

# *ST MARY'S SCHOOL*

## **Recommended Reading**



### **LIBRARY AND ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

December 2011

The following offers some suggestions for reading for girls in year 9 and above. It covers titles both old and new, in no particular order, and deliberately excludes many of the “more popular” authors. All are available from the School Library.

*Happy Reading!*

## **I am Rembrandt's Daughter**

*Lynn Cullen*

Sadness and love permeate this deeply touching coming of age story based around the life of Rembrandt, the great Dutch painter. Caring for her difficult father teetering on the brink of madness at the end of his life, his daughter Cornelia pieces together the story of her childhood and discovers secrets and scandal. Her only happiness comes in chance meetings with Carel, the son of a wealthy shipping magnate with a passion for art.

## **Sarah Dessen**

*The Truth About Forever*

A kind-hearted and intuitive account of a young woman, Macy, dealing with the private issues in her life which concern her not-so-perfect boyfriend and the death of her father. When she meets a group of artistic friends through a job with a catering company she finally begins to understand how to live her life happily without suppressing her emotions. Macy's journey is one of self-discovery and learning to accept the past

## **Sepetys, Ruta**

*Between Shades of Gray*

One night in 1941 fifteen-year-old Lina, her mother and young brother are hauled from their home by Soviet guards, thrown into cattle cars and sent away. They are being deported to Siberia. An unimaginable and harrowing journey has begun. Lina doesn't know if she'll ever see her father or her friends again. But she refuses to give up hope. Lina hopes for her family, her country, her future and love - first love, with a boy she barely knows but does not want to lose. The story is based on first-hand family accounts and memories from survivors.

## **Annabel Pitcher**

*My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece*

Ten-year-old Jamie Matthews has moved to the Lake District with his Dad and teenage sister, Jasmine for a 'fresh start'. Five years ago his sister's twin, Rose, was blown up by a terrorist bomb. His parents are wrecked by their grief; Jasmine turns to piercing, pink hair and stops eating. The family falls apart. How can Jamie be a normal teenager when his dad is so angry all the time and Rose's ashes are still on the mantelpiece? Unflinching but not grim this is heart-warming story finds elements of hope and humour in a very sad situation.

**Eva Ibbotson***A Song for Summer*

When eighteen-year-old Ellen accepts the post of housekeeper at Hallendorf School of Music, Drama and Dance, she isn't expecting it to be quite so unusual. Deep in the beautiful Austrian countryside, she finds an eccentrically magical world occupied by wild children and even wilder teachers. Ellen is particularly intrigued by the enigmatic, and very handsome, Marek. Life seems idyllic, but outside Hitler's Reich is already casting its menacing shadow over Europe. Through her growing friendship with Marek, Ellen begins to encounter the dreadful reality of a world on the brink of war. And, by the time she has figured out Marek's true identity and his dangerous mission, she is completely in love with him - and equally sure that her love will never be requited.

**Jamila Gavin***Coram Boy*

*Coram Boy* relates the intertwining stories of Meshak and Alexander, two young men of different abilities and backgrounds who find their fate inextricably linked. Meshak, the mentally handicapped son of Otis Gardiner, helps his father dispose of unwanted children; generally infants whose mothers think that Mr. Gardiner will transport them to Coram Hospital, a newly-created facility to care for abandoned children. The story weaves together the harsh realities of 18th century life, of slavery, prejudice, tragedy and corruption, which reach out to both the rich and poor of society.

**Hilary Freeman***Lifted*

Robyn is a compulsive shoplifter - with a difference. Everything she steals, she donates to charity shops - then blogs about it. She doesn't need to steal, but shoplifting gives her a buzz like no other. Soon everybody's talking about the mystery blogger. At last Robyn has the fame she craves - but only one person knows who she really is, and he's sworn to secrecy ... Will Robyn risk revealing her true identity - and can she stop shoplifting before she gets caught?

**Michael Lawrence***A Crack in the Line*

Two years ago, Alaric's mother died in an accident, and his world fell apart. Then one winter's day, Alaric finds himself drawn into a parallel world - a world in which his mother didn't die. The only problem is that in the other world she has a daughter, a girl called Naia, who is living the life that should have been Alaric's...

## **Julia Jarman**

### *Peace Weavers*

Hilde is furious when her peace-campaigner mother sends her to live with her father on a US Air Force base. Refusing to go to school, she joins an archaeological dig ("not really her scene") where she meets Friedman ("definitely not her type"). He's the son of an American fighter pilot. War with Iraq looks inevitable, but Hilde feels that protesting is futile. That is, until she steals a gold brooch from the grave of a sixth-century woman – a peace weaver – and suddenly, her feelings begin to change.

## **K M Peyton**

### *Small Gains*

Set at the beginning of the nineteenth century *Small Gains* is the story of Clara, a true heroine who struggles to keep her head above water in a time of poverty and prejudice. Clara, a farmer's daughter has a special way with horses. Unfortunately, her destiny is deeply intertwined with that of Nat Grover, who is the cruel but incredibly attractive son of the local rich family. After he and Clara's sister fall in love, life begins to change and everything spirals out of control...

## **Rachel Anderson**

### *This Strange New Life*

This follows one family's experiences of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/M.E., an increasingly common problem. The narrative follows Johnnie, the youngest of the family, coming to terms with her two brothers' diagnoses with CFS and their deterioration from strong, healthy heroes to being bedridden, with 'maggots munching inside their heads'. Through its different perspectives, this is a powerful, moving, and ultimately hopeful story about growing up, being a family, life, the universe - and everything.

## **Anna Perera**

### *The Glass Collector*

In Cairo, Egypt, there is a city within a city: a city filled with garbage - literally. Fifteen-year-old Aaron makes his living sorting through the waste. When his family kicks him out, his only alternatives are to steal, beg, or take the most nightmarish garbage-collecting job of all. So...let's consider...Aaron's job? To collect broken glass. His life? Wasted. His hope? To find a future he can believe in...