

December Highlights

BOOK OF THE MONTH



Meri Kirihimete, Kererū!

Juliette MacIver & Daron Parton

Allen & Unwin | \$23.00

It's Christmas time in the bush and all the creatures are excited! They're wondering what special treats Santa will bring them.

Kiwi wants to fly, Tuatara wants a soft place to lie, Tūi wants a mirror, and so on. Kererū just wants to be able to sing like Tūi.

Santa makes his midnight flight, delivering all the presents. But he can't give Kererū what he wants ...

Will it be the perfect Kirihimete for all?

Juliette MacIver's exquisite rhyme is on show in this beautiful Christmas story. It's a perfect picture book for any kiwi kid, with te reo Māori woven throughout. MacIver's stories are always such fun, with her love of linguistics obvious to any reader. There's a sweet little message for younger readers about friendship and kindness.

An array of native animals brings this sweet story to life, and illustrator Daron Parton has done an incredible job. His style is unique and fun with vibrant colour and bold shapes, and just a dash of silliness. This is a very fun, funny and heartwarming Christmas story from a talented duo that will make a perfect Kirihimete gift for every younger reader.

*Reviewed by Rebekah Lyell
for NZ Booklovers*

KIDS & YA

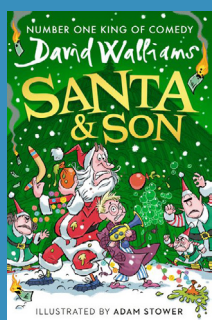


Let's Stick Summer Fun: A Bluey Sticker Book

Bluey

Penguin | \$13.00

Dive into sunny, sticker adventures with Bluey and Bingo as they play cricket at the park, splash through Swim School, fire up backyard BBQs and hit the beach for nonstop summer fun. Packed with summer scenes and holiday-ready activities, this vibrant book brings the hit preschool series to life with playful, joy-filled moments perfect for little fans on the go.



Santa & Son

David Walliams & Adam Stower

HarperCollins | \$25.00

On Christmas Eve, a daring robbery hits the world's most famous toy shop, and only the store's Santa and his quick-thinking son can stop it. Trapped inside with a gang of baddies, they turn pogo sticks, bouncy balls, slime, helicopters and more into laugh-out-loud weapons. A fast, funny, heartwarming Christmas caper bursting with chaotic toy-shop action.



The Keeper of the Lost Cities: The Graphic Novel Vol. 2

Shannon Messenger

Simon & Schuster | \$29.00

Sophie Foster's new life in the Lost Cities is full of incredible powers, strange creatures and mounting danger. As she struggles through Foxfire Academy midterms, unsettling clues swirl—mysterious fires, whispers of conspiracies, and memories in her mind that don't feel like hers. Someone is hiding deadly secrets inside her, and Sophie may be part of something far bigger than she ever imagined.



Poppa's Workshop

Chelsea Cresswell & Jessica Twohill

Little Moa | \$22.00

Step inside Poppa's toy workshop, a magical place where creations come to life and Christmas dreams begin. As the holiday countdown ticks closer, Poppa races to finish his enchanting surprises. But will everything be ready in time? Filled with warmth, wonder and a special fold-out surprise, this beautifully illustrated story celebrates the magic hiding in unexpected places.



Wolf Girl 14: The Break In

Anh Do

Allen & Unwin | \$19.00

Gwen's long-awaited reunion with her dad brings the pack one step closer to being whole, but danger waits in the wilderness. When a lost spaniel leads them to dogs being forced to dig for minerals along a perilous cliff, Gwen must pull off a daring break-in to free them. High-stakes action, loyal pups and a rescue mission that pushes Wolf Girl to her limits.



Gladiator, Goddess

Morgan H Owen

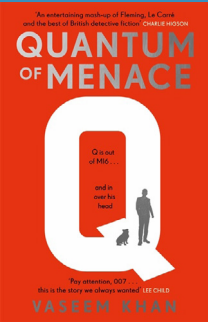
Simon & Schuster | \$29.00

In ancient Pompeii, Gia dreams of becoming a gladiator—an impossible ambition for a woman. But when she wins the favour of Claudia, the emperor's daughter, she's thrust into the arena and into the heart of a brewing conspiracy to upend the Empire. As danger rises, so do their forbidden feelings, defying even the Goddesses who set their fates in motion.



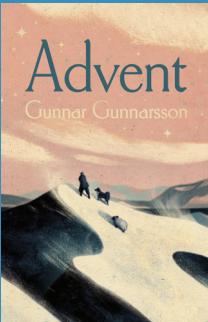
Culpability
Bruce Holsinger
Allen & Unwin | \$38.00

When the Cassidy-Shaws' autonomous minivan collides with an oncoming car, killing an elderly couple, seventeen-year-old Charlie is in the driver's seat, with his father, Noah, riding shotgun. In the back seat, Alice and Izzy are on their phones, while their mother, Lorelei, a world leader in the field of artificial intelligence, is absorbed in her work. Yet each family member harbours a secret, implicating them all in the tragic accident.



Quantum of Menace
Vaseem Khan
Allen & Unwin | \$50.00

A spin-off cosy James Bond series. After leaving M16, Q returns to his quiet hometown, only to stumble upon a mysterious death. When his friend, a quantum computer genius, dies under suspicious circumstances, the police shrug it off, but Q suspects sinister forces at play. Using his trademark ingenuity and dry wit, he must unravel the secrets before danger catches up in this clever, thrilling spin-off.



Advent
Gunnar Gunnarsson
Penguin | \$35.00

Each year, in the days leading up to Christmas, Benedikt treks into Iceland's snowy mountains to rescue sheep lost in brutal winter storms. With only his loyal dog and ram beside him, he braves blizzards, perilous terrain and long, silent nights, driven by compassion and duty. Newly translated after 90 years, this timeless Christmas classic captures the stark beauty, quiet heroism and deep peace of the season.



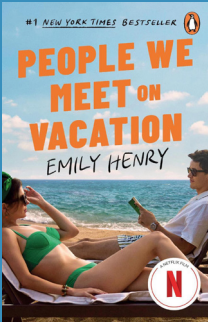
Best Offer Wins
Marisa Kashino
Transworld Publishers | \$38.00

House hunting has pushed Margo Miyake to the edge. After endless failed bids, a tip-off leads her to the perfect off-market home. It could be her chance to save her marriage and get her life back on track. But harmless stalking and minor trespasses spiral into increasingly unhinged schemes. Darkly funny, tense, and completely gripping, this domestic thriller proves that sometimes obsession has no limits.



One Aladdin Two Lamps
Jeanette Winterson
Penguin | \$45.00

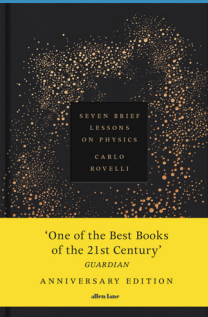
With her execution looming, a woman is fighting for her life. Every night she tells a story. Every morning, she lives one more day. Jeanette Winterson blends magic, memoir and myth to explore truth, love, happiness and the power of reimagining our own narratives. A bold, modern retelling that celebrates storytelling as a force strong enough to change any ending.



People We Meet On Vacation
Emily Henry
Penguin | \$28.00

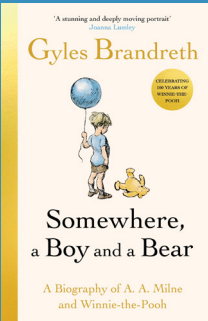
Two friends. Ten summer trips. One last chance at love. From a rocky first meeting to unforgettable adventures and near-misses over the years, Poppy and Alex's friendship has been full of laughs, heartbreak, and life-changing moments. This summer, their final trip will decide everything. Will they stay friends, or finally risk it all for love? Grab the movie tie-in edition and don't miss the story behind the film.

NON-FICTION



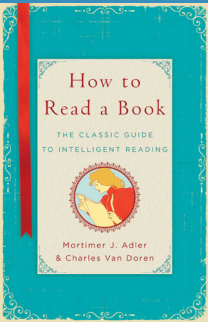
Seven Brief Lessons on Physics
Carlo Rovelli
Penguin | \$30.00

Celebrate the anniversary of this international phenomenon with Carlo Rovelli's elegant guide to modern physics. Through seven concise, captivating lessons, he unravels Einstein's relativity, quantum mechanics, black holes, gravity, and the universe's hidden architecture. Clear, vivid, and enchanting, this anniversary edition makes complex science accessible, thought-provoking, and utterly mesmerizing.



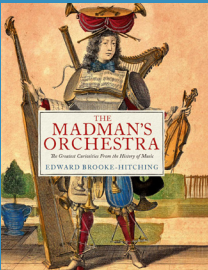
Somewhere, a Boy and a Bear
Gyles Brandreth
Penguin | \$60.00

worldwide appeal, this intimate biography also reveals the trials and triumphs of three generations of Milne's family, offering a heartfelt look at fame, fortune, and the joy one bear brought to millions.



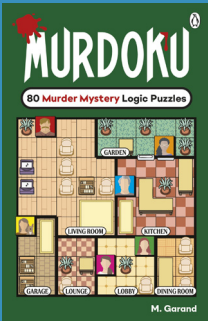
How to Read a Book
Mortimer J. Adler & Charles Van Doren
Simon & Schuster | \$47.00

Now in a stunning hardcover edition, How to Read a Book is the definitive guide to reading comprehension. From basic reading to speed and critical analysis, it teaches how to understand any text; fiction, history, science, or philosophy. With techniques, tests, and a curated reading list, this timeless classic equips readers to unlock insight, mastery, and joy from every book.



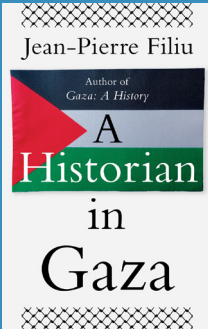
The Madman's Orchestra
Edward Brooke-Hitching
Simon & Schuster | \$80.00

Join Edward Brooke-Hitching on a wild, illustrated journey through the strangest moments in music history. From prehistoric monuments to AI compositions, haunted melodies to helicopter quartets, The Madman's Orchestra uncovers eccentric instruments, musical hoaxes, secret codes, and bizarre performances. Fascinating, funny, and utterly captivating, this book celebrates the weird, wonderful, and boundless creativity of music across the ages.



Murdoku
M. Garand
Penguin | \$40.00

Step into 80 immersive mini murder mysteries with Murdoku, where logic puzzles meet full-colour crime scenes. From bakeries to casinos, farms to operas, each location hides clues in rooms, furniture, and objects, with twists that ramp up the challenge. Starting easy and building to expert level, these addictive puzzles will test your detective skills. Can you solve every case?



A Historian in Gaza
Jean-Pierre Filiu
Scribe | \$37.00

Historian Jean-Pierre Filiu delivers a harrowing, immersive account of life in Gaza during December 2024 and January 2025. From scarce food and water to limited medical care, he documents daily survival under extreme conditions, blending eyewitness reportage with historical insight. Lyrical, searing, and unflinching, this book reveals the human cost of conflict and the resilience of a people under siege.