

NEVER MIND THE BOTOX

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6 of the best... BOOKS FOR THE BEACH

MAKE sure there's space in your case for our pick of this summer's top chick lit, chosen by The Sun's book critic NATASHA HARDING. They're perfect for those lazy days on the beach or by the pool.

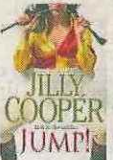
1 **The Perfect Hero**, by Victoria Connelly (Avon, £6.99): When a friend of Kay's dies leaving her a wad of cash she decides she has to use it as an opportunity to make something of her life for once.



The hopeless romantic has always loved Lyme Regis and within weeks has bought a B&B and has her first bookings – a film crew who are working in the pretty seaside town on a remake of a Jane Austen classic.

But when Kay falls for the leading man it's bound to end in tears. A wonderfully old-fashioned tale to enjoy.

2 **Jump!**, by Jilly Cooper (Corgi, £7.99): Etta Bancroft has had her spirit crushed by her dominant, bombastic husband but when he dies her problems really begin. Instead of looking after their mother, her children move her into an ugly bungalow and demand she looks after their kids.



But soon Etta has a new load of friends and a horse to love – which could result in a return to the high life once more.

As you would expect, Jilly Cooper's latest offering is a fast-paced and enjoyable read.

3 **A Rural Affair**, by Catherine Allott (Michael Joseph, £12.99): Widowed Poppy Shilling ought to be devastated at the loss of her husband – but the reality is somewhat different.

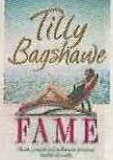


Instead she is finally free from the controlling man and loveless marriage and is determined to make up for lost years by throwing herself into village life.

Before long Poppy has the men falling at her feet and all kinds of trials and tribulations to get her head around – but at least she's living.

A great read.

4 **Fame**, by Tilly Bagshawe (Harper, £7.99): One of the best books of all time, Wuthering Heights is to be made into a film and with the talents of hotshot producer Dorian Razmirez at the helm it looks set to be the movie of the year.



Sabrina Leon is struggling to save her career and when she is cast as Cathy it's the lifeline she needs, if only she could appreciate it. Viorel Hudson plays the brooding Heathcliff – but can he handle the stress of being on location?

Naughty and glam, Tilly is my guilty pleasure.

5 **Summer Loving**, by Allie Spencer (Arrow, £6.99): Sometimes, when the going gets tough, only a girls' holiday will do. With things going from bad to worse Beth decides sun and sea are the order of the day so she plans a fortnight's break for herself and three friends.



They see it as the perfect time to chill out and rekindle their friendships – what could go wrong?

Plenty, which makes for a frenetic story.

From torrential rain to boyfriends turning up unexpectedly, heated arguments and bridezillas – it all goes on in this high-speed read.

6 **Never Mind The Botox: Alex**, by Penny Avis & Joanna Berry (Matador, £6.99): Alex is a high-flying lawyer and wants to make partner but needs a final deal.



When she hears that the exclusive Beau Street Group, which specialises in cosmetic surgery, is being bought by an American company she knows it's the career break she needs.

She wins the business but discovers that the company have some serious skeletons in their cupboards.

Also, how can Alex work when she can't stop swooning over her colleague Dan?

This is chick lit with a welcome twist.

Got a story or an opinion
you want to share?

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comments to 61008
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Edited by
SALLY BROOK



Sun woman

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THE LOW-DOWN ON DESIGNER VAGINAS, TOE TUCKS AND RIB REMOVAL...NOT FOR THE SQUEAMISH

THE secrets of cosmetic surgery are about to be revealed in a new four-book series called Never Mind The Botox.

The co-authors, Penny Avis and Joanna Berry, go behind the glossy brochures, reassuring pep talks and immaculate receptions to reveal the often ugly and occasionally gruesome reality of major surgery done in the name of beauty. While we are often assured the "down time" is minimal and side-effects are rare, this book tells you exactly what you could be letting yourself in for. While the books are classed as fiction, the authors have based their novels on the real-life accounts of patients and industry insiders to uncover what we are having ripped and tucked. Here Penny and Joanna, pictured below, write exclusively for The Sun and reveal the most shocking and extreme cosmetic surgery procedures they came across during their research. *The squeamish should look away now...*

Toe tucks – toes lengthened, shortened or narrowed to fit designer sandals

This is the latest must-have surgery for those who want to look perfect in their strappy sandals. With Keira Knightly allegedly using a foot double, as her feet are "too big and veiny" and Victoria Beckham's bunions getting about as many column inches as her husband, it's not surprising that mere mortals are stressing about the appearance of their feet. The "toe-besity" procedure list, costing from £3,000, includes:

Toe tuck – slims the little toe to help you fit into narrow shoes – can involve shaving the bone and fat reduction.

Toe slimming – removes fatty deposits that make the toes look uneven.

Toe shortening – reduces the length of toes (normally the second toe) so they form a perfect arc shape.

Foot lift – lifts the arches of your foot to make high heels more comfortable.

However, according to the American Orthopaedic Foot And Ankle Society, cosmetic surgery for feet is a risky proposition.

The chance of complications from these surgeries is high, including permanent nerve damage, infection, bleeding, scarring and chronic pain when walking.

At its worst, foot cosmetic surgery gone bad could make it difficult for a woman to wear any shoes at all.

We came across one lady in the US who still couldn't walk on her left foot nine months after surgery and developed neck and back complications as the other foot took the strain. Her bills for the extensive physiotherapy she needed were not covered by her medical insurance and that, combined with being off work for months, sent her badly into debt. We would rather have ugly feet.

Mummy makeover "gift cards" covering the price of a boob job, nose job and tummy tuck.

Confronted with celebrities Angelina Jolie and Katie Holmes bouncing back into shape seemingly seconds after giving birth, mummy makeovers are growing in popularity.

Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears and Kerry Katona are all said to have had them. Combine that with the dramatic rise in the range of cosmetic surgery procedures available, it is not surprising that gift vouchers have swiftly followed suit.

However, these can backfire. We came across a man who gave his wife a mummy makeover voucher and she was so offended she promptly left him. And

another where it was so successful that the recipient woman ran off with her tennis coach. Proceed with caution.

With tummy tucks from £5,600, boob jobs from £4,000 and nose jobs from £3,000, nor is it a cheap option.

Armpit Botox and similar treatments for excessive sweating

A common pre-Oscar night or wedding day treatment,

Botox costing from £350 is injected into the armpits to eliminate or reduce sweating for several months.

However, one of the side-effects is that sweat can then appear somewhere else, as the body still needs to get rid of it.

On the forehead, back of the neck and between the legs are common areas where this can

occur instead – and that's certainly not a good look.

Designer vaginas to have the "lady garden" of a 16-year-old again

There is an increasingly popular trend in women choosing to have these procedures which start at £2,500.

It is often linked to internet pornography creating unrealistic images of what women should look like downstairs – which if true, is a pretty horrifying incentive.

Jordan has confessed to having had treatment to her "lady areas" but said it was for medical reasons. But it's not just for porn stars and celebs. The most

recent NHS figures show a 70 per cent increase in the number of women having labiaplasty on the NHS, so the trend shows no sign of abating. We came across one example where a mother and daughter had this done on the same day then compared results. Too much information!

Eyelash transplants

This procedure works in the same way as hair treatment for balding men, where living hair follicles are grafted on to the upper eyelid.

Considered a "must-have" for women who lust for longer, thicker lashes or who have lost lashes through overuse of extensions (yes, this is

possible). The surgeon injects the hair into the eyelids, normally under a local anaesthetic. After the treatment, patients have to wear goggles at night to stop themselves scratching them out in their sleep as they are so itchy. The "after" photos are very scary indeed – weeping, scabby, swollen and bruised eyelids, worse than a heavyweight boxer after 12 rounds.

Complications can include severe itching, eyelid infection, ingrown hairs and even inward turning of the eyelid against the eyeball.

The transplanted hair will also continue to grow like hair on your head, so will need to be trimmed regularly and curled to shape like normal lashes. Costs start at £3,500.

Ankle liposuction

"Cankles" happen where the calf meets directly with the ankle giving it a swollen appearance due to a lack of muscle or a build-up of fluid.

With ankle liposuction, fatty deposits are removed to trim and shape the ankle area.

However, as ankles are primarily made up of muscle and bone and contain a number of key nerves and veins, the procedure, costing from £800, is much more complex and risky than liposuction in other areas.

Cheryl Cole was recently photographed with cankles, showing that it isn't always related to weight.

Contour irregularities, nerve damage, blood clots and hanging skin are just some of the reported side-effects and the swelling can take several months to go down, rather defeating the object.

And if you thought these were a step too far, wait until you see what could be just around the corner due to popular demand...

Rib removal with tummy tuck to create an hourglass figure

There's a long list of celebrities who have been rumoured to have had this done: Cher, Jane Fonda, Raquel Welch, Tori Spelling, Pamela Anderson, Janet Jackson... the list goes on.

As far as we could see, none of the rumours have ever been proved to be true.

But our research showed that chat rooms still abound with people seeking out where they can get it done – despite the fact they

wouldn't be able to breathe properly, bend or

drive for several weeks and that side-effects can include collapsed lungs, nerve damage, perforation of the diaphragm, infection or pneumonia.

● The first book in the Never Mind The Botox series by Penny Avis and Joanna Berry, is called Alex and is out now (£6.99, Matador). For more information visit avisberry.com.



BRING ME SUNSHINE

EVEN amid the downpours, there's some sunshine so it's still worth buying some cool shades for the summer party circuit.

You can be subtly stylish in classic metal or tortoiseshell frames, or funk it up with brights and prints. And with prices starting as low as £2, why stop at one pair? Here, we reveal our top ten aviator sunglasses.

1
Tortoiseshell, £16, Topshop



2
Pink, £10, Dorothy Perkins

3
Black, £5, George at Asda



4
Two-tone, £14, Topshop

5
Pink snakeskin, £4, Peacocks



6
Gold, £5, F&F at Tesco

7
Gold detail, £18, House of Fraser



8
Red, £2, Primark

9
White, £6, M&S



10
Blue floral, £5, Peacocks

The **bettybrisk** Interview

CELEBRITY ETIQUETTE AND DAILY DILEMMAS

“Our guest Jamie Oliver wanted to make the gravy – I told him: ‘I’ll kill you first’”

Each week Betty, our no-nonsense (and frankly eccentric) Mistress Of Modern Manners, quizzes a celebrity on their ethics and standards. Here RICHARD MADELEY talks about why he won't wear underpants, sulking and keeping passion alive

DON'T tell Judy, but the sight of you on TV makes me come over all giggly and girlish. Why is that, do you think?

I use subliminal imaging and have done for years. It is a standard part of any TV contract I sign that micro-second images of Brad Pitt must be flashed on-screen every 30 seconds.

Mr Brisk's younger than me. He says he prefers women "who have done a bit", so he doesn't have to explain anything. Should I take that as a compliment?

I happen to know your husband and called him for help on this one. He says he in no way intended that remark as a compliment. It was said in the middle of a row on your wedding anniversary and he added the fact you are trying to rewrite history ("again") is "bloody typical of the woman". Sorry, I'm just telling it like it is.

Your dislikes list includes rosy-cheeked farmers, beard trimmers and tap dancers. How do you feel about men's baggy underpants (my own personal bugbear)?

I shun underwear of any description. I think it is rude.

I fidget watching others do things I KNOW I can do better, which is pretty much everything. Are you a control freak too?

Oh, very much so. In fact my wife has grown so weary of my ceaseless (and, of course, entirely justified) criticism of everyone and everything on the television, she now watches it wearing headphones. Perhaps she has grown tired of me being right all the time. I accept this must be very demoralising.

I'll take over the cooking from the hostess at dinner parties if I think she won't be up to scratch. When would you steam in?

Well, I ejected Jamie Oliver from my kitchen when he, his wife Jules and their girls came over for Sunday lunch. He said he wanted to help out with the



gravy. I said, "I'll kill you first," and he retreated. I don't think I over-reacted to his unsolicited offer of help. Do you, Betty?

I gather you put chicken livers in your spaghetti bolognese. Are you a bit Heston Blumenthal in the kitchen?

Well, if frozen foodstuff takes too long to defrost I have been known to add antifreeze. It's surprisingly effective and there's nothing wrong with a quick fix. Most people survive, I find.

I imagine there might be the occasional heated debate round your house. True?

Judy and I long ago agreed to use the AV system to resolve any disagreements. The whole family does. For example, we recently decided to have a holiday in Portugal, the destination of choice for a substantial minority of Madeleys. But then we remembered AV and balloted our second and third choices. As a result, we all enjoyed a memorable fortnight in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Are you the petulant one who flounces and slams doors and sulks for hours?

Whatever. Shut up, anyway.

Do you call Judy "Jude"?

I never address my wife by anything other than her full name and avoid eye contact unless given specific permission to do so.

You've been married for 25 years and still find each other sexy. Any tips for Mr B and I... we seem to have left our bed-breaking days behind us.

See above. It keeps the magic alive.

Would you fight ageing by dyeing your hair? Waxing your bits? Having Botox?

I'm not sure what I would find more embarrassing – going through the process or being found out. No, I will take ageing on the chin – however grizzled it may become.

● Richard and Judy's Book Club Summer Reads are currently available at WHSmith. See richardandjudy.co.uk

Betty can sleep at nights now, knowing Noel Gallagher's wedding has gone smoothly and that Cheryl Cole's announced she's fine... though is she? Really?

LIAM GALLAGHER was apparently "too busy" to turn up for the wedding of his brother Noel at the weekend. Imagine the whoops of joy, elated high fives and huge sighs of relief all round that must have greeted that news at the ceremony.

The groom was probably already stressed beyond measure with worry over what the scarily unpredictable Russell Brand might come out with during his best man's speech.

Fretting that your sulky little brother might nut the vicar, heckle during the vows or try to snog the bride's mother would have put a complete dampener on the day.

WHAT a relief! Cheryl's finally broken her silence to reassure her anxious fans that that she's "absolutely fine" after a "weird past few weeks". Phew.

Though I do wonder if anyone was actually that worried. Maybe Cheryl, unemployed and with no prospects in the pipeline, has noticed that we've all been moving on without her.

It might explain those rumours she's getting back with Ashley (perhaps he texted her pics of himself in his underpants – it's worked for him before).

But surely she has no intention of rekindling their romance. She can't be that desperate for publicity. Can she?



Friday, June 17, 2011
Advertisement Supplement

my MailLife

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spa for two
with
spabreaks.com
See page 6

Page 3 Our top 15
holiday essentials



Page 5 Let us pack
your bags



Life's a beach

See page 7



Holiday reading

WIN
a day
spa for
two

To celebrate the launch of *Never Mind the Botox*, we have teamed up with Spabreaks.com to offer one lucky Daily Mail reader a spa day for two. Choose from over 300 locations across the UK. The first 25 runners-up will get a free copy of *Never Mind the Botox*.

10 fiction titles



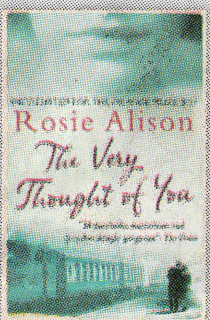
SAVE £2 off RRP

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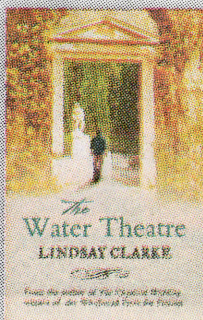
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Never Mind The Botox

Thinking about Botox?

Most people have Botox to look and feel better. But with the average cost topping £1,000 a year, there are plenty of things to think about before succumbing to a lifetime of injections. Penny Avis and Joanna Berry, co-authors of the fabulous new contemporary women's fiction series *Never Mind the Botox*, offer their thoughts.

Airbrush yourself

Photo-editing software is everywhere. Get a close-up photo of your smiling face and slowly airbrush your lines away. It will soon teach you what you want, or, more importantly, what you don't want. Tiny changes can quickly make you look very odd indeed.

Katie Price or Yasmin Le Bon?

What type of look do you want? Totally smooth or just slightly more youthful? Quality clinics will offer a free consultation. Take some photos with you, ask them what is achievable and what it will cost.

The law of unintended consequences

There are claims that when your usual muscles can't move, wrinkles can appear somewhere else instead, such as down the side of your face. Make sure you discuss all the risks before going ahead.

Grandma knows best

In the good old days, women used to get their hair done every week. You could have a wash and blow-dry every Friday and still spend less in a year than you would on Botox. Result.

Spoil yourself

Book a spa day once a month instead. Rejuvenate, relax and experiment with new treatments. If that doesn't make you feel better, we'll eat our dressing gowns.

Face lift at fifty

Save £1,000 a year and after five years you would have enough to have a face lift instead, which might end up being a better long-term investment. Worth a thought?

Credit crunch planning

Botox is for life, not just for Christmas. What happens if you can't afford it anymore? Perhaps you buy a new house or get made redundant. Are you prepared to drift back to how you used to look, only older?

To enter sign up to the MailLife newsletter. Visit www.MailLife.co.uk/newsletter for full details of the competition



Never Mind the Botox
PC: BER6304 £6.49



VOICE OF THE DAILY Mirror

voice@mirror.co.uk

Derail this dodgy deal

THE Government's explanation for handing a £1.4billion train carriages contract to Germany has hit the buffers.

Ministers tried to claim that EU competition laws had forced them to overlook UK-based company Bombardier.

When experts argued they could have taken into account the devastating impact that would have on the Derby workforce they claimed the tendering process set up by Labour couldn't be undone.

Documents obtained by the Mirror have shown that is untrue, and more questions were raised by our revelation that consultants pocketed £15million for telling the Government to shop abroad.

Now the whole business case for picking Siemens has been exploded by news that the German firm doesn't even make the chassis that will provide the basis of the order.

This decision simply doesn't add up and it must be reversed.

Compo shame

CRAVEN officials desperately tried to keep evil Levi Bellfield's sickening compensation payout under wraps.

When the Mirror got wind of the twisted killer's claim, the Ministry of Justice moved heaven and earth to throw us off the trail.

Devious spin doctors all but lied in a bid to cover up the appalling truth that taxpayers were going to put thousands into Bellfield's pocket because a fellow inmate had given him a slap.

We persevered and exposed this travesty of justice but the episode raises important questions about a government that likes to lay claim to transparency.

A free society depends on the right of journalists to ask straight questions and the public have a right to expect straight answers.

Old spinster

STRENGTH. Former Oz spin king Shane Warne is turning into a right Sheila.

They say that dogs start to look like their owners but fans will be appalled to see the once rugged cricket legend transformed into Liz Hurley's poodle.

Ke'ber and Black SHANE WARNE AND LIZ HURLEY IN LOVE



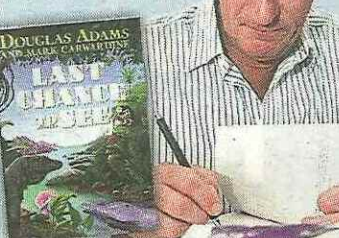
JEREMY PAXMAN

READING: The Rotters' Club by Jonathan Coe

Jeremy's holiday read is about three teenage friends growing up in the 1970s, against the backdrop of IRA bombs, strikes, and punk rock. The book also held the record for the longest sentence in English literature with 13,955 words.

SHOULD BE READING: Last Chance To See by Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine

All about endangered species. With the future of Paxman's Newnight in the balance it could resonate all too well with him.



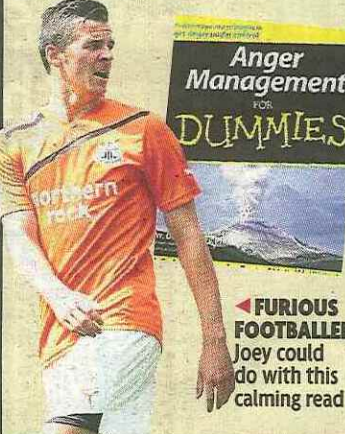
JOEY BARTON

READING: Animal Farm by George Orwell

Footballer Joey Barton's been tweeting Orwell quotes as he falls out with Newcastle United.

SHOULD BE READING: Anger Management for Dummies by Gillian Bloxham

Every time Joey shows any good sense, he ruins it soon after by being stupid — for example, by stubbing out a cigar in a trainee's eye. Maybe this would put an end to his troubles.



BARACK OBAMA



BOOKISH Obamas

READING: For Whom The Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway

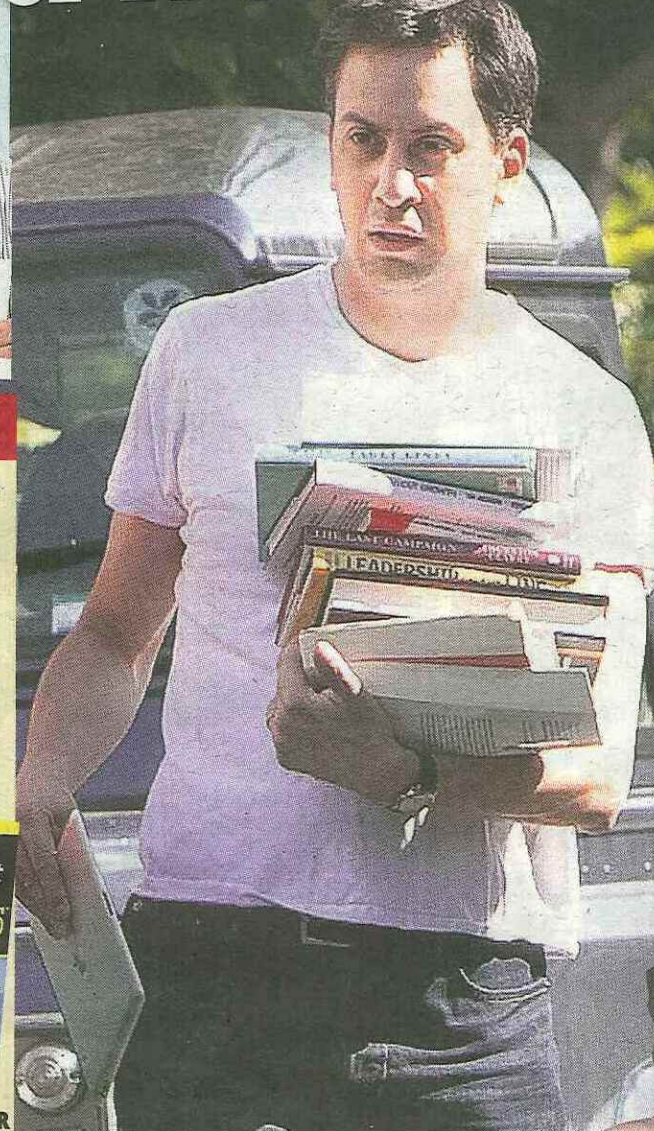
The US president admitted this meditation on death and the savagery of war was his book of choice.

SHOULD BE READING: A House Divided by Deborah LeBlank

Given his troubles trying to solve the problem of the debt-laden US, this horror story would seem more appropriate.



Turn over a new leaf



BOOKS CELEBS SHOULD READ

BY **MATT ROPER**
m.roper@mirror.co.uk

RELAXING with a really good book is a great way to unwind on holiday.

Labour leader Ed Miliband was spotted this week stocking up on summer reading material with books such as Leadership On The

Line, Prosperity Without Growth and The Last Campaign, about Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 race to be US President.

But what are other famous people flicking through on the beach this year?

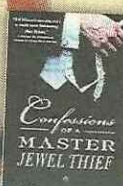
And, with tongue firmly in cheek, what should they have perhaps taken instead?

LINDSAY LOHAN

READING: The Plot Against America by Philip Roth
Lindsay Lohan was recently spotted reading this novel, a fictional account of the fate of America's Jews after a rabid right-winger defeats Franklin Roosevelt in the 1940 election.

SHOULD BE READING: Confessions Of A Master Jewel Thief by Bill Mason

Lohan recently served time for stealing a necklace — so this autobiography by arguably the greatest jewel thief who ever lived would be perfect.



WAYNE ROONEY

READING: Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone by JK Rowling

Rooney recently told how the Harry Potter series were his favourites as the books "really get your imagination going".

SHOULD BE READING: Dangerous Liaisons by Pierre Choderlos De Laclos

After revelations about cheating on wife Coleen, this handbook for seducers could teach him a few lessons.



VICTORIA BECKHAM

READING: To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Victoria says this much-loved novel about racism in 1930s Alabama is her favourite book, and rumour has it she even named her new daughter Harper in her honour.

SHOULD BE READING: The Secret Seven by Enid Blyton

Not only is her daughter's middle name Seven, it's also her husband's favourite shirt number.

▼ **MUMMY** With Harper



NIGELLA LAWSON

READING: The Count Of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas

Nigella's holiday to Tuscany this year will be taken up reading this classic adventure novel, about Edmond Dantes, a man wrongfully imprisoned in Italy who escapes and remakes himself as the Count of Monte Cristo to gain revenge.

SHOULD BE READING: Cover Up by John Francome

This horse racing thriller's title may remind Nigella of the burkini outfit she sported recently on Bondi Beach.



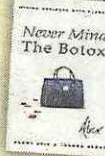
ASHTON KUTCHER

READING: The Youth Pill by David Stip

The 33-year-old actor, married to Demi Moore, 48, was snapped reading a book detailing the race to isolate the suspected human "gerontogene" — the gene causing us to age that one day could be "switched off".

SHOULD BE READING: Never Mind The Botox by Penny Avis and Joanna Berry

It might be a novel, but this book about a man who buys out a cosmetic surgery business might be a more realistic choice of reading for the What Happens in Vegas actor.

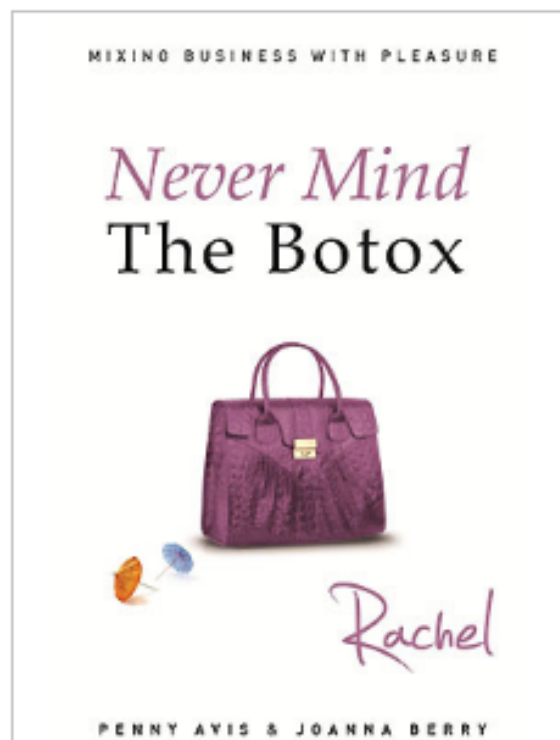


Best books for February 2012

February is a bumper month for books – and to help you decide which one (or more) you're prepared to part from your pennies for, here's Cosmo's indispensable guide to the 12 hottest reads.

06 February 2012 By Rosie Mullender

4 of 12



 View Thumbnails

Never Mind The Botox: Rachel by Penny Avis and Joanna Berry

It feels like we've been waiting forever for the next instalment in this series about four professional women stepping into the glamorous world of cosmetic surgery. Six months after reading Alex's story, it's now the turn of Rachel to tell the same tale from a completely different perspective. Financier Rachel struggles with her work and love-life, thanks to her boozy boyfriend and a disastrous deal – but how will it affect her friends? Each book in this clever series intertwines with the others, but can be read in any order. Glamorous, high-octane fun, it's best read with a cocktail and a smile!

£8.99, **Matador**

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Have you got a novel in you?

Many of us dream of writing a book, but how hard is it
really to take yours from an idea to printed words
on a published page? Six authors tell us...

BY BEATRICE HODGKIN PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW HAYES-WATKINS

THE AT-HOME MUM TURNED AUTHOR



You'd think if your novel was bestseller material, finding an agent and publishing deal would be easy. Not so for mum-of-two Rosemund Lupton, who had to re-write two thirds of her novel, *Sister* (Platkus, £7.99) once it was finally picked up by a publisher. Her latest book, *Afterwards* (Platkus, £7.99), is out now.

DON'T GIVE UP

My career crash-landed when I had babies, but when the youngest started school I decided to focus on what I'd always wanted to do: write a novel. But, as any mother who works from home knows, there are a million distractions. It was very slow to start with: on the first day I think I wrote just 50 words! But I kept going and my first draft took three years to write.

RESEARCH THE INDUSTRY

I looked in the *Writers' And Artists' Yearbook* (AC & Black, £14.95), which lists all the literary agents, and sent out three sample chapters to selected agents, one at a time, regularly, over a two-year period. Most said that they'd get back within six weeks, but in reality it would be six months. It was so disheartening, but I finally got 'the call' from Emma Bewetherick,



THE ENTREPRENEURS



Friends for almost 20 years, Penny Avis, a corporate finance partner at Deloitte, and Joanna Berry, a high-flying lawyer, both mothers, put their business gumption into the writing of a quartet of novels, *Never Mind The Botox* (Matador, £6.99 each), choosing to self-publish.

READ BOOKS ABOUT WRITING NOVELS

The best one we found was Stephen King's *On Writing* (New English Library, £9.99). It gives tips on plot and pace, characterisation, chapter-length, and the balance between narrative, description and dialogue. Another was *How Not To Write A Novel* (Penguin, £9.99), as we wanted to make sure we weren't making any of those mistakes! We also read *Will Write For Shoes: How To Write A Chick Lit Novel* (Griffin, £8.99), which is really positive about chick lit.

STRUCTURE THE BOOK

We set out the novels' concept in three lines, then created four main character synopses and a more detailed four-act summary of each book. We created a style guide so we wrote in the same way and set deadlines, with a word count per week and a time allowance of nine

"We set deadlines, with a time allowance of nine months to write the first two books"

months in total to write the first two books – one book each. At the end we wrote a book proposal, setting out the target market and their reading tastes.

CONSIDER SELF-PUBLISHING

The traditional route was too slow, so we researched self-publishing and looked at Author House, Lulu and Matador. We went with Matador, who said it would take 12 weeks to get a finished manuscript onto Amazon. They created an ISBN number (the barcode needed for sales) the Nielsen BookScan information (which registers sales in bestseller charts),



put the books on online retailers and did the order fulfilment. Every service you want, you pay for.

DON'T FORGET PROOFREADING, DESIGN AND PUBLICITY

We were comfortable negotiating contracts and royalties, but we wanted professional editing so found Charlie Wilson at Perfectly Write. We chose a mid-range service, somewhere between simple proofreading and a story critique, which was about £500 and took roughly three weeks. Our book cover, website and flyers were all put together by the same graphic design house, who we found by inviting various designers to pitch to us. Through a random connection we were introduced to Midas PR, a book publicity company. We delayed publication by six months so we could generate publicity.

GENERATE PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

We contacted bookshop managers ourselves and arranged signings – it

helps if there's a connection to a shop, such as being local. We also tried to think of three different types of businesses relevant to the book that might partner us, so we wrote to Spa Breaks, Fitness First and the Harley Medical Group. Spa Breaks loved the idea and offered competition prizes, via our website nevermindthebotox.co.uk.

INVEST IN IT

You can self-publish fairly cheaply if you want to. Very basic services cost about £1,000. Something more comprehensive is more like £4,000, but if you start adding on PR and an editor the price creeps up. Post-publication, if you take into account standard retailer discounts and order-fulfilment costs from Matador, we make between 30p and £2.50 per book with a cover price of £6.99. The odds are stacked against you if you want to self-publish a bestseller, but if you're a little bit entrepreneurial, a business approach can really help. →

CONTEMPORARY

NEVER MIND THE BOTOX:
RACHEL BY PENNY AVIS
AND JOANNA BERRY
(Matador, £6.99)

In the second of this four-book series Rachel Altman is a work hard, play hard kind of woman. She has a prestigious job as a corporate financier but her sports journalist boyfriend Harry is constantly trying to lead her astray. When she is offered the sole charge of a very important account for a cosmetic surgery company, she jumps at the chance to prove herself and climb the promotion ladder. But when she uncovers secrets and lies within the clinic, Rachel finds herself in a catch-22 situation that threatens to shatter both her professional and personal life. This is a rip-roaring read with plenty of humour and warm, believable characters – best read with a chilled glass of Pinot Grigio.

LIKE THIS

Try...
Ophelia In Pieces by Clare Jacob or *Faking It* by Lotte Daley

HISTORICAL FICTION

THE WINTER PALACE BY EVA STACHNIAK (Doubleday, £12.99)

Sent to the glittering court of Empress Elizabeth when her father dies, Vavara's ability to listen and learn unobtrusively is spotted by the great Chancellor Bestuzhev. As he teaches her the art of lock picking and how to survive as one of the Empress's key spies, she is sent to spy on 14-year-old Sophie of Anhalt – an obscure Prussian princess. The two girls find an unlikely and forbidden friendship develops as Vavara helps Sophie, now known as Catherine, navigate the dangers of her new marriage to Crown Prince Peter. A wonderfully magestic and evocative tale of 18th century Russia at a key moment in history.

LIKE THIS

Try...
The Bronze Horseman by Paullina Simons or *The Red Scarf* by Kate Farnival



BOOK OF THE MONTH

ME BEFORE YOU

BY JOJO MOYES
(Penguin, £6.99)

Desperate to find a job, the lively, eccentrically dressed Louisa Clark is taken on by Camilla Traynor to be a companion for her adult son, Will. He has been wheelchair-bound since a terrible accident and the once high-flyer is now quadriplegic and consumed with bitter anger. Lou is convinced he hates her and dreads her job each day, but her close-knit family need the money and so she persists. Slowly, they begin to get on, and their verbal sparring and her willingness to learn from him seems to spark Will's interest in life again. But then Louisa discovers his ultimate goal and she sets out on a desperate attempt to change his mind. Jojo Moyes has done it again with this funny, touching tale that is impossible to put down. Make sure you have a box of tissues to hand!

LIKE THIS

Try...
To My Best Friends by Sam Baker or *The Ugly Sister* by Jane Fallon

WOMEN'S FICTION

THE PROMISE
BY LESLEY PEARSE

(Michael Joseph, £18.99)

Belle Rielly finally has the life she's always wanted – a devoted husband in Jimmy and her own hat shop in a fashionable part of London. But then World War One breaks out and when Jimmy joins the army, Belle realises she can no longer just stand by and volunteers for the Red Cross. Soon she finds herself driving ambulances in war-torn France, which throws her back into the path – and arms – of Etienne, the enigmatic man who had played such a significant part in her traumatic early life. Belle is now torn between her loyalty to Jimmy and feelings for Etienne – but then the past returns to haunt her in other, more unpleasant ways, and Belle's character is tested as never before. This is the follow-up to the bestselling *Belle* and is an enjoyable page-turner that will spice up cold winter nights!

LIKE THIS

Try...
To Love And To Cherish by Lyn Andrews or *Family Ties* by Danielle Steel



BOOK NEWS:

The TV Book Club (Channel 4) returns to our screens this month with a panel of presenters and celebrity guests who will be reviewing books from new and emerging authors, plus contributions from reading groups around the country. To find out which books will feature this January, go to tvbookclub.co.uk where you will also find reading notes, author profiles and extracts from the books featured.

AUTHOR Q&A

ELIZABETH GEORGE currently lives on an island in Seattle. Her first *Det Inps Lynley* book was published in 1988 and many of the 17 novels in the series have been dramatised for television



What inspired *Believing The Lie*?

To talk about the inspiration would, I'm sorry to say, give away a large part of the plot. I was inspired years ago in Sweden at a book fair when I learnt who was in the room down the hall from my own.

What's your favourite book?

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee.

What would be your perfect day?

Relaxing with the fire burning, reading a good book, drinking endless cups of Earl Grey tea, holding my

mini dachshund on my lap. Ahhhhh!

What's your favourite word?

Enormity, used correctly. Alas, it seldom is, especially in England.

Who would be your ideal party guests?

Yo Yo Ma, Bill Moyer, Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, Bill Gates, Oscar Wilde and Elizabeth I.

What's your first thought in the morning?

"What's on today's agenda?"

Who inspires you?

My mother's work ethic and *A New Earth*

by Eckhart Tolle (Penguin, £9.99).

What's your most treasured possession?

I try to remember that things are just things, but it would probably be one of my oil paintings called *The Flute Player*.

If you weren't a writer, what would you be?

Someone who wanted to be a writer.

Believing The Lie (Hodder & Stoughton, £13.99) is now out in paperback



DID YOU KNOW...?

Almost a third of UK adults are too embarrassed to admit to loving a particular book. Top of the list is the *Harry Potter* series, second is *The Da Vinci Code* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* is third.*