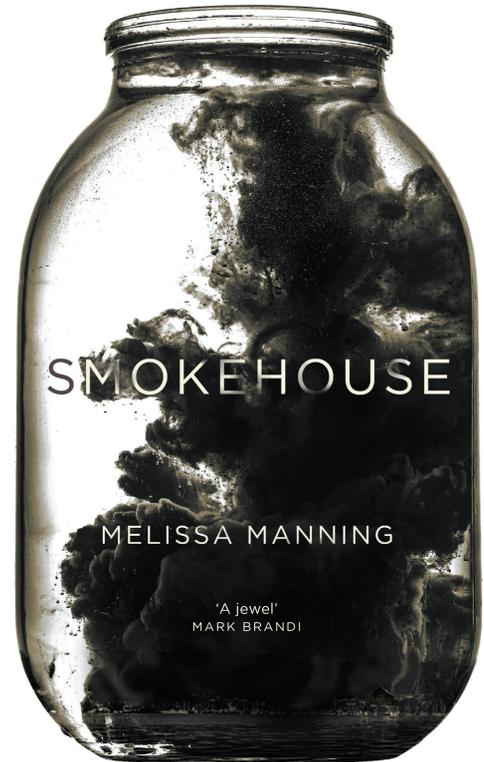


**An accomplished story collection that is deeply rooted in the Tasmanian landscape and those moments in people's lives when everything changes.**

Set in southern Tasmania, the linked stories in *Smokehouse* bring into focus a small community and capture those moments when life turns and one person becomes another. As we get to know these characters – a mother whose fresh start leads to a fractured future, a stonemason seeking connection, a woman grieving her adopted mother, a couple torn apart by their daughter's drug addiction – we learn how their lives intersect, in various ways, across time and place.

With insight and empathy, Melissa Manning interrogates how the people we meet and the places we live shape who we become.



### BOOK DETAILS

C-format paperback | 978 0 7022 6302 6  
\$29.99

## Questions

1. The stories in *Smokehouse* reveal the turning points in life, both cataclysmic and minor, when change starts to happen. Choose two stories and identify the moments when things begin to shift in the protagonist's life.
2. What is revealed about the fragility of plans, and the balance between fate and autonomy, in *Smokehouse*? Consider how these themes play out for Rob and Lyn in 'Chainsaw', for Gurj in 'Faal', and for the protagonist in 'Nao'.
3. Place is integral to each of the stories. How does the landscape impact on the way the characters inhabit their lives and the things they value? Perhaps consider this question in relation to Harry in 'Boy' and Walde in 'Stone'.
4. In 'Nao' and 'Bruny', each protagonist wonders who she might have been if she had lived somewhere else. Do you understand that feeling and does it apply in your own life?
5. Each of the stories centres on love and desire, and on the events that can bring those undone or embellish them. Which is your favourite love story in the book, and why?
6. In what ways did 'Boy' make you reflect on the complexities of custody battles?

Questions continued

7. What does the story 'Leaven' have to say about travel allowing you to 'come home' to somewhere you've never been before?
8. In 'Stone', Walde takes pride in his work and finds solace in his 'girls'. What does his story say about the importance of connection to animals and the natural world, and the need for human relationships?
9. The story 'Chainsaw' focuses on the many ways that parents can 'lose' their children. Do you think relationships can survive such losses?
10. Did you like that the novella 'Smokehouse' was split into two so that it bookends this collection? Or would you rather have read 'Part Two' immediately after 'Part One' (or perhaps you did)? Why do you think the author decided to separate the parts?
11. Ultimately all of the stories in *Smokehouse* intersect in some way. How did this shape your understanding of the characters, and your overall response to the book?
12. Did you have a favourite story in the book? Why?

'Bookended by a captivating love story, this collection is as raw and true as the rugged Tasmanian coast it traverses.'

Carrie Tiffany

'These quietly powerful stories are rich with emotional intensity, taut scenes and an earthy, tangible sense of place. Manning writes about relationships with great insight and feeling ... Her talent hums on the page.'

Robbie Arnott

'Manning finds beauty in our frailties – *Smokehouse* is a jewel.'

Mark Brandi

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Melissa Manning is a Melbourne-based writer and lawyer. She grew up in southern Tasmania and has lived and worked in London and Hungary. Her writing has been recognised in awards and published widely, including in *The Best Small Fictions* (US), *To Carry Her Home* (UK), *Award Winning Australian Writing* and *Overland*. *Smokehouse* is Melissa's debut collection.



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