

Dear Writers

Thank you for your patience while waiting for the results of the novel competition. We had a great response and it's been an immensely difficult decision, particularly when we got to the full manuscripts of the short-listed novelists..

Congratulations to all those who made it into the final 20 novels:

1	The Quiet Water Spy	Ali Thurm
2	Playing for Gloria	Colin Farrell
3	Before the Silence	Joanna Swingler
4	Songbirds of Cyprus	Anita Davie
5	Sitting in the Shit of Angels	Timothy William Neal
6	A Quieter Shade of Silence	Catherine Coldstream
7	Caulibon	Elizabeth Parker
8	Ruby	Lesley Wyles
9	Tripping to Utopia	Gianni Mitchell
10	Cold Crash	Jennifer Young
11	Tell me the Truth	Sarah Steele
12	Native Soil	Sarah Watkinson
13	Tales from the Greenhills	Terry Melia
14	Elin	Janet Laugharne
15	Patch work	Dorothy Judd
16	Shadowlight	Lisa Morriss Andrews
17	Some Things the English	Rachel J Fenton
18	Santa Maria and the Village of Miracles	Michael Brennan
19	The Gardener	Antonio Spaccapietra
20	Another Way Back	Marcus Klein

Getting these down to the last five was very difficult, but it came down to the following short-list:

Catherine Coldstream	A Quieter Shade of Silence
Anita Davie	Songbirds of Cyprus
Terry Melia	Tales from the Greenhills - Tommy Dwyer
Jennifer Young	Cold Crash

All four of these novels had gripping characters, human drama and delivered compelling narratives.

A Quieter Shade of Silence has a distinctive first person voice and an intriguing, unique story. Beautifully paced and elegantly written, it is a humane, engaging and intelligent account of someone finding their way in the world after an extraordinary period of life in a convent.

Songbirds of Cyprus is a high-octane novel set in a military base: affairs, domestic abuse, and army politics jostle with even bigger themes of child pornography and the abduction of a five-year-old girl, but at its heart this is a human story about how we come to terms with our pasts and make new futures. It's a great read as well as being thought-provoking.

Tales from the Greenhills is a fine example of social realism well handled. The characters and setting are authentic and the events, though often highly dramatic, are always

credible. The use of a prologue that only fully reveals its impact at the end of the novel is a convincing device and difficult characters in hard circumstances are made empathic.

Cold Crash is a tightly written spy thriller with an unusual and engaging protagonist who carries the narrative forward with great pacing. The period detail is meticulously researched but doesn't over-burden the narrative and it has a great sense of place as well as excellent supporting characters and a central mystery that really hooks from the opening line.

We read and re-read these entries and finally whittled down to two and got stuck for a while, but the overall winner emerged into focus on two counts – a really strong opening and the tightness of the writing throughout. We're delighted to announce that the winner is Jennifer Young with *Cold Crash*.

Huge congratulations to all the short listed writers and especially to Jennifer. We look forward to working with her to develop the novel for publication in November 2017.

In the meantime thank you to everyone who entered and we hope to see more of your work in future.