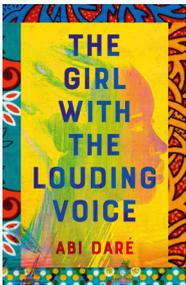


# THE DESMOND ELLIOTT PRIZE 2020 SHORTLIST

## The right recommendations for readers, right now

The Desmond Elliott Prize is unique in supporting early-career novelists and celebrating exceptional first novels that speak to our times. In the current climate, this mission is more important than ever.

That's why we're sharing succinct selling points for each short-listed book, written with our local booksellers The Book Hive in Norwich. Our aim? To help busy bookshops at a difficult time, and help brave writers reach the readers they deserve.



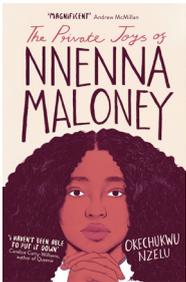
### **THE GIRL WITH THE LOUDING VOICE** by Abi Daré (Sceptre)

Available from Gardners at 40% discount

**What is it?** By age fourteen, Nigerian Adunni is a commodity, a wife, a servant. But an irrepressible curiosity leads to an impossible plan: escape, gain an education, and find a way to speak out – for her and for others.

**Why recommend this, now?** A poignant reminder of issues beyond our current crisis, this inspiring story of resilience – of finding a voice and believing in joy, no matter what – is both a call-to-arms, and a tonic, for our times.

**For fans of...** Malala Yousafzai, Imbolo Mbue and Rosamund Lupton, who was 'utterly captivated by Adunni and her mesmerising louding voice'.



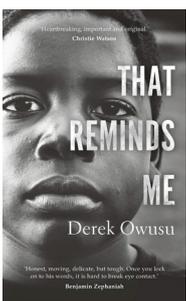
### **THE PRIVATE JOYS OF NNENNA MALONEY** by Okechukwu Nzele (Dialogue Books)

Available from Gardners at 40% discount

**What is it?** A comic novel about a half-Nigerian teenager approaching womanhood, whose longing to connect with her Igbo-Nigerian culture puts a strain on relations with her mother.

**Why recommend this, now?** Identity, family, class... Lockdown brought these themes to the fore. And, with schools closed and youth freedom curtailed, we can all probably relate to intimate relationships being put in the spotlight!

**For fans of...** Joe Dunthorne, Zadie Smith, and Bernardine Evaristo, who says it has a 'witty confidence rarely seen in debut fiction'.



### **THAT REMINDS ME** by Derek Owusu (#MerkyBooks)

Available from Gardners at 45% discount

**What is it?** A slim chronicle of a young man's descent from childhood to mental collapse and recovery – told in fragmentary sections that channel the spirit of Anansi, trickster of west African folklore.

**Why recommend this, now?** A health and economic crisis makes us sharply aware of mental health, and this book boldly goes where we need it to: exploring self-expression, addiction, and self-hood in adversity.

**For fans of...** Guy Gunaratne, Eimear McBride, and Benjamin Zephaniah, who called it 'a beautiful meditation on childhood, coming of age, the now, and the media'.

## WIN £500 FOR YOUR BOOKSHOP!

- Recommend one or more books from our shortlist on your bookshop Instagram, Twitter or Facebook
- Recommendations can take any form – blog posts, photos, videos etc – flex your independent spirit
- Use the hashtag #DEP20, tag in @writerscentre on Twitter and Instagram or 'National Centre for Writing' on Facebook, and we'll pick our favourite
- We'll announce the winner on the National Centre for Writing Twitter on Tuesday 28 June

For the first time this year, the Desmond Elliott Prize is being run by the National Centre for Writing as the flagship in its Early Career Awards portfolio. Along with a £10,000 prize, the winning writer will receive a package of long-term, sustainable support including residency opportunities, mentoring and industry insight.

For more information please visit [nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/desmond-elliott-prize/](https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/desmond-elliott-prize/)