



BOOKS

CitiVibe

The Citizen Thursday 25 July 2013

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Secrets and pain

JANE is pregnant. She is living in a strange city, she can't speak the language and feels isolated while her partner, Petra, works.

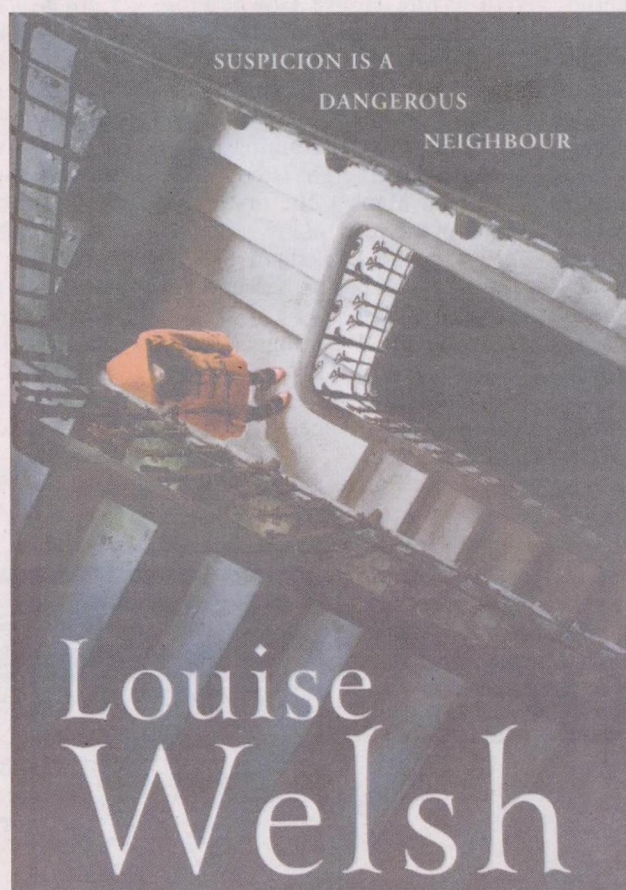
Unable to sleep at night, she hears screams from the next-door apartment. The next morning she sees Anna Mann, the neighbour's teenage daughter, with bruises on her face. Jane is convinced that her father is abusing her. The problem is that no-one believes her.

Petra warns her not to interfere in other people's lives; that she should focus on her health and the birth of her baby.

Jane is determined to prove that her suspicions are true. She finds herself uncovering secrets and discovers that Anna is not as innocent as she appears.

I felt the beginning was a little slow, but then found myself unable to put the book down. The characters were intriguing. The ending tied everything into a neat bundle.

ULRIKE HILL
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA

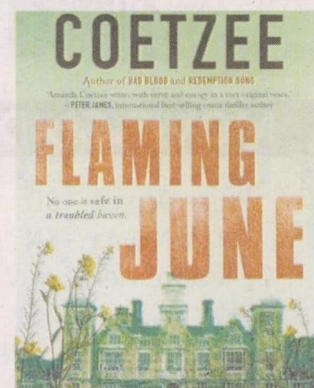


The Girl On The Stairs by Louise Welsh (John Murray), R279. ISBN: 9781848546608

CULT FAVOURITE

THIS is my first Badger novel. I can't wait to get my hands on the previous two. Badger is a "traveller" (or gypsy) and a cop. When a young woman is found floating in a river, Badger will do anything to catch her killer. He uses plain old detective work and a good dose of traveller's lore to work this case. The victim is a member of a cult run by twins, who are horribly sick and twisted. Coetzee uses many viewpoints and some are unnecessary. Although I found the story predictable, and there were pacing issues with the ending, it was still a good read.

MIA BOTHA
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



Flaming June by Amanda Coetzee (Macmillan), R187. ISBN: 9781770102828

HARD-HITTING CRIME FICTION

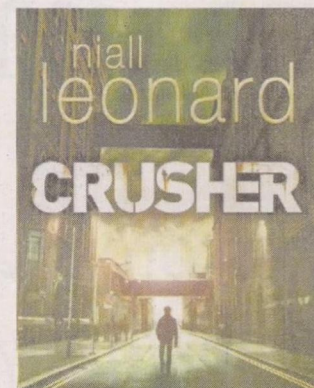
FINN McGuire discovers his father bludgeoned to death in a pool of blood at his desk. He becomes the prime suspect in his murder. Finn must race against time to clear his name and find out who the real murderer is.

Scouring London for answers, Finn faces danger at every turn. He is about to find the people you trust are the ones who deceive you.

This story is about fights, where Finn survives by a whisker. It is a thrilling crime-fighting story that takes you from one bloody scene to the next.

This is not a book for the faint-hearted but the story grips you.

DEE ANDREW
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



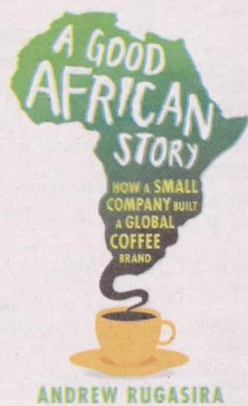
Crusher by Niall Leonard (Random House), R150. ISBN: 9780857532091

BIG-PICTURE BUSINESS

GIVE a man a fish and you feed him for a day, but teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. – Chinese proverb. This is the story of the Good African Coffee Company and they do just this, only with coffee, not fish. They have helped thousands of farmers to support themselves and break free from the destructive cycle of poverty. Andrew Rugasira discusses the joys and trials of setting up and running a business in Africa. He has a strong "trade, not aid" philosophy.

This is an inspiring story. Rugasira is passionate about our continent. What he failed to do, though, was share his passion with me. He didn't engage my emotions. I didn't smell the coffee and I didn't touch the freshly tilled soil. Still, it is recommended for anyone who has a business.

MIA BOTHA
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



A Good African Story by Andrew Rugasira (Bodley Head), R279. ISBN: 9781847922076

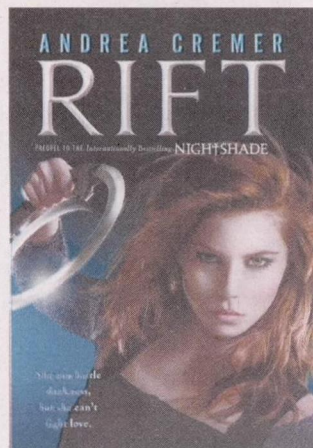
ORIGINS EXPLAINED

RIFT is the beginning of the prequel to the *Nightshade* trilogy. Set in the 15th century, the novel explains the origins of the wolves, Searchers, and Keepers from *Nightshade*.

Ember Morrow's mother almost dies giving birth to her. They are saved by a healer from the Conatus. The price is handing Ember over to The Guard when she turns 16. The society is hidden in Scotland, trying to stay under the radar of the church. Alistair, her life-long friend, escorts her to her new home, but Ember's heart is lost once she meets her mentor: the strong, honourable, kind, loyal, and fearless, Barrow.

Rift is a powerful young adult novel with a strong, spirited heroine. The book has a completely different texture to Calla Tor and *Nightshade*. This is Ember's story. Highly recommended.

AMANDA PATTERSON
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



Rift by Andrea Cremer (Atom), R181. ISBN: 9781907411397

SIGN OF THE TIMES

BARBARA Kingsolver's writing style is superb, her plot flows and I could relate to the characters.

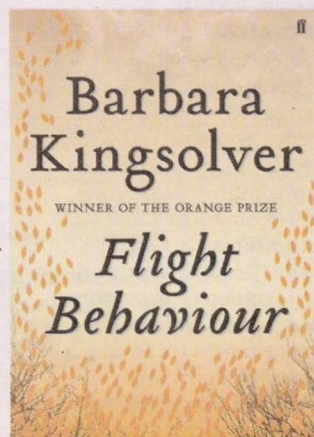
This is a book that can't be read in a rush, as each word and sentence must be savoured. The plotline is almost of secondary importance to the way Kingsolver spins magic with her words. Dellarobia is on her way to follow up a flirtation when she is distracted by what at first seems to be a forest fire: millions of butterflies flaring the valley orange with their colours.

Everyone interprets this phenomenon differently; Dellarobia sees it as a miracle. For the scientist Ovid it is a sign of devastation, and the media jumps in.

A small town opens to the world and Dellarobia's life changes.

The underlying themes of the book are the impact of global warming and social injustice.

PAULINE VIJVERBERG
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



Flight Behaviour by Barbara Kingsolver (Faber & Faber), R215. ISBN: 9780571290789

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

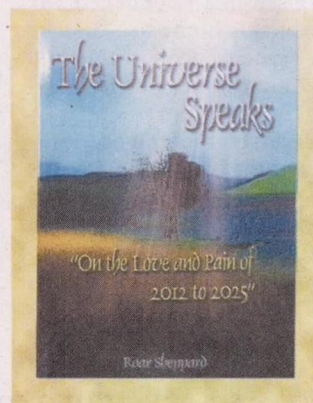
ROAR Sheppard takes a bold step in addressing the damage we humans have wrought on our planet. From a spiritual and theological perspective, Sheppard discusses the way forward, both physically and spiritually. The earth is running out of resources to support an ever-growing human population. Sheppard asks very specific questions and addresses things like disposable products, recycling and localising our economy.

He discusses our necessary spiritual growth. Having spent 15 years in South Korea focusing on meditation and spiritual development, Sheppard applies a deep method of meditation to communicate with spiritual entities to get answers to his questions.

He explains how the coming changes provide us with an opportunity to grow.

With such a dense amount of information, the Q and A format works perfectly. The opportunity for us to overcome was reinforced.

VICTORIA MALAKOU
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



The Universe Speaks by Roar Sheppard (Kima Global), R80. ISBN: 9781920533052

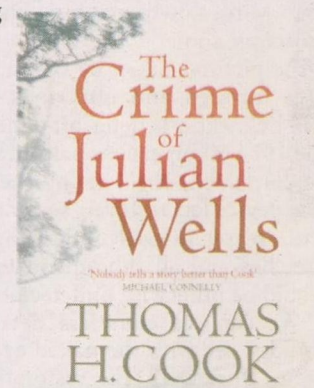
NO ANSWERS

THIS is mysterious, dark, very beautiful prose. As Julian steps into the dinghy in the pond he lets it drift far from inquisitive eyes. He slits each wrist, letting his hands hang over the sides of the boat as life drains away in dark red blood.

He has been a famous crime writer and his friends can't explain his suicide. They follow a trail of places, searching for clues to his death.

His agent thinks he has been in love with Marisol who is missing. "There is no such thing as love," says the agent, "only a lack of perspective". It all ends with a huge question with no answers.

DEE ANDREW
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



The Crime Of Julian Wells by Thomas H. Cook (Head of Zeus), R120. ISBN: 9781908800152

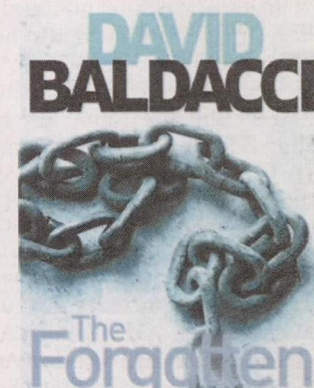
A TOWN FROM HELL

JOHN Puller, a military criminal investigator, receives a rather disturbing letter from his aunt who lives in Paradise, Florida. When he arrives there he discovers she has died, supposedly in an accidental drowning. He decides to investigate ...

He discovers Paradise is not what it seems. As the underbelly emerges, it is more like hell for some people. The unscrupulous rich exploit the poor or weak for drugs, prostitution and labour. He uncovers secrets that are kept hidden and could cause huge ramifications that would spread wider than this town.

This is a racy, exciting read which also gives food for thought.

DAWN BLANKFIELD
 WWW.WRITERSWRITE.CO.ZA



The Forgotten by David Baldacci (Macmillan), R178. ISBN: 9780230762923