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but he also gained the respect of many colleagues and acquaintances. As his father weakens and wearies of life, Babu, his son, begins to learn and understand a little better all that his father has gone through.

FRENCH, Dawn

A tiny bit marvellous

Mo is about to hit the big 50, and some uncomfortable truths are becoming quite apparent: She doesn't understand either of her teenage kids, which as a child psychologist, is fairly embarrassing. She has become entirely grey. Inside, and out. Her face has surrendered and is frightening children. Dora is about to hit the big 18 . . . and about to hit anyone who annoys her, especially her precocious younger brother Peter who has a chronic Oscar Wilde fixation. Then there's Dad . . . who's just, well, dad.

HICKEY, Christine Dwyer

The cold eye of heaven

Farley is an elderly Irishman, frail in body but sharp as a tack. Waking in the middle of the night, he finds himself lying paralysed on the cold bathroom floor and so his mind begins to move back into his past. Decade by decade, Farley unravels the warp and weft of his life, recalling loves, losses and betrayals with the darkly comic wit of a true Dubliner. For this is also Dublin's story, the city Farley has seen through poverty and prosperity, boom and bust - each the other's constant companion throughout his seventy-five years.

KAY, Francesca

The translation of the bones

Reality or delusion? Fantasy or fact? When word gets out that Mary-Margaret O'Reilly, a slow-witted but apparently harmless young woman, may have been witness to a miracle, religious mania descends on the Church of the Sacred Heart in Battersea. The consequences will be profound, not only for Mary-Margaret but for others too - Father Diamond, the parish priest, who is in the midst of his own crisis of faith, and Stella Morrison, adrift in her marriage and aching for her ten-year old son, away at boarding school.

NEILL, Fiona

What the nanny saw

Nanny required to take care of needs of busy professional London family

When penniless student Ali Sparrow answers Bryony and Nick Skinner's advertisement her life changes overnight. She is catapulted into the privileged and excessive world of London's financial elite. At first everything is overwhelming - from twins who speak their own language to a teenage girl with weight issues and a son almost her own age. Then there is Bryony, who has one eye on her dazzling career and the other on Ali's failings.

RACHMAN, Tom

The imperfectionists

The English-language newspaper was founded in Rome in the 1950s, a product of passion and a multi-millionaire's fancy. Over fifty years, its eccentricities earned a place in readers' hearts around the globe. But now, circulation is down, the paper lacks a website, and the future looks bleak. Still, those involved in the publication seem to barely notice. The obituary writer is too busy avoiding work. The editor-in-chief is pondering sleeping with an old flame. The obsessive reader is intent on finishing every old edition, leaving her trapped in the past. And the dog-crazy publisher seems less interested in his struggling newspaper than in his magnificent basset hound, Schopenhauer.

WINTERSON, Jeanette

Written on the body

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POSTLETHWAITE, Pete *A spectacle of dust*
After training as a teacher, Pete Postlethwaite started his acting career at the Liverpool Everyman Theatre where his colleagues included Bill Nighy, Jonathan Pryce, Antony Sher and Julie Walters. After routine early appearances in small parts for television programmes such as *THE PROFESSIONALS*, Postlethwaite's first success came with the acclaimed British film *DISTANT VOICES*, *STILL LIVES* in 1988. He then received an Academy Award nomination for his role in *THE NAME OF THE FATHER* in 1993. In *THE ART OF DISCWORLD*, Terry Pratchett said that he had always imagined Sam Vimes as 'a younger, slightly bulkier version of Pete Postlethwaite', while Steven Spielberg called him 'the best actor in the world', about which Postlethwaite said: 'I'm sure what Spielberg actually said was, "the thing about Pete is that he thinks he's the best actor in the world."' This is the story of a diverse and multi-talented actor's eventful life, told in his own candid and vibrant words.

SEWELL, Brian *Outsider: always almost: never quite*
Outsider is the life of a child, boy, adolescent, student and young man in London between the Great Depression of the 30s and the sudden prosperity and social changes of the 60s, affected by the moral attitudes of the day, by the Blitz, post-war austerity and the new freedoms of the later 50s that were resisted with such obstinacy by the old regime. It is about education in the almost forgotten sense of the pursuit of learning for its own sake. It is about the imposed experiences of school and National Service and the chosen experience of being a student at the Courtauld Institute under Johannes Wilde and Anthony Blunt. It is about sex, pre-pubertal, in adolescence and in early adulthood, and the price to be paid for it. It is about art and the art market in the turbulent years of its change from the pursuit of well-connected gentleman to the professional occupation of experts.

GARDENS

WILLES, Margaret *The making of the English Gardener*
In the century between the accession of Elizabeth I and the restoration of Charles II, a horticultural revolution took place in England. Ideas were exchanged across networks of gardeners, botanists, scholars, and courtiers, and the burgeoning vernacular book trade spread this new knowledge still further - reaching the growing number of gardeners furnishing their more modest plots across the nation and its young colonies in the Americas. Margaret Willes introduces a plethora of garden enthusiasts, from the renowned to the legions of anonymous workers who created and tended the great estates. Packed with illustrations from the herbals, design treatises and practical manuals that inspired these men - and occasionally women - Willes' book charts how England's garden grew.

HISTORY

DUNSTAN, Simon *Grey wolf: the escape of Adolph Hitler*
Did Hitler (code name Grey Wolf) really die in 1945? The evidence says no. Here's the gripping story of what might have happened... When Truman asked Stalin in 1945 whether Hitler was dead, Stalin replied bluntly, No. As late as 1952, Eisenhower declared: We have been unable to unearth one bit of tangible evidence of Hitler's death. What really happened?

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Simon Dunstan and Gerrard Williams have compiled extensive evidence, some recently declassified, that Hitler actually fled Berlin and took refuge in a remote Nazi enclave in Argentina. The recent discovery that the famous Hitler's skull in Moscow is female, as well as newly uncovered documents, provide powerful proof for their case. Dunstan and Williams cite people, places and dates in over 500 detailed notes that identify the plan's escape route, vehicles, aircraft, U-boats and hideouts. Among the details: the CIA's possible involvement and Hitler's life in Patagonia, including his two daughters.

JENKINS, Simon A short history of England
From the invaders of the dark ages to today's coalition, Simon Jenkins weaves together a strong narrative with all the most important and interesting dates in a book that characteristically is as stylish as it is authoritative. There have been long synoptic histories of England but until now there has been no standard short work covering all significant events, themes and individuals.

LOCHERY, Neill Lisbon
Lisbon had a pivotal role in the history of World War II, though not a gun was fired there. The only European city in which both the Allies and the Axis power operated openly, it was a temporary home to much of Europe's exiled royalty, over one million refugees seeking passage to the US and a host of spies, secret police, captains of industry, bankers, prominent Jews, writers and artists, escaped POWs, and black marketeers. An operations officer writing in 1944 described the daily scene at Lisbon's airport as being like the movie Casablanca, times twenty.

WILSON, A. N. The Elizabethans
Apart from the complex character of the Virgin Queen herself, we follow the story of Francis Drake and political intriguers like William Cecil and Francis Walsingham, so important to a monarch who often made a key strategy out of her indecisiveness. Favourites like Leicester and Essex skated very close to the edge as far as Elizabeth's affections were concerned, and Essex made a big mistake when he led a rebellion against the crown. Life in Elizabethan England could be very harsh. Plague swept the land. And the poor received little assistance from the State. Thumbscrews and the rack could be the grim prelude to the executioner's block. But crucially, this was the age when modern Britain was born, and established independence from mainland Europe. After Sir Walter Raleigh established the colony of Virginia, English was destined to become the language of the great globe itself, and the foundations were laid not only of later British imperial power but also of American domination of the world.

WRIGHTSON, Keith Ralph Taylor's summer. A scrivener, his city and the plague
The plague outbreak of 1636 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was one of the most devastating in English history. This hugely moving study looks in detail at its impact on the city through the eyes of a man who stayed as others fled: the scrivener Ralph Tailor. As a scrivener Tailor was responsible for many of the wills and inventories of his fellow citizens. By listening to and writing down the final wishes of the dying, the young scrivener often became the principal provider of comfort in people's last hours. Drawing on the rich records left by Tailor during the course of his work along with many other sources, Keith Wrightson vividly reconstructs

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BURNSIDE, John

Black cat bone

John Burnside's remarkable new book is full of strange, unnerving poems that hang in the memory like a myth or a song. These are poems of thwarted love and disappointment, of raw desire, of the stalking beast, 'eye-teeth/and muzzle/coated with blood'; poems that recognise 'we have too much to gain from the gods, and this is why/they fail to love us'; poems that tell of an obsessive lover coming to grief in a sequence that echoes the old murder ballads, or of a hunter losing himself in the woods while pursuing an unknown and possibly unknowable quarry. Drawing on sources as various as the paintings of Pieter Brueghel and the lyrics of Delta blues, *Black Cat Bone* examines varieties of love, faith, hope and illusion, to suggest an unusual possibility: that when the search for what we expected to find - in the forest or in our own hearts - ends in failure, we can now begin the hard and disciplined quest for what is actually there.

SCIENCE

TODD, Richard

Bouncing-Bomb Man: The Science of Sir Barnes Wallis

Barnes Wallis is best known as the 'boffin' behind the famous bouncing bomb used by 617 Squadron to breach the Ruhr dams in 1943, but his work covers a far wider canvas. It ranges from airships, through novel aircraft structures and special weapons, to long-range supersonic aircraft, and an extensive patent portfolio. This book describes the huge breadth of Wallis's work, showing how his genius brought totally new ideas into these various fields, and revealing the science and engineering expertise that he deployed to make them work.

PERRY, Alex

Lifeblood: How to change the world, one dead mosquito at a time

One day in 2006, the rich, well connected but very private philanthropist Ray Chambers flicked through the holiday snaps of his friend, the development economist Jeffrey Sachs, and remarked on the placid beauty of a group of sleeping Malawian children. 'They're not sleeping,' Sachs tells a shocked Chambers. 'They're in malarial comas.' A few days later, they were all dead. So begins Chambers' mission to eradicate a disease that has haunted mankind since before medicine began, still infects half a billion people a year, and kills a million of them. The campaign draws in presidents, celebrities, scientists and enormous funding and becomes a stunning success, saving millions of lives and propelling Africa towards prosperity. And by replacing traditional ideas of assistance with business acumen and hustle, Chambers upturns the whole notion of aid, forging a new path not just for the developing world but for global business, religion and even celebrity.

SOCIETY

KHORSANDI, Shappi

A beginner's guide to acting English

It's 1977 and life in Iran is becoming unpredictable. The Shah will be overthrown and events are about to take place on the world stage. But for five-year-old Shappi Khorsandi all this means is that she must flee, leaving behind a mad extended Iran clan and everything she has ever known. Shappi and her beloved brother Peyvand arrive with their parents in London - all cold weather and strange food - without a word of English. If adapting to a new culture isn't troubling enough, it soon becomes clear that the Ayatollah's henchmen are in pursuit. With the help of MI5, Shappi's family go into hiding. So apart from checking under the family car

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discovering in these distant places a degree of freedom and respect unimaginable to them as spinsters at home.