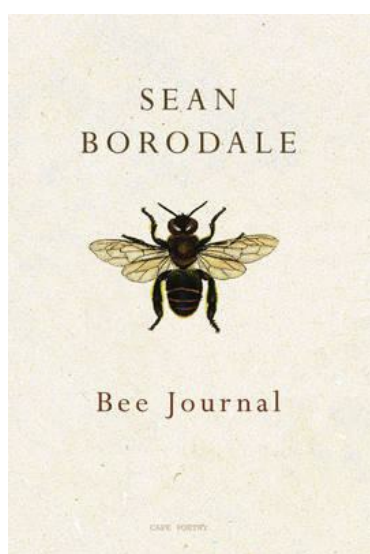


Reading Well Mood-boosting Books: Overview of the 20 books for 2013

READING WELL



***Bee Journal* by Sean Borodale, published by Jonathan Cape**

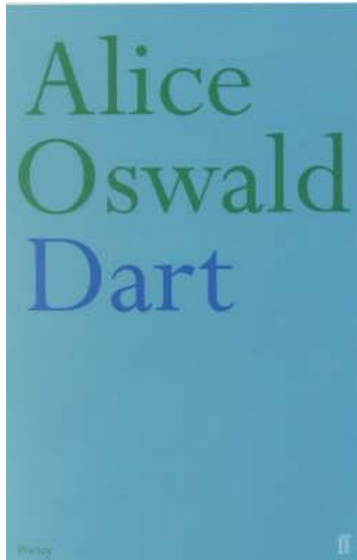
Bee Journal is a startlingly original poetry sequence: a poem-journal of beekeeping that chronicles the life of the hive, from the collection of a small nucleus on the first day to the capture of a swarm two years later. It observes the living architecture of the comb, the range and locality of the colony; its flights, flowers, water sources, parasites, lives and deaths.

The book is full of moments of revelation – particularly of the relationship between the domestic and the wild. In attempting to record and invoke something of the complexity of the relationship between 'keeper' and 'kept' it tunes ear and speech towards the ecstasy of bees, between the known and the unknown. The language itself is dense and clotted, the imagery thrillingly fresh, and the observing eye close, scrupulous and full of wonder. *Bee Journal* is one of the most unusual and exciting poetry debuts in years.

ISBN: 9780224097215 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 5 July 2012 **Extent:** 112pp

Other formats: Ebook (9781448138241)

**THE
READING
AGENCY**



***Dart* by Alice Oswald, published by Faber and Faber**

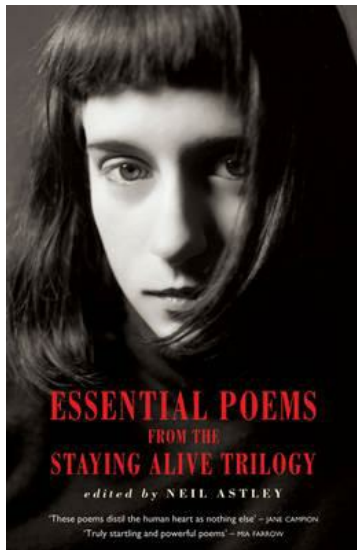
Over the course of three years, Alice Oswald recorded conversations with people who live and work on the River Dart in Devon.

Using these records and voices as a sort of poetic census, she creates a narrative of the river, tracking its life from source to sea.

The voices are wonderfully varied and idiomatic – they include a poacher, a ferryman, a sewage worker and milk worker, a forester, swimmers and canoeists – and are interlinked with historic and mythic voices: drowned voices, dreaming voices and marginal notes which act as markers along the way.

ISBN: 9780571214105 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 8 July 2002 **Extent:** 64pp

Other formats: Hardback (9780571259335); Ebook (9780571259427); CD-Audio (9780571243921)



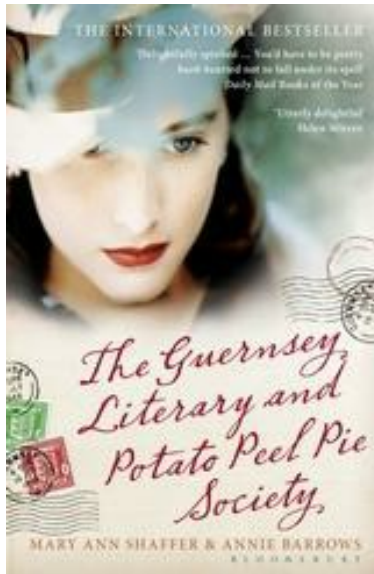
***Essential Poems from the Staying Alive Trilogy*, edited by Neil Astley, published by Bloodaxe Books**

Staying Alive, *Being Alive* and *Being Human* have introduced many thousands of new readers to contemporary poetry, and have helped poetry lovers to discover the little known riches of world poetry. This new pocketbook selection of 100 essential poems from the trilogy is a *Staying Alive* travel companion. As well as selecting favourite poems from the trilogy – readers' and writers' choices as well as his own favourites – editor Neil Astley provides background notes on the poets and poems.

These essential poems are all about being human, being alive and staying alive: about love and loss; fear and longing; hurt and wonder; war and death; grief and suffering; birth, growing up and family; time, ageing and mortality; memory, self and identity; faith, hope and belief; acceptance of inadequacy and making do – all of human life in a hundred highly individual, universal poems.

ISBN: 9781852249427 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 24 May 2012 **Extent:** 160pp

Other formats: Hardback (9781852249588)



***The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, published by Bloomsbury Publishing**

It's 1946 and author Juliet Ashton can't think what to write next. Out of the blue, she receives a letter from Dawsey Adams of Guernsey – by chance, he's acquired a book that once belonged to her – and, spurred on by their mutual love of reading, they begin a correspondence.

When Dawsey reveals that he is a member of the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, her curiosity is piqued and it's not long before she begins to hear from other members. As letters fly back and forth with stories of life in Guernsey under the German Occupation, Juliet soon realizes that the society is every bit as extraordinary as its name.

ISBN: 9781408810262 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 7 June 2010 **Extent:** 256pp

Other formats: Ebook (9781408803318)



***The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, published by Penguin Books**

The Help is the phenomenal international bestseller, which inspired an Oscar-nominated film, by Kathryn Stockett.

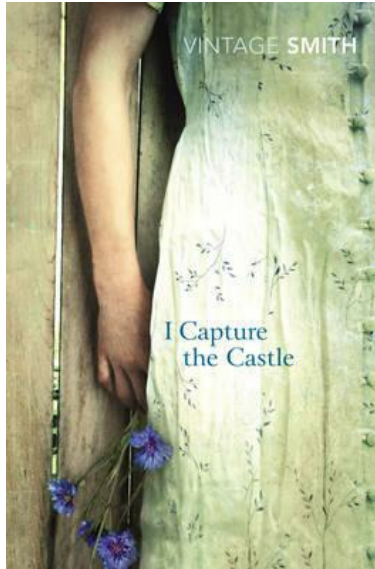
Enter a vanished and unjust world: Jackson, Mississippi, 1962. Where black maids raise white children, but aren't trusted not to steal the silver...

There's Aibileen, raising her seventeenth white child and nursing the hurt caused by her own son's tragic death; Minny, whose cooking is nearly as sassy as her tongue; and white Miss Skeeter, home from College, who wants to know why her beloved maid has disappeared.

Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny. No one would believe they'd be friends; fewer still would tolerate it. But as each woman finds the courage to cross boundaries, they come to depend and rely upon one another. Each is in a search of a truth. And together they have an extraordinary story to tell...

ISBN: 9780241956533 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 29 September 2011 **Extent:** 464pp

Other formats: CD-Audio (9781407442754)



***I Capture the Castle* by Dodie Smith, published by Vintage**

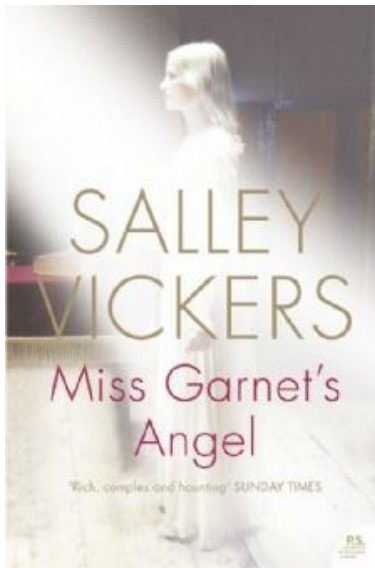
'I write this sitting in the kitchen sink' is the first line of this timeless, witty and enchanting novel about growing up.

Cassandra Mortmain lives with her bohemian and impoverished family in a crumbling castle in the middle of nowhere. Her journal records her life with her beautiful, bored sister, Rose, her fadingly glamorous stepmother, Topaz, her little brother Thomas and her eccentric novelist father who suffers from a financially crippling writer's block.

However, all their lives are turned upside down when the American heirs to the castle arrive and Cassandra finds herself falling in love for the first time.

ISBN: 9780099460879 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 31 January 2004 **Extent:** 432pp

Other formats: Ebook (9781446467145); CD-Audio (9781901768879)



***Miss Garnet's Angel* by Salley Vickers, published by Fourth Estate**

Salley Vicker's sensational debut novel, *Miss Garnet's Angel*, is a voyage of discovery; a novel about Venice but also the rich story of the explosive possibilities of change in all of us at any time.

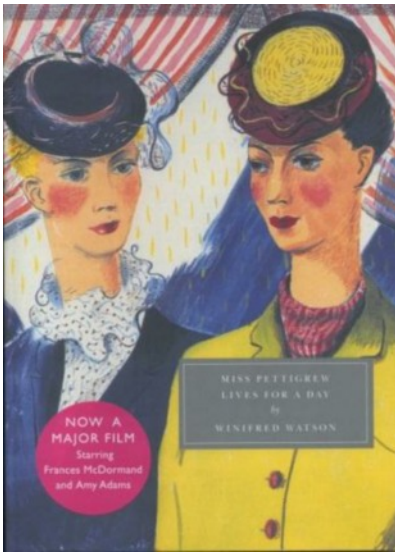
Julia Garnet is a teacher. Just retired, she is left a legacy which she uses by leaving her orderly life and going to live – in winter – in an apartment in Venice. Its beauty, its secret corners and treasures, and its people overwhelm a lifetime of reserve and caution.

Above all, she's touched by the all-prevalent spirit of the Angel Raphael. The ancient tale of Tobias, who travels to Media unaware he is accompanied by the Archangel Raphael, unfolds alongside Julia Garnet's contemporary journey. The two stories interweave with parents and landladies, restorers and priests, American tourists and

ancient travellers abounding. The result is an enormously satisfying journey of the spirit – and Julia Garnet is a character to treasure.

ISBN: 9780006514213 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 2 January 2001 **Extent:** 400pp

Other formats: Ebook (9780007364336); CD-Audio (9780754008200)



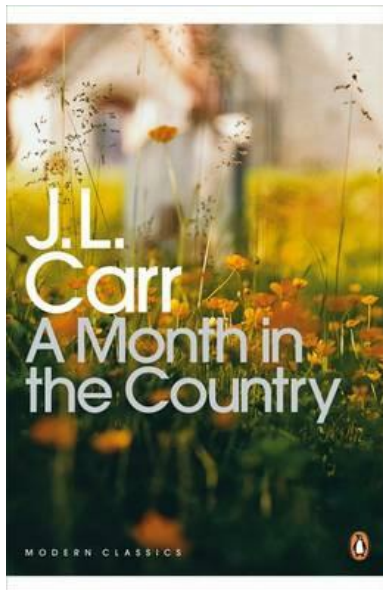
***Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day* by Winifred Watson, published by Persephone Books**

Miss Pettigrew is about a governess sent by an employment agency to the wrong address, where she encounters a glamorous nightclub singer, Miss LaFosse. 'The sheer fun, the light-heartedness' in this wonderful 1938 book 'feels closer to a Fred Astaire film than anything else' comments the Preface-writer Henrietta Twycross-Martin, who found Miss Pettigrew for Persephone Books.

The Guardian asked: 'Why has it taken more than half a century for this wonderful flight of humour to be rediscovered?' while the Daily Mail liked the book's message – 'that everyone, no matter how poor or prim or neglected, has a second chance to blossom in the world.'

ISBN: 9781906462024 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 24 April 2008 **Extent:** 256pp

Other formats: CD-Audio (9781906462062)



***A Month in the Country* by J. L. Carr, published by Penguin Classics**

A damaged survivor of the First World War, Tom Birkin finds refuge in the village church of Oxgodby where he is to spend the summer uncovering a huge medieval wall-painting. Immersed in the peace and beauty of the countryside and the unchanging rhythms of village life Birkin experiences a sense of renewal and belief in the future.

Now an old man, Tom looks back on that idyllic summer of 1920, remembering a vanished place of blissful calm, untouched by change, a precious moment he has carried with him through the disappointments of the years.

ISBN: 9780141182308 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 3 February 2000 **Extent:** 112pp



A Sea Change by Veronica Henry, published by Orion

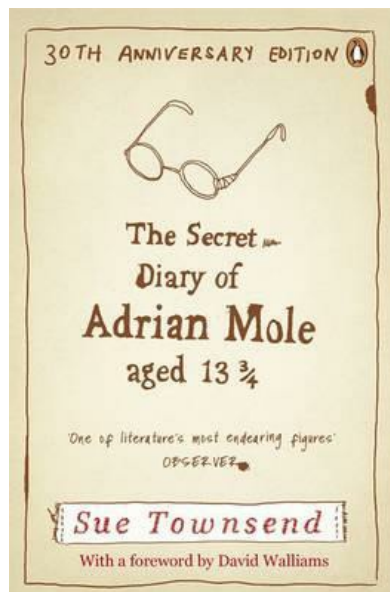
Jenna is known as The Ice Cream Girl. She doesn't mind the name one bit. After all, it's a happy name, and there are far worse jobs than selling ice creams on Everdene beach.

Craig spends as much time as he can at the beach hut in Everdene he rents with a few of his mates. As a policeman, it is a restful change from his daily life, and he's surfing mad. One weekend he's down there on his own when he notices a girl on the beach. He's young, free and single and she catches his eye.

But on this particular summer weekend, both Jenna and Craig's lives are about to change...

ISBN: 9781409104018 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 1 February 2013 **Extent:** 96pp

Other formats: Ebook (9781409108931)



The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾ by Sue Townsend, published by Penguin Books

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾ is the first book in Sue Townsend's brilliantly funny *Adrian Mole* series.

'Friday January 2nd. I felt rotten today. It's my mother's fault for singing "My Way" at two o'clock in the morning at the top of the stairs. Just my luck to have a mother like her. There is a chance my parents could be alcoholics. Next year I could be in a children's home.'

Meet Adrian Mole, a hapless teenager providing an unabashed, pimples-and-all glimpse into adolescent life. Writing candidly about his parents' marital troubles, the dog, his life as a tortured poet and 'misunderstood intellectual', Adrian's painfully honest diary is still hilarious and compelling reading thirty years after it first appeared.

ISBN: 9780141046426 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 19 January 2012 **Extent:** 336pp

Other formats: Hardback (9780718158705); CD-Audio (9780141803623)



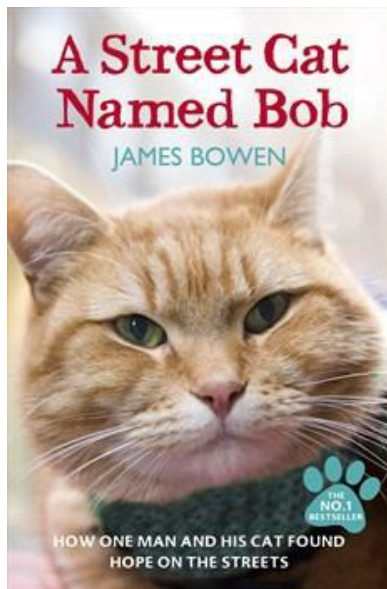
***Soul Music* by Terry Pratchett, published by Corgi Books**

This is a story about sex and drugs and Music With Rocks In. Well, one out of three ain't bad. Being sixteen is always difficult, even more so when there's a Death in the family.

After all, it's hard to grow up normally when Grandfather rides a white horse and wields a scythe. Especially if he decides to take a well-earned moment to uncover the meaning of life and discover himself in the process, so that you have to take over the family business, and everyone mistakes you for the Tooth Fairy. And especially when you have to face the new and addictive music that has entered Discworld. It's lawless. It changes people. It's got a beat and you can dance to it. It's called Music With Rocks In. And it won't fade away.

ISBN: 9780552167550 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 14 February 2013 **Extent:** 432pp

Other formats: Ebook (9781407034935); CD-Audio (9780753122167)



***A Street Cat Named Bob* by James Bowen, published by Hodder**

When James Bowen found an injured, ginger street cat curled up in the hallway of his sheltered accommodation, he had no idea just how much his life was about to change.

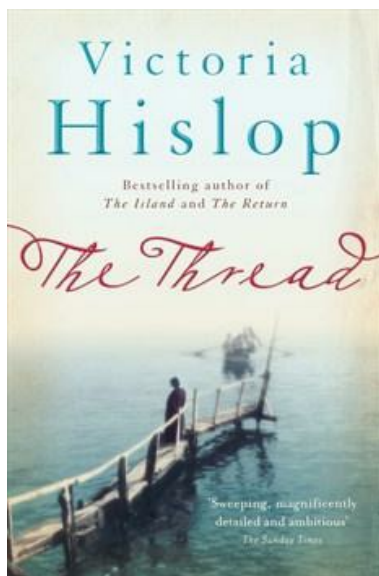
James was living hand to mouth on the streets of London and the last thing he needed was a pet. Yet James couldn't resist helping the strikingly intelligent tom cat, whom he quickly christened Bob. He slowly nursed Bob back to health and then sent the cat on his way, imagining he would never see him again.

But Bob had other ideas. Soon the two were inseparable and their diverse, comic and occasionally dangerous adventures would transform both their lives, slowly healing the scars of each other's

troubled pasts. *A Street Cat Named Bob* is a moving and uplifting story that will touch the heart of anyone who reads it.

ISBN: 9781444737110 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 13 September 2012 **Extent:** 288pp

Other formats: Large-print hardback (9781444815498)



***The Thread* by Victoria Hislop, published by Headline Review**

The enthralling novel from Victoria Hislop, the million-copy bestselling author of *The Island* and *The Return*.

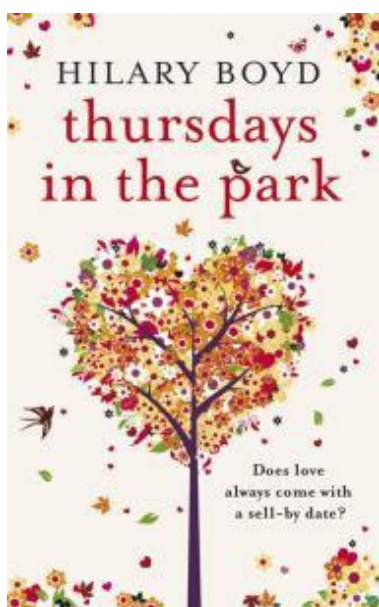
Thessaloniki, 1917. As Dimitri Komninos is born, a devastating fire sweeps through the thriving Greek city where Christians, Jews and Muslims live side by side.

Five years later, Katerina Sarafoglou's home in Asia Minor is destroyed by the Turkish army. Losing her mother in the chaos, she flees across the sea to an unknown destination in Greece. Soon her life will become entwined with Dimitri's, and with the story of the city itself, as war, fear and persecution begin to divide its people.

Thessaloniki, 2007. A young Anglo-Greek hears his grandparents' life story for the first time and realises he has a decision to make. For many decades, they have looked after the memories and treasures of the people who were forced to leave. Should he become their next custodian and make this city his home?

ISBN: 9780755377756 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 24 May 2012 **Extent:** 480pp

Other formats: Hardback (9781445869490); CD-Audio (9780755382248)



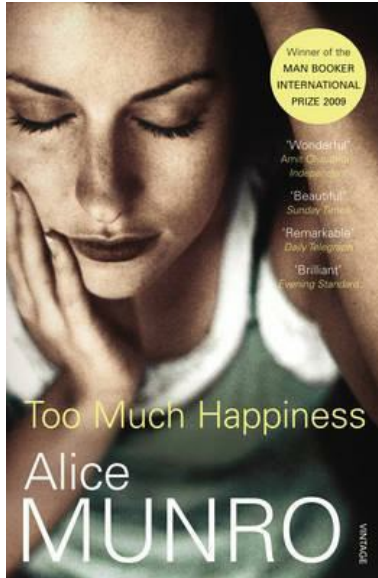
***Thursdays in the Park* by Hilary Boyd, published by Quercus Publishing**

What do you do if you've been married to a man for half your life and out of nowhere he leaves your bed – permanently? When this happens to Jeanie, she's furious and determined to confront George, her husband of thirty years. Is he in love with someone else? What did she do wrong? He won't tell her.

The brightest day of her week is Thursday, the day Jeanie takes her granddaughter to the park. There, one day, she meets Ray, kind, easy to talk to, and gorgeous – he is everything George isn't. But does she have the courage, while facing opposition from all sides, to turn her life upside down for another shot at love?

ISBN: 9780857385178 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 30 August 2012 **Extent:** 352pp

Other formats: Hardback (9781445844121); CD-Audio (9781471239090)



***Too Much Happiness* by Alice Munro, published by Vintage**

A brilliant, compelling new collection from one of the world's greatest living short-story writers, and winner of the Man Booker International Prize 2009.

A wife and mother, whose spirit has been crushed, finds release from her extraordinary pain in the most unlikely place. The young victim of a humiliating seduction (which involves reading Housman in the nude) finds an unusual way to get her own back and move on. An older woman, dying of cancer, weaves a poisonous story to save her life. Other stories uncover the 'deep holes' in marriage and their consequences, the dangerous intimacy of girls and the cruelty of children.

Alice Munro takes on complex, even harrowing, emotions and events, and renders them into stories that surprise, amaze and shed light on the unpredictable ways we accommodate to what happens in our lives.

ISBN: 9780099524298 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 2 September 2010 **Extent:** 320pp

Other formats: Hardback (9780701183059); Ebook (9781409016755)



***Turned Out Nice Again* by Richard Mabey, published by Profile Books**

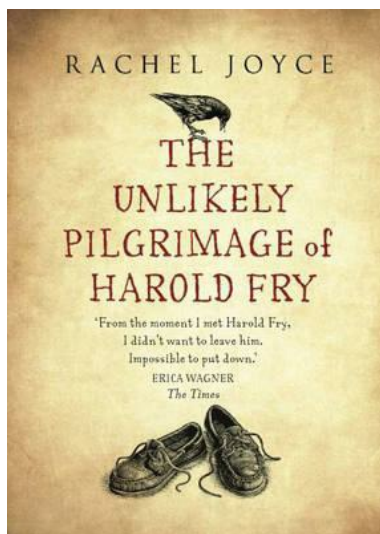
In his trademark style, Richard Mabey weaves together science, art and memoirs (including his own) to show the weather's impact on our culture and national psyche.

He rambles through the myths of Golden Summers and our persistent state of denial about the winter; the Impressionists' love affair with London smog, seasonal affective disorder (SAD – do we all get it?) and the mysteries of storm migraines; herrings falling like hail in Norfolk and Saharan dust reddening south-coast cars; moonbows, dog-suns, fog-mirages and Constable's clouds.

We should never apologise for our obsession with the weather. It is one of the most profound influences on the way we live, and something we all experience in common.

No wonder it's the natural subject for a greeting between total strangers: 'Turned out nice again.'

ISBN: 9781781250525 **Format:** Hardback **Publication date:** 18 February 2013 **Extent:** 160pp



***The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce,
published by Black Swan**

When Harold Fry nips out one morning to post a letter, leaving his wife Hoovering upstairs, he has no idea that he is about to walk from one end of the country to the other.

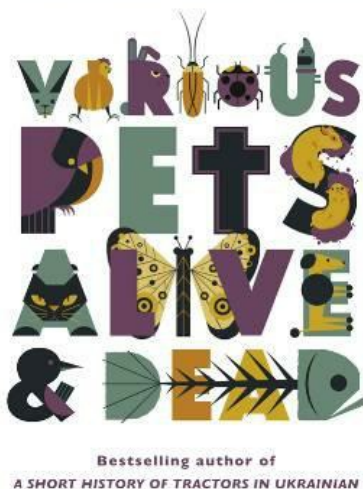
He has no hiking boots or map, let alone a compass, waterproof or mobile phone. All he knows is that he must keep walking. To save someone else's life.

'The odyssey of a simple man, original, subtle and touching.' Claire Tomalin

ISBN: 9780552778091 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 2 January 2013 **Extent:** 368pp

Other formats: Hardback (9781471315671); Ebook (9781446488645)

MARINA LEWYCKA



***Various Pets Alive and Dead* by Marina Lewycka,
published by Penguin Books**

Marina Lewycka, author of the million-copy bestseller *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian*, explores the clash of the generations in one extremely colourful family in her comic novel *Various Pets Alive and Dead*.

For twenty years Doro and Marcus lived in a commune, convinced lentils and free love would change the world. They didn't. What they did do was give their children a terror of radicalism, dirt, cooking rotas and poverty. Their daughter Clara wants nothing less conformist than her own, clean bathroom. Their son Serge hides the awkward fact that he's a banker earning loadsamoney. So when Doro and Marcus spring a surprise on their kids – just as the world

is rocked in ways they always wished for – the family is forced to confront some thorny truths about themselves . . .

ISBN: 9780141044941 **Format:** Paperback **Publication date:** 28 February 2013 **Extent:** 384pp

Other formats: Hardback (9781471313110)