

**Sofa, so good**  
The latest, greatest TV  
you need to catch up on

**In proportion**  
How to make MMP  
more representative

**Aaron Smale**  
Shane Jones & the  
Ngāpuhi settlement

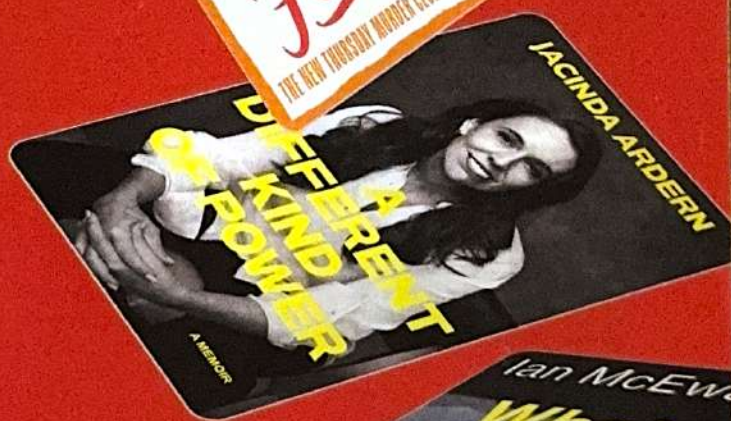
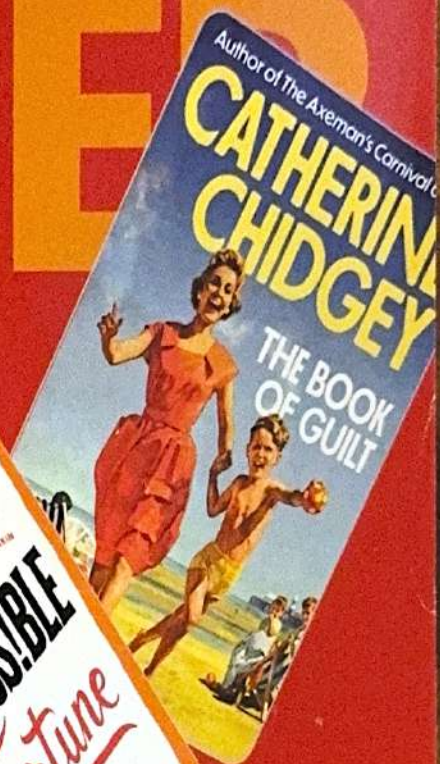
NEW ZEALAND

# LISTENER

JULY 12-18 2025 [www.listener.co.nz](http://www.listener.co.nz)

## Midwinter BOOKS SPECIAL

The best so far &  
the gems to come • Crime  
master Michael Connelly  
• Charlotte Grimshaw on  
reading to kids • Book tsar  
Kate De Goldi & more



**Striking oil**  
Does kākūka extract have  
life-extending potential?

**Lorde's Virgin**  
Her extraordinary,  
provocative new album

**Murderbot**  
The Kiwi connection  
to the hit AI comedy



# The great indoors

As the peak of winter approaches, books editor Mark Broatch and our reviewers pick their favourites of the year so far and point to tantalising titles to come.

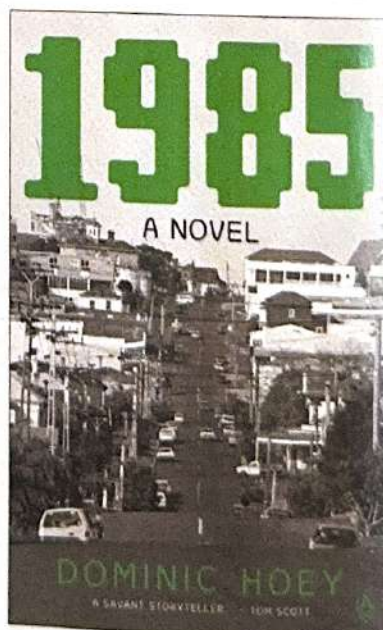
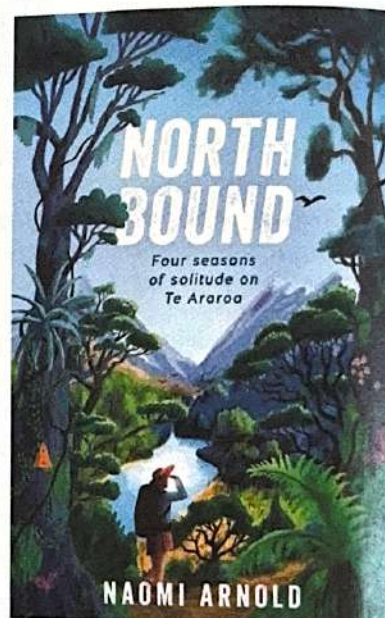
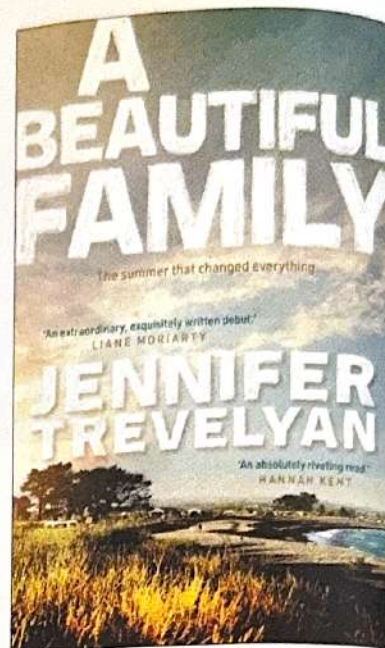
## THRILLS & CHILLS

Some first-class Kiwi thrillers have been a hallmark of 2025. In Rachel Paris's Sydney-set **See How They Fall**, homicide squad detective Mei O'Connor investigates a poisoning at the grand estate of the Turner dynasty. Jennifer Trevelyan's **A Beautiful Family** finds a family on a long summer holiday, in which the youngest, Alix, pairs up with a boy named Kahu to find a girl who disappeared in the area a couple of years back. In Michael Bennett's **Carved in Blood**, set during Matariki, retired detective Hana Westerman is faced with a new case and lots of twisty surprises. Gareth and Louise Ward's Bookshop Detectives are going strong with the second in their cosy-crime series, **Tea and Cake and Death**, and Liam McIlvanney is back with missing-child chiller **The Good Father**. Just out is **King of Ashes** from SA Cosby, the award-winning author of Southern noir crime novels, in which a son returns home to Virginia and must protect his family. Also recommended is Belinda Bauer's **The Impossible Thing**, a page-turner thriller about birds' eggs, and Callan Wink's tense, compelling **Beartooth**, about two tree-chopping

brothers in backwoods Montana who are made a lucrative, risky offer. Also new for crime aficionados is **Murderland**, a readable, lyrical account of a spree of American serial killers in the 1970s and 1980s from a Pulitzer Prize winner. But hold on to your rosary beads – there's a new Dan Brown coming in September. In **The Secret of Secrets**, symbologist Robert Langdon must use all his arcane knowledge – while being stalked – to find an academic who goes missing in Prague. Also out that month is a new Thursday Murder Club from Richard Osman. In **The Impossible Fortune**, the team are in action again as Elizabeth meets a wedding guest who fears for their life and a baddie wants access to an uncrackable code. Also coming is **Clown Town**, the much-awaited new Slow Horses novel from Mick Herron. In October, **Gone Before Goodbye** sees Hollywood books-to-screen mogul Reese Witherspoon team up with Harlan Coben for a tale about a combat surgeon who's thrown into intrigue and danger in the world of the super-rich.

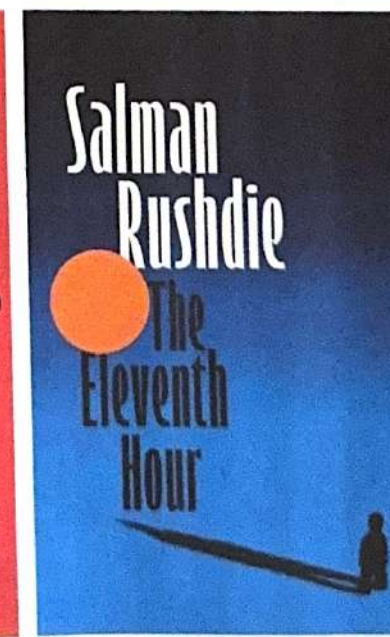
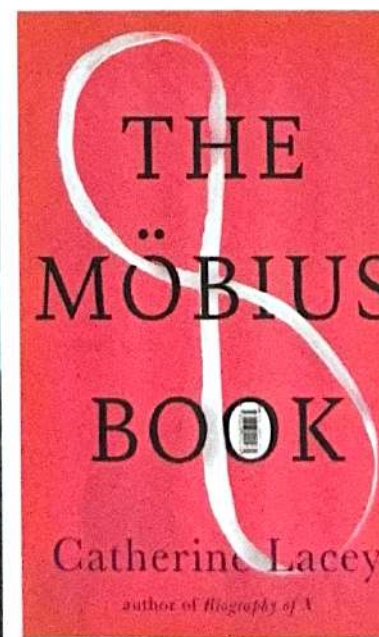
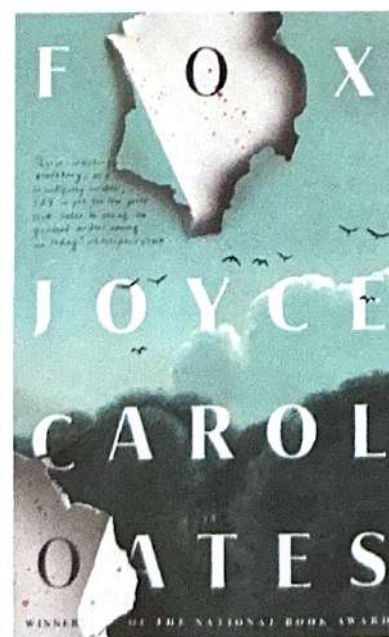
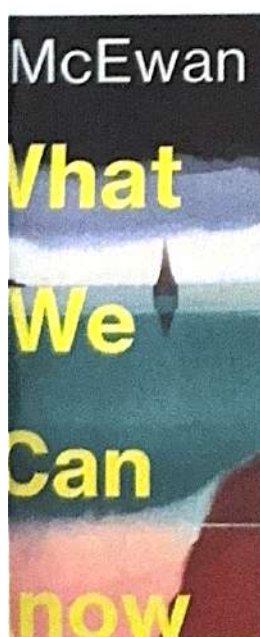
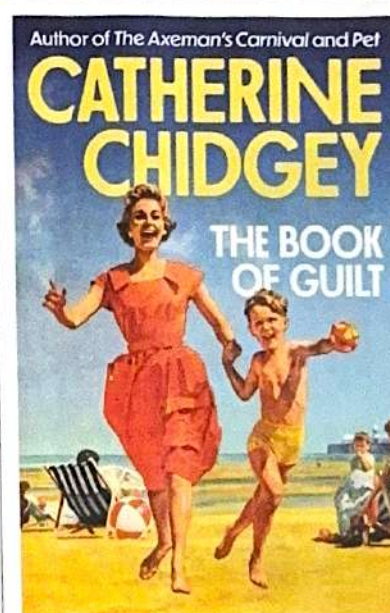
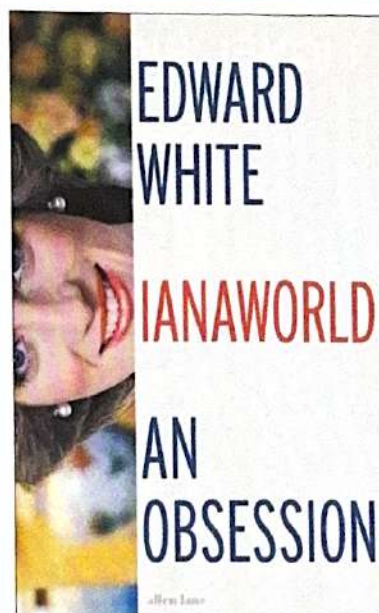
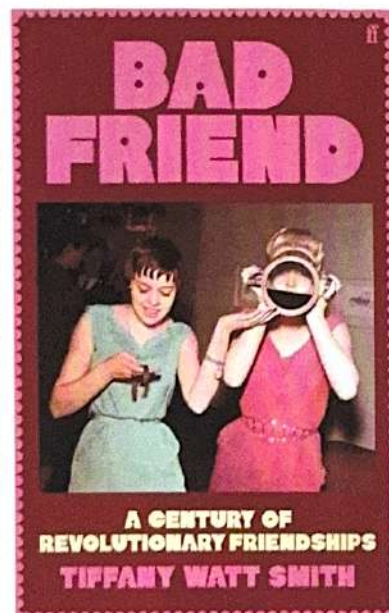
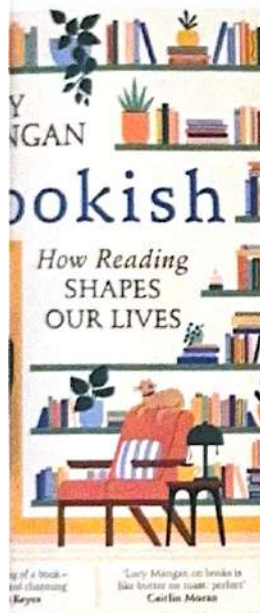
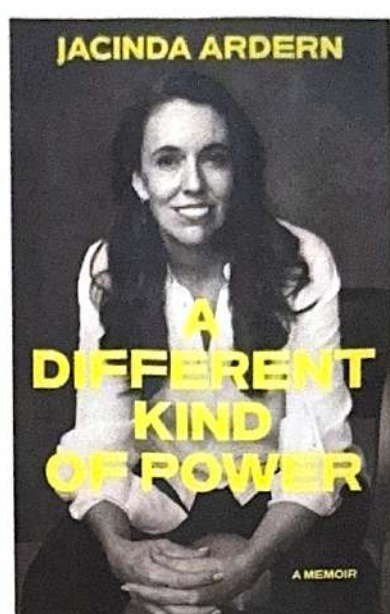
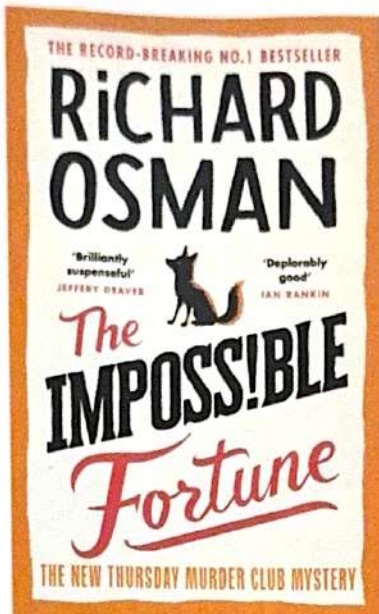
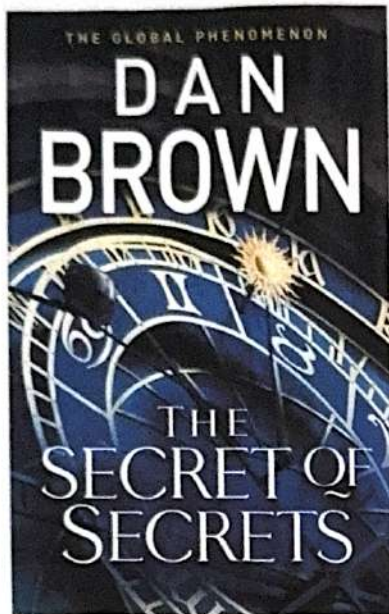
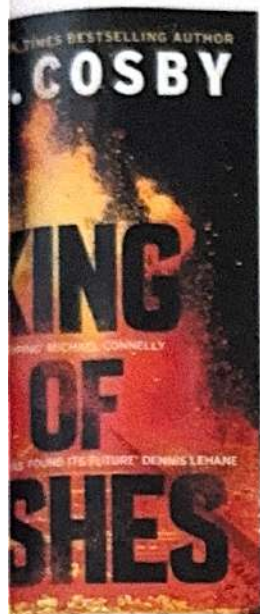
## SUNDAY AFTERNOON READS

Former PM Jacinda Ardern's memoir, **A Different Kind of Power**, received a largely warm reception from the nation's critics, who said it offered a rare insight into the private life of a public figure in New Zealand, particularly one who went through as many national crises and personal events as she did; though some sought more explanation of her government's more controversial policy decisions. For those who prefer intrepid



Hold on to your rosary beads, there's a new Dan Brown coming.







## FRANCES WILSON ELECTRIC SPARK



travel from the comfort of an armchair, Naomi Arnold's *North Bound* is a travelogue and tale of endurance on the Te Araroa trail. Also in the wilderness vein is *Fire & Ice*, from Hazel Phillips, packed with stories about Tongariro National Park. *When the Going Was Good* is former *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter's entertaining account of running an influential magazine in times of journalistic plenty. *Bookish* is bibliophile journalist Lucy Mangan's second captivating love letter to reading, her tastes running from serious literature to thrillers, bonkbusters and young adult tales. Later this month sees the release of *Bad Friend*, a personal history of the pleasures and difficulties of women's friendships from cultural historian Tiffany Watt Smith. In *Dianaworld*, in ebook and audiobook now and hardback in August, British writer Edward White presents a vivid portrait of the late Princess of Wales and of those whose lives she touched. Among self-help titles on the way is *Protocols*, a guide out in September that aims to improve your physical and mental health, by US neuroscientist and podcaster Andrew Huberman.

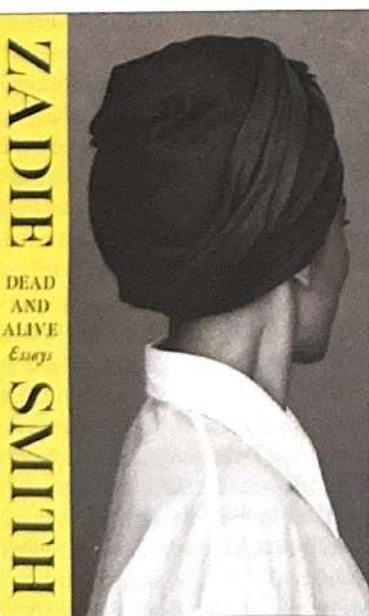
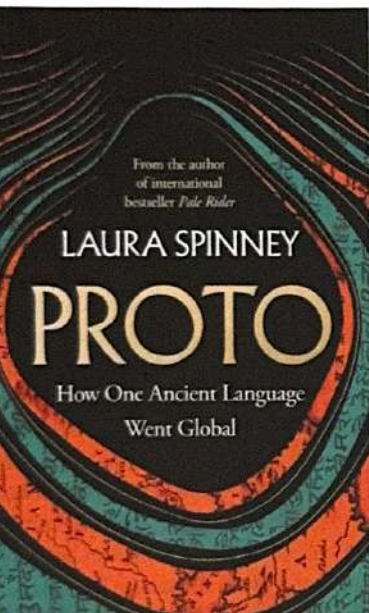
### CHEWY FICTION

The Waikato fiction machine that is Catherine Chidgey has delivered another doozy – a literary novel that's a critical and commercial success, topping the bestseller charts since its release and being widely praised here and overseas. *The Book of Guilt* centres around boy triplets in an alternative Britain in 1979. The three are the last orphans in a house in the countryside, part of a mysterious government scheme. Dominic Hoey's coming-of-age novel, *1985*, pulls no punches, and comes highly recommended by several *Listener* reviewers. *Wonderland*, by Tracy Farr, is set at a theme park on the Miramar Peninsula in Wellington in the early 20th century and persuasively imagines scientist Marie Curie visiting New Zealand incognito. Also out now is Elaine

Feeney's potent *Let Me Go Mad In My Own Way*, in which Claire returns to her family home in the west of Ireland to look after her dying father only to rekindle relations with an old flame and stir up past history. Florence Knapp's *The Names* is a compassionate and affecting tale of family told through three alternative realities. In September, Ian McEwan has a new novel, the dystopian *What We Can Know*, set in a future Britain reduced by rising seas. Joyce Carol Oates is back with *Fox*, a literary suspense novel about a charming English teacher at an elite US boarding school who may be involved in a missing persons case. And Catherine Lacey has written *The Möbius Book*, a hybrid fiction-fact story of trust, anger and love. For diehard Harper Lee fans, in October there's *The Land of Sweet Forever*, unpublished short stories alongside previously published essays. In November, *The Eleventh Hour* sees Salman Rushdie return to fiction, in the form of short stories pondering life and death that range in location from England to America to India. Also that month, Josie Shapiro's second novel, *Good Things Come and Go*, will appear.

### HUMAN STORIES

*Careless People*, by Kiwi Sarah Wynn-Williams, was released with little fanfare. Hardly surprising, really, given that it was a blow-by-blow public airing of the inner workings at Facebook and the company tried to stop its distribution and promotion. Wynn-Williams was the former director of global public policy, and her very readable book throws a strobe light on the sometimes shocking ethical failings of the tech oligarchy. In *John & Paul: A Love Story in Songs*, Ian Leslie offers a fresh perspective on the changing relationship of the twin drivers of The Beatles. In *Memorial Days*, Geraldine Brooks writes about how her apparently healthy partner, Pulitzer-winning journalist Tony Horwitz, collapsed and died on a Washington, DC street, and how she came to properly grieve on a remote Australian island. Ruth Shaw's *Three Wee Bookshops at the End of the World*, the second part of her fascinating life, continues to please Kiwi readers. Also well received by critics and book buyers were *Tony Fomison: Life of the Artist*, the decade-in-the-making account of the painter by art scholar Mark Forman, and artist



“  
The fiction machine that is Catherine Chidgey has delivered another doozy.”