

‘Elegiac, sexy and deeply felt.’ Jennifer Down

When loyalty becomes a burden, how do you learn to let go? *Frogsong* is a tender and delicate tale of love and addiction from one of Australia’s brightest literary talents and winner of the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for her debut book.

Caro and Danny grew up side by side at the waterhole. Bound by love, loss and a promise Caro made to Danny’s mother, their lives are entwined. But as Danny spirals into addiction and self-destruction, Caro is caught between loyalty and the need to save herself

She becomes haunted by memories, by the stories she told herself of the life they’d have, and by the waterhole that shaped them both. From southern Tasmania to Lisbon’s winding streets, she searches for escape from lost dreams, until a return home forces her to confront what it means to let go.

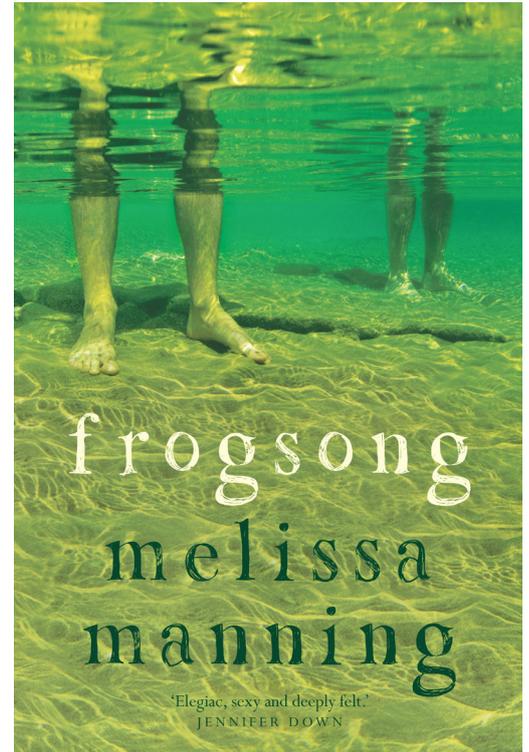
Frogsong is a lyrical and devastating story of love, addiction and the ghosts that shadow us.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melissa Manning is an Australian writer. Her debut interlinked story collection, *Smokehouse*, won the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for Fiction (2022), and was shortlisted for the USQ Steele Rudd Award for a Short Story Collection. Her short fiction and narrative non-fiction has been awarded and published in literary journals and anthologies, including

Overland, Meanjin, Southerly, The Big Issue, Award Winning Australian Writing, To Carry Her Home (UK) and *Best Small Fictions* (USA).



BOOK DETAILS

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‘Frogsong is about a girl’s existential unwinding and about the way she threads herself back together by following moments of presence and tiny joy. Somehow Manning makes it both grounded and realist, yet at the same time, lyrical and otherworldly. It’s a wise and compassionate novel.’

Toni Jordan

‘Taut and tender, *Frogsong* captures first love, deep grief and the ache of leaving the people and places that once anchored you. Melissa Manning is a superb writer and her shift from short form to the novel is both seamless and a gift to us all.’

Kate Mildenhall

FURTHER
READING



QUESTIONS OVER PAGE

Questions

1. *Frogsong* begins and ends with water. What do you think water symbolises in Caro's story?
2. How much does the promise Caro made to Diane influence the choices Caro makes later in her life? Do you ever feel frustrated by Caro's decisions?
3. Which relationships do you think are most pivotal in Caro's life? Why?
4. What do you think of the choices Danny makes? Do you have sympathy for him?
5. How does the physical setting of the waterhole and the mapping of frog lifecycles link to the transformation of Caro's own life?
6. How do Caro's relationships with her two 'mothers' (Ines and Diane) differ? Do these relationships change over the course of the novel?
7. Caro and Danny grow up in a rural Tasmanian town: how does this setting impact them and their relationship?
8. What does Caro and Danny's journey teach us about 'first love' and how this evolves with the transition from childhood to adult life?
9. *Frogsong* is told in a series of short scenes capturing glimpses of – and vignettes from – Caro's life. Do you think this device works to convey that the book covers quite a few years of the main characters' lives?
10. How does Caro's time in Portugal affect her sense of self? Is her decision to return to Tasmania a good one?