

SPEAKS VOLUMES

THE MAGAZINE OF THE LEEDS LIBRARY

"In Leeds, where one would least expect it, there is a very good public library."

James Boswell, 1779

WHAT LIES BENEATH:
A DISCOVERY IN
ARCHIVE HIGHLIGHTS

ONE OF OUR BOOK
GROUPS CELEBRATES
A QUARTER CENTURY

**STARTER'S ORDERS:
THE FINAL PHASE
OF THE NEXT
CHAPTER
PROJECT**



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GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Let's all club together

As a member of The Leeds Library, you have the opportunity to join one of our clubs. Meeting regularly at the library, we have not one but three book clubs; and with film, craft, and writing groups proving popular, there are plenty of ways to socialise with your fellow members.

If you are interested in joining, send an email to enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk; or ask at the counter. Full details of club dates can be found on our website:

theleedslibrary.org.uk/members-area/members-clubs-the-leeds-library/

Monday Evening Book Club

The first Monday of every month
6pm - 7pm

Tuesday morning Book Club

The first Tuesday of every month
10:30am - 12pm

Film Club

Twice a month
Wednesday (6pm)
Saturday (3pm)

Craft Club

The first Monday of every month
5pm - 7pm

Writing Group

The second & fourth Tuesday of every month
12pm

Book Chat

The first Friday of every month
11am - 1pm (ish)

COMING UP

There's lots going on

The library hosts a wide range of events throughout the year, from author talks to creative workshops. They're a great way to socialise with fellow members, as well as to learn new skills and expand your horizons. Found a book at the library that you love? Always wanted to meet a favourite author? If you have any ideas for events we might run, please get in touch:

enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk

You can find out full details about all our forthcoming events on the What's On page of our website.

theleedslibrary.org.uk/events/?eventPage=1

Make your own star book

Saturday 21st September
10:30am - 12:30pm
£27.50

The Brody & Nickson workshop

Tuesday 15th October
6:15pm - 7:30pm
£5.50

AI in libraries: beyond the hype

Tuesday 5th November
6:30pm - 8pm
Pay what you decide

Ash Bhardwaj explores Why We Travel

Friday 8th November
6pm - 7:30pm
Pay what you decide

Casting the Runes: Two ghost stories by MR James

Thursday 28th November
7pm - 9pm
£15.00

Christmas wreath-making workshop

Saturday 14th November
Two sessions: 10:30am & 2pm
£45.00

FROM THE CEO

Dear members and supporters

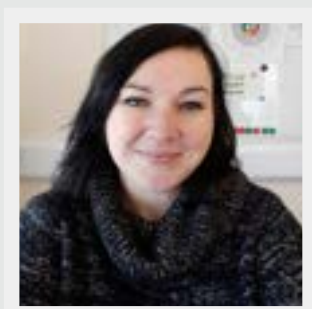
Phase 2 of the Next Chapter project is in full swing. We're hoping that the work will be completed in January and will of course keep you updated. The Project Board had a very productive meeting in the first week of September to review the plans and make sure that everything is on track. I'd like to say a huge thank you for your donations towards the project. We are working hard on fundraising the remainder of the monies, and if you have any ideas for fundraising or possible donors, I am keen to hear from you. We're so close to our target, and with work already in progress, every donation helps.

The Adopt-a-Book scheme has got off to a great start, and many of the books have already been taken away to be re-bound. Demand has been even greater than we anticipated, but it just shows the passion that you all have for the Library and the collections. We will of course keep adding titles to the scheme, and provide updates on the books.



Our first edition (complete with spelling mistake) of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* is collected by specialist conservators.

Operationally, we've been working hard on reviewing and stabilising our finances, following a loss of rental income through changing tenancies, increasing energy rates and overall cost increases. Number 15 opening will provide the opportunity for increased revenue, as well as reducing the current impact on member spaces, and help to take us to the next level. We will very shortly be recruiting for a fixed-term Learning & Engagement Officer, which was made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Funding. This will help us to pull together an engagement programme for Number 15 and increase school visits.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nina Corey'.

NINA COREY
CEO

Fundraising link:

<https://www.theleedslibrary.org.uk/support-us-2/>

CONSERVING OUR COLLECTIONS: ADOPT-A-BOOK

New scheme a great success

The library's collection has been growing, based on member recommendations, since the books we purchased for our first catalogue back in 1768, when Joseph Priestley was our secretary. Since Joseph's day, the library collection has grown to around 140,000 items. But the age of the collection presents its own challenges, one of them being the physical condition of our older books. Many of them have been borrowed and read a lot, of course. And the library hasn't always been an ideal place to keep books: our gas mantles, for instance, burned coal gas, which when combined with water in the atmosphere, produced sulphuric acid vapour! This is thought to have contributed to a deterioration in the condition of many titles. All in all, it's estimated that we have around 30,000 books in need of conservation: more than enough for one conservator's lifetime. Our Adopt-a-Book initiative is an important part of our efforts to preserve and improve our collection.



The first book to be adopted was our first edition of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, which is not only a first edition, but also comes with a typo—in the word *species* no less.

Nearly forty books have been adopted so far, with titles ranging from our second impression of JRR Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (always a popular item to show to visitors on tours) to *The Dialect of Leeds and its Neighbourhood*.

Items included in the initiative are chosen by Jane and the Library Services team to prioritise books of particular importance to the collection.

The work needed ranges from a standard rebind in cloth covers, to the re-sewing of book blocks.

At the point at which this issue went to press, members have donated over £2,100 to the scheme. Around thirty books are still available for adoption, with costs ranging from £40 to £150 per book. Every adoption is acknowledged with a book plate on the inside cover of the book. This plate can acknowledge your name, or be in someone's memory.

A catalogue of the books waiting for adoption is available at the counter.

CLEAN AS A WHISTLE: BOOK-CLEANING GROUP SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Get hands-on with our collection

Of the many dangers faced by books and their readers, dust and dirt are some of the most common. To help keep the older books accessible, the library relies on a group of volunteers to remove surface dirt and assess the condition of the books on its shelves. You may have seen some of them on a Wednesday morning diligently brushing page after page of books.

Each book is documented, and then dusted using a combination of smoke sponge and brushes to remove surface dirt. But their work doesn't stop there: they also repair minor tears; reattach pages; and very occasionally repair a spine that has started to come loose. It's a never-ending task, but deeply satisfying.

If you would like to learn more about conservation cleaning, the book cleaning group is currently looking for more volunteers. Whether you are passionate about books, looking for experience in conservation, or just want to have a natter on a Wednesday morning while doing something with your hands, get in touch. Please note that all volunteers will have to take part in, and be signed-off on, training before they are allowed to work on the books. If you are interested, please email us enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk

The digital benefits of your membership: PressReader

A member commented recently that accessing PressReader was saving him around £1,000 a month in magazine subscriptions. PressReader comes free with Individual and Household membership, and gives you access to over 7,000 newspapers and magazines, including *The Guardian*. To get access, ask at the counter or email us:

enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk

10 QUESTIONS

We talk to CEO Nina Corey about Gormenghast, her favourite Sherlock Holmes actor...and cheese...

Which 3 books would you take to a desert island?

I'm not copying Finn, but Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* is on the list. I would also take *Perfume* by Patrick Süskind and *Paprika* by Yasutaka Tsutsui.

Who is your literary hero or heroine?

It's a bit obvious, but Sherlock Holmes! I've always enjoyed the Sherlock stories. As an aside, I firmly believe that the best screen version of Sherlock was played by Jeremy Brett.

What is the biggest misconception about librarians?

That they're quiet...need I say more...

What is your favourite film?

Velvet Goldmine. I first watched it when I was 17 and it has unwaveringly been my favourite ever since.

What was your favourite subject at school?

Classical Civilisation; my school only offered it because the headteacher had studied it. Only two of us opted for it and since they had no classroom available, the lessons took place in the history store cupboard.

Do you have any hobbies or interests?

I love crafts, particularly crochet. I also enjoy reading (of course) and writing. It was always my secret ambition to write subversive tv comedies.

Where were you born and do you have any siblings?

I was born in Truro and have one younger brother who works in Bristol as a mad scientist.

Do you have a Kindle or other eReader?

No, I refuse to read books on an eReader.

What's your favourite food?

That's a tricky one. Let's go with cheese. Any sort of cheese. Just cheese.

What would the title of your autobiography be?

'Save and complete later'.

ARCHIVE HIGHLIGHTS

*Dive into the history of some mysterious Victorian tiles
with Archives Assistant Niimi Day Gough*

Hello all! Welcome to another Archive Highlights. In this edition, we'll be delving into a slightly unusual highlight from the Library's 216-year-old building. Some of our members might recall the Library's renovation of the entryway in 2015 (see the before on page 11!). What few know, however, is that this renovation uncovered a full Victorian tile floor installed in 1881.

Unfortunately, too many of these tiles were broken to keep the floor in place – so we now have around thirty boxes of Victorian tiles in our roof storage! With the fit-out of No. 15 ongoing, it seemed the perfect time to dig further into the source of these tiles as we look towards decorating our new space.

The first place I turned to for information was our extensive collection of committee minute books. These date from the beginning of the Library's history, and cover committees from Finance to General.

For our research purposes, I cracked open the Alterations Committee minutes. The Alterations Committee was founded in 1879, when the Library's proprietors commenced a course of structural improvements that culminated in the construction of the New Room.



The original discovery of the Victorian tiled floor in 2015. Not glamorous, but fascinating!

It handled design, communications with the architect, and more until renovations were finished in 1882. Like most of its brethren, the Alterations Committee minutes were handwritten – and, at points, almost indecipherable! Thankfully the Library’s archive has given me multiple years of experience decoding Victorian handwriting by now, so I eventually found my quarry in 1881’s offerings. The Committee discussed multiple patterns of tiles available in what they called ‘Minton’s Catalogue B’, eventually settling on pattern 242. Tiles were sourced from local tile layers Beckwith & Frankland.



From this research, I found the Minton’s tile company archive and the page from their 1905s catalogue with pattern No. 242 (circled) still in their offerings.



This was the extent of the information recorded by the committee. Thankfully, the tiles themselves had clues for me. As you can see pictured above, the red tiles are stamped with a maker’s mark recording their source: Minton, Hollins & Co., Patent Tile Works, Stoke Upon Trent.

With our mini-mystery solved, our Victorian tiles are ready for any purposes the Library may have for them in our new building. As with the Next Chapter as a whole, the Library aims to bring as much of our heritage as possible into our new space next door. The information our archive holds about that heritage is a great tool in our arsenal – so if you have any questions about today’s archive highlight or the Library’s history in general, please feel free to email me at day-goughn@theleedslibrary.org.uk! See you next time, in *Speaks Volumes*’ 41st edition!

WAVES OF INSPIRATION

Daniel White

Weaving in and out of waves.
Bobbing beneath seaweed and starfish is great.
The shapes I make are circular and straight down
head to foot.
I dive beneath the sailors' boats, keep out of reach
of their nets.
I'm weaving a poem with every one of my breaths.
For a moment my head is above water.
I see the sun blaze at me
and the lines of the sea glimmer.
I love looking in the distance.
I see bodies like ants.
I see the colour even from this distance.
The beach looks sandy but more just a brown.
From this far away I can just make out a town.
Back to the sea and I'm swimming like a poet.
I could walk on water but I dare not show it.
Instead I much prefer to weave.
And I am not special.
It's just my lungs are full of air.
They belong here and on the ocean
where the sight of people is rare.
In my life I've seen many of the ocean's species.
Not sure if I've seen one like me.
Then a giant wave comes in and all I write is lost.
But that's alright because in my heart is this book
and tomorrow I'll start a new leaf.
Maybe live in a jungle or somewhere just as deep.
And I'll write there making new memories.

This poem was inspired by reading the poem 'Silk, Poets' by Suzannah V. Evans from the book 'Some Language!'. Daniel is a member and has shared with staff how much he loves to write at the library. Thank you for sharing your work, Daniel!

LEAVE A LEGACY TO THE LEEDS LIBRARY

9th - 15th September is the Chartered Institute of Fundraising's Remember a Charity Week

Why leave a legacy?

Leaving a legacy is one of the most personal ways in which you can choose to support the Library. Legacies play a vital part in allowing our heritage story to be told by helping to safeguard our unique collections, and buildings and maintaining our expertise and knowledge.

How legacies help

The Leeds Library costs in excess of £500,000 to operate each year and every legacy, no matter the size, makes a difference. Whether it is to help cover some of our running costs, or is used in a specific project or purchase, legacies provide crucial annual income which help to ensure the Library, our collections and our work is safeguarded. Over recent years the Library has undertaken a number of major development projects, including the improvement of the foyer and basement, the replacement of the Library flooring, the conservation of over 1,000 heritage books and the purchase of a digital scanner. Many of these projects would not have been possible without the support and generosity of donors. A legacy to the Library makes a positive contribution to the lives of the Library's community, our visitors, partners and the city of Leeds.

What kind of gift can you make?

There are three main types of legacy that you can make in your will.

Firstly, there is a pecuniary legacy which is a fixed sum of money decided by you. There is a residuary legacy which can be a bequest of the remainder, or a proportion of the remainder, of your estate after other legacies, inheritance tax, debts and expenses have been paid. Finally, there is a specific gift which is the gift of something such as stocks or shares, literary rights, books, art and antiques.

You can leave either an unrestricted legacy, the applications of which are left at the discretion of the library's Trustees and can be used wherever the need is greatest, or you might wish to direct your legacy towards a key area of the Library's work that you particularly want to support. Some examples of projects currently requiring support include:

- Online cataloguing
- Furniture restoration
- Educational outreach
- Book conservation and collection development
- Archive and rare book digitisation.

How to leave a legacy to the Library in your will.

We know that leaving a legacy is a personal matter and that you will want to think it through properly and we recommend that you discuss your will and the type of legacy you might like to leave to the Library with your solicitor. The value of your gift will be deducted from your estate before inheritance tax is applied, meaning leaving a legacy can be a cost-effective way of giving which may reduce the overall tax charged on your estate. Your solicitor will be able to discuss how this may affect your estate and beneficiaries.



A VERY HAPPY 25TH BIRTHDAY

Our Tuesday morning book group celebrates its 25th anniversary

Our Tuesday Morning Book Group celebrated its 25th anniversary this month—and they did it in some style, with catered sandwiches, fizz, and a book cake! Congratulations on the quarter-century of reading and discussion. Thank you to the members who have run the group, especially Ann Suter; and thank you to members of the group who have so consistently written reviews for this magazine.

You can find out more about the group, and our other member clubs, on page 3.



Read anything good lately?

Book reviews from the Tuesday Morning Book Group

Wide Sargasso Sea

Jean Rhys

This novel is set in the Caribbean in the period soon after the Emancipation of the slaves in 1834. The slave-based socio-economic structure of colonial society is disintegrating with new arrivals from England seeking to buy up plantation estates on the cheap and ex-slaves seeking revenge on their former masters by sometimes setting fire to their Great Houses. The last part of the novel is set in England.

Jean Rhys was a white Caribbean creole and, though an admirer of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, she took exception to the characterisation of the mad Caribbean creole woman, Bertha, in that novel. *Wide Sargasso Sea* was written as a response and one of the main characters, Antoinette, is a white creole woman who is gradually driven towards insanity and is portrayed more sensitively and sympathetically than Bertha in *Jane Eyre*. As a child, she is neglected and lonely but loves the wild garden she plays in until the house she lives in is burnt down. She is married off by her stepfather to an unnamed younger son, who has also been pressured into marriage with her, because she is an heiress, by his father, an English landowner. The novel traces the gradual deterioration of the relationship as suspicions are planted in the mind of the husband regarding her sexual history and possible hereditary insanity. It culminates in her husband's incarceration of her in an English mansion strongly resembling *Thornfield* in *Jane Eyre*.

Three of the themes in the novel are gender, race and empire and they are inextricably linked. The economic vulnerability of women is shown when Antoinette forfeits all control of her money to her husband upon marriage; thereafter, she feels and is trapped. Her black servant/companion, Christophine, is a strong woman who shows courage in standing up to her husband and condemning to his face his treatment of his wife. The patriarchal nature of imperial power is then demonstrated by his ability to force Christophine off the island through his contact with the colonial magistrate in charge.

There are a number of clear links to *Jane Eyre* which become more obvious and explicit in part three of the novel but it is important to view it as a book which can stand on its own independently of *Jane Eyre*. The style, characterisation, mood and other novelistic techniques are those of twentieth century fiction and very different from Brontë's novel. The narrative structure is quite complex, for example: the two main characters, Antoinette and her husband, are also the two main narrators, giving different accounts from differing viewpoints. But these are complicated by shorter accounts from Christophine and from a man called Daniel who claims to be Antoinette's half-brother. All of them are affected to a greater or lesser extent by self interest with some being more reliable than others but none can be totally dismissed, leaving the reader with the responsibility to interpret the truth. Another twentieth century technique used by Rhys is the 'stream of consciousness' to reveal the psychological insecurity of Antoinette's husband.

The group's responses to the book were generally very positive. The complexity was appreciated even if it left the reader with a sense of uncertainty – that probably was the intention. The descriptions of the Caribbean scenery and its atmosphere were admired. The scope and depth of such a short book were commented on. Perhaps inevitably, vivid memories of *Jane Eyre* were evoked and these played a significant part in the discussion.

Chronicle of a Death Foretold

Gabriel García Márquez

1 The man

Born in 1927 in the rural town of Aracataca, near Cartagena on the Caribbean coast of Colombia, the site of all of GGM's fiction. An undistinguished student of law in the capital Bogota, he was offered a job as a journalist in Cartagena in which allowed him the opportunity to pursue his interest in literature and political activism. The book which made him the most famous Latin American writer of his generation was *One Hundred Year of Solitude* (100YS) published in 1967, which has sold a staggering 50 million copies worldwide (and which has been translated into 46 languages). In 1982 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982, only the 4th Latin American writer to be awarded the prize, which has made him arguably the most famous Latin American of the 20th century. Given the scale of the literary success of 100YS, his biographer Gerald Martin suggests that GGM's political activism and his friendship with Fidel Castro influenced the decision not to award GGM the Nobel Prize until 1982.

2 Magical Realism (MR)

In 100YS, GGM introduced the world outside Latin America to Magical Realism, the portrayal of fantastical events (such as levitation, or a plague of amnesia) in an otherwise realistic tone.

In a review article on CDF by Salman Rushdie in the London Review of Books in 1982 he linked MR in Latin America to Surrealism and the portrayal of “public corruptions and private anguishes” He suggests that “in the world that Marquez describes, impossible things happen constantly and quite plausibly, out in the open under the midnight sun.”

3 The text

A departure for GGM. GDF is not a magical realist text, unlike his previous novels. nor is it a political text. It presents, instead, a strong critique of social and religious conventions, especially the code of machismo (male superiority) a deeply-rooted code of behaviour in both Spain in Latin America, especially in rural areas. The macho code seeks to control (and punish) female sexuality beyond the confines of marriage sanctioned by Catholic ritual and tradition, and requires men to express their masculinity through aggression and dominance and pride in sexual prowess and licence which is denied to women. A classic example of double standards.

CDF introduces an un-named narrator, a journalist (GGM?) who is investigating the murder of Santiago Nasar. Angela Vicario, the bride of Bayardo San Roman, on her wedding night accuses Santiago Nasar of having taken her virginity. In disgrace, Angela is sent back to her parents. Her brothers Pedro and Pablo are then faced (reluctantly, as it turns out) with the obligation, according to the code of honour, to salvage the family’s good name by murdering Santiago. It appears that the whole town knows about the plan, and nobody believes that Santiago is responsible, but nobody does anything to stop it.

The book is based upon the horrifying murder of GGM’s close friend Cayetano Gentile in January 1951. Gentile, like Santiago Nasar was accused of seducing and deflowering a young bride once it was discovered on her wedding night that she was no longer a virgin. According to a local newspaper report, the brothers of the girl brutally murdered Cayetano in the Main Square, in front of the whole town.

We all enjoyed reading the book which is really more of a novella. One of the group did comment that the narrative was so powerful that she felt a relief when the murder was finally committed. The style and the tension build up to the end were greatly admired. Comments were made that while it was in part apolitical novel it was a great indictment against the Catholic Church. Everyone in the community knew the murder was going to be committed but no one did anything (Collective guilt)and it seemed that the events were fated to happen. It was likened to a Greek tragedy and played out in the same inevitable way.

We did feel the getting together of Angelo and Bayardo at the end was unlikely and unreal and in the actual true story that this book was based on this did not happen. It may have been only included by the author perhaps to soften the ending

At the end we were left with many questions unanswered, that I think that is part of the cleverness of the novel.

We certainly would recommend it as a good read.



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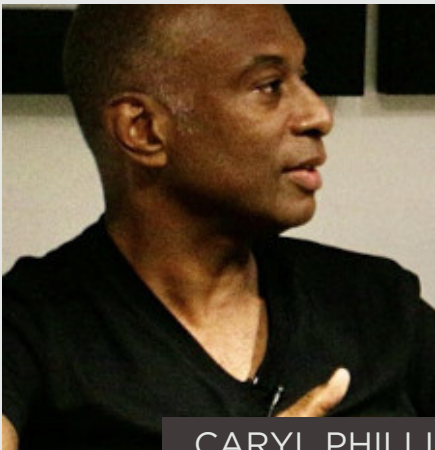
SIMON ARMITAGE

Simon Armitage was born and lives in West Yorkshire. He is a poet, playwright and novelist and writes for radio, television, film and stage. He published his first collection *Zoom!* in 1989 with several full-length collections in the years since. In 2007 he published his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. His latest collection *Sanddette Light Vessel Automatic* (2019) is a collection of some of the hundreds of poems that he has written for various projects, commissions, collaborations and events. In 2015, he was elected Oxford Professor of Poetry and in 2017 he was appointed Professor of Poetry at the University of Leeds. In 2018 he was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and in 2019 he was named UK Poet Laureate.

Barbara Taylor Bradford was born in Upper Armley in Leeds and began her career as a journalist for the *Yorkshire Evening Post*. She then moved to London to work on Fleet Street and continued on to America to pursue her writing career. An author of 38 novels, all of which have been international bestsellers, Barbara has sold over 90 million novels and is one of UK's most commercially successful authors of all time.



BARBARA TAYLOR BRADFORD OBE



CARYL PHILLIPS

Caryl Phillips was born in St.Kitts and came to Britain at the age of four months. He grew up in Leeds, and studied English Literature at Oxford University. He is an award winning novelist, playwright and essayist and has written for film, theatre, radio and television. His novel *Crossing the River* was shortlisted for the 1993 Booker Prize. *A Distant Shore* was longlisted for the 2003 Booker Prize, and won the 2004 Commonwealth Writers Prize. He has worked as an academic at numerous institutions including Amherst College, Barnard College, and Yale University, where he has held the position of Professor of English since 2005.

Nima Poovaya-Smith is a curator, speaker and writer. She was the founder Director of *Alchemy Anew*. Previous posts have included Head of Special Projects, National Media Museum, Director of Arts, Arts Council Yorkshire and Senior Curator, Bradford Museums and Galleries. She has contributed to numerous international and national publications including books and journals on subjects ranging from contemporary art, Indian jewellery, textiles, and curatorial and audience engagement practice. She is Senior Visiting Fellow at the Department of Fine Arts, Art History and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, and a Trustee of Harewood House Trust.



NIMA POOVAYA-SMITH

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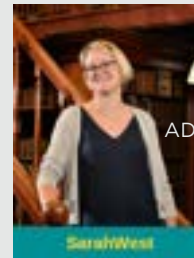
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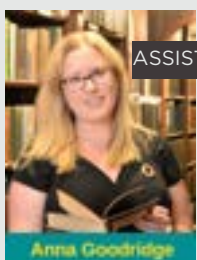
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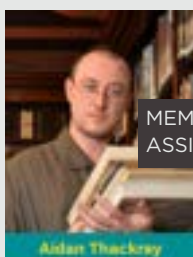
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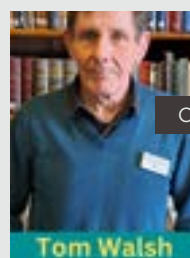
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THE MAGAZINE
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Jane's new kittens: say hello to Burt, Norman, and Stanley.

"You want weapons? We're in a library. Books are the best weapon in the world. This room's the greatest arsenal we could have. Arm yourself!"

Russell T. Davies

SPEAKS
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