

The Text Publishing Company



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Unnecessary Drama by Nina Kenwood

From the author of the much-loved *It Sounded Better in My Head* comes a deliciously entertaining new rom-com, set in a run-down student share house in Melbourne.

Eighteen-year-old Brooke is the kind of friend who not only remembers everyone's birthdays, but also organises the group present, pays for it, and politely chases others for their share. She's the helper, the doer, the guarder-of-drinks, the minder-of-bags, the maker-of-spreadsheets. She's the responsible one who always follows the rules—and she plans to keep it that way during her first year of university.

Her new share house is rules-lite. But 'no unnecessary drama' means no fights, tension, or romance between housemates. When one of her housemates turns out to be Jesse, her high-school nemesis, Brooke is nervously confident she can handle it. They'll simply silently endure living together and stay out of each other's way. But it turns out Jesse isn't so easy to ignore...

Channelling the screwball comedy of *New Girl* with an enemies-to-lovers twist, *Unnecessary Drama* is a joyful story about leaving home, dealing with the unexpected complications of life, and somehow finding exactly what you need.

'I laughed out loud several times and fell in love with flawed protagonist Brooke...Completely charming from start to finish.' Karys McEwen, author of *All the Little Tricky Things*

'Takes readers through the tumultuous uncertainty that exists on the cusp of transitioning out of high school into adulthood.' *Books+Publishing*

'Adorable, this book made us laugh, cry and feel all the warm and fuzzies. We just loved every single page.' Ali Berg and Michelle Kalus, authors of *The Book Ninja*

Nina Kenwood is an award-winning author living in Melbourne. Her debut YA novel, *It Sounded Better in My Head*, won the Text Prize and was a finalist for the American Library Association's William C. Morris Award, as well as being shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Queensland Literary Awards, Russell Prize for Humour Writing, Indie Book Awards and Australian Book Industry Awards. *It Sounded Better in My Head* has been published in seven languages and optioned to be adapted for the screen.

Rights Held: World

Rights Sold: ANZ audio—Wavesound; North America—Flatiron Books

Young-adult fiction

October 2022

Finished copies available

Dancing Barefoot by Alice Boyle

WINNER, TEXT PRIZE FOR YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S WRITING, 2021

Evie Vanhoutte is a teachers' pet, a basketball star and the most beautiful girl in the year level. Evie Vanhoutte is tall, has long dark hair, a great smile, and for the past four years, Evie Vanhoutte has been the object of my most ardent, heartfelt, and passionate affection. Unrequited affection, of course.

Patch is out of place at Mountford College: she wears the wrong clothes, she's not sporty or popular, she lives in a small flat above her dad's record shop a world away from the leafy suburb where she goes to school. And she has a secret long-term crush on basketball star Evie Vanhoutte. Evie barely knows Patch exists until an accident involving a bottle of ink and Patch's school uniform sparks a friendship that's equal parts exhilarating and terrifying, and very, very confusing.

As if that weren't enough, Patch is also trying to deal with a jealous school bully, forgetting to be supportive of her transitioning best friend, Edwin, and worrying about how a potential new stepmother could throw everything off course.

Dancing Barefoot is a feel-good romance about growing up queer, figuring out your place in the world, staying true to yourself and your friends, finding love, and learning to embrace the obstacles life throws in your path.

'I loved everything about *Dancing Barefoot*—its strong characters, its laugh-out-loud moments and its irresistible narrative voice that engaged me from the first page.' Erin Gough, author of *Amelia Westlake*

'If you're ever in the need for a feel-good, heartfelt romance, or simply a book to cosy up to like a warm, fuzzy blanket by the fireside, I recommend *Dancing Barefoot*...Beautifully written with a natural laugh-out-loud humour, [it] encapsulates the angst and seemingly apocalyptic emotions teenagers feel towards love.' *Readings*

Alice Boyle is an English teacher and author living in Naarm/Melbourne. She has written for SBS Voices and the Stella Prize, and her short story 'The Exchange' was published in the Black Inc. anthology *Growing Up Queer in Australia*. In 2019 she was highly commended for the Wheeler Centre's Next Chapter program, and in 2021 she won the Text Prize for her debut novel, *Dancing Barefoot*.

Rights Held: World

Young-adult fiction

September 2022

Finished copies available

The Brink by Holden Sheppard

A group of school-leavers: free at last, ready to party, expectations high.

A remote island on the Western Australian coast wasn't exactly the plan, but they're not going to let that hold them back.

Leonardo, geeky, asthmatic, shy and prone to anxiety, has landed with them. He's terrified—he's definitely not part of this cool gang. Super high-achiever Kaiya is trying to forget her frustration with her drug-addicted sister as well as dealing with pressure from the popular girls to lose her virginity. Mason, footy jock with the physique to match, is coming to terms with his secret desire for his best mate, Jared. And Jared wants a week off from his relationship with Val so he can have sex with as many girls as possible.

But the party takes a dangerous turn when Val is drugged and a man is later found dead on the beach. Blame, fear, mistrust, coverups, power plays and dark secrets tear the group apart and expose the deadly tensions beneath the surface. And each teen is forced to confront demons that will lead them either to devastating tragedy or transformative triumph.

Whoever survives the week will never be the same again.

The Brink is a raw, powerful novel that pulls no punches in its authentic exploration of masculinity, sexuality, mental health, drug and alcohol use, relationships and sex. Holden Sheppard takes the teenage experience to the next level.

'Raw, exhilarating and emotionally charged, an absolute must-read!' Gary Lonesborough, author of *The Boy from the Mish*

'*The Brink* succeeds in establishing Sheppard as a young writer with huge potential in the Australian literary scene...It is frank, fresh and unapologetic...There is so much to admire about this novel—the plotting and structure are impeccable, the tropes run thick and fast. All this is underpinned by beautifully drawn characters.' *Newtown Review of Books*

Holden Sheppard is an award-winning author born in Geraldton, Western Australia. His debut novel, *Invisible Boys* (Fremantle Press, 2019), was published to both critical and commercial success. It won the WA Premier's Prize for an Emerging Writer, was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards and was named a Notable Book by the Children's Book Council of Australia. *Invisible Boys* is currently in production as a television series.

Rights Held: World

Rights Sold: ANZ audio—Wavesound

Young-adult fiction

August 2022

Finished copies available

The Museum of Broken Things by Lauren Draper

SHORTLISTED, THE READINGS YOUNG ADULT BOOK PRIZE, 2022

SHORTLISTED, TEXT PRIZE FOR YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S WRITING, 2020

I didn't always live here. Not so long ago I was living in a thriving metropolis with more than one coffee shop on each block and four full bars of reception. I went to Heathmont High School, home to one thousand students, two best friends, a deeply average orchestra, and one cursed statue. Well, allegedly.

Reece still isn't used to living in the small beachside town of Hamilton: she misses her old school, her old friends and her old life. She can't go back and she can't move forward: nothing feels right anymore. Not that she's trying very hard—she hasn't even unpacked yet, and the only new friend she's made is a middle-aged barista.

But when Reece inherits a strange artefact that belonged to her beloved grandmother, she begins to unravel a mystery that might change the way she feels about everything around her, including her charismatic classmate Gideon...

A lively, witty novel about letting go of the past and finding your place in the world, *The Museum of Broken Things* introduces a dazzling new voice in contemporary fiction.

'A clear-eyed, absorbing and atmospheric story of loss (and love) that pulls you in, then warmly holds you there.' Rhiannon Wilde, author of *Henry Hamlet's Heart*

'A warm, heartfelt debut that masterfully explores the lingering pain of grief and the power of love, family and friendship.' Gabrielle Tozer, author of *Remind Me How This Ends*

'[A] well-crafted story dealing with teenage friendship and romance as well as a psychological journey into grief and the struggle of dealing with trauma.' *Read Plus*

Lauren Draper is a Melbourne-based writer and marketing professional. She is a graduate of RMIT's Professional Writing and Editing program and now works in children's publishing—she loves nothing more than a story infused with magic, hijinks and a touch of nostalgia. *The Museum of Broken Things*, her debut novel, was shortlisted in the 2020 Text Prize. Her work has also been longlisted in the 2019 Richell Prize and has appeared in various non-fiction publications. She grew up in Western Australia, mostly on land but often in water. She now lives in Melbourne with one struggling coffee machine, a moderately behaved golden retriever and her partner.

Rights Held: World

Young-adult fiction

June 2022

Finished copies available

The Hotel Witch by Jessica Miller

Sometimes the simplest spells are the most powerful.

Sibyl is the apprentice hotel witch at the splendid Grand Mirror Hotel. She is busy each day, under the watchful eye of her grandmother, drawing useful spell patterns to keep the hotel guests happy: spells to shine shoes, spells to make the pastry chef's cakes rise, spells to remove dust and spells to return lost things like hats and gloves to their owners.

But Sibyl dreams of other possibilities—possibilities like her mother returning from the Black Mountains, and like Grandma letting her draw spell patterns from the *Book of Advanced and Dangerous Magic*.

When Grandma gets stuck in last Tuesday, somewhere on the hotel's thirteenth floor, Sibyl must perform all the magic herself. Just when a very mysterious and perplexing problem arises and a very important guest must be taken care of.

With the help of her friend Ahmed, the lift attendant, an aloof cat called Alfonso and Dora the concierge, Sibyl must solve the mystery of the missing shadows and find the right spell pattern to get them back.

Will she open the *Book of Advanced and Dangerous Magic*? And will it contain the answers she needs?

The Hotel Witch is a magical tale of determination, love and the power of imagination, filled with quirky characters who sparkle and delight.

'By the time I reached the end of the book my heart was racing and I couldn't turn the pages fast enough...A simple, good-old-fashioned scary manor mystery.' *Books+Publishing* on *Elizabeth and Zenobia*

'Miller crafts a Russian folklore-infused tale, augmented by excerpts from mythical history books...The theme—"If you feel you don't fit somewhere, change it until it fits you"—is movingly portrayed.' *Publishers Weekly* on *The Republic of Birds*

Jessica Miller is a children's writer from Brisbane, currently living in London. Her first novel, *Elizabeth and Zenobia*, was shortlisted for the Text Prize and the Readings Prize and was a CBCA Notable Book, as was her second book, *The Republic of Birds*.

Rights Held: World excl. North America

Other Rights: InkWell Management

Middle-grade fiction

March 2023

Manuscript available