

Who Books

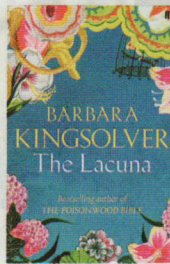


Kingsolver's novel *The Poisonwood Bible* was an Oprah pick.

The Lacuna

Barbara Kingsolver

(Faber & Faber)



It's more than 10 years since Kingsolver's mega-selling novel *The Poisonwood Bible*, but she hasn't lost her touch. With

this rich, decades-sprawling saga set in Mexico and the US, she delivers her signature blend of exotic locale, political backdrop and immediately engaging storyline. *The Lacuna* follows the life of the fictional Harrison Shepherd, the unassuming son of a Mexican mother and a Washington, DC, bureaucrat, who is torn between two cultures when his parents divorce. In the 1930s he is hired as a houseboy for muralist Diego Rivera and his wife, fellow artist Frida Kahlo. Indelibly influenced by his Bohemian employers, Harrison becomes a celebrated author. Like an underwater lacuna, defined by Kingsolver as "an opening, like a mouth, into the belly of the earth," this novel teems with dark beauty. ★★★★★ —J.P.

The Possibility of Everything

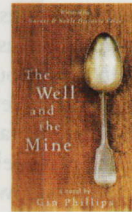
Hope Edelman (HarperCollins)



When Edelman finds her 3-year-old in the grip of a hostile imaginary friend, she is consumed by fear. Is "Dodo" a spiritual intruder? A symptom of schizophrenia? The stirring nonfiction account of Edelman's trip to Belize (she hopes shamans can heal her daughter) is a crafted memoir of scepticism versus spirituality. ★★★★★

The Well and the Mine

Gin Phillips (Virago)



Set in the Depression, this debut novel tells of a coal miner and his family living in a small community in Alabama. One night, 9-year-old Tess sees a woman throw a baby into the family's well, which sets the child and her teenage sister on a quest to find the mystery woman. Despite the bleak setting and premise, it is a tender-hearted and ultimately uplifting story about a family's love for each other. ★★★★★

The Coral Thief

Rebecca Stott (Orion)



It's 1815, and medical student Daniel Connor heads for a coveted research position in Paris. But a beautiful stranger steals the precious fossils intended as gifts for his new employer, and his pursuit leads him into a shadowy underworld. Intercut with the story of the recently defeated Napoleon, this novel is part adventure story, part love story and all fun. ★★★★★

You or Someone Like You

Chandler Burr (Allen & Unwin)



Anne Rosenbaum's husband is a top Hollywood producer, so when she starts a book club, the whole of LA takes notice. When her husband rediscovers his Jewish roots, his identity—and their marriage—is thrown into crisis. This is a brilliant exploration of the way art and life intersect and illuminate each other. ★★★★★

5 MINUTES WITH... BRADLEY TREVOR GREIVE

If dogs weren't around, Greive (with his pets) reckons pigs could be man's best friend.



With his 2000 debut, *The Blue Day Book*, former paratrooper and lifelong animal-lover Bradley Trevor Greive, 39, became a global publishing sensation. For his latest offering, the Tasmania-based author (and proud papa of three Great Danes—"over 200kg of furniture-splintering love") tackles that timeworn debate, *Why Dogs Are Better Than Cats* (Andrews McMeel, \$32.95). "When I discovered there were 200 million more pet cats in the world than

dogs, I was stunned," says BTG, as he's known. "Put simply: dogs are social—cats are sociopaths." That may be the thrust of his lighthearted argument, but BTG insists he's not a cat hater, just a passionate admirer of pooches. His book is "first and foremost a funny illustrated essay about friendship," says BTG, whose next work will be *The Obsequious Parrot*. "That being said, I must confess the subtext is probably summed up as 'Get a dog and get a life!'" ■