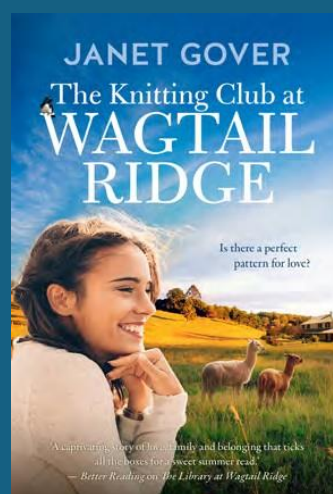
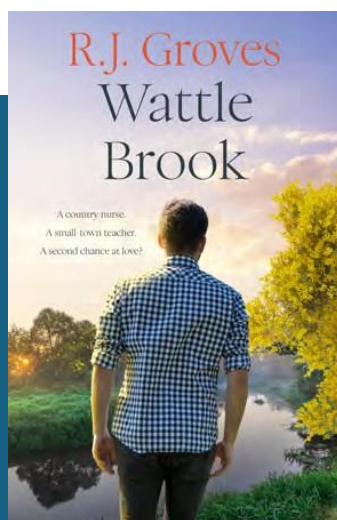
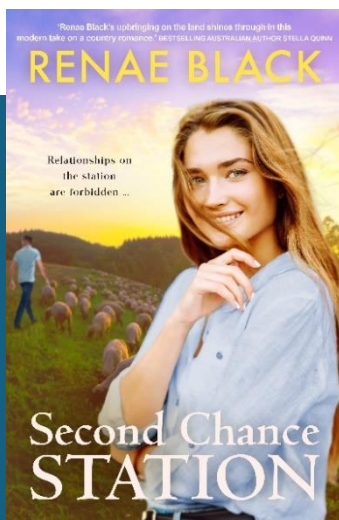


# HQANZ ROMANCE GUIDE

## LBF25



HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

# INTRODUCTION

Dear All,

Welcome to HQ's 2025 Romance Guide.

As a separate division of HarperCollins ANZ, HQ publishes a wide range of fiction across multiple genres, but there is no doubt that romance has always formed a key part of our list.

As the home of many romance award-winners, bestsellers, rising stars and reader favourites we are respected at home and internationally for the quality of our romance novels and authors.

We have a long and proud tradition of publishing excellent romance for discerning readers and our aim is to offer our readers the kind of romance that inspires, uplifts and utterly delights.

For information about our general fiction list, please request the HarperCollins Adult Rights Guide, LBF 2025.

Best wishes,  
the HQ team

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## HOME TO THE HEART COUNTRY (WT)

Libby M Iriks

**A heartfelt small-town romance exploring themes of trust and connection, and addresses issues such as social anxiety and undiagnosed neurodivergence.**

Beth Campbell has lived in more places than she cares to name, so when she discovers she's inherited a house from an aunt she never knew she had, she sees it as her chance to finally create the home she's always wanted.

Beth hires a local farmer-slash-wannabe renovator, Noah Brennan, to help her make improvements. But thanks to her self-preserving tendencies, she's otherwise determined to keep her distance from everyone in town.

Despite her best efforts to remain aloof, Beth starts forming meaningful connections and, in Noah, she discovers a man who sees beyond her awkward shyness to the woman she is on the inside. In order to claim her destiny, however, she must first find the courage to be vulnerable with him.

### KEY POINTS

- Small town romance meets *The Kiss Quotient* (Helen Hoang) in an Australian setting
- With a neurodivergent protagonist and series potential, this story calls attention to the differences in functioning between autistics and non-autistics, and highlights the challenges faced by neurodivergent people living in a world geared towards those neurotypical
- 3 chillies spicy, perfect for readers of *The Pumpkin Spice Café*
- A fresh voice for a favourite genre

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Libby Iriks** fell in love with story as an eight-year-old when her teacher read *Charlotte's Web* to the class. She developed a fondness for the romance genre soon after, and in 2018, combined her passions when she became the Commissioning Editor of Romance for Vulpine Press in the UK. When not writing, Libby is also a developmental editor and author coach, based in Western Australia, who helps new and emerging romance authors.

## COVER TO COME

December, 2025

ISBN: 9781038955852

TPB

288 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

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## A COUNTRY PRACTICE CHRISTMAS

Penelope Janu, Stella Quinn, Renae Black, Pamela Cook

**Four new festive rural stories from favourite Australian authors about finding love in small town medical practices this Christmas.**

Nurse Piper is excited for a fresh start in Rush Creek where no one knows her ... except she immediately runs into rural paramedic Emmett, her older brother's childhood best friend and Piper's longstanding crush. Psychologist Hannah was ready to spend Christmas alone again until a terminally ill friend turns up and asks for her help celebrating one last Christmas in Yarrabee. Locum vet Amelie must ask if there's the possibility she was wrong about the childhood bully she swore to ignore when she returned to Summerfield. And physiotherapist Jodie doesn't believe in happy endings anymore; not even with the handsome publican who once saved her life.

With festive events to plan, meddlesome grannies getting involved, and a little bit of holiday magic, will these four women find their own happy ever afters this Christmas?

### KEY POINTS

- Brand new content from four well-loved rural romance authors
- Bargain anthology four-in-one Christmas-themed novellas
- Small town settings spread across Australia
- Popular romance tropes including enemies to lovers, forced proximity and second chance at love

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

By day **Renae Black** works as a social worker and by night she escapes to the romantic fictional realms of rural Australia that transport her back to the property she grew up on. As the mother of three beautiful daughters, **Pamela Cook** is passionate about issues affecting women and hopeful endings. **Penelope Janu** lives on the coast and writes novels that celebrate Australian characters and communities. Boarding school in rural Queensland left **Stella Quinn** with a love of small towns and heritage buildings and that is why she loves writing rural romance.

## COVER TO COME

October, 2025

ISBN: 9781038955876

TPB

448 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

## SECOND CHANCE STATION

**Renaë Black**

**A gritty, flirty and uplifting rural romance about taking risks, overcoming the past and standing up for the people you love.**

*Relationships on the station are forbidden ... but are some rules made to be broken?*

At Windale Mountain Sheep Station there's only one rule: don't sleep with the guests.

In her ten years living on the mountain, Indigo Mills has never once thought about breaking the rules. After a childhood of neglect and an adolescence that still haunts her, the opportunity to live and work on the sheep station was a lifesaver - literally - and Indy won't do anything to jeopardise her mountain family and home.

That is until Carter Hendrix, the best half-back in the game of professional rugby league, turns up.

The Scorpions have come to Windale for a pre-season training camp, fresh off the loss of last year's grand final - a loss Carter's teammates blame him for. Carter's plan is to keep his head down and his sponsors happy so he can continue playing the game he loves.

Until he meets Indy. Now is not the time for distractions and Indy is full of reasons why they shouldn't explore their attraction: their vastly different backgrounds, their age gap, the rules. But their chemistry is impossible to ignore. Can Carter prove to Indy that he's worth the risk, or will it all be left on the mountain?

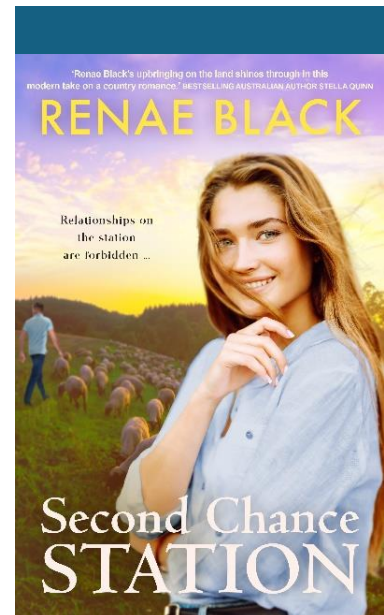
### KEY POINTS

- Authentic voice from an author who grew up on a farm and now works as a social worker, specialising in child protection
- Popular romance tropes: forbidden romance, age gap, grumpy/sunshine, he falls first, second chances
- A little grittier than a traditional rural romance, unpacking some more complex themes around belonging, trauma, found family, and standing up for what's right, especially in the face of misogyny

### PRAISE FOR RENAË BLACK

'I wasn't expecting a novel as powerful as this! I thought I was getting an Australian outback romance - and I did, but it was so very much more. *Red Dirt Home* is a powerfully emotional read.' Sandy's Book a Day

'Warm-hearted and authentic. *On the Down Low* will take you to the heart of the outback' - bestselling author Alissa Callen



July, 2025

ISBN: 9781038945563

TPB

304 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Renaë Black** lives in Queensland with her husband and two young bookworms. By day she works as a social worker within the child protection industry. By night, she escapes to the romantic fictional realms of rural Australia that transport her back to her childhood home, a large property that bred cattle and hosted the odd ostrich sale.

WATTLE BROOK (ASH GULLY SERIES, BOOK #3)

**R.J. Groves**

**Return to Ash Gully in this heartwarming rural romance about a country nurse and the ex she can't seem to ignore.**

Four years ago, Benjamin Engel broke Sarina Cooper's heart and left town with no explanation. It's been three years since he moved back to Ash Gully, and Sarina has done an excellent job of avoiding him. There may be an annoyingly magnetic pull between them, but Sarina knows better than to offer him her heart a second time. Ben is in her past, and that's where he should stay. So why is she suddenly finding it so hard to keep him out of her head?

Ben has only ever been in love once. And by the time he'd realised it, it had been far too late. When fate offers him a second chance with Sarina, he's determined not to waste it. Will they both be able to leave the past behind to forge a future together, or is history about to repeat itself?

#### KEY POINTS

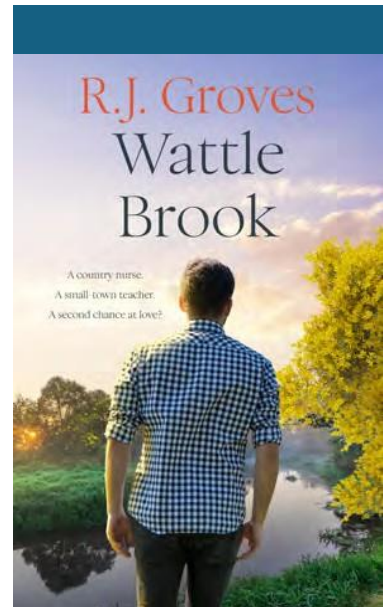
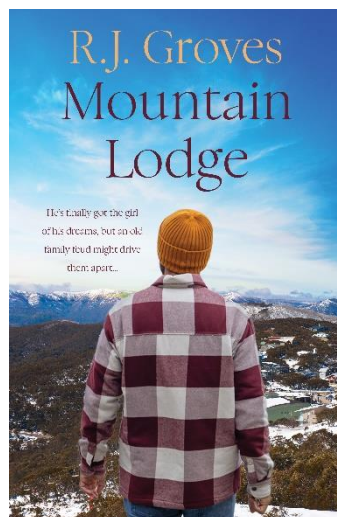
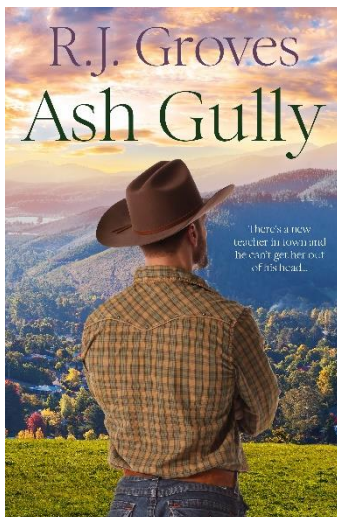
- Series fan favourite teacher Ben will finally get his own happily ever after with a local country nurse
- Well-loved tropes like second chance at love and he falls first
- For readers of Alissa Callen, Mandy Magro and Karly Lane

#### PRAISE FOR THE ASH GULLY SERIES FROM READERS

'A beautiful story, well written and filled with emotion.'

'A delightful read!'

'Swoon! A fantastic romance read with all the feels.'



June, 2025

ISBN: 9781038953407

EPUB

176 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Australian author **R.J. Groves** has been passionate about writing since she could put pen to paper and can usually be found jotting plots and stories down on anything she can get her hands on. Describing herself as a mum, wife, author, and coffee lover, her other passions include music, cooking, books, adventures, and searching for plot bunnies in even the most mundane activities.

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## WEATHERING THE STORM

**Mandy Magro**

**Batten down the hatches when fate throws an opinionated journalist and a commitment-phobic cowboy into the middle of a TV dating show...**

Montana Walker isn't thrilled when her new assignment is covering TV's hottest new dating show. She begrudgingly travels to the chosen bachelor's cattle station in the remote outback, wondering what woman in her right mind would want to fall for an ex-bull rider?

She should know, because the bull rider in question is the very same man who broke her eighteen-year-old heart. Not that she thinks he'll remember her. She was just another fleeting fancy, she's sure.

Mason Wilde finds himself completely out of his depth when his family nominate him for the show. Ever since he messed up the best relationship he's ever had, he's avoided any kind of commitment. Imagine his surprise when he spots the woman who got away working among the crew.

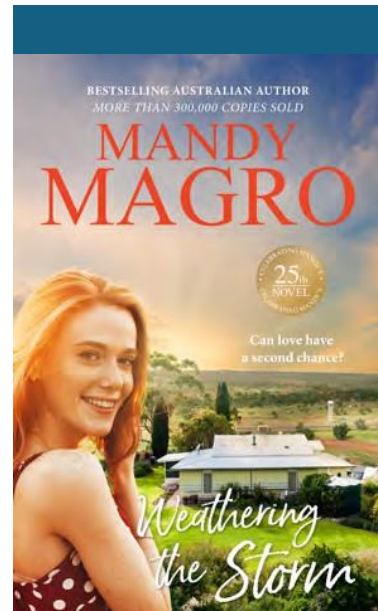
But whatever winds of chance are blowing, you can't change the past. Montana and Mason agree it's better if they keep their distance and protect their hearts. However, fate has other plans and they are forced to be around each other for countless hours of filming -- while their attraction is undeniable. So much so, that if they're not careful, they'll become the news story...

### KEY POINTS

- All new, standalone rural romance from one of the top names in the genre
- Mandy's 25<sup>th</sup> novel. 300,000 + copies sold across her work.
- She is a regular Top 10 Romance chart hitter on release
- Novels that take you into the heart and soul of country life
- Mandy Magro uses her love of the outback and her many memorable adventures on the land for inspiration that makes her an authentic Australian storyteller

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Mandy Magro** lives in Cairns, Far North Queensland, with her fiancé, Des, their daughter, Chloe Rose, and their two adorable pooches, Sophie and Sherlock. With pristine aqua-blue coastline in one direction and sweeping rural landscapes in the other, she describes her home as heaven on earth. A passionate woman and a romantic at heart, Mandy loves writing about soul-deep love, the Australian way of life, and the wonderful characters who call the country home.



May, 2025

ISBN: 9781038908780

TPB

336 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

**Mandy Magro**

***What happens when the past won't let go? Buried secrets rise to the surface in this rural-set romance and mystery from bestselling author Mandy Magro.***

Even after leaving small-town Wildstone behind her, Nyah Love hasn't been able to escape the soul-deep tragedy of her dark past. How's she meant to live a happy life when her younger sister is still missing after sixteen years? But fate plays a devastating hand when her mother loses a battle with an illness that Nyah knew nothing of. With no other choice, she must return to her hometown and sort out her mother's estate - heartbroken at losing her longed-for chance to fix their shattered relationship.

Caleb Hart has had his heart broken way too many times. By his first love, Nyah, when she abruptly left town, then by a cheating ex-girlfriend. Now a sergeant with the Wildstone police, he's never given up on trying to find out what happened to her little sister.

Nyah's homecoming is the kindling that soon ignites this cold case. As buried secrets gradually find their way to the surface - firstly with the reading of the will, and then when an unexpected emergency in the neighbourhood uncovers new evidence - Caleb is there to support her through it all. She doesn't want the complication of love, but how long can she resist her reignited feelings for him? As the past returns with a vengeance, they must face the shocking truth ...

#### KEY POINTS

- Novels that take you into the heart and soul of country life
- Mandy's 26th novel; 300,000 + copies sold across all her works
- A regular Top 10 Romance chart hitter on release
- Mandy Magro uses her love of the outback and her many memorable adventures on the land for inspiration that makes her an authentic storyteller

#### PRAISE FOR THE AUTHOR

'If you're looking for the perfect romance to curl up with, you can't go past *Jillaroo from Jacaranda*.'

## COVER TO COME

October, 2025

ISBN: 9781038908803

TPB

304 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Mandy Magro** lives in Cairns, Far North Queensland, with her fiancé, Des, their daughter, Chloe Rose, and their two adorable pooches, Sophie and Sherlock. With pristine aqua-blue coastline in one direction and sweeping rural landscapes in the other, she describes her home as heaven on earth. A passionate woman and a romantic at heart, Mandy loves writing about soul-deep love, the Australian way of life, and the wonderful characters who call the country home.



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## A SNOWY RIVER SUMMER

**Stella Quinn**

**A heartwarming story about finding love where you least expect it from Stella Quinn, bestselling author of *The Vet from Snowy River*.**

*Lady mechanic seeks love in the country.*

Kylie Summer loves her hometown in the Snowies, and life would be wonderful if only her workshop would turn a profit (she's broke) and Hanrahan would recover from its shortage of eligible blokes (unlikely).

But then an arrogant city lawyer turns up. Is he in Hanrahan to stay? Not at all. He's charming and he's good-looking but he's a bad decision waiting to happen. If only he didn't make her feel so ... wonderful.

Damon Johns hasn't lost a court case in months, so he's mad as fire when his colleagues ban him from work. Sure, he's had a run-in with a traffic cop ... and a judge ... but banning him? What his colleagues don't know is that Damon's past is about to catch up with him and his career may not be the only thing set to implode.

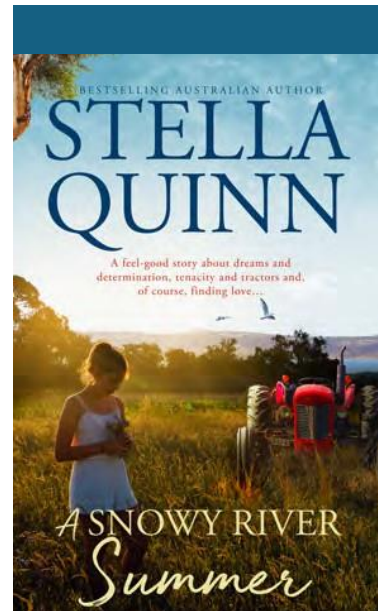
A chance request to organise the sale of a country property is good news: he'll need a distraction if he can't work, and soon he'll be back in the city where he belongs. The bad news? The place comes with a special-needs labrador and a girl-next-door mechanic who both conspire to give his lonely heart crazy ideas about sticking around ...

### KEY POINTS

- Incredible track record: 2023's *Home Among the Snow Gums* (18k+) saw a huge increase in p-sales on previous books. (*Vet From Snowy River*: 26k+ sold)
- Multiple romance award winner
- For readers of Rachael Johns, Alissa Callen, Kristin Higgins and Susan Elizabeth Phillips—but Stella's warm humour makes her a next-level standout

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Stella Quinn** lives in sunny Queensland now, but has lived in England, Hong Kong and Papua New Guinea. Boarding school in a Queensland country town left Stella with a love of small towns and heritage buildings (and a fear of chenille bedspreads and meatloaf!) and that is why she loves writing rural romance. An active member of Romance Writers of Australia, Stella has won their Emerald, Sapphire and Valerie Parv Awards, and finaled in their R\*BY Romantic Book of the Year award.



March, 2025

ISBN: 9781038903938

TPB

416 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

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## THE KNITTING CLUB AT WAGTAIL RIDGE

**Janet Gover**

**A heartwarming story of second chances, baby alpacas, and knitting a fractured family back together.**

*These ladies know a perfect match when they see one...*

Bree Johnston has given up trying to be the perfect lawyer. It's time to focus on her own dreams, so she decides to leave the city and set up an alpaca farm and wool shop. Her grandmother Rose might be her only supporter, but that's fine. Bree's done trying to win her parents' approval.

She finds the perfect property in the charming small town of Wagtail Ridge but gets more than she bargained for when sparks start flying with the handsome real estate agent.

Being a dad is the most important thing in Matt Ambrose's life. His small agency is struggling, but he's committed to raising his young daughter, Vicki, in the country, the way he and her late mother had planned. But Vicki's grandmother wants to take control, and her interference is only getting worse, putting his little family at risk.

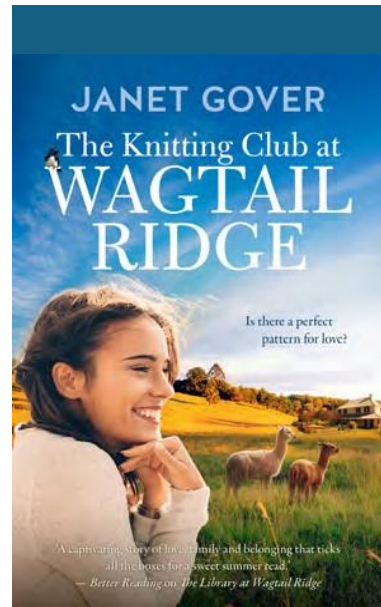
Although these two have a lot on their plates, the ladies of the newly formed Wagtail Ridge Knitting Club know a perfect match when they see one. Or rather two perfect matches, when shearing boss Mike walks onto Bree's farm and into her grandmother's life. With needles, yarn and cups of tea to hand, the matchmaking begins...

### KEY POINTS

- Award-winning author: Janet won the 2023 RUBY for *The Library at Wagtail Ridge* (Dec-22)
- Warm family drama meets wholesome romance, a must-read for anyone who enjoys TV's *Chesapeake Shores* or *Virgin River*
- Perfect for readers of Debbie Macomber and Robyn Carr

### PRAISE FOR THE AUTHOR

'Gover writes stories of strong women, rural communities and falling in love, something she takes up once again in *The Library at Wagtail Ridge*, a charming and heartfelt rural romance. - *Better Reading*



January, 2025

ISBN: 9781038917270

TPB

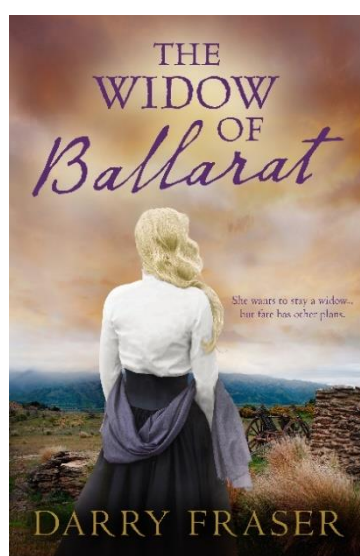
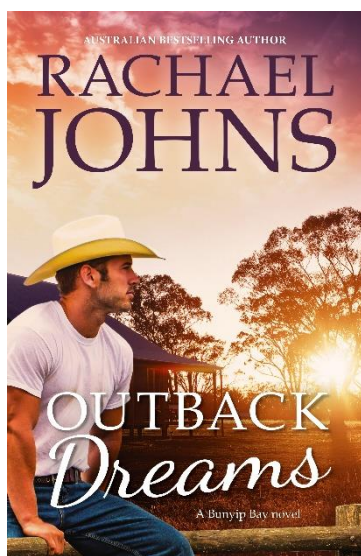
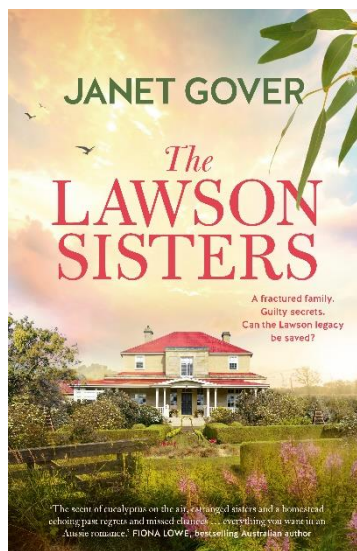
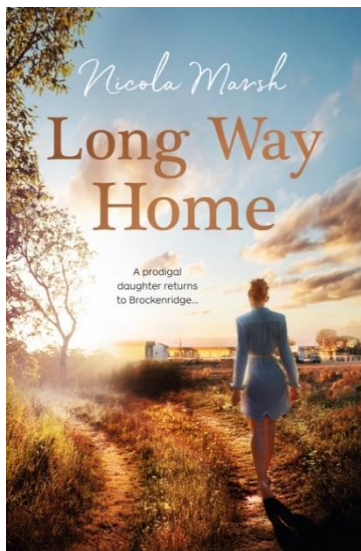
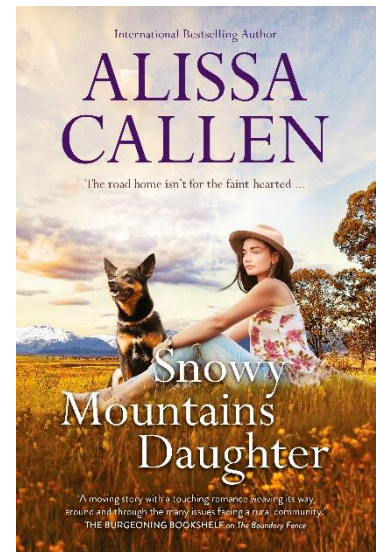
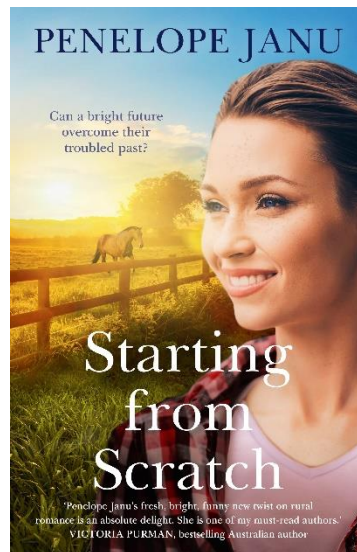
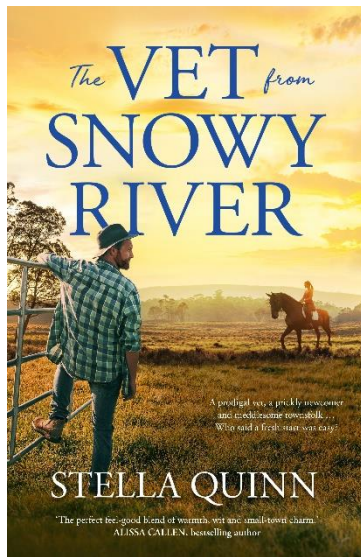
336 pages

Rights Held: World, All languages

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Janet Gover** grew up in outback Australia, surrounded by wide open spaces, horses ... and many, many books. When her cat lets her actually sit in her chair, she writes stories of strong women, rural communities and falling in love. Her novel *Little Girl Lost* won the Epic Romantic Novel of the Year Award presented by the Romantic Novelists' Association in the UK, and she has won or been shortlisted for awards in Australia and the USA. The author of 16 published novels, Janet divides her time between West London and Australia.

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