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The Bottle Imp

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New Publications
Fiction & Poetry

Prisoner of the Inquisition

by Theresa Breslin

Doubleday Children's Books, 2010

Zarita, only daughter of the town magistrate, lives a life of wealth and privilege. Indulged by her parents, she is free to spend her days as she pleases, enjoying herself in the company of an eligible young nobleman, horse riding, or leisurely studying the arts. Saulo, son of a family reduced by circumstances to begging, witnesses his father wrongfully arrested and dealt with in the most horrifying way. Hauled off to be a slave at sea and pursued by pirates he encounters the ambitious mariner explorer, Christopher Columbus. Throughout his hardships Saulo is determined to survive – for he has sworn vengeance on the magistrate and his family. As Zarita's life also undergoes harsh changes the formidable and frightening Inquisition arrives in the area, bringing menacing shadows of suspicion with acts of cruel brutality – and ultimately, amid the intrigues of the court of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand in the splendid Moorish city of Granada, betrayal and revenge ...

Precious and the Puggies: Precious Ramotswe's Very First Case

by Alexander McCall Smith,

transl. James Robertson

Itchy Coe Books, 2010

Alexander McCall Smith's *Precious and the Puggies* is his first detective story for younger readers published in Scots ahead of its English version. Translated into Scots by James Robertson and with beautiful illustrations by Iain McIntosh, this book is a truly ground-breaking title. Known to readers around the world as Mma Ramotswe, young Precious must solve her very first case involving her friend Sepo, a piece and some cheeky puggies and so become a detective.

Zenith

by Julie Bertagna

Young Picador, 2008

In a drowned world, the search for a future is a terrifying fight for survival. The mighty ice caps at the poles are in meltdown. The seas have risen. And land has disappeared forever beneath storm-tossed waves ... *Exodus* and *Zenith* tell the incredible story of young people with the will to make their own new beginnings in the harshest of worlds. *Zenith* continues the stunning journey begun in the award-winning and critically-acclaimed best-seller *Exodus*.

Naming the Bones

by Louise Welsh

Canongate Books, 2010

Knee-deep in the mud of an ancient burial ground, a winter storm raging around him, and at least one person intent on his death: how did Murray Watson end up here? His quiet life in university libraries researching the lives of writers seems a world away, and yet it is because of the mysterious writer, Archie Lunan, dead for thirty years, that Murray now finds himself scrabbling in the dirt on the remote island of Lismore. Loaded with Welsh's trademark wit, insight and gothic charisma, this adventure novel weaves the lives of Murray and Archie together in a tale of literature, obsession and dark magic.

If It Is Your Life

by James Kelman

Hamish Hamilton, 2010

Giving voice to the dispossessed and crafting stories of lives on the edge, lives almost lost, lives held in the balance, James Kelman writes about the things that touch us all. With honesty, toughness and humour, he confronts the issues of language, class, politics, gender and age – identity in all its forms – with a sympathetic pen and a sharp and observant eye. No other British writer today penetrates so deeply into the hearts, minds and desperation of his characters, and this collection is as uncompromising, and as beautiful, as anything he has ever written.

The Cottagers of Glenburnie and other Educational Writings

by Elizabeth Hamilton; ed. Pam Perkins
ASLS 2009

Writing in the late 18th and early 19th century, Elizabeth Hamilton produced fiction, satire, comical sketches, philosophical essays, historical biography, theological treatises, and essays on educational theory. She is best known for her novel *The Cottagers of Glenburnie* (1808) with its vivid depictions – and biting satires – of Scottish peasant life. A lively and entertaining tale, *The Cottagers of Glenburnie* also skillfully discusses and dissects class issues, British imperialism, and war. Also included here are three examples of Hamilton's non-fiction: *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education* (1801); *Memoirs of the Life of Agrippina, Wife of Germanicus* (1804); and *Letters Addressed to the Daughter of a Nobleman* (1806). All three present different aspects of Hamilton's educational theories. Taken together, these works show how, despite its ostensibly simple plot and style, Glenburnie brings together the political and social concerns of the day with the Scottish Enlightenment interest in theories of the mind and of moral education on which Hamilton drew throughout her career. is a fascinating example of early 19th-century women's fiction. This volume is the only edition available in print, and it comes with a glossary and notes for scholars and students.

Homecoming

by Alan Riach

Luath Press, 2009

Homecoming puts Scotland in touch with the wider world, particularly fitting as the country prepares to welcome back its sons and daughters in a year-long celebration. Riach, himself a returned ex-pat, finds common humanity at home and abroad with a new book of inspired poetry carefully arranged in five sections, from the opening preludes to the diverse landscapes of Scotland, from Orkney to the Borders. Riach guides the reader around the globe from New Zealand through China to Mexico, Istanbul and Helsinki before returning home to Scotland in the final section, and the crux of the collection. In over 80 engaging poems, diverse in form and subject matter, Riach observes life with a poignancy, clarity and sometimes a hard edge that has earned him the reputation as one of the finest poets of his generation. *Homecoming* also includes beautiful original illustrations by artist Alexander Moffat.

The Lamplighter

by Jackie Kay

Bloodaxe Books, 2008

Jackie Kay's *The Lamplighter* takes us on a journey through the dark heart of slavery. It is both a radio and stage play and a multi-layered epic poem. This edition includes the much acclaimed BBC radio play on two CDs (pouched inside the back cover). Four women and one man tell the story of the fort, the slave ship, the middle passage, the life on the plantations, the growth of the British city and the industrial revolution. *The Lamplighter* focuses on parts of history other books rarely touch upon, revealing the devastating human cost of slavery for individual people. Constance has had to witness the sale of her own child; Mary has been beaten to an inch of her life; black Harriot has had to become a high class whore; the *Lamplighter* was sold twice into slavery from the ports in Bristol. All four very different voices tell their story, along with Macbean, the zeitgeist.

From the Ganga to the Tay

by Bashabi Fraser

Luath Press, 2009

"The mythical qualities of Indian rivers is profound with daily rituals imprinted in community consciousness. Scotland's rivers were also recognised as the life blood of mother earth, and considered sacred, but cultural evolution seems to have clouded our ancestors' respect for Scotland's most powerful river, the Tay." – Kenny Munro

From The Ganga to the Tay is an epic poem in which the Indian River Ganges and the Scottish River Tay, the largest waterways in their countries, relate the historical importance of the ties between India and Scotland. The rivers are potent natural symbols of continuity and peace. With stunning photographs, the conversation between the rivers explores centuries of shared history between Scotland and India as well as each river's personal journey through time.

Ménage

by Ewan Morrison
Jonathan Cape, 2009

Is the ménage à trois a way to live, or just a dream, impossible in reality? In 1993, Dot, Saul and Owen lived together on the fringes of the Hoxton art scene, shoplifting, dole scrounging, doing drugs and swapping clothes and beds. Their year as a ménage, however, led to a suicide attempt, to art stardom, and to one of the three vanishing from the world. Fifteen years later there is a big retrospective of Dot's art and they are each drawn back into each other's lives. But can they relive the past, or will they rekindle the passions that nearly destroyed them? *Ménage* is a *Jules et Jim* for the jilted generation. A tale of heroin chic, fake moustaches, shoplifted sherry, pickled animals, and a love so insane that it could only be a work of art.

What Becomes

by A L Kennedy
Jonathan Cape, 2009

Always attuned to the moment of epiphany, these twelve stories are profound, intimate observations of men and women whose lives ache with possibility – each story a dramatisation of the instant in a life that exposes it all; love and the lack of love, hope and the lack of hope. These men and women are perfectly ordinary people – whose marriages founder, who sit on their own in a cinema watching a film with no soundtrack; who risk sex in a hotel with an anonymous stranger. They conceal tenderness and disappointment, vulnerability and longing, griefs and wonders ... A.L. Kennedy's fifth remarkable collection of short stories shows us exactly what becomes of the broken-hearted. She reveals the sadness, violence, hurt and terror, but also the redemption of love – and she does so with the enormous human compassion, wild leaps of humour, and the brilliantly original linguistic skill that distinguishes her as one of Britain's finest writers.

Zero

by Brian McCabe
Polygon, 2009

According to the Pythagoreans and the Hebrew cabalists, the essential mysteries of life and creation may be revealed through the decoding of numbers. Brian McCabe's new collection, *Zero*, is devoted to the poetics of numbers and numerological qualities, even including shape, colour, and taste. Intertwining literature and mathematics – ostensibly very different ways of approaching and understanding reality – these poems confront the problem of knowledge and representation. The author believes that, 'though founded on certainty, mathematics is essentially just another way of probing the uncertain, the many – though not necessarily infinite – mysteries of the universe'. Human understanding is a constant quest to impose pattern and form over chaos; this is expressed through McCabe's rhythmic play with the potentially infinite combinations of the finite: ten figures and twenty-six letters. His skilful permutations transform numbers into flesh. He roots the abstraction of figures into a personal and graspable reality, 'as a dream put into words,/ a notion put into dogma'.



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www.thebottleimp.org.uk

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