

The Pilkington Agency

Rights Catalogue 2025

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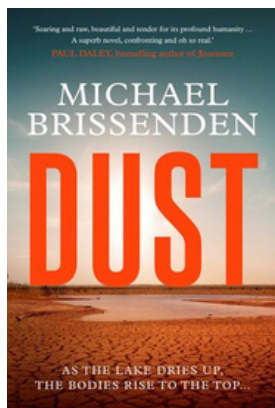
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FICTION

Dust

Michael Brissenden

CRIME AND THRILLER



September 2025
320pp
Final PDF available

The #1 Bestseller

As the lake dries up, the bodies rise to the top.

Lake Herrod, a once-thriving community, now lies in the shadow of a nearly dry lake. The town, like the water, is evaporating and its residents are left clinging to what little remains.

When Aaron Love discovers a fresh corpse near the cracked lakebed – along with evidence his missing father is alive and linked to a web of organised crime – he is thrust into a world of deception, injustice and betrayal. With the town on the brink of collapse, Aaron and a haunted detective, Martyn Kravets, uncover a web of conspiracy that reaches far beyond the small community.

Dust is a dark, gripping thriller that explores the complexities of identity, a search for truth, and the unyielding forces of corruption in a world where lives are lived on the fringe and nothing is as it seems.

‘Atmospheric, dark. Brissenden takes us to dangerous worlds we never want to escape.’ – Candice Fox

‘Masterful. A new classic of Australian crime fiction.’ – Chris Hammer

‘Dust is a story about what we leave behind, how far we’ll go, and what it takes to rise up. Brissenden always reaches for just the right detail. This is smart, thoughtful, raw: rural crime done right. Brissenden is a must-read!’ – Hayley Scrivenor

Michael Brissenden is an author and journalist. He has covered politics, national security issues and spent many years working as a foreign correspondent. He now writes fiction and has published four novels: *The List*, *Dead Letters*, *Smoke* and *Dust*.

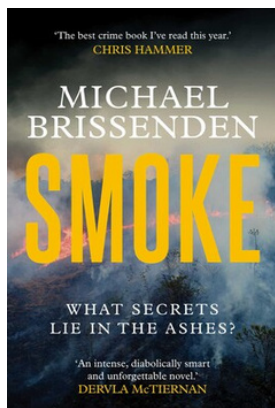
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Rights sold: Australia & New Zealand
(Affirm Press, Simon & Schuster)

Smoke

Michael Brissenden

CRIME AND THRILLER



June 2024
320pp
Final PDF available

What secrets lie in the ashes?

After a brutal wildfire tears through the town of Jasper in the Californian sierras, a body is discovered in a shed. It looks like an open-and-shut case of accidental death - until further investigation reveals that the victim was locked in from the outside.

Years after leaving Jasper, Detective Alex Markov has been sent back under the shadow of an LAPD corruption investigation. She is convinced that the man, a family friend, was murdered opportunistically under the cover of the fire. As the smoke clears, Alex reveals a town corrupt to its core - but exposing that corruption could destroy her and the people she loves. Will she ignore the crookedness and deceit, or face the consequences of pursuing an inconvenient truth?

'Trenchant, vivid and densely plotted, this is Brissenden's best book so far'. - The Age/The Sydney Morning Herald

'An engrossing read that I just could not put down....intense, diabolically smart and unforgettable' - Dervla McTiernan

'Powerful, haunting and exceptionally well written' - Don Winslow

'Atmospheric, fast-paced, and almost unbearably tense - I was deeply immersed in Alex Markov's dangerous, unpredictable world. Brissenden has created characters you'll care about and a page-turner that'll keep you guessing. This is a cracking crime novel and his best book yet.' - Mark Brandi

Michael Brissenden is an author and journalist. He has covered politics, national security issues and spent many years working as a foreign correspondent. He now writes fiction and has published four novels: *The List*, *Dead Letters*, *Smoke* and *Dust*.

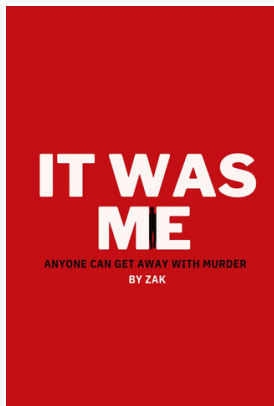
Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Rights sold: Australia & New Zealand
(Affirm Press, Simon & Schuster)

It Was Me

Zak

CRIME AND THRILLER



Publication mid-2026
55,000 words
Unedited MS available

American Psycho for the Tik-Tok generation

It was Me has all the hallmarks of a cult sensation. It's a hugely fun and original crime novel written for the digital age:

- Chapters are all approx. 4 pages long
- It's written in the first person
- There are no full stops
- It's a short and punchy 60,000 words long

Zak is a profoundly disturbed individual with a sophisticated facade. He is narcissistic, charming, and manipulative - and capable of extreme violence. He is a bored advertising executive who sets himself the challenge of getting away with murder.

But murder in itself is pretty easy. After all, you could easily get away with killing some random person in the street, because there's nothing to connect you to them. It's much harder when you actually know the victim.

So, let's make this really difficult...

Can you get away with killing your best friend?

Hilarious and shocking, fast-paced and insightful, inventive and accessible, *It Was Me* is a perfect read for fans of *The Talented Mr Ripley* and *Saltburn*.

Damien Horner worked at some of the biggest advertising agencies in Europe before co-founding a creative hotshop where he won multiple awards. He has worked in the book industry on strategies for authors including JK Rowling, Lee Child, Jodie Picoult and Stephen King.

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Rights sold: World English Audio
(Wavesound/W.F. Howes)

The Line-Up

Nicholas Timms

CRIME AND THRILLER



August 2026
85,000 words
Unedited MS available

It's been years since Bo Curren touched the ocean. Once destined for surfing stardom, Bo walked away from it all after tragedy struck. Away from the water, his hometown of Byron Bay and the life he thought was his. Now, holed up in a Brisbane apartment, Bo drinks too much, grieves in silence and watches live feeds of his old local break. Surfing has become something he observes, not something he lives.

Then one morning, the feed shows something that jolts him back to life: a surfer killing a man with his bare hands, before dragging the body out of frame and vanishing. No witnesses. No evidence. Nobody believes him.

Forced to return to Byron, Bo finds a town both familiar and hostile. The surf scene he grew up in has shifted; still beautiful, but sharpened with aggression, resentment, and old scars that haven't faded. As Bo tries to uncover what really happened on that beach, he's drawn back into the world he's tried to forget: one filled with localism, silent codes, and the violence that can simmer just beneath the surface.

The Lineup is a crime novel about murder, guilt and memory - but it's also a story of healing. Through Bo's reluctant return to the waves, he's forced to confront his grief, his past, and a culture that made him feel like a stranger in his own town.

Set against the sun-bleached beauty and quiet menace of Byron Bay, this is a noir-tinged surf thriller that asks: what does it take to truly come home, and who gets to belong?

Nicholas Timms is a writer and former competitive surfer based in Sydney. Now working as a copywriter for a globally recognised advertising agency, he has been the creative mind behind several award-winning campaigns for the likes of AAMI, Arnott's Biscuits and Bundaberg Rum.

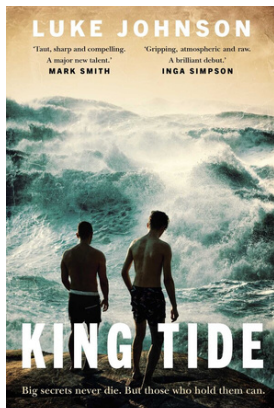
Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Rights sold: English Language in Oceania and Asia (Penguin Random House Australia).

King Tide

Luke Johnson

CRIME AND THRILLER



August 2025

320pp

Final PDF available

A storm batters the seaside town of Lagunes Bay, unleashing a king tide across the wintry beach. As the water recedes, it reveals a long-buried secret: a body, framed and exposed in the sand.

When the body is identified as a young woman who vanished years ago - with little effort ever made to find her - the entire community comes under suspicion. How did she meet such a gruesome end? What did those closest to her know? Was Tate, the town's golden boy, her final boyfriend? And why has the return of an Anglican priest and his daughter left everyone so tense?

This isn't the first disappearance to rock this small town, but the local families aren't giving much away. As Detective Harper Lewis investigates this insular world, the mystery deepens with every uncovered clue. In Lagunes Bay, everyone has something to hide and every shadow tells a story.

King Tide is a stunning, exhilarating debut: a beautifully crafted, intricately plotted tale that is as emotionally raw as it is gripping.

'Dark and powerful' - Mark Brandi

'Gripping, atmospheric and raw. Friendship, love and loyalty drive this brilliant debut set in a small-town coastal community where secrets are tightly held, but eventually find their way to the surface.' - Inga Simpson

'Taut, sharp and compelling, King Tide announces the arrival of a major new talent in crime fiction.' - Mark Smith

Luke Johnson is from Ocean Grove, Victoria and is a Senior Physiotherapist. He won the 2021 Bellarine Short Story Competition and was the equal Second Prize Winner of the Sorrento Creative Writer Prize.

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Rights sold: Australia & New Zealand
(Affirm Press, Simon & Schuster)

The Multicultural Network

Nick Bhasin

SATIRICAL THRILLER



Publication TBC
80,000 words
MS available date TBC

Get Out meets Severance in this razor-sharp social comedy that becomes an edge-of-your seat thriller.

Amarjeet Atwal has finally made it. He's just been hired by MBN; the country's most publicly diverse media organisation, proudly dedicated to equity, visibility, and hashtags like #WeWantYourStories and #MBNIsWhyWeSmile.

Giant banners quote smiling staff: "I feel included here." The company charter is called The Understanding. The inclusion action plan? Rise and Smile.

At first, Amarjeet wants to believe. Needs to believe. But soon, the atmosphere starts to shift. Colleagues vanish. Others return quieter. Softer. Their edges dulled. Their words rehearsed. And blood starts to ooze from employees' eyes during HR training. Amarjeet begins to slip, too; misplacing time and hearing a Voice in his head; a Voice that won't shut up.

The Multicultural Network is a genre-bending literary thriller —equal parts horror, satire, and speculative fever dream.

'The Multicultural Network is a properly funny HR fever dream, an exacting takedown of box-ticked "inclusion"...I laughed and winced at how close to real it all is, and kept reading!'

- Sami Shah

Nick Bhasin is a writer and editor based in Sydney, but originally from the US. His writing has appeared in a variety of publications, including the *New York Times*, the *Guardian* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Nick has worked as an editor for Junkee, 10 Daily, SBS, Foxtel Magazine and OK! Magazine.

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Pillar of Ink

Claire Benson

ROMANTASY



Publication TBC

95,000 words

Unedited MS available

The first book in the Sigils of Starlight trilogy

In a world ruled by the Truthseeker Order, magic is tightly bound, every spell sanctioned, every power controlled. The Eight Pillar Sigils are sacred, bestowed only upon the worthy to preserve order.

For Estella Vestas, stepdaughter of a ruthless Mindswayer matriarch, that order is nothing but a cage. Born to charm the elite, groomed for obedience, she yearns for freedom - and for the chance to create. On the eve of her twenty-first birthday, she dares the ultimate defiance: she carves a forbidden sigil into her skin. But the mark she claims does not glow with sanctioned silver. It burns crimson. Bloodfire. A volatile magic tied to the nine exiled goddesses, wild and hungry, bending to her rage, her longing, her heart.

Branded a heretic, Estella is suddenly the most hunted fugitive in the realm. The Council's sinister head believes she is the key to an ancient prophecy. A rebel faction hails her as their messiah. And shadowing her every step is Captain Grey Astrophel - an Orion enforcer sworn to capture her, even as a pull he cannot fight threatens to unravel his oath.

Forced into an uneasy alliance with a rebel whose secrets could undo her, Estella must navigate a world of treachery, passion, and shifting loyalties. Her magic could save everything - or ignite a fire that consumes it all.

Pillar of Ink is set to be the breakout Romantasy debut of 2026.

Claire Benson is a Sydney-based fine-line tattoo artist, author, and founder of Everywhere Studios, the city's first dedicated fine-line tattoo and art space. Raised in the North West of England, she began tattooing at nineteen. You can find her at [@claire.everywhere](https://www.claire.everywhere.studio).

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

NON-FICTION

The Buried Teachests

Annika Blau

NARRATIVE NON-FICTION



Publication TBC

Extent TBC

Proposal available now

An extraordinary true story of family secrets, scandal, and survival.

The Buried Teachests follows journalist Annika Blau's journey after she stumbles upon a secret family legacy. What follows is a remarkable investigation into a family who rose to prominence as purveyors of the famous 4711 cologne, only to be brought down by scandal, internment, and erasure.

A few years ago, Annika discovered that two teachests of mail collected by her great-grandfather had been found during a demolition and auctioned off for a small fortune by strangers. They were lauded as one of the most significant hauls of military mail in Commonwealth history, containing rare correspondence from Sydney's WW1 prisoner of war camp. But for Annika, they revealed family secrets, silences and shame.

Using the mail as clues, Annika uncovers the riches to rags tale of the relatives who collected it. Charting a path through two world wars and the Great Depression, it's a story about the family's rise to Sydney's high society and their fall to years behind bars as British "war trophies". At the heart of the story is a mystery: why did Annika's great-grandfather collect this historic haul only to hide it under some floorboards? Ultimately, she discovers he buried not just the teachests, but the truth of who the family were and where they came from.

At once memoir and investigation, *The Buried Teachests* sits alongside *Wifedom* by Anna Funder and *The Hare with Amber Eyes* as a powerful exploration of identity, loss, and the truths families bury to endure.

Annika Blau is an award-winning journalist, editor and podcaster. She is a reporter for ABC Radio National's flagship investigative program, Background Briefing. In 2023, she wrote, produced and presented *The Buried Teachests*: a two-part podcast series for RN's History Listen program.

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

Rediscovering the Joy of Parenting

Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini

POPULAR SCIENCE/SELF-HELP



Publication TBC

Extent TBC

MS available date TBC

A science-backed guide to presence, connection and compassion in early childhood

Rediscovering the Joy of Parenting is a bold, science-backed antidote to the rigid routines and separation-based approaches made popular by movements like ‘Save Our Sleep’ and traditional “cry it out” methods. In this timely and compassionate book, child development specialist Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini challenges the cultural obsession with outcomes, independence, and control and instead makes a powerful case for joy, connection, and presence as the true foundations of healthy development.

Based in over 15 years of academic and frontline experience, Dr Siobhan draws on developmental psychology, attachment theory, and real-life stories to reframe delight, not as a feel-good bonus, but as a critical force in emotional safety, co-regulation, and resilience. Each chapter offers research-informed insights and practical strategies that help adults move beyond behaviour management and performance metrics to truly see, connect with, and enjoy the children in their care.

Dr Siobhan’s work through her trusted platform Science Minded has helped thousands of parents and educators translate complex science into everyday practice; always with empathy, flexibility, and zero judgement.

Blending academic rigour with real-world warmth, *Rediscovering the Joy of Parenting* is not just another parenting manual, it’s a quiet revolution. For anyone weary of punitive systems and seeking a slower, more meaningful way to raise children, this book offers both a balm and a blueprint.

Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini (PhD) is a child development specialist, educator, and founder of Science Minded, a widely respected platform offering evidence-based resources, courses, and professional development for parents and early childhood professionals.

Rights held: Film, World All Languages

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