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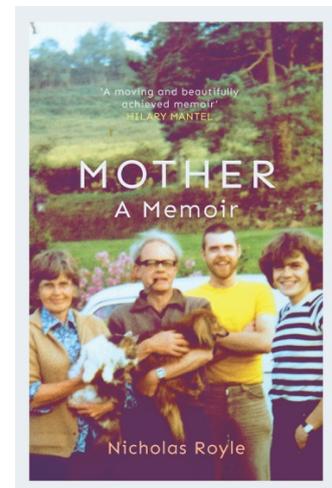
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## An extract from *Mother: A Memoir*

New this week, we have an exclusive extract from *Mother: A Memoir* by **Nicholas Royle** available to read on the Myriad website, [HERE](#).

'A tender and graceful study of parents and children, and a finely judged and measured attempt to capture the flitting, quicksilver shapes of what we keep and what we lose: the touch, the tone, the gaze of the past as it fades. It is a moving and beautifully achieved memoir, and a testament to the writer's skill and generosity of spirit.' —Hilary Mantel

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## New reads for 2020 and 2021

The brand new **Myriad** catalogue is here! With news of all our forthcoming titles for 2020 and 2021 – Lisa Blower's *Pondweed*, Hannah Eaton's *Blackwood*, Tyler Keevil's *Your Still Beating Heart*, Tammye Huf's *A More Perfect Union* and many, many more – as well as our complete backlist, it is jam packed.

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'Myriad publishes books that are both nourishing and inspiring, and a gift to any reader. What a huge achievement to publish challenging, impressive literature in a climate like this.'

—Kerry Hudson



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## The week in reviews

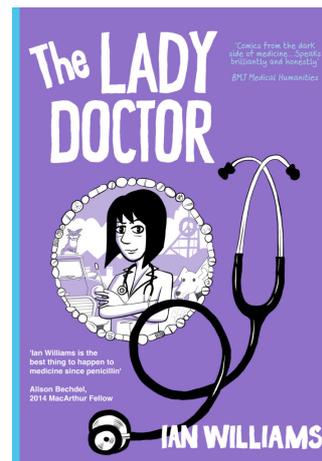
## THE WEEK IN REVIEWS

### ***The Lady Doctor***

**by Ian Williams**

'His tone is wonderfully balanced: there are plenty of hilarious, somewhat raunchy scenes, but also touching moments.' — Bookish Beck on the 'Not the Wellcome Prize' blog tour

In celebration of the 'Not the Wellcome Prize' blog tour, you could **win a copy of *The Lady Doctor* in our Twitter competition**, closes 04 May at 12.00 BST.



### ***She-Clown and Other Stories***

**by Hannah Vincent**

'Reminiscent of Miranda July ... the magic of her stories lies in the mundane.' —Jodie Matthews, Jodie Reads Books

### ***Mother: A Memoir***

**by Nicholas Royle**

'I enjoy reading, profoundly. *Mother: A Memoir* I loved so much that I didn't want it to end, even postponing reading the last ten pages, unable to accept that it would end.' —Thomas Dutoit, Professor of English at the University of Lille

### ***The Wolf of Baghdad***

**by Carol Isaacs**

'Jewish life in Baghdad is brought vividly to life.' —Lyn Julius, **Jewish Renaissance**

### ***The Heartsick Diaspora***

**by Elaine Chiew**

'Asian representation done right.' —Jessica Tay

'...genius and empathy combined ... The stories are full of ingenuity and heart.' —Grace, Curious Book Reviewer

'The Heartsick Diaspora is perfect literary company for those of us under lockdown. With hysteria abounding in the world now about immigrants these stories should help us see how much diasporas have shaped history. I give the collection my highest endorsement.' —Mel Ulm, **Reading Lives**

### ***The Haunting of Strawberry Water***

**by Tara Gould**

'...a beautifully-written tale of a motherless girl growing up to become a mother struggling against her destiny.' —Sussex Life

*Cora Vincent*

by Georgina Aboud

'...a disjointed account of scenes and events in an actress' life as she prepares to return to the stage. Judging by these excellent little books, **Spotlight Books** deserves success.' – Sussex Life

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## My bookish life... Lucy Fry

Now more than ever it feels important to talk to each other, to meet new people, to learn new things. And so we're asking our writerly and bookish friends to talk to us, sharing a little insight into their daily lives...



This week author and journalist Lucy Fry is under the lockdown microscope. Her memoir, *Easier Ways to Say I Love You*, is about love, lust and attachment: one woman's remarkable and candid account of transforming a difficult and uncomfortable love triangle into an honest polyamorous relationship.

*Have you formed a new routine?*



No. I'm not a routine person. I've never been disciplined, although I'm very driven. Things get done either when they have to or when I'm feeling a bit inspired. Or when I'm too anxious not to do them. None of that has changed, although I really need to meditate each morning... that's next week's goal, 15 mins per day as I know from experience that it clears the mental and emotional channels and helps facilitate creativity. I do have a rather sprightly almost-3-year-old though who makes it quite tricky, first thing.

### ***Have your days changed?***

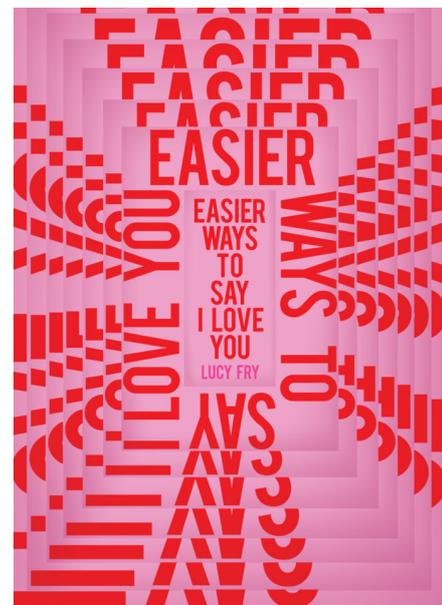
Yes and no. In some ways, as a freelance writer, I'm used to spending hours upstairs in my attic study, writing and listening to music and staring at the wall or getting distracted by something meaningless. In other ways, in my work as a trainee psychotherapist, my days have changed hugely since client work is now done via Zoom. Also, I'm with my son a lot more than I was, so although I do still have work time, my downtime is reduced which I find has a big (negative) impact on my writing output. Mostly, though, my days have changed metaphysically, in the time spent feeling listless or upset, thinking about all I wish I could be doing and then remembering to surrender to what is. This part is exhausting, the frustration-fight-surrender repetition... It happened before, of course, with other things, but now it's such a huge part of my daily life and I can feel the effect in my body too. It's all inside my bones; I'll try to write that though, as well.

### ***What are you looking forward to?***

It's quite hard to say when there is so much uncertainty around time frame at the moment. If I had to summarise it I'd say: touch. I miss everything that comes with being able to touch others more. It's interesting though because this whole experience is very humbling – I guess lots of us go around with all these hopes and dreams, and we think or hope we're kind of special, but really, we're not. Or I'm not, anyway – noting what I'm missing reminds me just how ordinary I am! It's all the obvious stuff I want – seeing my girlfriend, who lives fifty-five miles away, re-connecting physically with other friends and family members, planning events or holidays, and being able to attend my psychotherapy school again (it's shut, for the foreseeable) and giggle with my peers there. There are some things that used to feel like such a basic freedom that I so look forward to doing again, like taking a train to the seaside, somewhere like Margate, with my laptop. I write well on trains and there is something about movement and freedom that helps me to unlock good work, sometimes. I also really miss throwing heavy weights around in class at my CrossFit gym.

### ***Do you have any advice for anyone feeling creatively squashed right now? What helps you get back into the zone?***

Just note down some of your experiences in whatever form you feel inspired by. Either that, or accept that you are compromised and trust that if you have something to birth then it'll



or accept that you are compromised, and trust that if you have something to share then it will happen when it happens. I read that Jenny Offill wrote *Department of Speculation* (years after her first novel) on those small cards people use for speeches, in tiny sections. I do that when I'm feeling small, squashed, fearful or exhausted. Just write a sentence here and there. It's enough (and so are you).

***What are your small daily comforts?***

Most things that comfort me also hurt because they also remind me what I can't have. Facetime with my girlfriend. Phonecalls with close friends. Calling forth memories of trains and Brighton beach. The comforts that don't hurt at all are story time with my son and taking an hour's walk each day around Tooting Common. There's also something very comforting for me in



remembering the bigger picture, and also that this Covid pandemic and all that comes with it is one of life's extraordinary experiences, albeit at times very uncomfortable and for many also traumatising. I tell myself there will be things that become clear later, that make more sense of this time now.

***Are you able to stay creative? Are you writing?***

Yes, and no. I'm creative, definitely, and feel a huge energy building. I'm not writing as much as I'd like because the time and energy it's taken to adapt these last few weeks, particularly to the online therapy work and changes to parenting schedule, have rather swamped my daily output. But I can feel it – something's coming. And it is going to be good.

***How are you keeping in touch with others?***

My mobile phone. I'm surprised it hasn't worn down to a pulp. I actually sent a couple of postcards and some emails too, but mostly it's messages and calls.

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**If you work with books, in any way – editor, blogger, bookshop worker, reviewer – and would like to feature in our new 'My bookish life' series, we'd love to hear from you.**

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## **Before you go...**

Myriad's **Anna Burtt** and the team at Jericho Writers have put together a Summer Festival

of Writing to suit these strange, strange times – three months with over 100 hours of webinars, Q&As, one-to-ones and 'in conversations' with some of the best agencies, publishers and writers today. [FIND OUT MORE HERE](#)

'Carnival', from Hannah Vincent's collection of feminist short fiction, ***She-Clown***, can be heard on **Radio Reverb**, read by Ben Noble for The Literature Hour. Look out for future readings from the book. [LISTEN HERE](#)

Download the April issue of *Songlines* magazine to read about author of ***The Wolf of Baghdad Carol Isaacs***' latest project – a highly personal multimedia history project that is being released as a book, a CD, and a 'motion comic' that features music combined with graphic illustrations. [BUY HERE](#)

**Elaine Chiew**, author of ***The Heartsick Diaspora***, shares her thoughts on writing short stories in a Q&A with book blogger Jessica Tay. [READ HERE](#)

With the Wellcome Book Prize on hiatus for a year, a band of bookish bloggers have gathered together to create a 'Not the Wellcome Prize' blog tour, celebrating the best of health-themed literature from 2019 – and our doctor in residence **Ian Williams** has been chosen by Bookish Beck, for his creation ***The Lady Doctor***. [READ HERE](#) • [ENTER OUR TWITTER COMPETITION HERE](#)



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