

The Break

By Phillip Gwynne

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9780143789383 SCIS: 5374238

\$19.99

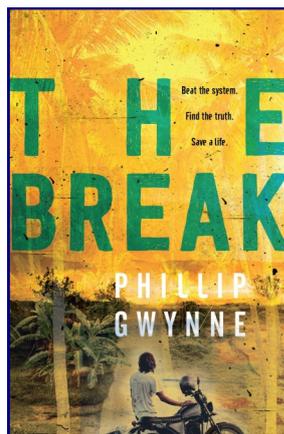
**SECONDARY BOOK
OF THE MONTH**

Blurb:

From the author of the literary hit, *Deadly Unna?*, comes a fast-paced rite-of-passage set amid the mythical surf and island culture of Bali, and up to its neck in the madness of its politics and the terrifying consequences of breaking the rules...

Growing up with the famous Bali surf at his back door, sixteen-year-old Taj had an idyllic childhood - until ten years ago when his father was arrested for smuggling drugs. He's been on death row in Bali's infamous Kerobokan Jail ever since, leaving Taj in an uneasy limbo. When an execution date is set, Taj is left with one course of action - bust his dad out of jail and hightail it back to Australia.

What follows is the desperate, dangerous ride of a father and son on the run. As events unravel and time runs out, Taj uncovers startling truths about his family, his girlfriend and the stranger he is rapidly falling for.



Lamont Review:

An great story of perseverance, *The Break* is a rollercoaster from start to finish! Making a change from his usual Australian setting, Philip Gwynne set this story further north, in Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Taj had a great life in Bali, until his father was arrested for drug smuggling, which comes with a death sentence. When an execution date is set, Taj decides to break his father out of prison and get him back to Australia.

The 15 and 16-year-old characters who give their voice to the story are all incredible in their own way, with the plot bringing out the best and the worst in all of them over the course of this story. I found myself supporting different characters, changing what I wanted to happen and overall being left enthralled by their journey to save Taj's father.

The Break is a fast-paced story, with short chapters that make it very easy to read and stay engaged, perfect for reluctant readers and those who enjoy action-packed stories. Covering themes including friendship, betrayal, family and international law, *The Break* is suitable for all readers aged 15+.

Reviewed by Ben

How To Repaint a Life

By Steven Herrick

Publisher: University of Queensland Press

ISBN 9780702263156 SCIS: 5374148

\$19.99

Blurb:

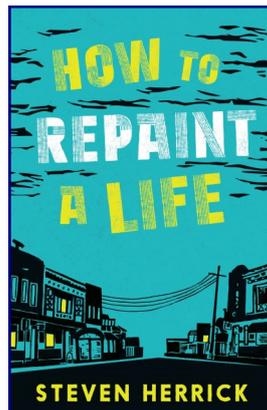
A powerful prose novel from one of Australia's most awarded authors.

Isaac is running from his old life when he steps off the bus in a small town.

He doesn't plan on sticking around and has nowhere to stay, but a local cafe owner's kindness offers him a chance to change his story.

Then Isaac meets Sophie and learns he's not the only one wanting to repaint his life.

As he did so masterfully with *The Simple Gift*, Steven Herrick delves into the universal themes of rising above the past and taking control of your future.



Lamont Review:

Isaac's mother left when he was young, and now Isaac decides to escape his abusive father too. So Isaac boards a bus, and randomly gets off in a small town. He has nowhere to stay, but stops in at the local café for a coffee. When the owner, Joan, is kind to him he decides to stay in town for a while.

Then he meets Sophie and they instinctively trust each other. Slowly Isaac rebuilds his life and learns that love and friendship are not confined to family, but can be found in the people who love you and want you in their lives.

How to Repaint a Life is Steven Herrick at his very best. A beautiful story of running from your past, making a better life for yourself and not letting the past define you. Isaac and Sophie are wonderful characters who are both trying to find their place in the world and growing and learning as they do.

This is a story of friendship, young love, growing up and not being scared of change. It's sure to be a favourite, and is perfect for readers in Year 9 and up. I loved it.

Reviewed by Michelle

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

self / less

By Aviva

Publisher: Macmillan Australia / Pan Macmillan Australia

ISBN 9781760984892 SCIS: 5374137

\$29.99

Blurb:

A world where self-expression is banned. A world where survival is everything. A girl who will be heard. Seventeen-year-old Teddy lives in the walled-in city Metropolis. Radical laws condemn all forms of self-expression and creativity, and the lives of the people are carefully constructed and controlled by the City Council: We watch because We care. When Teddy finds out the truth behind one of the City's biggest lies, she slips out into the darkness of the City after curfew. She is captured by a stranger and held prisoner in an old bomb shelter that lies beneath the City. Here, Teddy discovers that there is a world beneath Metropolis, a world where a growing web of clans are fighting to keep their humanity alive, and waiting for a leader to unite them and lead them back up into the light.



Lamont Review:

Teddy Veodrum is in the upper echelon of society in this futuristic world. Her Dad works directly for the Mayor (and is never at home), and her glamorous Mum works for the Metropolis magazine, the source of all information for residents as the only remaining legal media in the city.

Teddy is facing her three ceremonies - she is given a job, she is life partnered to be a wife and she is to be a womb keeper.

Free thought and self-expression are banned in Metropolis. No music, fiction or art is allowed, and the motto of the Metropolis City Council is 'We watch because we care'. Life has been this way for 70 years, and Teddy is ignorant of many things as a result. But all of this is about to change...

Teddy comes to learn that infected people are not actually being reprogrammed and released to a different part of town. Instead, there is a whole other society living Underground and trying to survive.

Teddy is in trouble and has to make a snap decision to go to the Underground herself. But Underground is a dangerous place, with clans fighting each other for survival.

Regardless of Teddy's courage and the friendships that she has formed, there are many in her new clan that see her as an outsider and are plotting her demise. Can Teddy manage to survive, and maybe even lead them to a better future?

With themes of government control, allies, trust and standing up to make the world a better place, this action-packed novel will best suit readers aged 14 and above.

Reviewed by Rob

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

The Gilded Cage (The Prison Healer Book 2)

By Lynette Noni

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9781760897536 SCIS: 5375799

\$24.99

Blurb:

#1 bestselling Australian YA author Lynette Noni is back with the second book in the breathtaking *Prison Healer* trilogy!

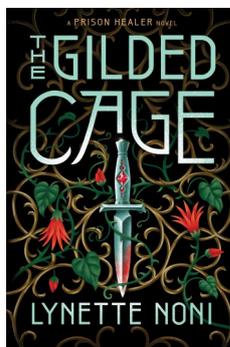
'You need to choose, Kiva. It's him or us. Them or us. You can't have it both ways.'

Kiva Meridan is a survivor.

Not only did she survive Zalindov Prison, but also the deadly Trial by Ordeal. Now, Kiva's purpose goes beyond survival to vengeance. For the past ten years, her only goal was to reunite with her family and destroy the people responsible for ruining their lives. But now that she has escaped Zalindov, her mission has become more complicated than ever.

As Kiva settles into her new life in the capital, she discovers she wasn't the only one who suffered while she was in Zalindov - her siblings and their beliefs have changed, too. Soon it's not just her enemies she's keeping secrets from, but her own family as well.

Outside the city walls, tensions are brewing from the rebels, along with whispers of a growing threat from the northern kingdoms. Kiva's allegiances are more important than ever, but she's beginning to question where they truly lie. To survive this time, she'll have to navigate a complicated web of lies before both sides of the battle turn against her and she loses everything.



Lamont Review:

Kiva has survived Zalindov prison and is slowly adjusting to life with her new found freedom. For ten years she has been waiting for vengeance on the Vallentis family for taking the throne from her family.

But now she finds herself living with the Vallentis family in the palace after Prince Deverick (Jaren to his family) helped her escape. And they are not the awful people she thought they were. Her two siblings, who she hasn't seen in ten years, have also changed and Kiva is not sure who she can trust anymore.

There seems to be more lies and secrets from both sides than she can deal with. Not to mention the complication caused by her falling in love with Jaren. Can she discover the truth before it's too late?

The first book in this series was included in your April Standing Order selection, however this can also be read as a stand alone story. With so many twists and turns, this is a book that is hard to put down.

An enticing mixture of danger, mystery, romance and magic. It is a perfect story for readers 14+. I am now eagerly awaiting the final instalment in this trilogy, and I am sure you will be too.

Reviewed by Michelle

If Not Us

By Mark Smith

Publisher: Text Publishing

ISBN 9781922330796 SCIS: 5374142

\$19.99

Blurb:

From the author of *The Road to Winter* trilogy comes an empowering standalone novel about the courage and consequences of taking climate action in a small coastal community.

He'd always accepted the mine and power station were part of Shelbourne. On still nights, the thrum of the turbines echoed down the valley and melded with the sound of the ocean until you couldn't tell them apart.

Hesse lives in a small coastal town, where a coalmine and power station are a part of the scenery, and a part of the ever-growing problem of climate change. His mum is a member of a local environmental group campaigning to close the mine and shut down the power station. It's a no-brainer, of course, but Hesse is more interested in surfing - and in Fenna, the new exchange student from the Netherlands.

But when someone seems to be trying to derail the campaign, and his friends' families face losing their jobs, Hesse begins to realise that things are complex.

Even though he's reluctant to step into the spotlight, with Fenna's encouragement he decides it's time to make a stand. Because some things are too important to leave to everyone else. And even one small, nervous voice can make a difference.

When Hesse agrees to speak at a protest meeting he has no idea of the storm he is about to unleash.

If Not Us is Mark Smith's first standalone YA novel following his hugely successful Winter trilogy. It's another great story with an engaging and relatable protagonist, as well as an impassioned plea for climate-change action that will inspire and empower readers of all ages.



Lamont Review:

This is a memorable Australian novel that tackles the important issue of climate change and the impact that this can have on communities.

In this case, the setting is a small coastal town that has long been home to an old coal mine. Some people want it closed down, but for forty workers and their families, it is their income source. As a result, any plans regarding the future of the coal mine are sure to divide the town in half.

Our main character is teenage surfer Hesse. He becomes the face of the campaign to shut the mine, via a worldwide Twitter campaign - #I'mWithHesse - that goes viral after he speaks at a rally.

But the story is also about so much more than just a viral campaign around climate change. It touches on grief, as Hesse still grapples with the loss of his Dad in the surf 10 years earlier, as well as dealing with change, social anxiety, love, bullying and eventual tragedy surrounding the death in a car accident of a local boy.

If Not Us says it all. The future is in the hands of the young and books like this one can only help make that future better!

A great book that is suitable for all teenagers.

Reviewed by Rob

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

Within The Ward

By Emily Larkin

Publisher: Rhiza Edge

ISBN 9781761110221 SCIS: 5375830

\$19.99

Here, Paige is immersed in a dream reality called 'the Journey'. If patients finish the Journey, then they can go home.

Secrets are exposed as Paige bonds with other teens who don't belong. The Journey is meant to be a cure – but Paige soon discovers dark forces within the hospital, and that the dream reality is the stuff of nightmares. Paige and her friends have limited chances to show progress, before it's too late.

Can they escape the ward? And can Paige find reasons to live?



Lamont Review:

Set in a futuristic world where 'depressives' are not tolerated - as they can only spread this to others. People are monitored, and crying is not allowed.

Our main character, Paige, finds herself in the state run institution where she must complete The Journey - three dream immersed challenges, that are performed with others, making teamwork vital.

Paige has no regard for her own life, but hates to see her friends suffer, so when she learns the reality of what happens if The Journey is not completed, she finally has a reason to succeed.

The Matron who runs the program does not want people with problems out in the community, and so does all she can to see them fail.

Paige has some people, both inside and outside the hospital, assisting her on The Journey, but will this be enough to get her through?

This is a somewhat dark and bleak look at an intolerant future world, with a fair degree of violence, that makes it best suited to readers 15 years and older. Despite the darkness, it does provide hope in the end, which for me is always an important consideration in recommending this type of novel to you.

Reviewed by Rob

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

Dark Rise: Dark Rise 1

By C.S. Pacat

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760875749 SCIS: 5374110

\$19.99

THE DARK WILL RISE. WHO WILL FALL? WHO WILL STAND?

The ancient world of magic is no more. Its heroes are dead, its halls are ruins, and its great battles between Light and Dark are forgotten. Only the Stewards remember. For centuries they have kept vigil, sworn to protect humanity if the Dark King ever returns.

Sixteen-year-old dock boy Will is on the run in London, pursued by the men who killed his mother. When an old servant urges him to seek out the Stewards, Will is ushered into a secret world, where he must train to fight for the Light in the oncoming war.

As the Dark King's return looms, reborn warriors begin to draw battle lines. But when the young descendants of Light and Dark step into their destined roles, old allegiances, old enmities and old flames are awakened. Will must stand with the last heroes of the Light to prevent the calamity that destroyed their world from returning to destroy his own.

Dark Rise is the first book in a thrilling new YA fantasy series from bestselling Australian author C.S. Pacat.



Lamont Review:

Will is trying to outrun the men he knows are after him - the same men who killed his mother. But there is more to Will and his past than even he knows, and the journey he is about to take is one that he could never have imagined.

Will finds himself caught up in a world of magic when The Stewards, who are the only remaining hope against the rise of the Dark King, take him in and train him in their ways. Will learns about the ancient history of the darkness, and what must happen to stop it taking over the world again.

The characters in this story, their intertwining relationships, and the juggle of who can be trusted and who cannot will drag you in, and make *Dark Rise* hard to put down.

This really is an epic, at times gruesome, magical tale of good versus evil, dark versus light, and has so many twists that readers will be eagerly awaiting the next instalment.

A great read for all those 14 and older.

Reviewed by Sam

The Great Dream Robbery

By Greg James and Chris Smith

Publisher: Puffin / Penguin

ISBN 9780241546307 SCIS: 5372926

\$16.99

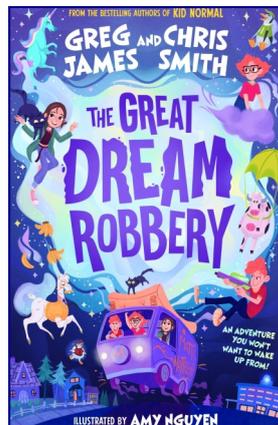
Blurb:

A brand-new adventure beyond your wildest dreams, from the bestselling authors of KID NORMAL.

Unlike most 12 year-olds, Maya Clayton is desperate to go to bed early. Falling asleep is the only chance she has to save her dad - the brilliant but slightly odd Professor Dexter.

The Professor invented a device that allows you to visit other people's dreams. But the devious Lilith Delamere has trapped him inside a nightmare and Maya and the mysterious Dream Bandits must find a way to rescue him before it's too late! Maya will face a dangerous journey and some difficult choices. But sometimes all you need is a dream... and a bit of courage.

Featuring a hospital heist, some banana-loving llamas and a talking cat called Bin Bag, this is one mind-bending adventure you won't want to wake up from.



Lamont Review:

Maya's Dad is a brilliant but slightly odd Professor who works with dreams. He has invented a device so he can visit other people's dreams, but now he is asleep and won't wake up.

He has been asleep for 6 weeks and Maya really misses him. When a strange boy turns up in her dream and says he needs Maya's help to wake her dad up and to solve the mystery of why he is asleep, Maya jumps at the chance.

Maya and her new friends will need to use their imagination in ways they never thought possible!

This is one of the best and funniest books I've read this year. It has laugh out loud moments (especially when the authors decide to talk to you - the reader), fantastic characters, and a story that is beyond your wildest dreams.

This book is what you get when you let your imagination run riot, and it would be a great classroom read to let imaginations loose.

This will be a favourite with readers in lower secondary and upper primary.

Reviewed by Michelle