

# BookPeople's ICYMI 22:

Must-read new Australian books you might have missed!



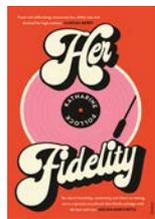
## Fiction



**Sunbathing**  
**Isobel Beech**  
Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$29.99

After weeks of grieving, a woman books a plane ticket bound for

an old villa in the mountains of Abruzzo. She lives for a summer in the house's Birthing Room, where generations of women once had their babies. More often, though, she lives in her head, trying to make sense of her grief and wondering how to go on. This spare, stunning novel explores the workings of the self in the wake of devastation and the infinite ways that the everyday offers solace and hope.



**Her Fidelity**  
**Katharine Pollock**  
Vintage Australia  
TPB \$32.99

Kathy has worked at beloved Brisbane

indie record store Dusty's Records for half her life. Having arrived as a teenager, suddenly thirty is on the horizon. Lately, though, cracks have been appearing in Kathy's comfortable indie bubble. How do you move forward when you're stuck in a groove? And what happens when you realise that you've been working so hard to be part of the boys' club that you never stopped to wonder if you should be creating a club of your own?

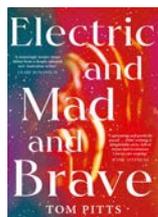


**All That's Left Unsaid**  
**Tracey Lien**

HQ  
TPB \$32.99

Ky Tran returns home to Cabramatta for

the funeral of her younger brother who has been brutally murdered. With the police stumped, Ky tracks down witnesses herself, determined to find answers. This compelling debut is both a study of the effects of inherited trauma and social discrimination, and a compulsively readable literary thriller that expertly holds the reader in its grip until the final page.



**Electric and Mad and Brave**  
**Tom Pitts**  
Picador Australia  
TPB \$34.99

An incredible and

moving debut that observes the tortures of all-consuming young love. Recovering from a breakdown in a mental health facility, Matt Lacey writes the story of his adolescence and the pain and love that shaped his life. A beautiful exploration of the passion of youth, the attendant helplessness of love and the realisation that the past never really leaves us.



**This Devastating Fever**  
**Sophie Cunningham**

Ultimo Press  
TPB \$32.99

Alice Fox has been writing her novel about Virginia Woolf's husband, Leonard, for years. Her determination to finish takes her to Sri Lanka, where Leonard worked as an administrator in then-Ceylon. From Alice's contemporary world we move back and forth from Leonard's in a beautiful narrative of love, art, and loss. Available in an exclusive-cover edition at participating stores. \* *While stocks last.*



**Hovering**  
**Rhett Davis**

Hachette Australia  
TPB \$32.99

Winner of the Victorian Premier's Unpublished

Manuscript award in 2020, *Hovering* is an exciting, genre-bending novel. Lydia returns home after 16 years to live with her sister and finds the city she grew up in changed beyond recognition (and still changing as streets literally shift overnight). Tempers flare between the sisters, and it seems Lydia harbours a terrible secret that could unravel their lives.



**Hydra**  
**Adriane Howell**

Transit Lounge  
TPB \$29.99

When her career goes

awry, young ambitious antiquarian Anja feels adrift. With the last of her inheritance she leases an old derelict cottage, needing its wildness and solitude. Yet a presence—human, ghost, or other—seemingly inhabits the grounds. A novel of dark suspense and mental disquiet, told through the female lens of freedom and constraint.



**The Islands**  
**Emily Brugman**

Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$29.99

On an archipelago off the coast of

Western Australia, a group of Finnish migrants settle into a new life on Little Rat Island. Crayfishing is in its infancy, but it promises the chance of a future for Onni Saari, his stoic wife Alva, and daughter Hilda, who dreams of captaining her own boat. The story of the Saari family unfolds as the Little Rat settlement evolves into a place they can call home.

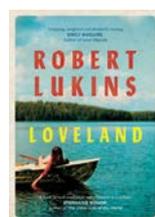


**The Furies**  
**Mandy Beaumont**

Hachette Australia  
TPB \$32.99

At sixteen, Cynthia has a resume of

trauma: her sister has disappeared, her mother incarcerated, and her father absconded. She sits at the centre of repeated violence against women, against the land and against animals. Set against the backdrop of a barren Australian landscape, *The Furies* is a raw, unflinching and utterly authentic debut novel from Mandy Beaumont.



**Loveland**  
**Robert Lukins**

Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$32.99

May has come from Australia to Loveland,

Nebraska, to claim the house on the poisoned lake as part of her grandmother's will. She is also escaping her controlling husband, and as she begins repairing the old house May discovers more about her grandmother and the secrets she moved halfway around the world to keep hidden.



**Son of Sin**  
**Omar Sakr**

Affirm Press  
TPB \$29.99

Omar Sakr's debut novel is an engrossing

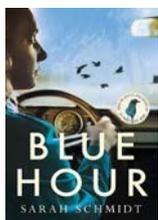
story of a young Arab-Australian boy's sexual coming of age and his lifelong struggle with faith, love and repressed desire. Jamal's attempt to reconcile faith and sexuality is set firmly in racism, family trauma, and homophobia, and is propelled by Sakr's lyrical language and dark humour.

## Dear BookPeople

We've put together our annual BookPeople ICYMI - must-read new Australian books that you might have missed with this selection of books published over 2022 from some of our finest and up-and-coming Australian writers.

Please join us in celebrating Australian writing and discover a brilliant new Australian author in the best place to do so: your local bookshop. Find your local bookshop here [bookpeople.org.au/find-a-bookshop](https://bookpeople.org.au/find-a-bookshop)

## Fiction & Short Stories



### Blue Hour

**Sarah Schmidt**

Hachette Australia  
TPB \$32.99

Following her award-winning debut. See *What I Have Done*, Sarah Schmidt's second novel, is an emotionally charged journey through motherhood and trauma. The novel moves back and forth between the stories of Kitty and her daughter Eleanor in the 1930s and 1970s as they travel through the different stages of their lives. Schmidt explores the beauty and violence in the world and the brutal cost when we allow grief and trauma to reach down generations.

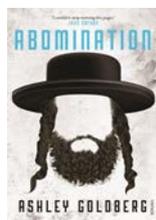


### A Great Hope

**Jessica Stanley**

Macmillan Australia  
TPB \$32.99

John Clare, union leader, husband, philanderer, father, played a key role in the election of Kevin Rudd. He could have been Labor leader himself, but he suffered a brutal and fatal fall, and those who knew him remember and mourn a complex and deeply flawed man. It isn't clear if Clare fell or met with foul play in this gripping mystery and a novel for our maddening, hypocritical times.



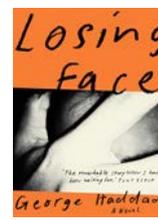
### Abomination

**Ashley Goldberg**

Vintage Australia  
TPB \$32.99

Melbourne 1999:  
Ezra and Yonatan

are best friends whose lives are forever changed when their school, the ultra-Orthodox Jewish Yahel Academy, is rocked by a scandal and they are thrown onto divergent paths. Twenty years later, the lives of the two men are very different. By chance they are reunited, and the events of their past and present collide with devastating consequences.



### Losing Face

**George Haddad**

UQP  
TPB \$29.99

Joey is young and indifferent.

He's drifting around Western Sydney, unaware that his passivity is leading him astray. And then one day he is involved in a violent crime. When Joey is arrested, Elaine, his grandmother, a proud Lebanese woman with problems of her own, is desperate to save face and hold herself together. In her family, history repeats itself, vices come and go, and uncovering long-buried secrets isn't always cathartic.

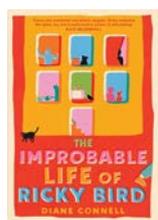


### My Heart is a Little Wild Thing

**Nigel Featherstone**

Ultimo Press  
TPB \$34.99

Patrick has always considered himself a good son. But as his mother's health continues to deteriorate and his siblings remain absent, he finds the ties that bind him to her begin to chafe. After an argument leads to a violent act, he travels to a familiar country retreat and through a chance encounter with a rare animal and an intriguing stranger, starts to wonder if perhaps it is not too late to let his heart run wild.

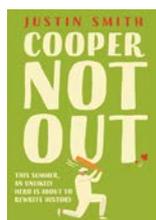


### The Improbable Life of Ricky Bird

**Diane Connell**

Simon & Schuster Australia  
TPB \$32.99

Ricky loves making up outlandish stories for her brother. Her extraordinary imagination is her weapon: as her father said, if you can spin a good yarn, you can get on in life. But the best stories sometimes take on a life of their own and no one, not even Ricky, is able to imagine the consequences. A wonderful portrait of a family, the extraordinary girl at their centre, and the power of storytelling.



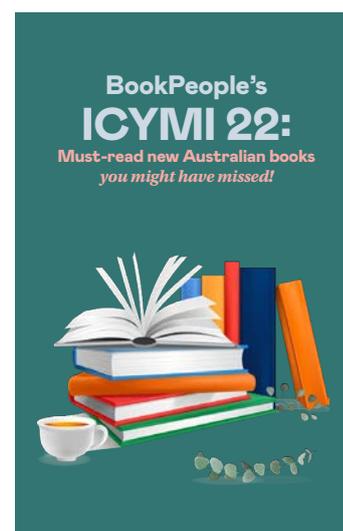
### Cooper Not Out

**Justin Smith**

Michael Joseph Australia  
TPB \$32.99

It's 1984 and the

West Indies are thrashing Australia. In the small town of Penguin Hill, an unlikely hero may help the nation revive its fading love of cricket. Sergeant Roy Cooper has been on the local team for decades and has never been dismissed. His remarkable story finds its way into the hands of sports columnist Donna Garrett and soon captures the nation's imagination. A funny and heart-warming novel.



### The Lovers

**Yumna Kassab**

Ultimo Press  
TPB \$32.99

*The Lovers* is an

enchancing fable that explores the light and dark of a relationship—a love distilled down to its barest form. What happens when we become used to each other, when we become bored, when we anticipate each other's moods like the seasons cycled in a day? What happens when we tire of each other? Written in short concise chapters, *The Lovers* delves into the most intimate of feelings.



### Every Version of You

**Grace Chan**

Affirm Press  
TPB \$32.99

In late 21st century

Australia, Tao-Yi and her partner Navin spend most of their time inside a hyper-immersive virtual reality called Gaia. They work, socialise, and even eat in this digital utopia. Across the city, in the abandoned 'real' world, Tao-Yi's mother remains stubbornly offline. When a new technology is developed to permanently upload a human brain to Gaia, Tao-Yi must decide what is most important: a digital future, or an authentic past.



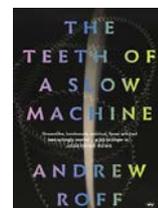
### Sadvertising

**Ennis Čehić**

Vintage Australia  
TPB \$32.99

In the mind-bendingly upside-down world of *Sadvertising*,

iPhones have feelings, brands come to life, creative directors disappear into parallel universes and lowly freelancers become immortal. It's a world where gods, ghosts and muses stalk the corridors of bland and placeless offices. Short, punchy and direct, Ennis Čehić's satirical fables are box-fresh and shot through with pitch-black humour and existential dread.



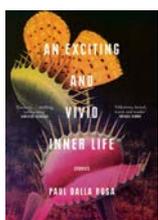
### The Teeth of a Slow Machine

**Andrew Roff**

Wakefield Press  
PB \$29.95

This daring,

irreverent, short-story collection explores the conundrums of contemporary life and what it is to be human. A corporate satire follows a pair of dark operatives working for a chicken franchise. A coder calculates the odds of her husband's cold developing complications and killing him. An archaeologist working for mining companies develops a mysterious psychological condition and commit extreme acts of generosity.



### An Exciting and Vivid Inner Life

**Paul Dalla Rosa**

Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$29.99

Shifting between euphoria and despair, the characters in this short story collection wrestle with what it means to live, work, and love. Paul Dalla Rosa explores an extremely contemporary existential malaise that seems to overwhelm young people in this brilliant debut.

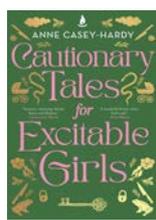


### Everything Feels Like the End of the World

**Else Fitzgerald**

Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$29.99

An impressive debut short story collection, from the winner of the Richell Prize. These speculative fiction stories explore the possible future of Australia and what it means to be human from our present day to thousands of years into the future.



### Cautionary Tales for Excitable Girls

**Anne Casey-Hardy**

Scribner  
TPB \$29.99

These gem-like stories are about the desire to rush out and meet life; about getting in over your head; about danger, and damage, and what it means to survive—and not always survive—the risk of being young. A masterful debut from a rare new voice.



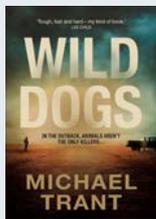
### Unlimited Futures

**Rafeef Ismail and Ellen van Neerven Eds.**

Freemantle Press  
PB \$19.99

*Unlimited Futures* is an anthology of Own Voices speculative fiction from First Nations writers and Black writers, reflecting visionary pasts, hopeful futures and the invisible ties between First Nations people and People of Colour. With contributions by Claire G. Coleman and many others.

## Crime & Thrillers



**Wild Dogs**  
**Michael Trant**  
Bantam Australia  
TPB \$32.99

In the drought-ridden rangelands of Western Australia, Gabe Ahern makes his living trapping wild dogs for local station owners. Still coming to terms with his wife's death—and the part he played in it—the old bushman leads a solitary life. Until one morning, he rescues a young Afghan man, Amin, from certain execution and Gabe is drawn into a ruthless game of cat and mouse.



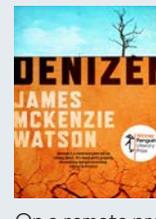
**The Torrent**  
**Dinuka McKenzie**  
HarperCollins  
TPB \$32.99

In Northern NSW, heavily pregnant and a week away from maternity leave, Detective Sergeant Kate Miles is exhausted and counting down the days. But a violent hold-up at a local fast-food restaurant with unsettling connections to her own past, means that her final days will be anything but straightforward.



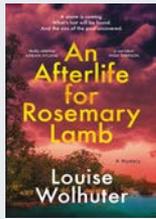
**When We Fall**  
**Aoife Clifford**  
Ultimo Press  
PB \$24.99

Lawyer Alex Tillerson is visiting her mother in the coastal town of Merritt when they come across the body of a girl on the beach. Alex thinks the local police aren't doing enough and isn't sure if they are incompetent or complicit. Deciding to investigate the murder herself she finds the residents of Merritt have quite a few secrets, including her own mother.



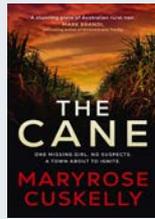
**Denizen**  
**James McKenzie Watson**  
Viking Australia  
TPB \$32.99

On a remote property in western NSW, nine-year-old Parker fears that something is wrong with his brain. His desperate attempts to control this internal chaos spark a series of events that get way out of his control in deadly and devastating ways. This is a gothic thriller exploring rural Australia's simultaneous celebration of harsh country and stoic people.



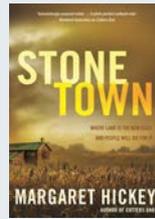
**An Afterlife for Rosemary Lamb**  
**Louise Wolhuter**  
Ultimo Press  
TPB \$34.99

When a young girl goes missing in the small town of Magpie Beach, three women's lives are irrevocably changed. Fleeing complicated pasts and trying to navigate uncertain futures, Meg, Rosemary, and Lily forge a delicate friendship under the shadow of a growing mystery and hostile town. This beautifully written portrait of a small community of outsiders keeps building until the final page, revealing how little we really know about each other.



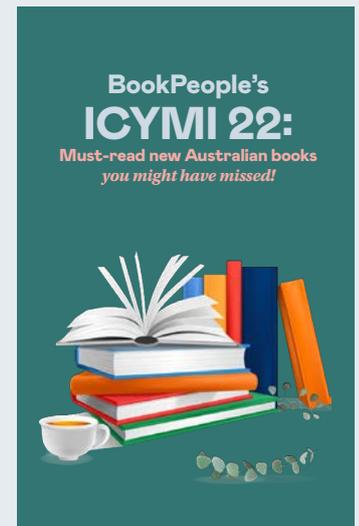
**The Cane**  
**Maryrose Cuskelly**  
Allen & Unwin  
TPB \$32.99

Sixteen-year-old Janet McClymont disappears, last seen walking into the cane fields in the North Queensland town of Quala. The police are clueless, the town is scared, and the cane needs to be burned for harvesting. Janet's mother tries desperately to stop the burning until her daughter is found. The region's distrust and prejudices hamper the search for truth in this taut, atmospheric thriller.



**Stone Town**  
**Margaret Hickey**  
Bantam Australia  
TPB \$32.99

With its gold rush history long in the past, Stone Town has definitely seen better days. And it's now in the headlines for all the wrong reasons. When three teenagers stumble upon a body in dense bushland one rainy Friday night, Senior Sergeant Mark Ariti's hopes for a quiet posting in his old hometown are shattered. Following a late-night call from his former boss, Mark is sure of one thing: he's now in the middle of a deadly game.

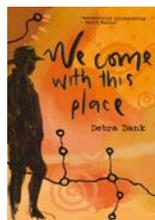


## Biographies & Memoirs



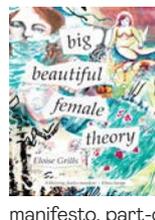
**Found, Wanting**  
**Natasha Sholl**  
Ultimo Press  
PB \$24.99

On Valentine's Day, after a night of red wine, pasta, and planning for their future, Natasha Sholl and her partner Rob went to bed. A few hours later, at the age of 27, Rob's heart stopped. *Found, Wanting* tells the story of Natasha's attempt to rebuild her life in the wake of Rob's sudden death and colliding with the cultural assumptions about the 'right way' to grieve.



**We Come with This Place**  
**Dr Debra Dank**  
Echo  
PB \$29.99

Debra Dank, a Gudanji/Wakaja woman, has written a personal history of ancestral knowledge, connection to family, community and Country. *We Come with This Place* is not only a love letter to her people and Country, it is also a piercing look at the cruelty and injustices of a deeply racist Australia.



**big beautiful female theory**  
**Eloise Grills**  
Affirm Press  
PB \$35.00

Part-feminist manifesto, part-graphic novel, *big beautiful female theory* is a carnivalesque exploration of the ways identity is formed through culture, relationships and the weight of society's expectations. Without falling into a simple recovery narrative, these essays give a sense of delight and optimism in defiance of difficult circumstances and unfair patriarchal structures.



**Desi Girl**  
**Sarah Malik**  
UQP  
TPB \$32.99

In these memoir-style essays, Walkley Award-winning Pakistani-Australian journalist Malik dissects the many layers of identity that have shaped her, from faith, to feminism, race and class. She shares stories of working in a newsroom as a Muslim feminist in the age of Islamophobia, and how to find and take your place in the world.



**The Wonder of Little Things**  
**Vince Copley & Lea McInerney**  
ABC Books  
TPB \$34.99

First Nations Elder Vince Copley shares his extraordinary story, beginning on a government mission in 1936. At a home for Aboriginal boys he befriended future leaders Charlie Perkins, John Moriarty and Gordon Briscoe. Vince's love of life and his determination to enjoy it in the face of adversity will inspire you to find the wonder in little things every day.



**Childless**  
**Sian Prior**  
Text  
TPB \$34.99

The long awaited follow up to *Shy: A Memoir* finds writer and broadcaster Sian Prior examining at fifty, despite her own many and varied attempts, that babies weren't hers to have. Unexpectedly uplifting and beautifully written Sian observes parenthood itself—how we succeed at it and how we fail—from a perspective outside the trenches.



**Raised by Wolves**  
**Jess Ho**  
Affirm Press  
TPB \$29.99

Jess Ho is best known for their 'take-no-prisoners' opinions on the Australian hospitality industry. In this powerful memoir, Jess reflects on growing up Cantonese in the racist outer suburbs, emerging from childhood with a major psychological complex and a kick-arse palate, traits that would help them fit right into the messy world of Melbourne's food scene.



**Tell Me Again**  
**Amy Thunig**  
UQP  
TPB \$32.99

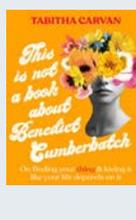
In this open and honest memoir, Amy narrates her challenging journey through childhood and adolescence, growing up in a community that faced the challenges of addiction and incarceration. In recounting her experience, she shows how the stories we tell about ourselves can help to shape and sustain us. Amy will captivate and inspire you with her candour and insight.

## Non-Fiction



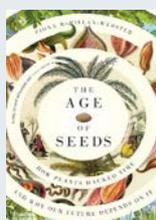
**Chasing Wrongs and Rights**  
**Elaine Pearson**  
Scribner  
TPB \$34.99

The Australia Director of Human Rights Watch shares her experiences defending human rights—from human trafficking in Nepal to the ‘drug war’ in the Philippines to treatment of detainees in Papua New Guinea and in Australia. Deeply informative and inspiring, Elaine Pearson’s story will leave you understanding how much needs to change, and how individuals can make a difference.



**This is Not a Book About Benedict Cumberbatch**  
**Tabitha Carvan**  
HarperCollins  
TPB \$32.99

When Tabitha Carvan woke up in her 40s with a raging crush on Benedict Cumberbatch, she thought that something was seriously wrong with her. But the more she delved into the world of fandom and obsession, the more she came to realise that it was the world that was wrong: specifically, the squashing of women’s passions along the way to adulthood. This book reclaims women’s joy unashamedly and very humourously.



**The Age of Seeds**  
**Fiona McMillan-Webster**  
Thames & Hudson  
Australia  
TPB \$34.99

Plants evolved seeds to hack time. Thanks to seeds they can cast their genes forward into the future, enabling species to endure across seasons, years and occasionally millennia. In *The Age of Seeds*, Fiona McMillan-Webster tells the astonishing story of seed longevity, the crucial role they play in our everyday life, and what that might mean for our future.



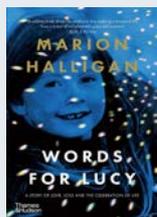
**POWER**  
**Kemi Nekvapil**  
Penguin Life  
Australia  
TPB \$34.99

Kemi Nekvapil knows the feelings of fear, vulnerability, and powerlessness. Growing up in foster care, many times she had the doors to opportunity closed to her because of her race and gender. Learning to make her own choices and use her voice without apology were her first steps towards a bold, purpose-filled life. Now a highly respected executive and personal coach, Kemi has created a five-step framework to guide other women to build their personal power.



**August in Kabul**  
**Andrew Quilty**  
MUP  
PB \$34.99

Afghanistan was a moral and foreign policy disaster for America, culminating in the Taliban and al Qaeda coursing through the country, toppling the proxy government and setting fire to another failed conqueror. The humiliating end to America’s longest foreign incursion is told through the stories of Afghans whose lives were upended, by multi-Walkley award winner Andrew Quilty.



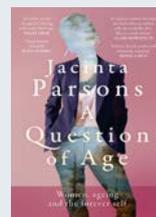
**Words for Lucy**  
**Marion Halligan**  
Thames & Hudson  
Australia  
TPB \$32.99

When your daughter dies, how do you navigate living? One morning, Lucy Halligan lay on her bed with her cat and went to sleep. Soon after, her heart stopped. But her mother, writer Marion Halligan, forced hers to keep beating. More joy than sorrow, this profoundly moving memoir celebrates Lucy’s life, weaving together everyday details and treasured events as a mother finds space in grief to live.



**We've Got This**  
**Eliza Hull, Ed.**  
Black Inc.  
TPB \$32.99

Eliza Hull went searching for information about what to expect, but found a lack of material for parents with a disability, despite the fact that they make up 18% of Australian households. In *We've Got This*, twenty-five authors push back against society’s assumptions that deaf, disabled or chronically ill people cannot make wonderful parents too.



**A Question of Age**  
**Jacinta Parsons**  
ABC Books  
TPB \$34.99

ABC radio journalist Jacinta Parsons has written a book for every woman experiencing the unavoidable process of aging. Parsons looks at what it means in today’s society for a woman to age and how we adjust to our new place in a world that tries to make us invisible. Parsons suggests instead of going quietly into our dotage this is the time we should take stock and look to the future.

## Children's & Young Adult



**August & Jones**  
**Pip Harry**  
Lothian Children's Books  
PB \$16.99

At its heart, this is a story of friendship, love and resilience. Outdoor-loving Jones has moved to Sydney from her country farm and meets shy, awkward August. They couldn’t be more different but when Jones’ eyesight fails and August’s family starts to fracture their friendship, a bold plan proves that anything is possible. A beautiful story that shows that friendship can come from all sorts of places. For readers 9+



**The Greatest Thing**  
**Sarah Winifred Searle**  
Allen & Unwin  
PB \$19.99

It’s the first day of high school, and Winifred has decided she is going to reinvent herself. In art class, she meets Oscar and April. They don’t look or act like the typical teenagers: They seem comfortable in their own skin in a way that Win can only dream of. A poignant and honest graphic novel about friendships, self-discovery and acceptance.



**My Spare Heart**  
**Jared Thomas**  
Allen & Unwin  
PB \$19.99

Phoebe’s non-Indigenous mum and her dad, an Aboriginal man, have split up and she’s moved to a sleepy town with him and his new health-obsessed girlfriend. Her new school is full of hippies, but some of the kids are cool, and the local basketball team is tight, so before long she’s fitting in. But as her mum becomes increasingly unreliable, her world begins to crumble again. How can she help her mum without tearing her family apart?



**Dancing Barefoot**  
**Alice Boyle**  
Text Publishing  
PB \$24.99

Patti ‘Patch’ Smith is a music-loving queer kid with a secret long-term crush on basketball star Evie Vanhoutte. An unexpected encounter with Evie sparks a friendship that is as terrifying as it is exciting. Add in supporting a friend who is transitioning, dealing with the school bully, and worrying about a potential stepmother—Patch is dealing with some complex feelings. Full of pop-culture references, this feminist, queer feel-good romance will have you cheering for Patch as she navigates first love.

## BookPeople's ICYMI 22: Must-read new Australian books you might have missed!

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