

Limelight

By Solli Raphael

Publisher: Puffin/Penguin

ISBN 9780143793762 SCIS: 1882653

\$16.99

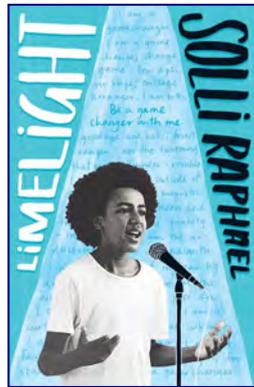
**SECONDARY
BOOK OF THE
MONTH**

Blurb:

Limelight is a unique collection of slam poetry paired with inspirational writing techniques. With over 30 original poems in different forms, the book features the viral video sensation 'Australian Air', which has been viewed 3.5 million times via Facebook. Solli's work tackles current social concerns for his generation, such as sustainability and social equality, all the while amplifying his uplifting message of hope.

The book includes several introductory chapters looking at traditional poetry forms and slam poetry, as well as tips on developing writing ideas and performing. Filled with his own experiences of creating poetry and speaking in public, such as Solli's top 10 ways to manage writer's block, this book engages kids on their level and encourages them to speak up for a better future of their own.

As a voice of his generation, and at a time when youth movements worldwide hold much importance, this extraordinary book showcases creativity and the power of social consciousness.



Lamont Review:

When I received this book by a 13-year-old slam poet I was a little hesitant, as I wasn't even sure what a slam poet was, but wow!

Solli just wants to make the world better, and he is sure going about it the right way. He may even succeed in re-introducing poetry to a younger audience, something I would love to see (and I'm sure many others would too!). With the exception of Steven Herrick and a few others who have done some wonderful work, there has been a fairly limited amount of quality Australian poetry for youth in recent years. However, *Limelight* really is something new and different. It's contemporary, and has the potential to reignite poetry in this unique style.

Solli won the Australian slam poetry competition at the Sydney Opera House at his first attempt, aged 12. He performed at the Commonwealth Games closing ceremony, and he is truly inspirational.

His book is partially autobiographical, and partially made up of his poetry writings, and both sections are fantastic. He wants to be a game changer and he is certainly heading well down the path of making the world a better place.

A great, easy to read experience for all students, particularly those aged 10 –15 years.

Reviewed by Rob

The Bogan Mondrian

By Steven Herrick

Publisher: University of Queensland Press

ISBN 9780702259982 SCIS: 1875511

\$19.95

Blurb:

'There are worse things than school.'

Luke sleepwalks through his days wagging school, swimming at the reservoir and eating takeaway pizza.

That is until Charlotte shows up.

Rumour is she got expelled from her city school and her family moved to the Blue Mountains for a fresh start.

But when Luke's invited to her house, he discovers there's a lot more going on than meets the eye.



Lamont Review:

Steven Herrick's books have been shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year awards seven times, and his latest book is equally worthy.

Set on the right and wrong side of the track, it shows that many things can bring happiness and that money of itself is not necessarily one of them.

Our main character Luke's Dad worked in the pub, gambled on the horses and didn't have much except happiness. Unfortunately, Luke's Dad died, and Luke and his Mum are just going along, coping day by day.

But when Charlotte, new to Luke's school and a seemingly stuck-up rich girl, stands up for Luke they develop an unlikely friendship.

But every family has their problems, and things in Charlotte's life are not as they seem. Her father is violent, and her home life is difficult. Can Luke and Charlotte hatch a plan to stop her father's behaviour for good?

This is a fantastic read, and as is Steven's way it delves deep into everyday life, this time touching on family violence, grief, and the meaning of happiness. It will best suit readers 13 years and older.

Reviewed by Rob

The Girl Who Fell: The Chess Raven Chronicles, Book 1

By Violet Grace

Publisher: Nero / Black Inc

ISBN 9781760640248 SCIS: 1875502

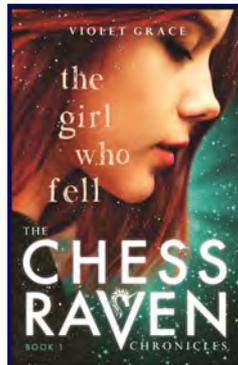
\$19.99

Blurb:

Chess Raven is a hacker who has grown up with nothing and no one. Her parents died when she was three and her foster care situation turned out badly - very badly. But on her sixteenth birthday, her life is turned upside down.

Chess learns her mother was Queen of the Fae and her father was a brilliant physicist. The unique blend of her mother's fairy blood and her father's humanity gives Chess - and Chess alone - the ability to unlock a mysterious vessel that will unleash unimagined powers - with devastating consequences. Thrown into a new world where nothing is at it seems, Chess must work out who to trust as vying forces race to control her. Or kill her.

Reunited with her childhood friend Tom Williams, an enigmatic shape-shifting unicorn, Chess discovers love for the first time and is prepared to risk her life for it. But first she must learn to overcome a fear of her own power and stop waiting for other people to save her. She is the one she's been waiting for.



Lamont Review:

Chess Raven has been in foster care as long as she can remember, and all of it has been bad.

When she gets into a second chance program after being caught hacking a pharmaceutical company, she gives it her best shot. But not everything is as simple as it seems, and on her 16th birthday she discovers she is the daughter of the Queen of the Fairies and that her father was a brilliant, although mortal, physicist.

Her life is turned on its head in an instant and she becomes a pawn in a new world that she didn't know existed. Can she trust herself enough to find her own power?

This is an exciting and thrilling fantasy series that I couldn't put down until I finished it. You will fall in love with Chess as she tries to work out who she can trust and who is trying to control her - and even worse - who is trying to kill her.

Intriguing characters with a mix of magic and amazing powers, this is also a coming of age story, and readers will be eagerly awaiting the second book in the series. Fantasy, mystery, adventure and romance are rolled into one fast paced story. This book will be most loved by girls in Year 8 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle

Inheritance

By Carole Wilkinson
Publisher: Black Dog Books/Walker Books
ISBN 9781760650360 SCIS: 1875525
\$17.99

Blurb:

Historical fiction for middle grade readers at its compelling, shocking, fascinating best.

Nic is left in the care of her grandfather at the remote family property that was once her mother's childhood home; a place with thirty rooms, three dogs and no mobile reception. Left to her own devices, she searches for clues about her mother – who died the day Nic was born. But when Nic learns how to slip through time, she discovers more than she could have imagined. The past holds a dark and shocking secret that haunts the land and the people who live there.



Lamont Review:

Written by Carole Wilkinson, the award winning author of the Dragonkeeper series, *Inheritance* takes us on an incredible time travelling journey into Australian history.

Veronica, Nic's Mum, died at birth and her Dad has been constantly travelling on cruise ships and the like, playing the saxophone with his worthless band. But now Nic is running out of friends and family to live with, and finds herself left with her grumpy Grandad at Yaratgil - the once magnificent, but now decaying, family homestead.

Bored senseless, Nic searches for things to do and uncovers magical stones that allow her to travel to important times in her families past. Or did the stones find her?

Nic discovers that all of her female ancestors could time travel, but what she discovers is not always pleasant. The discoveries that she made about her family, with the help of school friend Thor, a descendant of the local Aboriginal tribe, are particularly confronting. Can Nic travel to the past and alter history to right the wrongs of her ancestors?

This is a fantastic look at Australian history, something that Carole does incredibly well. The setting is real, the past is confronting, and the character's problems are heartfelt.

With themes of family, friendship and acknowledging our historical failures, particularly regarding the treatment of Aboriginal people, this is an enlightening, enjoyable read for 10 -14 year olds.

Reviewed by Rob

Impostors

By Scott Westerfeld

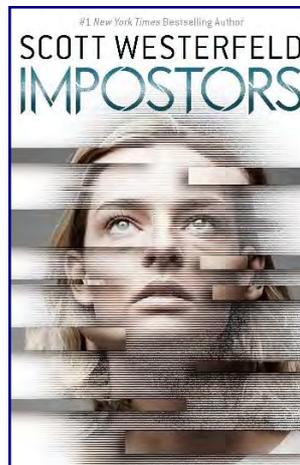
Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760528249 SCIS: 1879289

\$19.99

Blurb:

Frey was raised to take a bullet. She's the body double for her twin sister Rafia - the precious heir of the first family of Shreve - and her existence is a closely guarded secret. So while Rafi was schooled in poise and diplomacy, Frey was drilled in weapons and combat. Her purpose: to protect her sister from their tyrannical father's many enemies. When Frey is sent in Rafi's place as collateral in a precarious business deal, she becomes the perfect impostor - as elegant and charming as her sister. But Col Palafox, the son of a rival leader, is getting close enough to spot the killer inside her. As layers of deceit peel away, can Frey become her own person, and risk everything in a rebellion? Master storyteller Scott Westerfeld returns with a brilliant new series set in the world of his bestselling *Uglies* series.



Lamont Review:

Set in the same world as Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* series but a number of years later, this is the story of twins Rafia and Frey. One has been raised as the precious daughter of a despot leader, the other hidden away and taught how to kill to be her sister's double.

When Frey takes Rafia's place as a hostage in a precarious business deal, little does she know the risks she faces - especially from the charming Col Palafox, son of her hostage takers.

When things start to go terribly wrong, Frey and Col must decide whether they can trust each other enough to share their secrets and save their lives.

This is the first book in a new series, and while it is set in the *Uglies* world, it is a standalone title. However, fans of Scott Westerfeld's previous books will absolutely love this one too. It has an amazing array of fascinating characters, including a father who will stop at nothing to hold on to power. The stars of the show are definitely Frey and Rafia, and the complex lives they must lead to maintain the illusion that there is only one of them.

This will become a favourite of fantasy and sci-fi as it is so fast paced that it is impossible to put down. Best suited to readers in Year 8 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle

Catching Teller Crow

By Ambelin and Ezekiel Kwaymullina

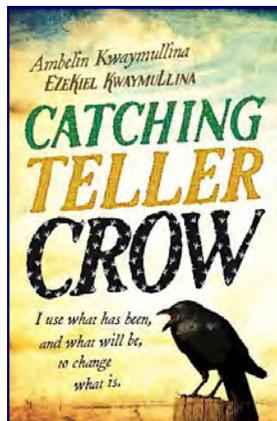
Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760631628 SCIS: 1875487

\$19.99

Blurb:

Nothing's been the same for Beth Teller since she died. Her dad, a detective, is the only one who can see and hear her - and he's drowning in grief. But now they have a mystery to solve together. Who is Isobel Catching, and what's her connection to the fire that killed a man? What happened to the people who haven't been seen since the fire? As Beth unravels the mystery, she finds a shocking story lurking beneath the surface of a small town, and a friendship that lasts beyond one life and into another. Told in two unforgettable voices, this gripping novel interweaves themes of grief, colonial history, violence, love and family. *Catching Teller Crow* is an up-to-the-minute tale that goes straight to the heart of Australia's darkest history. Through poetry and story, with great sensitivity, the Kwaymullinas pick up and deal with subjects most authors in this country find too hot to touch. Terrible crimes lie at the centre here; viewed through the eyes of young women of unquenchable spirit, they can be approached, examined, and ultimately solved. This novel will turn gazes in the right direction, and make the caw of every crow more resonant.



Lamont Review:

From an Aboriginal brother and sister team, *Catching Teller Crow* is an amazing first YA novel from the pair.

Having recently died in a car accident, Beth Teller cannot leave her grief ridden detective father until she knows he will be ok. His first job is supposed to be a mundane one - to look into a fire at a rural children's home - where one adult body was found. But with Beth's help, and their other 'witness', the ghost of Isobel Catching, they uncover so much more.

It is a ghost story, of sorts, but it is also a thriller. Set both in the present and in the past, and told in two voices, the story sets about uncovering the terrible crimes that have affected Beth's rural town, but also Australia's past.

With themes of grief, indigenous identity and culture, justice, Australian history, feminism and family, this is a fantastic novel for teenagers aged 14 - 18.

Reviewed by Rob

The Anger of Angels

By Sherryl Jordan

Publisher: Walker Books

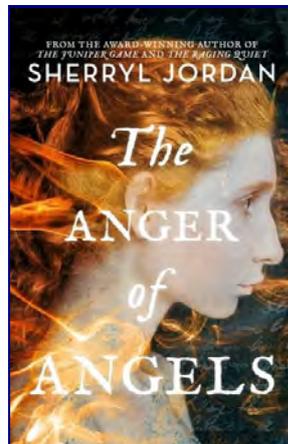
ISBN 9781760650605 SCIS: 1875120

\$19.99

Blurb:

An exciting historical fantasy YA by award-winning New Zealand author Sherryl Jordan.

“Words hold a terrible power. They can break a heart, or give it a reason to live. They can grant freedom – or begin a war.” In a world where it is a crime to speak against injustice, a jester dares to perform a play that enrages a powerful tyrant prince. The jester’s daughter, Giovanna, must journey into the heart of danger to turn back the terrible consequences unleashed by her father’s words – and becomes entangled in a treacherous plot to overthrow the prince. She alone holds a secret which, if made public, will end the prince’s reign and liberate his oppressed people. But when to openly denounce him brings certain death, will Giovanna have the courage to speak out?



Lamont Review:

Giovanna is a jester’s daughter, and when her father performs a play he has written that belittles the powerful Prince Savernola, the Prince is enraged - and terrible consequences follow.

Can Giovanna stop the bloodshed, or is she another pawn in a treacherous plot?

This is a part fantasy, part historical fiction set in Renaissance Italy, where a wrong word can be as dangerous as a sword.

It is a wonderful tale of mystery, drama, danger and romance, with enthralling characters—both good and bad. This is an irresistible book and will loved by readers in Year 9 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle

Inside The Tiger

By Hayley Lawrence

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9780143788959 SCIS: 1875019

\$19.99

Blurb:

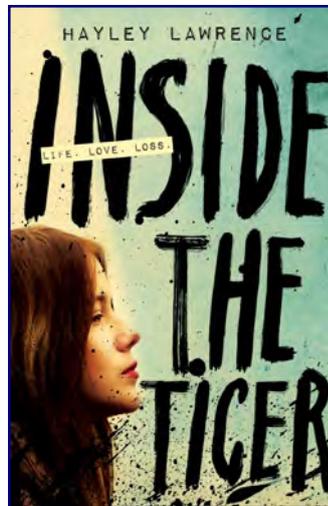
It's not because Bel's mother was murdered.

It's not because her father is a politician.

Bel writes to a Death Row prisoner as an easy way out of an assignment.

But now he's written back.

Drawn to Micah's world inside a Thai prison, Bel finds herself falling for the boy with ragged hair, shackles and a terrible past. But is she setting herself up for more loss? And will loving him mean losing the people who mean the most to her at home?



Lamont Review:

Bel lives a privileged life at home and at an exclusive Sydney Boarding School. When she has to find a 'cause' for a legal studies assignment, she thinks writing to a prisoner on death row will be simple. That is, until she falls in love with him!

This is a beautifully written story of love, loss, friendship and family. Full of characters that will tug at your heartstrings, it also opens your eyes to the highly emotive subject of corporal punishment. The story makes you question how much a life is worth, and whether we should have the power or the right to sentence someone else to death for their crimes.

It is also a story that resonates with themes of family and the power of love.

Best suited to girls in Year 9 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle