

## What's Next? Episode 3

**Hello Book Lovers! Welcome to What's Next? The Riverina Regional Library's podcast for readers. My name is Amy Heap and reading is my super power. I am here to be your personal librarian, helping you to find your next great read. You can email me at [amyheap@gmail.com](mailto:amyheap@gmail.com) let me know what you like and don't like to read, what you are in the mood for, and I will give some reading suggestions, just for you, though everyone can listen in.**

### **Why read?**

- Reading reduces stress; more than music, a cup of tea, or a walk.
- Reading increases physical wellbeing – studies show readers live longer.
- Reading increases emotional intelligence, and this helps us to have better relationships.
- Reading is good for your brain – it will help keep dementia at bay, and is a bit more varied than sudoku.
- Readers are learners; lifelong learners.
- Reading (print) helps you sleep.

### **How to get more reading done:**

- Plan to read.
- Think about when you will read.
- Read at lunchtime.
- Audiobooks for whenever your hands are busy, but your mind is free.
- Don't read at the dinner table if you live with other people, but if they are doing something else, read in the room with them.
- Watch just what you really want to watch on television.
- Don't mindlessly check your phone when you could be reading.
- Read what you like!
- Join a book club.

### **Malice in a small town:**

**The Lost Man** by Jane Harper, **Where the River Runs** by Fleur McDonald, **The Dressmaker** by Rosalie Ham, **The Shepherd's Hut** by Tim Winton.

### **Young Adult dystopias**

**The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins, **Divergent** by Veronica Roth, the **Change** trilogy by James Bradley (climate fiction novel by James Bradley – **Clade**, and new book called **Ghost Species**), **Maze Runner** by James Dashner, The **Darkest Minds** series by Alexandra Bracken.

**The Girl with all the Gifts** - a little girl who is detained by the military, restrained in a wheelchair and goes to school while heavily guarded, and doesn't truly understand why she is special until it is up to her to save the world, and **The Boy on the Bridge** by M.R. Carey.

### **Post-apocalyptic/pandemic novels**

**The Road** by Cormac McCarthy - a father and son wandering a ruined America, desperate to survive; the tension between hope and reality.

**The Stand** by Stephen King. After a nasty plague wipes out most of the world's people, the survivors must take sides in a battle between good and evil.

**Station Eleven** by Emily St. John Mandel - follows a group of people before and after a flu virus kills most of the world's population.

**Severance** by Ling Ma - a woman named Candace who lives and works in New York City when the fever comes, and though she clings to her life as it was, eventually, she finds herself alone, until she joins a band of survivors.

**The End of October** by Lawrence Wright - a medical thriller about a global pandemic of acute haemorrhagic fever.

**The Golden Age** by Joan London - a fictional story set in a real life polio convalescent hospital in Perth.

**I Can Jump Puddles** by Alan Marshall - an autobiography of a young boy with polio.

**Zone One** by Colson Whitehead - the world has been devastated by a pandemic, and there are just two types of people, the infected and the uninfected.

**On the big and small screen - Bird Box** by Josh Malerman, **The Passage** by Justin Cronin, and **World War Z** by Max Brooks.

**Who Fears Death** by Nnedi Okorafor - Set in a far future, post-nuclear-holocaust Africa, where genocide plagues one region.

### **Up Lit (uplifting literature)**

**The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** by Mary Ann Schaffer - set after WWII, but looking back to when Guernsey was occupied by the Germans. Bad things happened, but now, real friendships grow, and hope is restored.

**84 Charing Cross Road**, by Helene Hanff - a delightful collection of real life letters between a New York writer, and a second hand bookshop in London, from the late 40s, to the late 60s. **The Duchess of Bloomsbury Street follows on.**

(**The Bookshop** by Penelope Fitzgerald - a quietly powerful story of relationships, strength, and quirky personalities, but not a very happy one.)

#### **Chick Lit:**

**How to Find Love in a Bookshop**, by Veronica Henry - Emilia's father has died, leaving her a book shop in the Cotswolds that isn't doing very well. As she decides whether to keep it going or not, a cast of her customers also find themselves at crossroads.

**The Bookshop of the Broken Hearted** by Robert Hillman - In 1960s rural Australia, kind and gentle farmer, Tom's wife has left him again, and a glamorous older woman, a survivor of Auschwitz, moves into town determined to open a bookshop.

**The Book Ninja** by Ali Berg and Michelle Kalus - set in a bookshop in Melbourne, and is full of gorgeous, wise-cracking, quirky characters, book references and romance.

**Jojo Moyes, Sophie Kinsella, Cecelia Ahern, Liane Moriarty, Nicola Moriarty, Marian Keyes, and Lisa Jewell.**

**The Flatshare** by Beth O'Leary - Tiffy needs to leave her ex-boyfriend's flat, but her publishing job in London doesn't pay well, Leon works the night shift and needs all the money he can get to help his brother, so, without meeting, they begin to share a one-bedroom flat.

**One Night in December** by Josie Silver. One snowy night, a young woman on a bus locks eyes with a man at a bus stop, and falls in love. The bus drives away and she spends a year looking for him, until her best friend brings him home as her boyfriend. A little bit Bridget Jones.

#### **More Up Lit:**

**A Man Called Ove** by Fredrik Backman - Ove is a curmudgeonly old man, barely putting up with those around him, especially his neighbours, who slowly finds new purpose in his life.

**Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine** by Gail Honeyman - Eleanor doesn't fit in with the crowd, and spends her weekends drinking vodka, alone. One day, she and a colleague perform an act of kindness and Eleanor's life changes; she begins to remember what she drank to forget.

**Saving Missy** by Beth Morrey. Set in London, Saving Missy is about an elderly lady whose world has shrunk until she finds little pleasure in it. A series of encounters see her adopt a dog, which opens her up to community, and reflection on her life.

**How to Stop Time** by Matt Haig. Imagine once you hit puberty, your ageing slowed, so that when you were over 400 years old, you looked around 40. This is the situation for Tom Hazard, who has struggled for centuries to live with his past, and keep his secrets; knowing he mustn't make connections, but keep moving on. Now, he questions the meaning of life, and what makes it worthwhile. Other books by Matt Haig - **Reasons to Stay Alive**, and **Notes on a Nervous Planet** (non-fiction) and **The Humans** - begins with the death of Cambridge mathematics professor, and the arrival of an alien who impersonates him, in order to destroy all evidence of his recent, stupendous, mathematical discovery. The alien's slow uncovering of how humans live, what motivates them, and gives their lives meaning, is hilarious, insightful, moving, and life-affirming.

**In the Quiet** by Eliza Henry-Jones - an Australian novel about a woman who dies, and is then able to watch her husband and three children live on, trying to cope with her death and deal with the grief.

**Hotel Silence** by Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir - a man's wife has left him, his mother has dementia, and his daughter isn't who he thought she was, so he takes himself off to a war-torn country to end it all. Instead, he finds a way to put his life back together and help others.

**The Summer of Impossible Things** by Rowan Coleman - a novel which asks the question "If you could change the past, would you?"

**The Trouble with Goats and Sheep** by Joanna Cannon - a coming of age mystery novel, set in England, in 1976. After their neighbour goes missing, 10-year-olds Grace and Tilly decide to take matters into their own hands and find her and bring her home, going door to door in search of clues and soon discovering that everyone on the Avenue has something to hide.

**Two steps Forward** by Graeme Simsion and Anne Buist - about two people, going through rough periods in their lives, who go on the Camino de Santiago walk in Spain, finding it more than just a physical journey.

**Rise and shine, Benedict Stone** by Phaedra Patrick. Benedict Stone is a jeweller in a small, English village, and his life is not going well, when the daughter of his estranged brother turns up and changes everything.

**Moonglow** by Michael Chabon - As Mike Chabon's grandfather is dying of cancer, he tells Mike about his life. It's about being Jewish, about growing up, the war, marriage, brokenness, love and rockets.

**What I am reading now:** Paddy Richardson's **Swimming in the Dark**, which is a psychological drama set in New Zealand, **The Binding** by Bridget Collins, an historical

fantasy novel where people visit book binders to rid themselves of painful memories, **The Unlikely Voyage of Jack de Crow**, by A.J. Mackinnon, just for the joy and laughter, and audiobook, Kate Atkinson's **A God in Ruins**.