


















# The Reading Stack

where you can find a pile of good books

## What's Inside

- Crime 
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## Welcome to our first issue

*The Reading Stack aims to provide heartfelt recommendations—from our readers to you and your readers. If we don't like a book, you won't find it in these pages. Although you will find the opinions of a wide range of reviewers—all shapes and sizes and ages.*

*We don't claim to be a team of experts—we're a raggle taggle bunch of people brought together by our love of books and our desire to tell as many people as possible about the ones we have enjoyed.*

*If you like what you find here, tell a friend about us...*

## The Patch

**Editor's Choice**

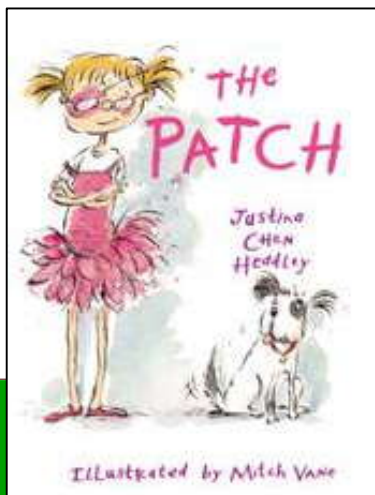
by **Justina Chen Headley** - black dog books. Paperback rrp \$16.95

For every young child who has to go through being "different" for one reason or another, this book is a great inspiration.

The author has included a note about Amblyopia (lazy eye) to further describe the condition.

This is a fun book with water colour illustrations of Becca and her wonderful characters on every page. It is an effective tool to help children understand and overcome the stigma of medical problems, such as a lazy eye or even a broken arm.

Five year old Becca has to wear an eye patch to correct her lazy eye. She changes into many different characters for her classmates, such as "Becca the Ballerina Pirate who dances across the seven seas" or "Becca the One-Eyed Monster", to avoid explaining why she has to wear the patch.



The book targets four to eight year olds and even though it is about a little girl it is just as effective a story for boys.

[www.justinachenheadley.com](http://www.justinachenheadley.com)

## Silk ♥

by **Alessandro Baricco** - Text Publishing. Paperback rrp \$19.95

Originally released in Italy in 1996, *Silk* has been translated into 26 languages and was published in Australia in 2006. Multi Academy and Grammy award winning composer Andre Previn is writing an opera based on it. A movie starring Keira Knightley, Michael Pitt and Koji Yakusho is due for release later this year. So what is all the fuss about? This is a haunting and unusual love story. Exotic, dark and gentle. Erotic, exhilarating and heartbreaking. On one level, it's easy to read. The narrative weaves its way from France to Japan and back again many times, until the journey becomes familiar. Chapters are short, no more than two pages. Language is simple with each word



carefully chosen. But I often re-read sections. It wasn't that the story was difficult to follow. I just knew there was another layer waiting for me if I wanted to uncover it.

In 1861, French silkworm-breeder Hervé Joncour travels east in search of disease-free silkworms. He is happily married to beautiful Helene but in Japan he meets a young concubine with captivating eyes. They don't speak yet he falls in love anyway and without words, his love is returned.

Theirs is a forbidden affair of surreptitious glances, body language and one secret, silent meeting. The cultural differences are immense. Ironically it is this disparity which enables their liaison to flourish, as no-one believes it could possibly be true.

While their love is not bound to fail, it is doomed to separation. Hervé returns home to Helene and continues on. But great love and desire lasts forever. Hervé can never let go of the past. He sits watching his life from outside, as we have been doing since the first chapter.

This is a book to read slowly. Once for pure enjoyment. Then again, if you want to peel off another layer of silk.

[www.optimnem.co.uk](http://www.optimnem.co.uk)

**“Books Alive is an Australian Government initiative to encourage reading. Every year, Books Alive runs a nationwide campaign to ignite the country's passion for books and make it easier to choose a really great ‘read’.**  
[www.booksalive.com.au](http://www.booksalive.com.au)”

## Wolf of the Plains

by **Conn Iggulden** - Harper Collins. Paperback rrp \$32.99

Set in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, on the freezing steppes of Mongolia, this book traces the birth, boyhood and rise to power of Genghis Khan.

*Wolf of the Plains* has been meticulously researched and the author lived with Mongolian tribesman for a period of time.

But you don't have to be interested in history to enjoy this. It is a powerful story of jealousy and revenge, blood and power, love and honour.

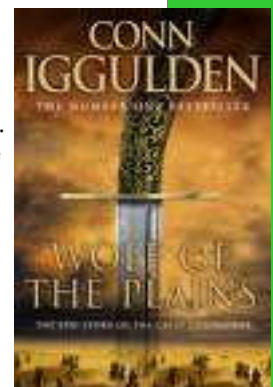
Temujin, is not born to lead. He is the second son of the Khan of the Wolves tribe. But when his father is treacher-

ously killed and his elder brother fails their outcast family, Temujin takes charge.

He seeks more than revenge. He dreams of bringing all the wanderers, herdsmen and outcasts into a new tribe, greater than all others. Temujin will be more than Khan of the Wolves he will be the Khan of the Sea of Grass, Genghis.

This is Book I in the Conqueror series and I will be buying the sequel as soon as it is released.

[www.conniggulden.com](http://www.conniggulden.com)



# For One More Day

by Mitch Albom - Sphere. Hardback rrp \$39.95

I always dream of going back in time – to make a fortune playing the market, maybe change a love gone bad, or warn others of impending dangers.

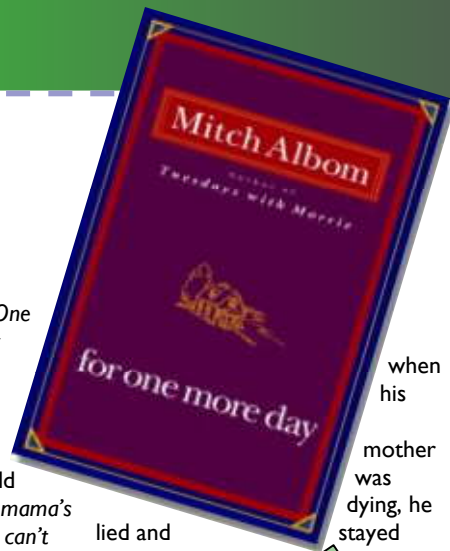
As I turned each page, I felt the author had read my thoughts. Oh to be given the chance to speak with a long lost person! To explain, to say sorry, to hug them one more time.

Given that chance – what would you do? *For One More Day* is the story of what Charley ‘Chick’ Bennett did. He tried to kill himself. But did he succeed or has he been given a much needed one more day with his mother? Is it really one more day? Even Chick himself

doesn’t know the answer. *One More Day* passes seamlessly from past to present to “limbo” as it recounts Chick’s life.

As a child, Charley “was told by his father, “*You can be a mama’s boy or a daddy’s boy, but you can’t be both.*” He chooses his father, a poor choice. Charley’s father is rarely there for his son, but quick to criticise everything Charley does. “*I guess he’d spent too much time moulding me to be different to allow me to be the same!*”

Later on in life, Charley has lost everything to alcohol – his wife, daughter, sporting abilities, his father and mother. Worst of all,



when his mother was dying, he stayed with her until she died. In desperation, he decided to end it all.

But then the strange thing happens.

This is a great story that makes you rethink all you have done and all you will do. A must read for anyone with a family. Go home and hug your children/parents!

[www.fornemoreday.com](http://www.fornemoreday.com)



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issues [http://](http://www.acal.ed)

[www.acal.ed](http://www.acal.ed)

[u.au/](http://www.acal.ed)

# Thirty-Three Teeth

by Colin Cotterill - Text Publishing. Paperback rrp \$32.95

Dr Siri Paiboun is an unusual man. To begin with, he has thirty three teeth. The average person has only thirty two.

In his early seventies, Dr Siri has been recently appointed the Laotian National Coroner. He is a man of contradictions. The grieving widow of a passionate communist activist, he finds much amusement and frustration with the new regime he now works for. A student of science and deduction, he is also the physical host of an ancient spirit and is visited by many others, including a newly dead elephant.

In Dr Siri’s life and occupation, crossing the line between the real

and spirit world is a regular occurrence. This is a man as equally comfortable discussing his cases with dead royalty and possessed puppets, as he is with the local law enforcement and government officials.



When a series of mutilated bodies are brought to the Vientiane morgue, Dr Siri and his enigmatic assistant, Nurse Dtui,

are puzzled. Is the killer a man or beast? The more they investigate, the stranger the case becomes. How many teeth does the murderer have? Suspects range from

an escaped circus bear to a newly released prison inmate who believes he is inhabited by the spirit of a weretiger.

This is a story of gruesome findings, shaman ceremonies and political intrigue. It is quirky and surreal, sinister and macabre. And it’s a great mystery. Can you imagine a Laotian Hercule Poirot? After reading *Thirty Three Teeth*, I can. Readers of crime and mystery, particularly those looking for something a little different, will thoroughly enjoy this book. I was pleased to find another adventure of Dr Siri already exists. *The Coroner’s Lunch* was the first in what I hope will be a long running series.

Author Colin Cotterill, is an Australian citizen whose real life experience led him to smuggle children’s books to Laos and later establish the charity, Books for Laos. You can read about this and more at [www.colincotterill.com](http://www.colincotterill.com)

