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**Newsletter No 77
December 2009**

“Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home!”

Charles Dickens, The Pickwick Papers, 1836

And we wish you all a very merry one.

Our [Book of the Month](#) is the thought-provoking ANTIGONA AND ME by Kate Clanchy.

See the [competition](#) page to win a copy and read our [interview](#) with the author.

Our other [recommended titles](#) are: LOVE AND OBSTACLES, a second brilliant collection of short stories by Aleksandar Hemon; SONGS FOR THE BUTCHER'S DAUGHTER by Peter Manseau and NOAH'S COMPASS by Anne Tyler.

The [guest review](#) is A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS by Khaled Hosseini.

Go to the [about us](#) page and meet some of our wonderful reviewers.

Visit our new [Poetry Page](#). We were inspired by National Poetry Day to make a dedicated space on the site for poems. This month we are featuring a collection called SLATTERN by the multi-talented Kate Clanchy.

We have 2 sets of Penguin's newly re-issued SHERLOCK HOLMES stories to be won in our [Christmas competition](#). Answer a simple question and a set could be yours!

Do you agree with our reviews?
Would you like to have your say?
Leave your comments - we'd love to hear them.

Can you [Spot the Bookshop](#)?

Congratulations to Cathie Shield the winner of November's competition for spotting the Yankee Bookshop, Woodstock, Vermont.

A £10 book token is on its way.

Congratulations to the winners of GO WITH ME by Castle Freeman. They are: Helen Coulter, Newtownabbey; Anne Cater, Gainsborough; James Miller, Glasgow; Ros Marshall, Perth; Carole McDonald, Stoke on Trent; Christopher Magson, Middlesbrough; Lucy Cahalin, Brighton; Jordan-Lee Johnstone, Falkirk and Val Winter, Consett.

Many thanks to Duckworth Overlook publishers.

Request your **FREE BOOKS!** Just go to the [offers](#) page. This is for **ALL** registered groups (sorry, UK and Ireland groups only) not just new ones. If your group is not registered then just fill in the [form](#). It's a very simple process.

N.B. You only need to register once.

Read about our [Bookgroup of the Month](#) the Rainbow Reading Group from Newton Abbot.

Fill in the [questionnaire](#) if you'd like to be a BGoTM.

See this year's [Costa Book Awards](#) shortlist. The novel award includes two of our previous Books of the Month: FAMILY ALBUM by Penelope Lively (see our [review](#)) and BROOKLYN by Colm Toibin (see our [review](#)).

Jonathan Littel has won the seventeenth annual Literary Review Bad Sex in Fiction Award for THE KINDLY ONES. Read the shortlisted passages [here](#). WARNING: don't read this on public transport or while eating!

An all-female shortlist has been announced for the [BBC National Short Story award](#). Among the shortlisted is Kate Clanchy, our Book of the Month author, poet and interviewee!



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Evie Wyld, a bookseller from south London, has won the [2009 John Llewellyn Rhys](#) prize with her debut novel, AFTER THE FIRE, A STILL SMALL VOICE, set in Vietnam and Australia.

See what the great and the good suggest as their [Christmas book choices of 2009](#).

[Radio 4 Bookclub](#) on Sunday 6th and Thursday 10th December features celebrated American author John Irving talking about his novel, A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY. You can "listen again" if you miss either of these programmes.

Would you like to attend a Bookclub recording? The Swedish author Henning Mankell will talk about SIDETRACKED (a Kurt Wallander mystery) at 4.00pm on Thursday 21st January at BBC Bush House, Aldwych, London WC2 and Lynne Reid Banks will discuss THE L-SHAPED ROOM at 4.30pm on Wednesday 10th February. Tickets are free and available on the [BBC website](#).

Many thanks to all of you have emailed us to thank us for helping with setting up your group and making your reading choices. Please do remember to forward the newsletter to other members of your group so that they can take advantage of the offers and competitions.

Please email us at info@bookgroup.info if you wish to unsubscribe to the newsletter.