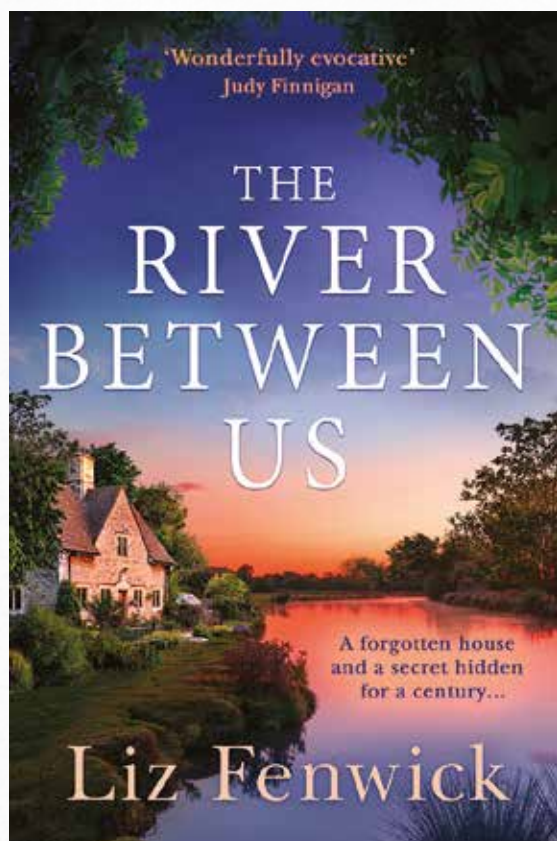




2022 Awards Finalists

THE WINNER OF THE POPULAR ROMANTIC FICTION AWARD



The River Between Us

Liz Fenwick

HQ

A forgotten house and a secret hidden for a century. Newly divorced, Theo buys Boatman's Cottage and as she begins to bring the cottage and the gardens back to life, Theo pieces together a story of star-crossed lovers played out against the river, while finding her own path to happiness.

THE FANTASY ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD



Space Hopper

Helen Fisher
Simon & Schuster

If you could go back in time to find answers to the past, would you? For Faye, the answer is yes. Questions about the past keep haunting her, until one day she finally gets the chance she's been waiting for. But how far is she willing to go to find answers?

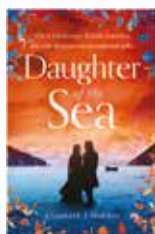


Beneath Cornish Skies

Kate Ryder

Aria

To outsiders, Cassie's life looks perfect but she knows something is not right. She takes a chance on a new beginning, working as a live-in nanny for a family on the rugged North Cornish coast. She soon wonders if she was drawn to this isolated part of the coast for a reason.



Daughter of the Sea

Elisabeth J Hobbes
One More Chapter

On a windswept British coastline the tide bestows an unexpected gift ... Wrapped only in a sealskin, the baby girl looks up at Effie and instantly captures her heart. A man claiming to be the child's father arrives, telling a story of selkies, legend, and the power of the sea ...



Children of Shadows

N J Simmonds

BHC Press

Single mother Ella is struggling and her daughter Indie is keeping a huge secret, entering a world of fate and power that Ella left behind sixteen years ago. She will soon discover that this world is on the brink of war, and that she may be the most powerful weapon of all.



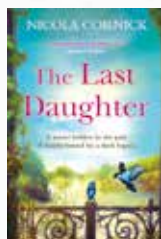
A Marvellous Light

Freya Marske
Pan Macmillan

An administrative mistake appoints young baronet Robin as parliamentary liaison to a secret society – he discovers magic lies beneath the reality he's always known. To navigate a deadly curse, he'll need the help of Edwin, his prickly counterpart. Together, they discover a mystery as old as the power that binds the land.

THE JACKIE COLLINS AWARD FOR ROMANTIC THRILLERS

Sponsored by Simon & Schuster UK



The Last Daughter **Nicola Cornick** **HQ**

Serena is haunted by the disappearance of her sister, eleven years ago. When Caitlin's body is discovered, Serena returns to her grandfather's house, beside the ruins of Minster Lovell Hall in Oxfordshire. She makes a startling discovery – tying her family to a fifteenth century secret and one of the most famous disappearances in history.



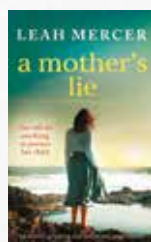
All That We Have Lost **Suzanne Fortin** **Aria**

2019. After the death of her husband, Imogen finds a beautiful, abandoned chateau and uncovers a dark web of secrets surrounding the house. 1944. Simone must choose between love and duty. As Imogen restores the chateau, she's determined to uncover the truth - and set to rest the ghosts of the past.



Chasing Flames **January James** **Independent**

A luxury retail empire with a dirty secret. A security guard with a murky past. Can Eliza keep her hands clean when she falls for them both? "My heart aches but my head knows it's for the best. Because Sam's story is darker than I could ever have imagined."



A Mother's Lie **Leah Mercer** **Bookouture**

Heartbroken and alone, Ali arrives at her grandmother's old house on the beach and feels instantly safe. The couple next door, Michael and Meg, welcome her into their seemingly perfect world. As Meg's behaviour becomes ever more erratic, Ali begins to worry ... and what about her own devastating secret ... the one she ran from?



A Villa in Portofino **Evonne Wareham** **Choc Lit**

Megan travels to Portofino after inheriting a villa from her estranged great-great aunt, Olwen. Long-lost relatives mean long-lost secrets – some of them stretching back as far as the Second World War. Are those secrets powerful enough to drive Megan from her new life in the home of her dreams?

THE KATIE FFORDE DEBUT ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD

Sponsored by Katie Fforde



Uncoupling **Lorraine Brown** **Orion**

When Hannah and Si's train divides on the way to a wedding, Hannah ends up in Paris whilst her boyfriend is 300 miles away, in Amsterdam. Hannah meets Leo on the station platform, and he's everything Si isn't. Hannah questions whether sometimes, you need to go in the wrong direction to find everything you're looking for ...



Love at Café Lompar **Anna and Jacqui Burns** **Honno**

After the sudden death of her husband, Grace discovers his mistress and son in Montenegro. With her daughter, Kat, they embark on an adventure to uncover the secrets of his hidden life. Can Kat find what she's looking for? Will Grace ever trust again and open her heart to love?



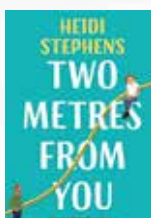
One Month of You **Suzanne Ewart** **Orion**

Jess has rules. And the first? Don't fall in love. Jess has inherited Huntington's disease from her mother. Falling in love would mean condemning someone to the heartbreak she feels every day. Alec is determined to break down her barriers. He proposes they forget the future and live for the moment - for just one month.



The Viking Chief's Marriage Alliance **Lucy Morris** **Mills & Boon**

Thorstein rescues a high-status ice queen from a storm-tossed longship, although she is not the comfortable wife the warrior chief is seeking. But maybe the bittersweet pain in Gyda's eyes hides another woman beneath? The one he tasted that first night when she'd kissed him with such pent-up longing?



Two Metres From You **Heidi Stephens** **Headline Accent**

When Gemma catches her boyfriend cheating, her best friend's suggestion of a restorative few days in the West Country seems perfect. That is, until the country enters a national lockdown, leaving her stranded with her dog, Mabel, and the mysterious (and handsome!) stranger who lives at the bottom of her garden ...

THE CHRISTMAS / FESTIVE HOLIDAY ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD



The Winter of Second Chances
Jenny Bayliss
 Pan Macmillan

After a shocking encounter with her husband and a waitress half his age Annie, aged forty-four, re-defines herself in a quiet town by the sea. Second chances seem to be opening up all around her, despite the agenda of her landlord's grumpy nephew. Maybe, just maybe, Annie will find the love that she deserves.



A Bookshop Christmas
Rachel Burton
 Aria

When prize-winning author Xander rams his supermarket trolley into young widow Megan's ankles, she is awoken from her self-imposed hibernation. Although when the worst happens, Megan begins to wonder if she should have stayed hidden away. Falling in love again is about more than just meeting under the mistletoe ...



The Christmas Escape
Sarah Morgan
 HQ

As long-held secrets unravel, and unexpected romance shines under the Northern Lights, can Christy and best friend Alix find the courage to fight for the relationships they really want? And could this Christmas escape save the precious gift of each other's friendship?



Winter at Cliff's End Cottage
Sheila Norton
 Little, Brown Book Group

Cliff's End Cottage is slowly toppling into the sea yet its elderly owner, Stella, refuses to leave her home. Holly, a young journalist and single mum, interviews her. Time is running out for the house on the edge, but perhaps, together, Stella and Holly can find a new way forward.



Snowflakes Over the Starfish Café
Jessica Redland
 Boldwood Books

Hollie has poured her heart into The Starfish Café but grieves the tragic loss of her family. Jake lives by two rules: don't let anyone get close and don't talk about what happened. Can Hollie and Jake break down the barriers holding them back from finding love and happiness, before Christmas comes around?

THE SHORTER ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD



A Proposal to Risk Their Friendship
Louise Allen
 Mills & Boon

Melissa is determined to remain an independent spinster but becomes embroiled in the hazardous secret world of Lord Henry Cary. Even so, she sees no reason why she cannot continue in her independent way of life, even in the face of scandal. And then Melissa finds herself asking the last question she ever imagined would pass her lips...



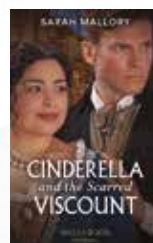
The Highlander's Inconvenient Bride
Terri Brisbin
 Mills & Boon

Future clan chieftain Robbie must marry Sheena, except she seems intent on breaking their betrothal! Just what is his inconvenient bride hiding? Uncovering her secrets means earning her trust ... but that also ignites a simmering passion! Will that love be enough when they are faced with the demands of duty and honor and loyalty?



A Ration Book Christmas Broadcast
Jean Fullerton
 Atlantic Books

Can Grace Meredith tune into love at Christmas? When she meets her old friend's brother, Gio, their mutual attraction keeps growing but will their Christmas Wishes come true?



Cinderella and the Scarred Viscount
Sarah Mallory
 Mills & Boon

Carenza's bullying step-mother and half-sisters have convinced her she is no beauty. It takes a troubled and battle-scarred Prince Charming to discover her real worth and value her as she deserves.



Hawaiian Medic to Rescue His Heart
Annie O'Neil
 Mills & Boon

Firefighter and paramedic Zach is looking forward to a quieter life in Hawaii and building a brighter future for himself and his son. But his beautiful, kind, vibrant new colleague, Lulu, has the potential to derail all of his plans...

THE ROMANTIC SAGA AWARD



A Distant Horizon **AnneMarie Brear** **Independent**

Ellen survived the Irish Famine. Can she survive the future in a strange land? Or has she made the greatest mistake of her life?



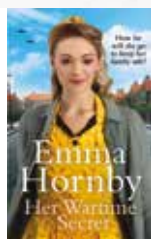
A Songbird in Wartime **Karen Dickson** **Simon & Schuster**

When a theatre agent hears Emily sing, he is determined to make her a star so hatches a plan to get her away from her fiancé, Tom. Six years later, with the world enveloped in war, will Emily and Tom find their way back to each other?



The Mother's Day Club **Rosie Hendry** **Little, Brown Book Group**

Norfolk, 1939. Sisters Prue and Thea welcome evacuee expectant mothers to their village. Marianne seeks a fresh start for herself and her unborn child, hoping her new neighbours don't discover the truth about her situation. Can the community come together in a time of need to do their bit for the war effort?



Her Wartime Secret **Emma Hornby** **Transworld**

Bolton, Lancashire: 1940. A family torn apart by war, held together by a secret. Janie's husband, James, comes home on leave a traumatised and desperate man. Determined to keep him safe, she plans to hide him in their new house. How long can they keep the secret, and what threats lie ahead if they're found out?



Angel of Liverpool **Elizabeth Morton** **Pan Macmillan**

When Evie's childhood sweetheart leaves for Canada, he leaves Evie with more than just a broken heart. Evie doesn't want a loveless marriage like her parents but how long can she keep her baby a secret from her neighbours and the nuns who run the local home for unmarried mothers?

THE JANE WENHAM-JONES AWARD FOR ROMANTIC COMEDY

Sponsored by Hazel Cushion, Rushford Ltd



That Jewish Thing **Amber Crewe** **Coronet, Hodder and Stoughton**

What is a Jewish wedding if not the perfect opportunity for the bride to do a bit of matchmaking on behalf of her single, workaholic cousin? Tamsyn's about to find out that in love, and in life, it's not always easy to run away from who you really are ...



Mr Right Across the Street **Kathryn Freeman** **One More Chapter**

Mia's move to Manchester was supposed to give her time and space from all the disastrous romantic choices she's made in her past. But then the hot guy who lives opposite – the one who works out every day at exactly 10 a.m. – starts leaving notes in his window ... for her.



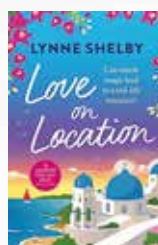
Life's a Beach **Portia MacIntosh** **Boldwood Books**

Peach is chief bridesmaid at her sister's wedding and, despite her reservations about the groom, tries to ensure everything goes to plan. But weddings are never straightforward affairs ... throw in some unexpected guests and one-night stands, and soon enough there is more drama than a reality TV show.



The Promise of Summer **Bella Osborne** **Avon**

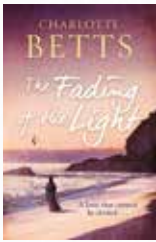
Ruby's life is about to change forever ... a stranger on a train to London makes her believe true love does exist, after all. When the stranger leaves an engagement ring behind, fellow passenger Curtis steps in, insisting he tracks the ring's owner down. Can the unlikely pair find their own happy ever after along the way?



Love on Location **Lynne Shelby** **Headline Accent**

Scriptwriter Laurel expects the historical advisor hired by the film studio to be an elderly academic. When she meets Professor Jason Harding, a young and unexpectedly handsome archaeologist, she realises the job isn't going to be as simple as she first thought. Will Laurel and Jason write the happy ending for their own story?

THE HISTORICAL ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD



The Fading of the Light
Charlotte Betts
 Little, Brown Book Group

1902. Spindrift House, Cornwall. Edith, deserted by her feckless husband Benedict eight years before, has established a thriving artists' community by the sea and found deep and lasting love with Pascal. Benedict's unexpected return sets in motion a chain of tragic events which reverberate down the years and threaten the happiness of the community forever.



The Return
Anita Frank
 HQ

When Jack left for the war, he made a parting pledge to his pregnant bride, Gwen, that he would never return. It was, after all, better for everyone that he didn't. But war has changed Jack and he is coming home, determined to claim a place in Gwen's life - and her heart.



The Marquess Next Door
Virginia Heath
 Mills & Boon

To avoid an unwanted suitor at a ball, Hope asks another gentleman to rescue her. He obliges - with a surprisingly passionate kiss! Revealed as her sinfully handsome new neighbour, Lucius, they forge a friendship over their balconies. It's refreshing he is more interested in her writer dreams than her looks, so why can't she stop thinking about that kiss?



The Night Train to Berlin
Melanie Hudson
 One More Chapter

Paddington Station, 1944: Alex and Eliza meet by chance on the night train. She is a gutsy painter desperate to get to the front line as a war artist and he is a wounded RAF pilot, now commissioned as a war correspondent. With time slipping away they make only one promise: to meet in Berlin when it's all over.



A Waltz with the Outspoken Governess
Catherine Tinley
 Mills & Boon

A quiet governess ... an unruly heart. Sir Nicholas is desperate to find a governess to care for his boisterous nieces and nephews. Demure vicar's daughter, Mary, seems ideal - at first. He discovers a different side ... a beautiful, vivacious woman. The spark between them is so tempting, but she challenges everything he thought he wanted in a wife!

THE CONTEMPORARY ROMANTIC NOVEL AWARD



An Endless Cornish Summer
Phillipa Ashley
 Avon

Rose is headed to a quiet Cornish village - to find the man who saved her life. She meets the handsome Morvah brothers - one of whom might just be the man she's looking for. But which one? Can Rose find the answer she's searching for, or will she lose her heart before the summer is over?



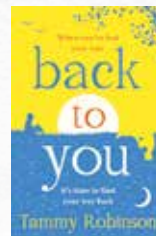
A Sky Full of Stars
Dani Atkins
 Head of Zeus

Alex is shattered by the loss of Lisa and overwhelmed by being a single father to a six-year-old boy. Then Alex meets four strangers. Two men and two women, who never met Lisa, but whose lives changed profoundly because she died. Alex begins to realise the world may not be as cruel and senseless as it seems.



One Summer Sunrise
Shari Low
 Boldwood Books

For Maisie, revisiting the past also rewrites her future. A familiar face sparks Harriet's quest to discover if there's something and someone worth living for. Scott plans to tell Kelly he's ending their marriage. However, Kelly has a bombshell of her own. Between sunrise and sunset, there's love, heartbreak, laughter and tears, but who will find happiness at the end of the day?



Back to You
Tammy Robinson
 Little, Brown Book Group

Finn and Zoe fall in love just as Finn is about to go travelling. While Finn is away, Zoe suffers a life-changing injury. Zoe cuts all ties. Finn has to decide how hard he's willing to fight for her. Zoe has to decide if she's got the strength to find her way back to the girl she once was.



The Frequency of Us
Keith Stuart
 Little, Brown Book Group

In Second World War Bath, Will meets sophisticated Austrian refugee Elsa. When the couple's home is bombed, Will awakes from the wreckage to find no one has heard of Elsa. They say he was never married. 70 years later a young carer looks after a lonely old man with an incredible story. There is more to Will and Elsa than anyone could ever realise.

WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK OUR READER JUDGES, LIBRARIANS, BOOKSELLERS, BOOK BLOGGERS AND OUR AWARD SPONSORS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT AS WE CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE IN ROMANTIC FICTION.

Katie Fforde

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