



## 10 short stories you must read in 2010

### Anthology

Publisher: Australian Council for the Arts, 2010  
ISBN: 9781864711592  
RRP: Free

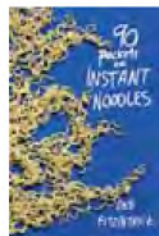
This collection of short stories has been released as a part of the 2010 Get Reading! campaign, an Australian Government initiative developed through the Australian Council for the Arts. This initiative, as suggested by the name, is designed to promote reading and the anthology, written by bestselling and award-winning Australian authors, is an excellent way to do so.

As the blurb states, there is plenty to enjoy in the collection. The stories range from the suburban realism of Christos Tsiolkas' 'Sticks, Stones', which candidly examines a mother's relationship with her son, to the joyful, yet slightly offbeat story of a vintage clothes shop owner and her unnerving customer in 'Dress, Medium' by Maggie Alderson. Alex Miller, celebrated author of *Lovesong*, reworks a harsh, heartbreaking true story beautifully, and 'Manuka' is a definite highlight of the collection.

Perhaps the only complaint that can be made about *10 short stories you must read in 2010* is its lack of cohesion. It is somewhat difficult to jump from Nick Earls' world of inner-Brisbane to exotic and humid India with Georgia Blain, and the writing styles vary as much as the settings. However, each story in itself is enjoyable, and the collection is designed to give readers opportunity to try new authors and take new journeys in reading. And with such an eclectic collection, this is very likely to happen.

**Annelies Allcock**

anneliesallcock@gmail.com



## 90 packets of instant noodles

### Deb Fitzpatrick

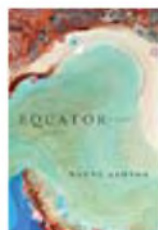
Fremantle Press, 2010  
ISBN: 9781921361999  
RRP: \$17.95

Joel is a somewhat disenchanted youth who lives in Fremantle with his Dad, a hardworking and relatively unassuming Aussie bloke who does a deal with the police so that his son doesn't have to go to gaol when he and his mates finally go too far in their youthful illegal activities. Rather than heading to the "slammer" like his mate Craggs, Joel is sent "out bush" to live in a shack on his own for three months. He soon realises that silence brings a whole new level of introspection, and that he can't cook worth a damn, hence the title of the novel. He's starting to understand himself, become self-sufficient, and care about his future when the ties of mateship call and Craggs shows up, ready to wreak havoc on Joel's life,

perhaps forever. This is a well written, engaging tale of a teenager facing the consequences of his actions for the first time. Well worth having in any public or high school library, and worth keeping an eye on this Australian Young Adult novelist in the future.

**Naomi Doessel**

naomidoessel@gmail.com



## Equator: a novel

### Wayne Ashton

Freemantle Press, 2010  
ISBN: 9781921361890  
RRP: \$27.95

*Equator* by Wayne Ashton is a literary novel filled with delicate prose and lush imagery. A provocative work of magic realism, *Equator* shows Ashton to be an artist of great skill, both writer and painter. His debut novel published in 2002, *Under a Tin-Grey Sari*, achieved wide critical acclaim and *Equator: a novel* continues in this tradition.

Here Ashton gives us a love story touching on issues of mental illness, ancestry, oceanic biodiversity, international trade and politics, and moving across many generations and settings to its final conclusion. There is a sense of determination and peace in the story-telling which captures the characters so well and invites you unknowingly into their lives.

I admit I found this a difficult book to read as it demanded both my clear attention and a relaxation of some standard reading assumptions – having not read much in the way of magic realism before, I was therefore challenged. Nonetheless I was consequently inspired by the imagery and found the turns of phrase both exquisite and sincere.

I would not say that *Equator: a novel* is an easy book to read, but I would certainly commend it as one being worth the effort.

**Cathy Johnston**

cathy.j1569@yahoo.com



## I've got a feeling!

### Stephanie Owen Reeder

National Library of Australia, 2010  
ISBN: 9780642276971  
RRP: \$17.95

Stephanie Owen Reeder's book *I've got a feeling!* explores a variety of feelings we experience in everyday life, and assists children to understand and recognise why these feelings happen and the actions/gestures associated with each feeling. The themes are also about recognising and understanding others' feelings when we witness the gestures and facial expressions. This book is aimed at preschool children.

There is an interesting section of photographs from the National Library

of Australia's Picture Collection which were the inspiration for illustrations in the book; these encourage you to discuss activities involved with exploring your feelings and emotions.

**Colette Stapleton**

cstapleton@rtrl.nsw.gov.au



## My Grandmother : a memoir

### Fethiye Cetin,

Translated by Maureen

Freely

Spinfex Press, 2010  
ISBN: 1876756853  
RRP: \$23.95

Turkish human rights lawyer, Fethiye Cetin's brief first book is truly a memoir, a series of recollections that lead to Cetin uncovering explanations for her dearly loved grandmother's behaviour and philosophy. After her father's untimely death at a young age, Cetin, her mother, and sisters lived with her maternal, Muslim grandparents. Well respected for her generosity and high standards of housekeeping, Cetin's grandmother proves to be a survivor of the Turkish slaughter of Christian Armenians in 1915. The Turkish government still denies the genocide. The gradual unfolding of this knowledge and its consequences informs Cetin's understanding of her family. Eventually, Cetin's grandmother encourages her to investigate the possibility that her family survived the genocide after fleeing to the US. Her discoveries, and the story of how her grandmother was denied her chance to join them, is stirring stuff, told in plain, unembroidered, heart-rending prose.

The generations of discrimination this family suffered because of their culture ranged from subtle to baldly hurtful – and is unfortunately not an isolated instance. While this is a personal tale for Cetin, it remains emblematic of an ongoing and worldwide malaise.

**Bronwyn McLoughlin**

rbmsgmcl@ozemail.com.au



## A Merciless Place: the lost story of Britain's convict disaster in Africa and how it led to the settlement of Australia.

### Emma Christopher

Allen & Unwin, 2010  
ISBN: 9781742372273  
RRP: \$35.00

I must confess upfront that this book covered a subject I knew little about. Once I had finished however, that was far from true. Emma Christopher's *A Merciless Place* deals with the British Empire's attempt to send convicts to West Africa before Australia was colonised. After the American Revolution, Britain needed somewhere to send its convicts and it settled on West Africa as the place. But the inhospitable terrain and

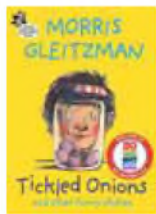
weather, coupled with awful conditions and soldiers and convicts working in the slave-trade, led to disaster.

This is a story of bad decisions and some truly awful human beings leading to even worse outcomes. *A Merciless Place* chronicles a dark chapter in the history of colonisation, and also sheds new light onto the eventual colonisation of Australia.

Overall this is a great book that is well worth reading. It will shock in places but it will also make you feel pity for the individuals who had no choice but to be caught up in this experiment.

**Peter Stoakes**

peter.stoakes@yarracity.vic.gov.au



## Tickled Onions and other funny stories

**Morris Gleitzman**

Penguin Group, 2010

ISBN: 9780143305606

RRP: Free when you purchase any book from 50 Books you can't put down, Get Reading! 2010.

Gleitzman's latest book of short stories is a collection of previously published titles with four new titles and is exclusive to Get Reading! 2010. Tickled onions, salami mousse, and choko yoghurt pancakes – who would want any of these in their lunchbox? Lucky Clyde finds a way to avoid starving every day after his lunch disappears in the skip bin.

Macques is sick of being bullied and

wishes to be ordinary. To live in an ordinary family, to eat ordinary food, and to have an ordinary name – MAX. What happens when your wishes come true?

The paparazzi are trying to take Natalie's photo: everyone from the next door neighbour to the aunt and uncle she runs into driving to the hospital. Thank goodness for the paper bag over her head.

'Paparazzi' was totally different to the other stories, unexpectedly funny but also moving.

It was difficult to choose a favourite out of these short stories as they were all so funny, but I thoroughly enjoyed 'Imagine' involving Garth an eleven year old boy with a definite fear and a very BIG imagination. From a very funny Australian author, an alluring variety of stories with fresh concepts sure to encourage new younger readers and delight fans.

**Colette Stapleton**

cstapleton@rtl.nsw.gov.au



## Wicked Appetite

**Janet Evanovich**

St. Martin's Press, 2010

ISBN: 9780755352777

RRP \$32.99

Janet Evanovich is on to a winning formula and she knows it. With the continuing success

of her Stephanie Plum series (over 16


and counting) Evanovich has branched out with *Wicked Appetite*, the debut in the new Unmentionables series, although branch might be a bit of an overstatement.

*Wicked Appetite* is littered with Evanovich's trademark kooky characters, led by heroine Lizzy Tucker, who, despite her cupcake baking abilities and New England origins, remains a blonde version of Stephanie Plum. What sets Lizzy apart is that she is an Unmentionable, a human with special powers. Led by her fellow Unmentionable, the hunky and flirtatious Diesel, Lizzy must use her special ability to detect empowered objects to help discover the whereabouts of the 7 SALIGIA stones, each representative of the 7 deadly sins, before the archetypical evil Gerwulf Grimoire can find them and unleash their power.

Readers can expect another 6 books in this new series, no doubt filled with similar wacky characters, slapstick situations, sexual tension, and mystery that have become the Evanovich hallmark. While these features do make for a light, enjoyable read, *Wicked Appetite* doesn't offer anything that hasn't been covered ad nauseum by the Plum series.

**Megan Cuthbert**

megsno2@yahoo.com.au




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