

German: Arctis Verlag

Dutch: Nieuw Amsterdam

Polish: Wydawnictwo Kobiiece

Spanish: Lumen

Turkish: Yurt Kitap

Catalan: Les Hores

Film: Katia Nizic & Emma Dockery

Winner - 2016 Stella Prize

Winner - 2016 Indie Book Awards Book of the Year

Winner - 2016 Indie Book Awards Fiction prize

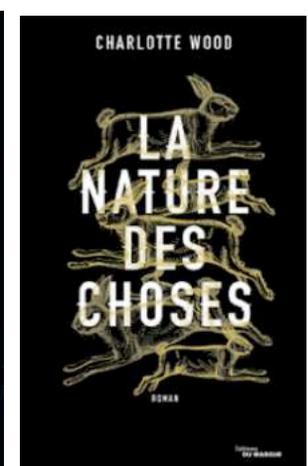
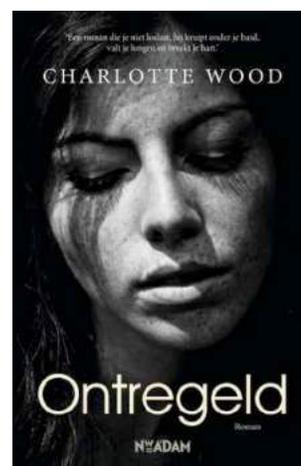
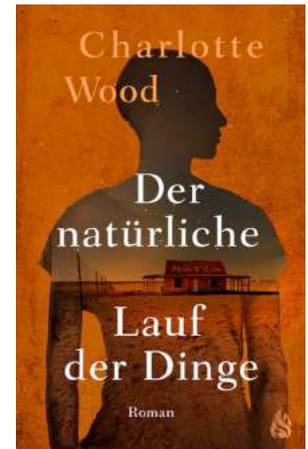
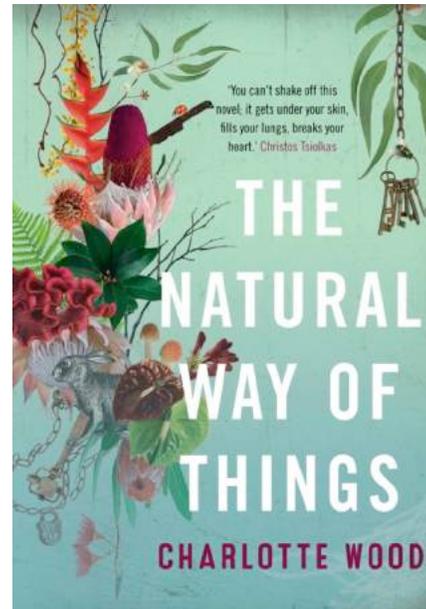
Shortlisted - 2016 Miles Franklin Literary Award

Shortlisted - 2016 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards

Shortlisted - 2016 Queensland Literary Awards

Shortlisted - 2016 Barbara Jefferis Award

Shortlisted - 2016 Prime Minister's Fiction Award



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