

## 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 majestic 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](http://tvbookclub.co.uk) where you will also find reading notes, author profiles and extracts from the books featured.

## AUTHOR Q&amp;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.\*