



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Upper secondary
(ages 14+)

CONTENTS

Plot summary	1
About the author	2
Author's inspiration	2
Writing style	3
Further reading	4

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Language, Literature, Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Discussions around grief, loss, relationships, family and love
- Discussions around difference, prejudice and self-image
- Analysing how language and writing evoke mood, tone, tension and characterisation
- Encouraging creative and imaginative writing

THEMES

- Relationships
- Friendships
- Family
- Grief, loss and survival
- Health
- Difference

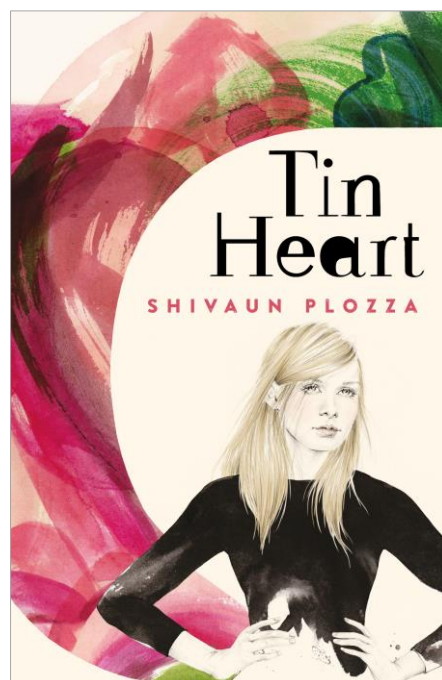
PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9780143786276 (paperback);
9781760146719 (ebook)

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Tin Heart Shivaun Plozza

PLOT SUMMARY

Funny, romantic and deeply moving by turns – a fitting follow up the critically acclaimed, award-winning *Frankie*.

Marlowe Jensen is a normal seventeen-year-old. Except for her vegan-warrior mother whose extravagant and fake-blood-fuelled protests have made a lifelong enemy of the local butcher and his son. Oh, and except for her ten-year-old brother whose idea of 'casual attire' is 'fancy dress'. And except for almost dying because of a congenital heart defect. But, now that she's had a heart transplant, things are going to be great.

Pity Marlowe's mum and brother didn't get the 'we're going to be a regular family from now on' memo. And now she's no longer The Dying Girl, fitting in at school is way harder. To top it off, Marlowe's dream of connecting with her heart donor's family is shot down in flames. And for a girl wracked with survivor's guilt this is the biggest blow of all.

When, after a bit of online sleuthing, Marlowe discovers a potential identity for her donor, the desire to seek out his family is too strong to deny. She doesn't intend on speaking to them, just finding out who they are – anything to feel closer to understanding the boy whose heart now beats in her chest. More than anything she needs to feel worthy of the gift she's been given.

But because Marlowe's life isn't complicated enough, she's starting to fall for the butcher's son. It's a pity her mother will kill her if she cavorts with a carnivore . . .

Marlowe discovers the identity of her donor's sister, Carmen, and turns up at the takeaway where she works. But it's all right because she's only going to look through the widow. She's only going to sit quietly at a table inside and spy on her. And when Carmen starts talking to Marlowe and they get along, she's only going to give a fake name and hang out . . . Oops.

So now Marlowe is deep in it. In the meantime she's struggling against her mother's suffocating rules and getting closer to the cute butcher's son.

The two stable points in her life are her little brother Pip and her new no-nonsense, kick-ass best-friend Zan. But as her friendship with Carmen grows, Marlowe finds it impossible to reveal her true identity. Something about Carmen makes her feel alive in a way she never thought possible. So Marlowe decides a little white lie never hurt anyone even after she realises Carmen is completely in denial about her brother's death.

But when Carmen discovers Marlowe's identity Marlowe manages to lose Carmen in the worst way, and alienate both her mother and Zan. Then to top it all off she almost destroys her relationship with Pip.

But, after a trip to her donor's graveside and an unexpected heart-to-heart with his father, Marlowe learns a few home truths. Like, courage isn't handed out by wizards – it comes from being prepared to face the humiliation of letting your true self out in the world. It comes from putting your heart on the line for the people that matter.

Marlowe's not sure if she can fix things with Carmen, but she knows she can make it right with her family and Zan. And it's going to take a pretty spectacular act of public humiliation . . .

In the end, Carmen isn't sure what relationship they can have, but there's hope. And Marlowe's mum doesn't approve of her daughter dating a butcher's son but she's coming around to the idea that Marlowe can make her own decisions. Life is for living, after all, and Marlowe's starting to think that maybe, just maybe, she's worthy of it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shivaun Plozza is a Children's and YA writer. Her debut novel about a girl called Frankie is titled *Frankie* and her activity book about medieval Europe is called *Medieval*

Europe. Because she's inventive like that. Her short story 'The Point' is part of *Where the Shoreline Used to Be*, an anthology of YA fiction. Other short works have appeared in *Above Water*, *Vivid* and *The Victorian Writer*. When she's not writing she's working away as an editor and manuscript assessor.

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

The waiting is supposed to be the hard part.

Getting a diagnosis is no walk in the park but at least it puts a name to the myriad symptoms and sleepless nights and countless tests and appointments that have taken over your life.

So you get the diagnosis and you're told you need a transplant to save your life and then you wait. And wait. And there's nothing you can do except wait because the sad fact of organ transplantation is that somebody has to die for you to live. And waiting on the transplant list gives you plenty of time to think about that.

I don't know what it's like to be on that list. I only know what's like to love somebody on that list. And I know what it's like when the waiting's over, when the call comes in the middle of the night and you grab the bag you already have packed and you drive to hospital hoping it wasn't a mistake, that the tests were right and the organ is compatible. And then there's surgery and more waiting and then there's the ICU and too many tubes and machines that beep ominously and families you don't know crying in the waiting room and then there's rehab and medication and still more tests.

And at some point there's the happily ever after. When the transplant is deemed a success and you're supposed to feel relief. Because the waiting is over – hard part, done and dusted.

But that's where *Tin Heart* starts, the story of seventeen-year-old Marlowe Jensen. It's one year after her heart transplant and medically things are fine. They're great.

Except Marlowe can't get her donor out of her head. Because I couldn't get the donor out of my head. Who was this person? What were they like? Who was their family? How do you say thanks to someone you never knew, could never know? Who do you become when you have this whole new part inside you, a part that lived a life you'll never know about? How do you begin to move on when you know there's someone left behind?

Tin Heart is about a girl piecing herself together again after receiving a second chance at life – and everything that entails. It explores why sometimes the 'happily ever after' is just as scary as what came before. It's about first love, new friends, controlling parents,



brilliantly eccentric brothers, mistakes (big mistakes), grief, gratitude and growing into yourself.

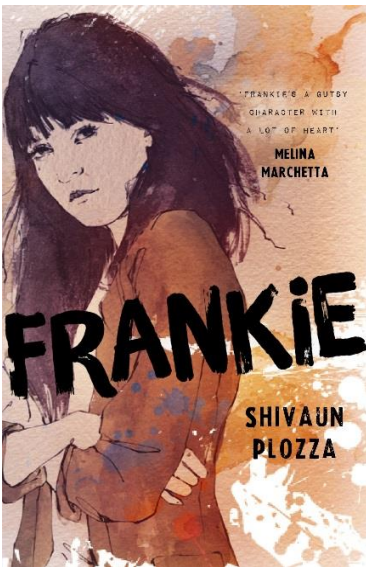
It's my second novel and I'm more than a little proud of it. Even though the idea of writing about something so close to my heart scared me senseless, I just couldn't not write this story. Marlowe got under my skin in a way other characters haven't – she's brave and flawed and awkward and stubborn and real and I hope she gets under your skin too.

WRITING STYLE

- One of the major themes of the novel is surviving and moving in from loss – death, divorce, organ transplant and loss of identity are all touched on. Write a piece from one of the character's perspectives detailing their experience and coping strategies and how it affected their personality and relationships.
- What is the novel's writing style? How effectively does this contribute to the novel's storytelling?
- How does the first-person point-of-view affect what is revealed to the reader and our feelings about the narrator? How might the story have been different if a third-person narration had been used?
- How might the story be different if it had been written from another character's point-of-view? Choose an incident in the story and write it from a different characters' perspective.
- How does the use of humour contribute to the storytelling?
- What are some other ways this novel could have ended and how would that have affected your experience of the story and feelings about the characters?
- How does the book's title relate to its content? What does it refer to?
- Discuss how the texts within the story are set against or support the major themes of *Tin Heart*.
- Is Marlow a purely sympathetic character? Discuss her character arc and development across the novel.
- Are there moral dilemmas in the book? Discuss how the various characters dealt with them and the fall out of their decisions.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

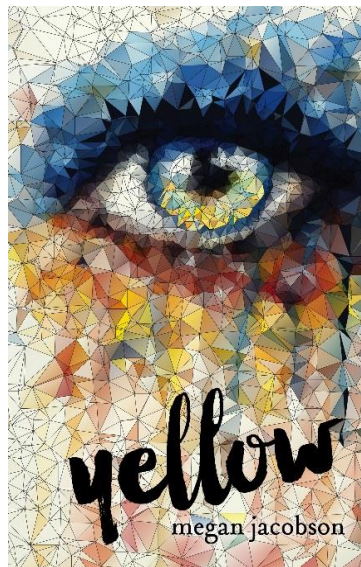


Frankie
by Shivaun Plozza

Frankie Vega is angry. Just ask the guy whose nose she broke. Or the cop investigating the burglary she witnessed, or her cheating ex-boyfriend or her aunt who's tired of giving second chances . . .

When a kid shows up claiming to be Frankie's half brother, it opens the door to a past she doesn't want to remember. And when that kid goes missing, the only person willing to help is a boy with stupidly blue eyes . . . and secrets of his own.

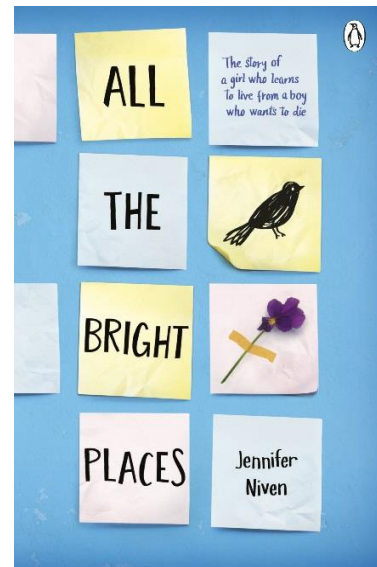
Frankie's search for the truth could change her life, or cost her everything.



Yellow
by Megan Jacobson

If fourteen-year-old Kirra is having a mid-life crisis now, then it doesn't bode well for her life expectancy. Her so-called friends bully her, whatever semblance of a mother she had has been drowned at the bottom of a gin bottle ever since her dad left them for another woman, and a teenage ghost is speaking to her through a broken phone booth.

Kirra and the ghost make a pact. She'll prove who murdered him almost twenty years ago if he makes her popular, gets her parents back together, and promises not to haunt her. But things aren't so simple, and Kirra realises that people can be haunted in more ways than one.



All the Bright Places
by Jennifer Niven

Theodore Finch wants to take his own life. *I'm broken, and no one can fix it.*

Violet Markey is devastated by her sister's death. *In that instant we went plowing through the guardrail, my words died too.*

They meet on the ledge of the school bell tower, and so their story begins.

It's only together they can be themselves . . .

I send a message to Violet: 'You are all the colors in one, at full brightness.'

You're so weird, Finch. But that's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to me.

But, as Violet's world grows, Finch's begins to shrink. How far will Violet go to save the boy she has come to love?

ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
<i>Tin Heart</i>	Shivaun Plozza	9780143786276	8+	\$19.99		
Frankie	Shivaun Plozza	9780143573166	8+	\$19.99		
Yellow	Megan Jacobson	9780143573333	8+	\$19.99		
All the Bright Places	Jennifer Niven	9780141357034	8+	\$17.99		
Our Chemical Hearts	Krystal Sutherland	9780143573906	8+	\$19.99		
The Piper's Son (YA crossover, 16+)	Melina Marchetta	9780143203421	10+	\$19.99		
The Sidekicks	Will Kostakis	9780143309031	8+	\$19.99		
TOTAL						

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