



Finding a Good Read

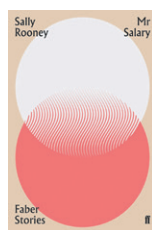
A column to help you find intriguing books

Ruby - PRG and Give a Book volunteer

Short novels

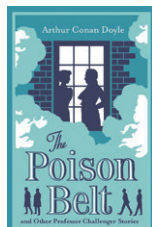
Short novels are easy, bite-sized and a great way to get into reading. They can also be skillfully written, complex and wonderful for experienced readers to dive into. Novellas permeate every genre, from thriller to fantasy, and have something to offer every reader.

The Old Man and the Sea, by American author Ernest Hemingway, is a touching story in which an old fisherman ventures out to sea in search of food after 84 days of misfortune.



Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These* is perhaps her most famous book, set in 1985 in a small Irish town in the lead-up to Christmas and centred around a Magdalene laundry. The story has recently been adapted for the screen, starring Cillian Murphy as Bill Furlong.

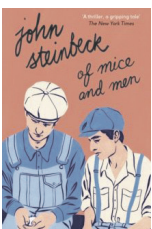
Sally Rooney, famous for her book *Normal People*, has also written short novels. *Mr Salary* tells the story of 20-something-year-old Sukie, who must return home to Dublin when her father gets leukaemia.



This Is How You Lose the Time War by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone is a book told through letters. Agents Red and Blue travel through time in different universes, working for two empires that are at war. They begin to communicate through time and fall in love, but when this is discovered both their lives are put at risk.

Scottish author Muriel Spark's *The Driver's*

Seat is a fast-paced read, with a twist that transforms the story into a unique 'whodunit'. It follows the confusingly inconsistent protagonist, Lise, on holiday as she escapes the monotony of her normal life, until a death cuts the holiday short...



Ursula K. Le Guin was a master of sci-fi and fantasy, incorporating gender into her works in the male-dominated field. *Paradises Lost* is a novella whose main characters are members of the fifth generation born on a spaceship on its voyage away from Earth and towards a habitable planet.

The Poison Belt is a novella by Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes series. It follows Professor Challenger, who is the only one to know before the Earth passes through a giant cloud of poisonous space gas.

Ruth Reichl's *Comfort Me With Apples* is a short fairytale-horror novel which retells the myth of Bluebeard. In the novel, a wife is horrified to discover what her murderous husband has hidden in a locked room which he has forbidden her from entering.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane is a novella by Neil Gaiman in which the unnamed main character is caught up in a series of fantastical events at a farm near his childhood home, including being tormented by a supernatural worm who was brought back from another dimension.

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is a classic novella which follows the tragic tale of George Milton and Lennie Small as they search for work during the Great Depression. Throughout the book, Lennie struggles with violence and mental disability, while George attempts to take care of him.

Prison Reading Groups (PRG) was created in 1999 to set up, support and fund informal reading groups in prisons. We currently support more than 110 groups in over 80 prisons nationwide. PRG is part of registered charity Give a Book.

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