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**Newsletter No 93  
May 2011**

"Your life story would not make a good book. Don't even try".  
Fran Lebowitz

Just to find out how wrong Ms Lebowitz is read our [Book of the Month](#) RED DUST ROAD a moving autobiographical account by Jackie Kay.  
See the [competition](#) page to win a copy and read our [interview](#) with the author.

The other [recommended titles](#) this month are: The atmospheric THE JANUS STONE by Elly Griffiths, second book in the Ruth Galloway series, and A BLESSED CHILD by Linn Ullmann, an unsettling story of complex family ties.

Let us know what you think of our reviews. Leave your comments at the bottom of any review - we'd love to hear them.

Just in case you haven't had enough of them our [quest review](#) is GONE WITH THE WINDSORS by Laurie Graham.

See our ["five of the best"](#) 20<sup>th</sup> century classics.

Can you [Spot the Bookshop?](#)  
Congratulations to Rebecca Unsworth the winner of our April competition. A £10 National Book Tokens gift card is on its way.

The 10 winners of HALF LIFE by Roopa Farooki are: Deborah Fraser, Cannock; Lee Thompson, Hove; Helen Cruse, Troon; Sonia Ellahi, Luton; Sean Lambourne, Brighton; Kerrie Milford, Belfast; Carole Bowe, Gloucester; Wendy Moncaster, Nottingham; Alison Church, Norwich and Julia Briscoe, Worksop.

Many thanks to Pan Macmillan, the publishers.

Welcome to all the new groups who have recently registered with us. Now is the time to request your **FREE BOOKS!** Just go to the [offers](#) page. This is for **ALL** registered groups (sorry, UK and N. 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. Does your bookgroup info need updating? Email us at [info@bookgroup.info](mailto:info@bookgroup.info) and we'll amend your directory entry for you.

This month's [Bookgroup of the Month](#) is the gender-balanced, non-geeky Science Fiction Bookclub, who meet in central London.

Science fiction authors Iain M Banks and Michael Moorcock are among 85 authors who have written to BBC director-general Mark Thompson complaining about the "shabby treatment of genre fiction" on World Book Night in March. The 85 claim that the "sneering tone that was levelled towards commercial fiction" during the BBC's programming on World Book Night was "deeply counterproductive to the night's aims of actually encouraging people to read novels". Strong stuff. Read more [here](#).

Do you want to be our BGoTM? Just fill in the [questionnaire](#) and win a £10 National Book Tokens Gift Card if you're chosen.

The English-Speaking Union is looking for readers for the 2011 [Marsh Biography Award](#), which is given to the best biography written by a British author and first published in the UK during the last two years. They need your help to create a shortlist from over 100 entries. Choose from a list of books on wide-ranging subjects and they'll send one to you for free. All they ask is that you read it

and fill in a short review form by 29<sup>th</sup> June. The book is then yours to keep unless it is shortlisted. Please [contact](#) them or see their [website](#) for more details.

Jennifer Egan's widely acclaimed novel A VISIT FROM THE GOON SQUAD, has won the \$10,000 (£6,000) Pulitzer Prize, the most prestigious award in American writing. See more about this and the other category winners [here](#).

Beryl Bainbridge's 1998 novel, MASTER GEORGIE, (our favourite!) is the winner of a special prize created to honour the late, much-loved author - the Man Booker Best of Beryl. See more at the [Man Booker](#) website and read our [review](#) of MASTER GEORGIE.

The Fiction Desk publishes a quarterly anthology of new short stories. The editors aim to select at least half the stories for each volume from unsolicited submissions, from all around the world, but especially from the UK. 'We're very much open to new writers,' says editor Rob Redman. 'Of course it's an honour to publish stories from the more established authors, but it's also exciting to get a great debut story into print. So we'd definitely encourage new writers to give us a try.' They recommend taking a look at the anthology before submitting—sample pages are available to download from the Fiction Desk [website](#). More information and submissions guidelines are available at [www.thefictiondesk.com/submissions/](http://www.thefictiondesk.com/submissions/) Volume one, titled VARIOUS AUTHORS, is out now in paperback and ebook formats. See our [offers](#) page to get a free copy.

Andrew O'Hagan met James Naughtie and readers to discuss his novel BE NEAR ME on [Radio 4 Bookclub](#) on Sunday 2nd and Thursday 5th May both at 4pm. It's

available online on the i-player and as a podcast.

See what's on in your area on our list of [festivals and events](#). If you want us to include something **free** on the listings page then complete the [registration form](#) or contact us at [info@bookgroup.info](mailto:info@bookgroup.info). If you're looking for an independent bookshop in your town our [list](#) could tell you if there's one near you, or if you own or manage an independent bookshop we can list your shop **free** on the site. Just complete the [registration form](#) or email us at [info@bookgroup.info](mailto:info@bookgroup.info) for more information.

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