

And in the Morning
Lenny Robinson

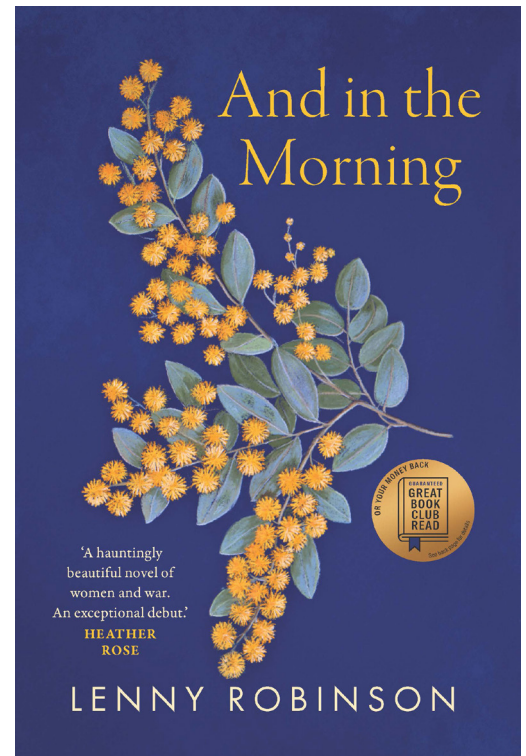
A prismatic gem of a debut novel that reflects the experiences of women across three wars and the damage done to the men they love – it is capacious and intimate in equal measure

In the winter of 1919, Lily and her three-year-old son, Ted, rush through the streets of Melbourne to welcome home Lily's husband, Bert, who has spent the last four years fighting with the Light Horse in the Middle East. Twenty-three years later, as the same city awaits a Japanese invasion, Frankie, a young servicewoman on a night's leave, meets an airman, Ed, at a dance. Almost three decades on, as Melbourne convulses with anti-war protests, single mother Fran prepares a funeral for her only son, a young conscript killed in Vietnam.

And in the Morning is a novel about war and the ways in which its tragedies, both great and small, transform the intimate lives of the mothers, wives and lovers who must live with its consequences.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Lenny Robinson has worked as a tutor, university lecturer, freelance writer and teacher. Her short stories and non-fiction have appeared in *Overland*, *Westerly*, *Island* and *The Best Australian Essays*. She is the author of *This Moral Pandemonium* (2009), a short biography of notorious nineteenth-century figure Madame Brussels, and several philosophy textbooks. Lenny lives with her partner and children in Naarm, Victoria.

**BOOK DETAILS**

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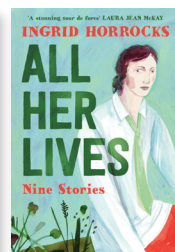
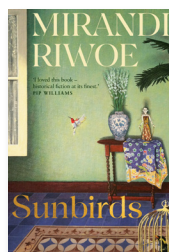
'A hauntingly beautiful novel of women and war. An exceptional debut.'

Heather Rose

'Lenny Robinson writes like a dream and understands the power of space: between a breath, a sentence, a war, and most painfully and brutally of all, between the men who go to fight overseas and the women who are left to pick up the pieces back home. Delicate, lyrical, *And in the Morning* is a nuanced and unexpected novel.'

Sophie Cunningham

FURTHER
READING



QUESTIONS OVER PAGE

Questions

1. The title, *And in the Morning*, is taken from the fourth stanza of Laurence Binyon's poem 'For the Fallen.' This fourth stanza is known in Australia as the 'Ode of Remembrance' and recognisable from ANZAC Day commemorative services. Why might the author have chosen this title? How does the novel invite us to reconsider the intended original meaning of the words from the poem?
2. Consider the accounts of war and its aftermath that you are familiar with. Do these accounts express the experiences of men or women? What can we learn about the experiences of women by considering the experiences of men?
3. How is the internal conflict of each of the main female characters informed by memory, and how does memory shape identity in the novel?
4. Although the novel largely focuses on the relationships between women and men, relationships between women are also important. Which of the relationships between women do you find most interesting and why? What do you think the novel has to say about the importance of such relationships in women's lives?
5. In what ways are the decisions that Lil, Frankie and Fran make shaped by their historical context? In what ways does their historical context constrain both their actions and their thinking? How – if at all – do they question, or push back against, their historical context?
6. Motherhood is a central theme of the novel. In what ways does the novel's structure work to expand on, and add dimension to, the novel's depiction of motherhood?
7. Lil, Frankie and Fran all experience the effects of war and yet war itself is something beyond their experience. How does this limitation affect them?

Questions

8. For many of the characters, the insufficiency of language to express meaning and feeling is an obstacle to connection. Where in the novel is this most evident and how does it act as a barrier between characters, either in their understanding of others or in their understanding of themselves?
9. At what points, when reading the novel, do the connections between characters become apparent? What is the effect of these gradual revelations and why might the author have made this choice?
10. Does the novel end on a positive note? Why or why not?