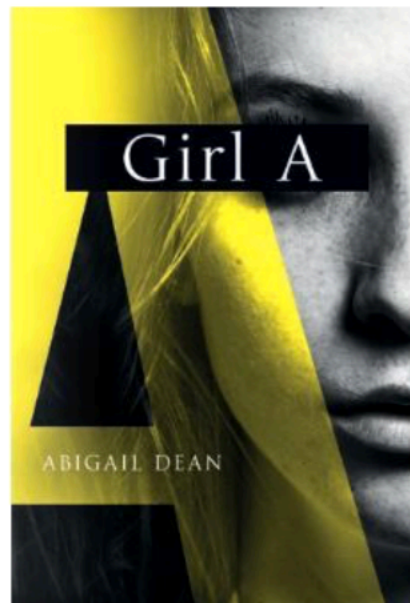
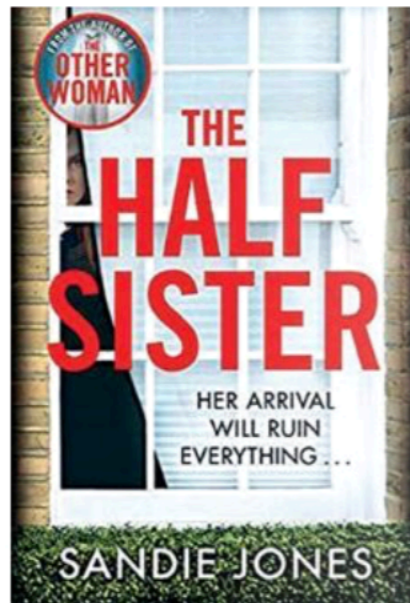


# Book club

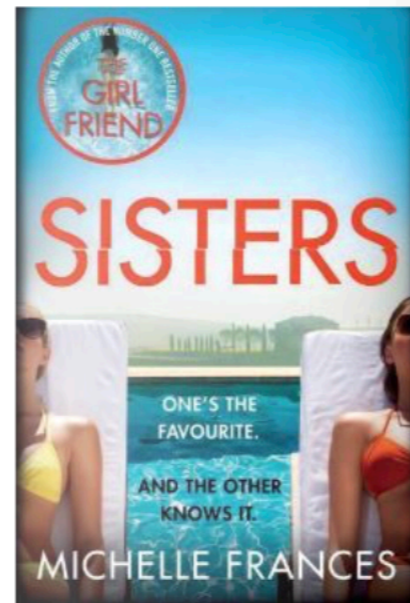
Mothers. Sons. Sisters. Friends. We're all about family this month



There's been much noise about **Girl A** ... and deservedly so. Abigail Dean's debut novel, which is being called 'the book that will define a decade', is magnificent. A psychological drama, it starts off fairly gently but gets deeper and darker and more distressing with every chapter. The story, told by Lex – Girl A, jumps from past to present ... the past being her and her siblings' horrendous childhood, growing up in her religious fanatic parents' House of Horrors; the present being when her mother dies in prison and leaves Lex, now a lawyer, executor of her estate ... a little money and the family home from which Lex escaped. Lex, with agreement and encouragement from her sister Evie, decides to turn the house into a force for good ... including everything her parents would have hated. We meet each of her siblings – as children and as the adults they've grown up to be. *Girl A*, soon to be a TV show directed by Johan Renck (director of *Chernobyl*), is a story of redemption, horror and love, and is gripping, powerful and deeply disturbing. Brilliant!



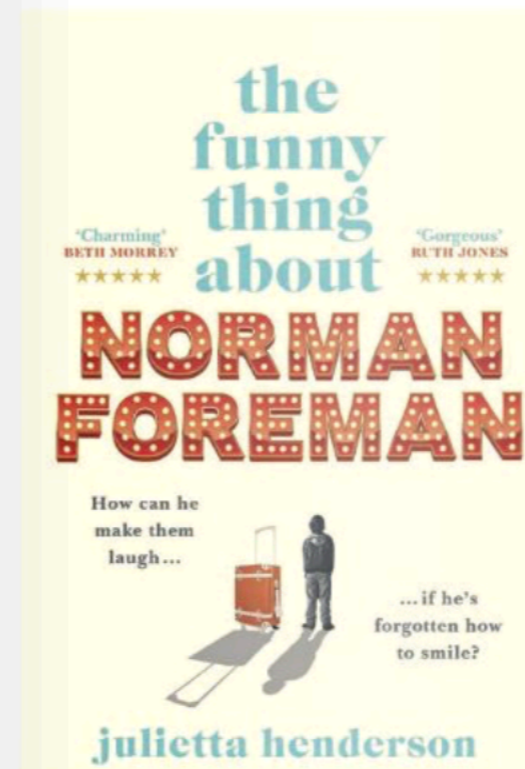
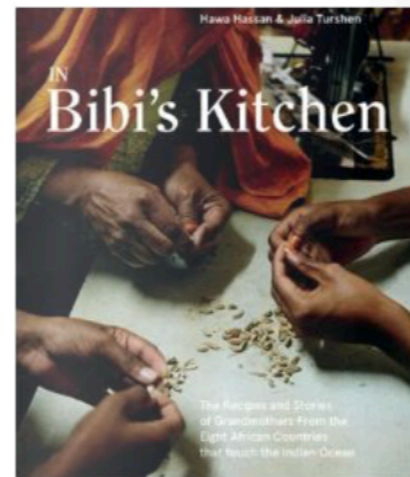
If you've nothing planned for the weekend, this one's a light, quick read which will keep you guessing. Michelle Frances (*The Girlfriend*, *The Daughter*) takes sibling rivalry and family secrets to a whole new level in **Sisters**. It starts off slow, and a little predictable, but the story soon hots up ... with sisters Abby and Ellie doing a Thelma and Louise through Italy, France and Spain, the police – as well as a baffled husband and an is-she-or-isn't-she-evil mother – close behind. • Staying with sisters – Kate and Lauren have a great relationship ... always there for one another. But when Jess arrives, claiming to be their half-sister, the fall-outs start. Is she the secret daughter of their father, who recently died? For the girls, their mother Rose, and newcomer Jess, life becomes a tangle of secrets, lies and questions. Is the family really as perfect as it appears? Sandie Jones (*The Other Woman*) is great at psychological suspense, and there's no shortage of that in **The Half Sister**.



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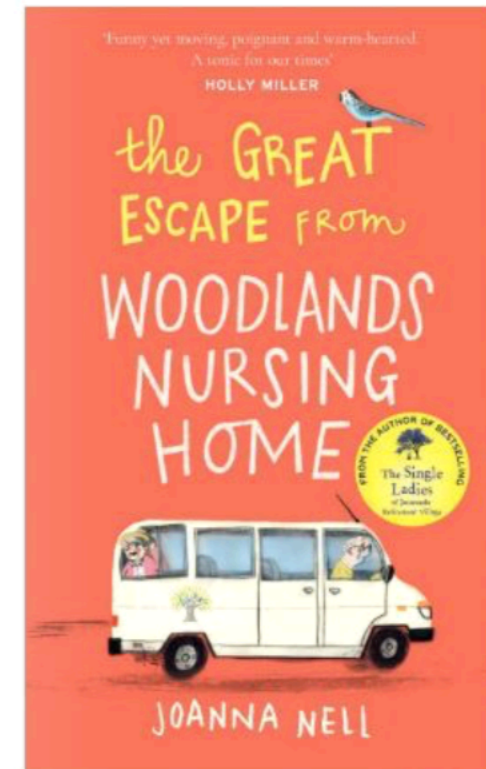
## In Bibi's Kitchen

Bibis – grandmothers – from eight eastern African countries welcome you into their kitchens to share flavourful recipes and stories of family, love and tradition in this cookbook-meets-travelogue. Food writer Julia Turshen and Somali chef Hawa Hassan gathered 75 recipes. Expect Kicha (flatbread) and Shiro (ground chickpea stew) from Ma Gehennet from Eritrea, Ajemi bread with carrots and green pepper from Ma Shara in Zanzibar, and stewed plantain with beans and beef from Ma Vicky – a real-life Tanzanian princess. Delicious in every way.



**The Funny Thing About Norman Foreman** is pure joy. It's tender, gentle, poignant, and touching. And madly, madly funny. Which it shouldn't be. Since Norman is a painfully awkward preteen. Short, covered in scaly, painful psoriasis, and then there's his name. Plus his best – and only – friend, Jax ('the bloody Rolls-bloody-Royce of bloody best friends') has just died. There goes their five-year plan to perform their duo comedy act at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2023. But 'one never knows' ... and a trio of delightful characters – Norman, his wonderful, scatty mum Sadie, an elderly pensioner co-worker Leonard, along with a host of people they meet along the way (one of whom may or may not be Norman's dad) travel from Cornwall to Edinburgh to make dreams come true. Obviously, not much goes according to plan. Massively inspiring, uplifting, wise ... a hugely enjoyable read by Julietta Henderson. Loved it! • More warm-hearted humour in **The Great Escape from Woodlands Nursing Home**. For those of you who've read Joanna Nell's *The Single Ladies of Jacaranda Retirement Village* and *The Last Voyage of Mrs Henry Parker*, you'll know what you're in for. And if you're new to this author, you're in for a treat. A roller coaster of fun and laugh-out-loud moments as nearly 90-year-old Hattie Bloom (retired nature writer and lover of birds) has a fall which lands her in a nursing home, where she meets fellow 'inmate' Walter Clements (a gregarious would-be comedian) who's also longing for escape, at The Night Owls – a clandestine club run by Sister Bronwyn and her dog, Queenie. Funny meets moving ... a delightful, feel-good book that proves it's never too late to laugh or to love.

This month we're keeping things tart with the bittersweet taste of ruby red grapefruit. Made with grapefruit hand-picked on the sun-drenched French island of Corsica in the Med, Pampelle is all citrus peel-fresh, with a touch of herbs, and makes the most amazing spritzer. Pour two tots of Pampelle into an icy cold glass, add about 75ml of Prosecco or sparkling wine, and top with soda water. Around R399 from your local bottle store.



Compiled by: KYM ARGO