

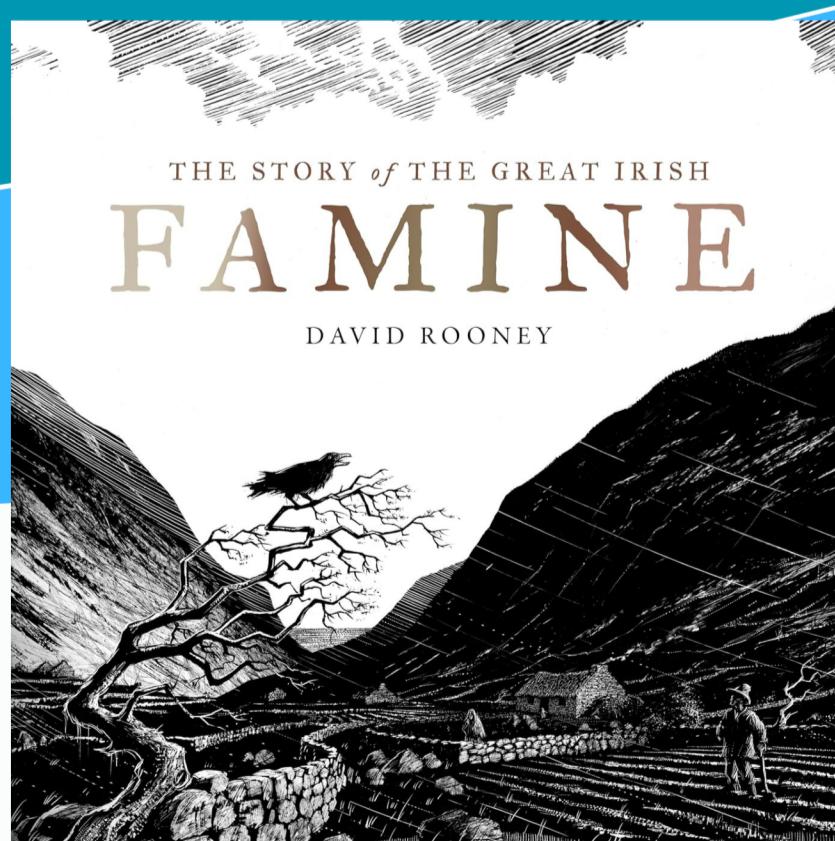
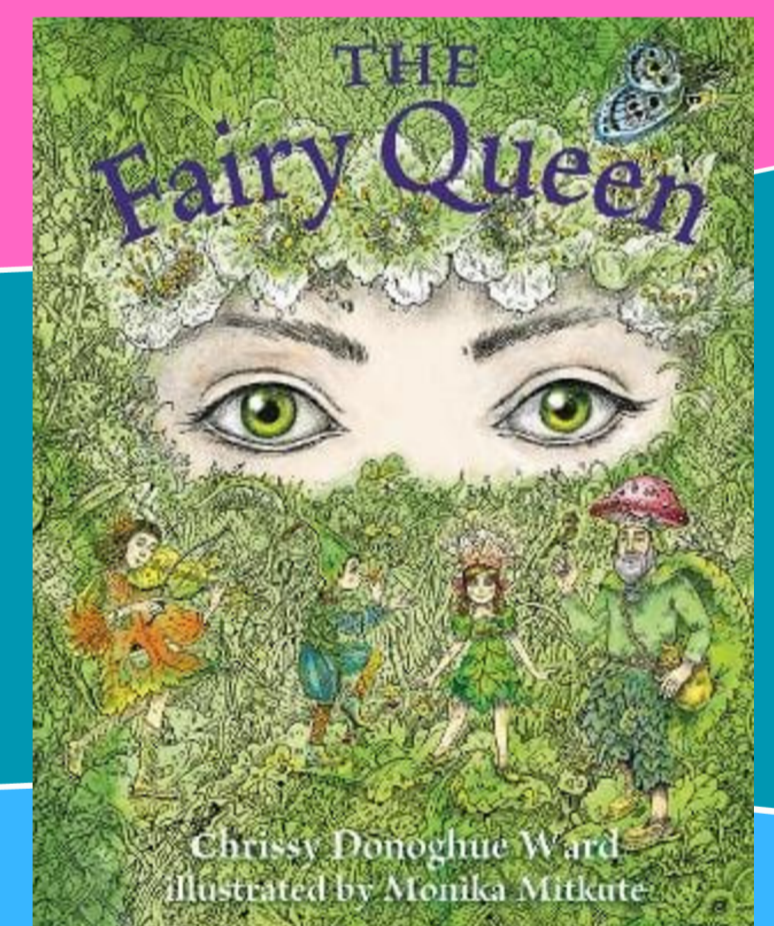
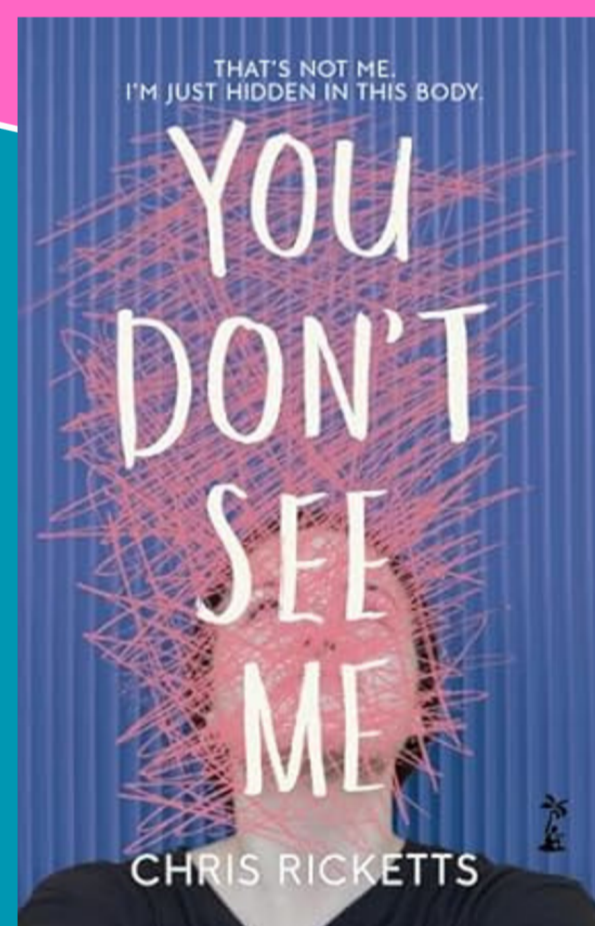
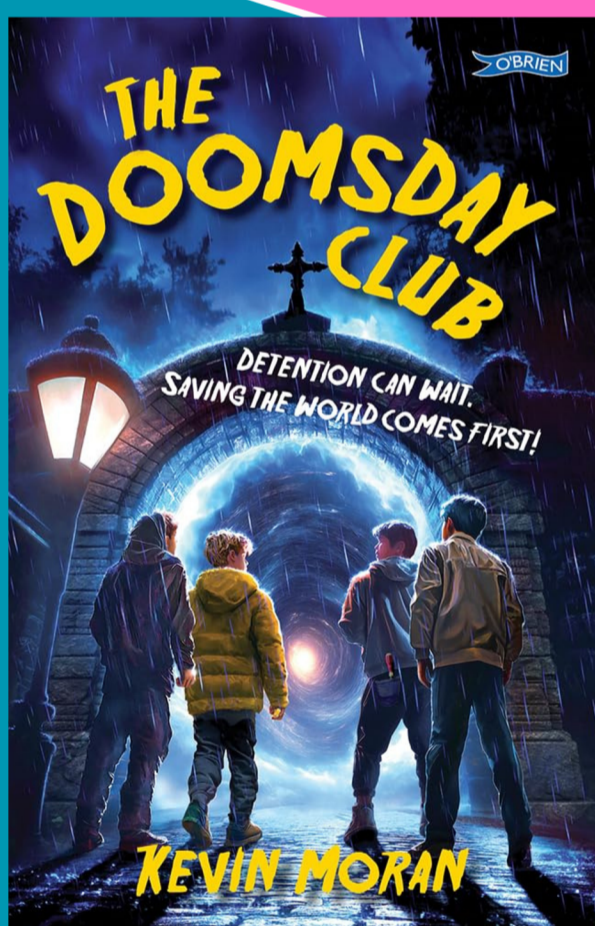
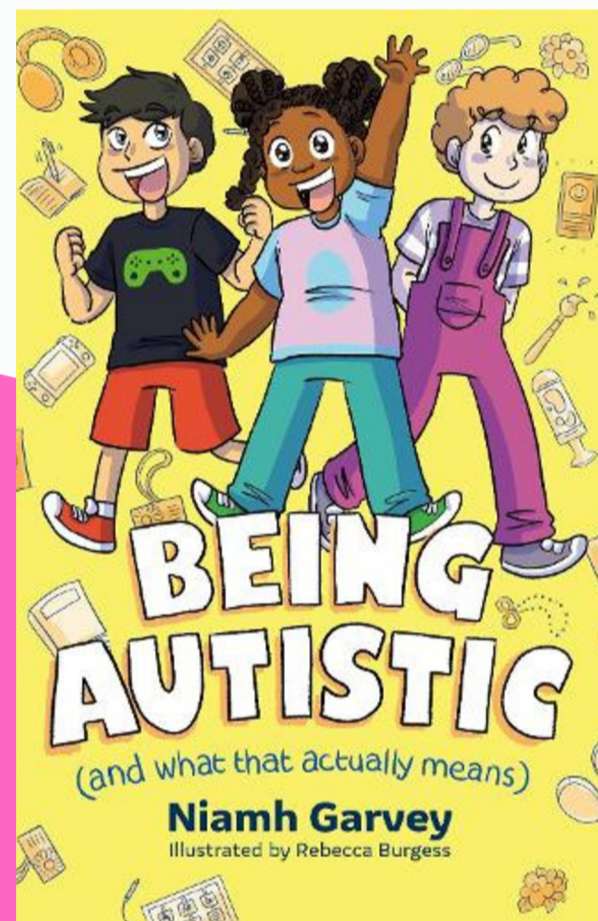
# GRA

LAI School Libraries Group

## Great Reads Award

A book award for Irish debut Children's/YA authors,  
shortlisted by school librarians,  
judged by students  
in Primary and Secondary Schools.

## Shortlisted Books 2025



Schools: Register for a chance to win a free pack of books at <https://schoolibrariesireland.com/great-reads-award/>

Read as many as you like  
and vote online for your favourite.

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## Braids Take a Day by Zainab Boladale

Fiction **13+**

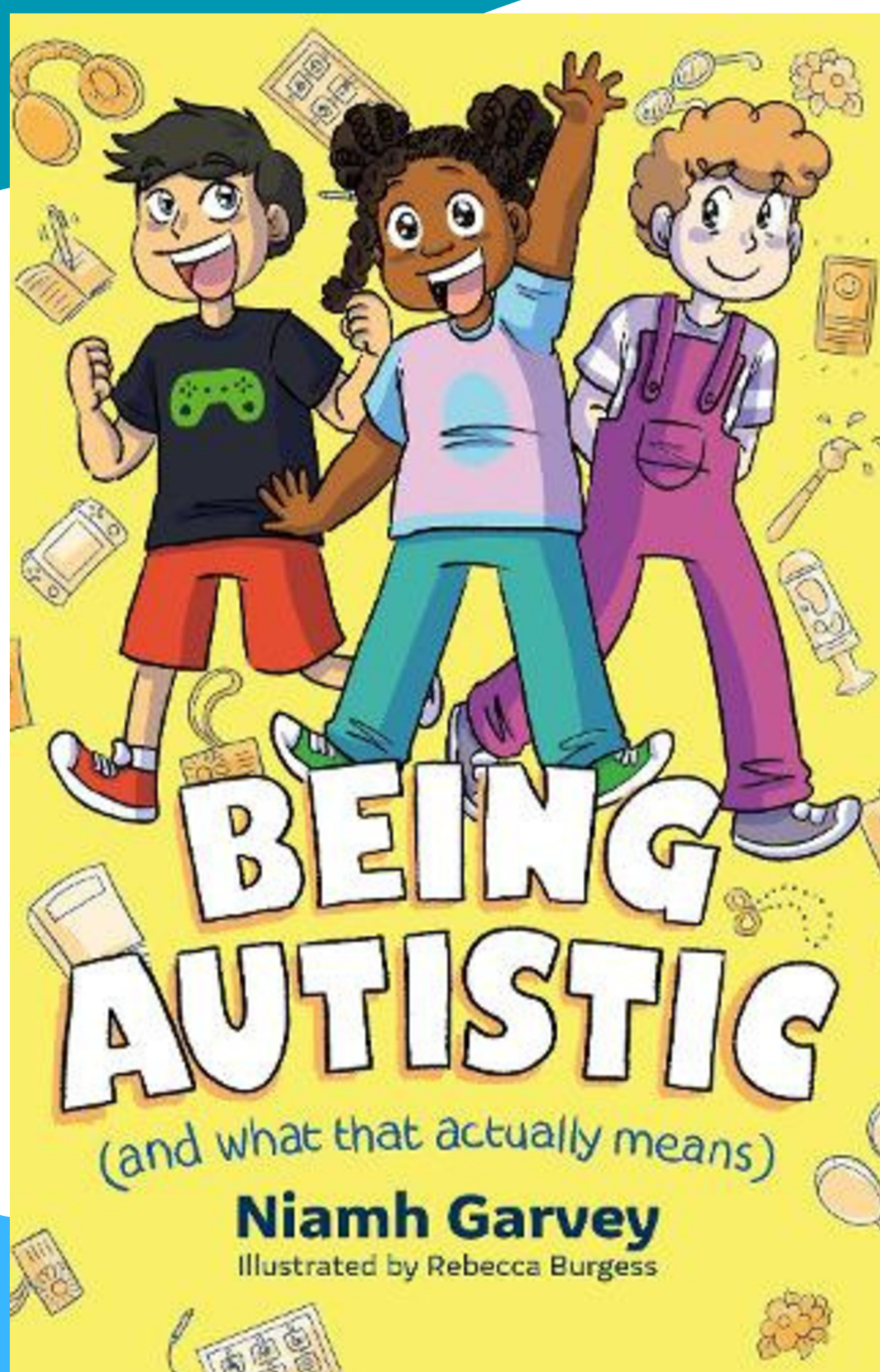
Uncovering secrets is like undoing braids, one at a time...

Abidemi can't wait for summer, her last one at home in Ennistymon before she heads off to college. She's ready to say goodbye to school, spend some time learning new braids and hairstyles – and see where things go with her friend Jack.

But when she meets an intriguing woman from Nigeria, secrets start to unravel. Suddenly Abi's life and family are changing and she needs to think hard about who she wants to be ...

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## Being Autistic

by Niamh Garvey

Illustrated by Rebecca Burgess

**Non-fiction 6+**

You're autistic - but what does that really mean?

Welcome to the ultimate guide to understanding who you are and what it means to be autistic!

In this fully illustrated graphic guide to what it means to be autistic and discover the differences between sensory seekers and avoiders, why you might find some things super easy and other things extra challenging and even begin to understand and navigate all of your big (and small) feelings.

Best of all, learn what makes you totally unique. You might just come away with some cool facts to share with your friends and family!

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## MEET THE BOOKS



### Don't Trust Fish by Neil Sharpson & Dan Santat



**Fiction** All ages

Have you ever noticed that fish spend all of their time under water? What are they plotting down there? And did you know that a group of fish is called a 'school'? Exactly what are they learning in these 'schools'? We must find answers. But one thing's for sure.

Whatever you do:  
Don't. Trust. Fish.

Laugh along as you learn lots of fishy facts from a very suspicious narrator, who believes that there's something more than a bit fishy about fish... Prepare to laugh, learn, and maybe even look at your pet goldfish a little differently.

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## Fia and the Last Snow Deer

by Eilish Fisher

Illustrated by Dermot Flynn

Fiction 10+

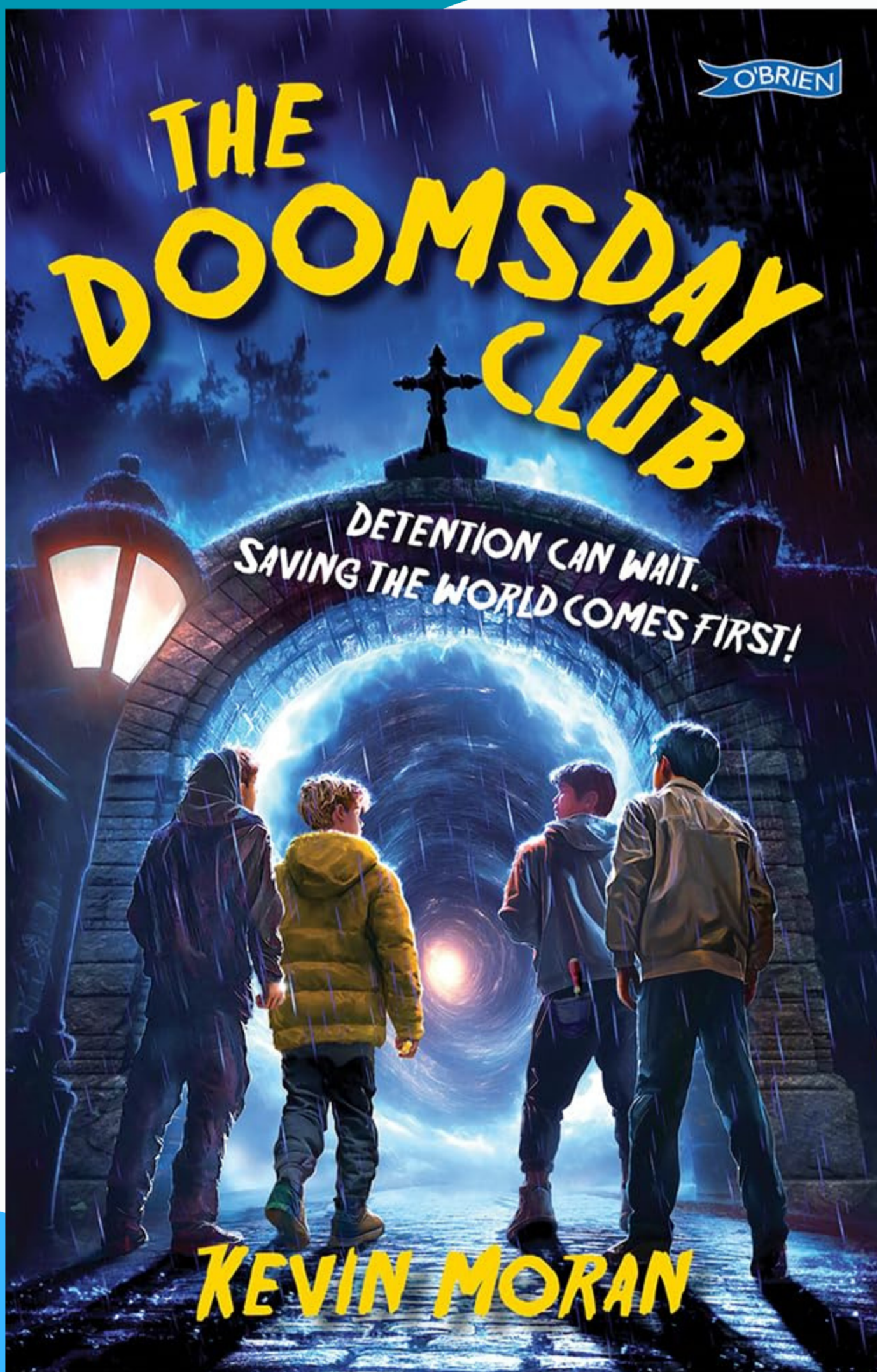
Fia and her snow deer Solas have always had a powerful and unbreakable connection. But as Fia's village face a seemingly eternal winter, they turn their sights to Solas and an ancient prophecy that promises the return of sunlight and life, if the ultimate sacrifice is made . . .

Refusing to allow the worst to happen, Fia and her cousin Mish run from the village with Solas, seeking out the Deer Mother - the mythical being who wakes the sun at the winter solstice and who might be their only hope to save Solas and their village.

A truly timeless verse novel set in snowy pre-historic Ireland, about hope, kindness and the power of friendship

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## The Doomsday Club by Kevin Moran

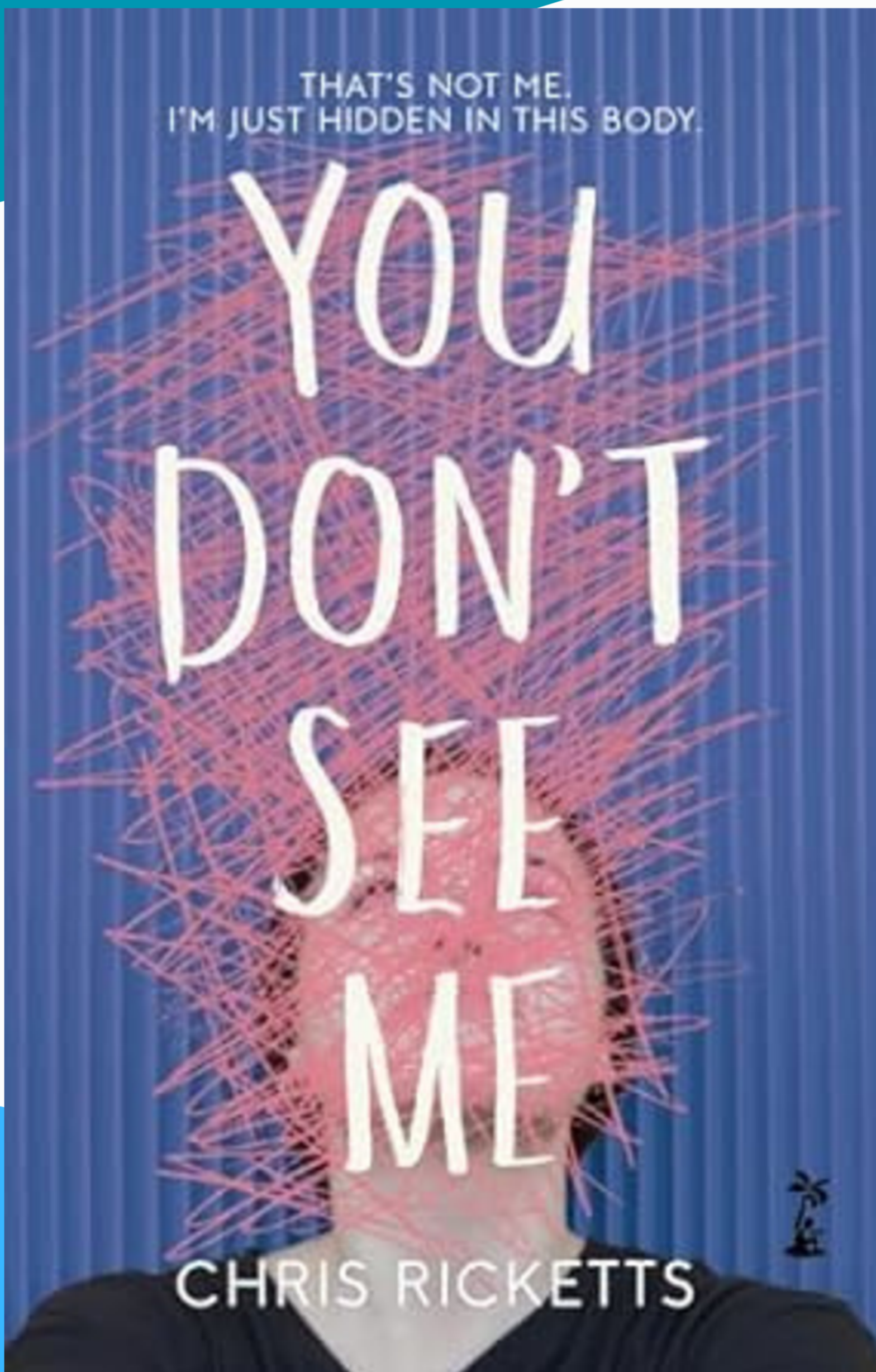
Fiction **10+**

Detention can wait. Saving the world comes first!

Jack and Conan's friendship is officially dead. Stuck in detention with Yash and Jerry after an all-out brawl, it's a terrible start to sixth class. And that's before they witness a monstrous beast step out of a portal outside their school. When it wanders into the crumbling mansion across the road, the boys follow. They have to investigate, right?

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## You Don't See Me by Chris Ricketts

**Fiction** **Young Adult**

That's not me. I'm just hidden in this body. Ros has finally found Eddy, the girlfriend they've always wanted. But Ros can't tell her the truth: that Ros is trans, and wants to live in a male body.

After a party Ros's classmates "discover" they are a lesbian – but the inaccurate label is hurtful.

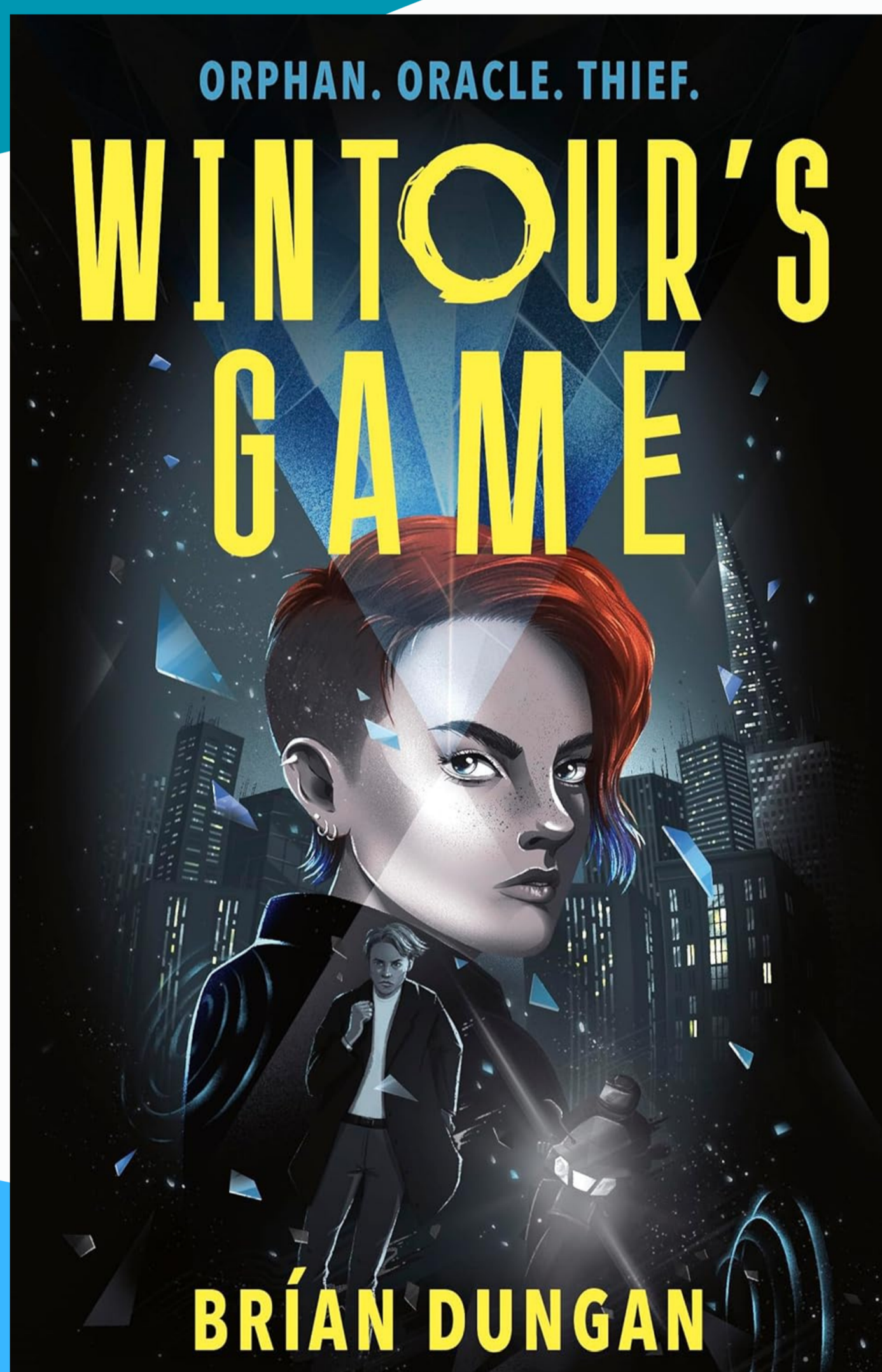
Ros knows only one thing will make them happy. But telling the world a truth you've hidden all your life is scary. Maybe it would be easier to live a lie? The homophobic comments are already bad enough.

And if the truth comes out – what is Ros's next move? And what will happen when Eddy finds out?

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## Wintour's Game by Brían Dungan

Fiction 10+

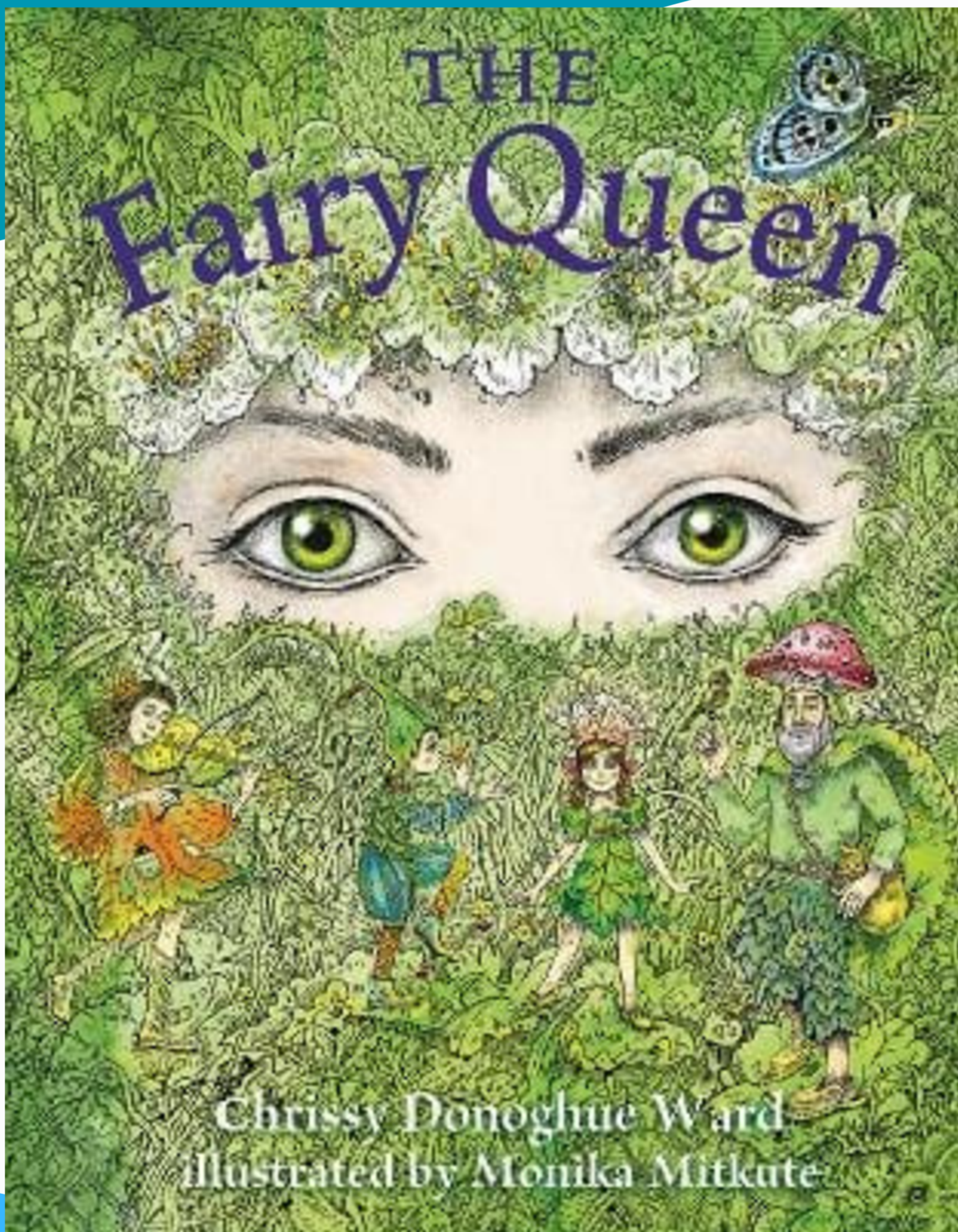


Alex Wintour: orphan, teenager, oracle, thief. Alex has only got this far in life by living off her wits. Well, that and an ability to see glimpses of the future - a useful talent when you need to stay one step ahead of the law. Then a robbery goes wrong, and her path is set on a collision course with the enigmatic teen millionaire Colman Reece. Like Alex, Cole is a Temporal - someone who can manipulate time - and he needs Alex's help for a heist that only she can pull off. But with the clock ticking, the sinister Temple on their tail and the hunt for a mysterious weapon underway, Alex soon learns that even being able to see the future doesn't always give you the winning hand.



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## MEET THE BOOKS



## The Fairy Queen

by Chrissy Donoghue Ward  
Illustrated by Monika Mitkute

**Fiction 6+**

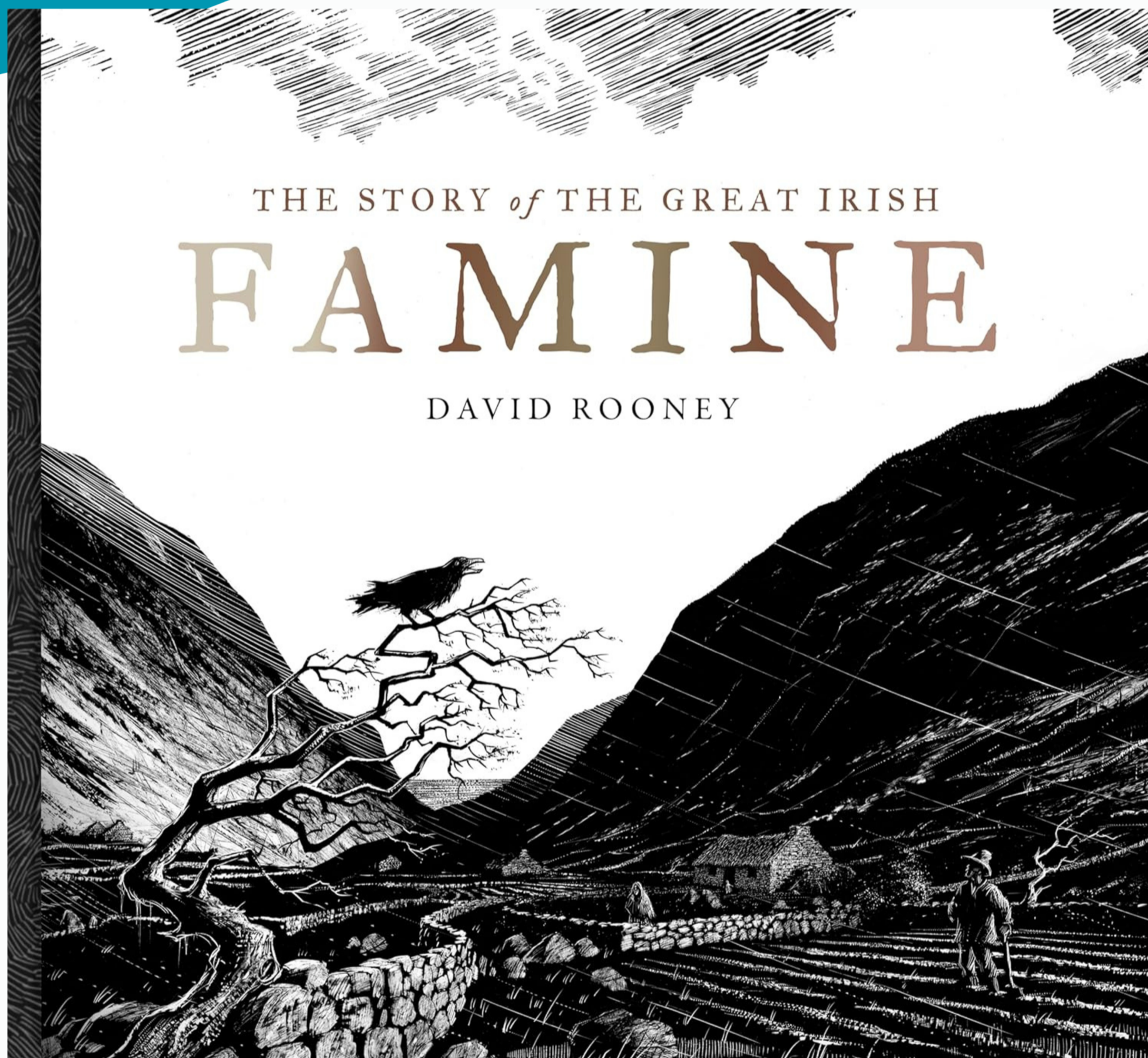
A tale rooted in the oral tradition of the Irish Traveller community.

The Travellers lived happily, travelling from place to place, until one day the bad king and queen arrived in Ireland.

The king of the Travellers, and his grandchildren run away to the woods. There they meet the lovely fairy queen, who turns all the Travellers into leprechauns so they can hide from the bad queen's soldiers.

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## MEET THE BOOKS



## The Story of the Great Irish Famine by David Rooney

**Non-Fiction 10+**  
**Picture book**

The Great Irish Famine is a story that has been told for several generations and is the single most pivotal experience in modern Irish history. Now, acclaimed Irish illustrator David Rooney, through the medium of scraperboard, scratches away at the detail of our shared history line by line, uncovering the collective memory that lies beneath us all.

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## GUIDELINES FOR READERS

### Things to keep in mind while reading the books:

- Did you enjoy the illustrations?
- What were the characters like?
- Did you like the story?
- What rating would you give the book out of 5?
- Was it easy to read?
- Who was the book aimed at?
- Who do you think would enjoy it?

### Voting is easy

Go to the LAI School Libraries Group website at  
<https://schoollibrariesireland.com/great-reads-award>  
or  
Scan this QR Code to vote for your favourites



Thank you for taking part!  
You are supporting debut Irish  
authors and illustrators,  
and helping to promote reading.

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JCSP  
Demonstration  
Library  
Project





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## GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

### Join the Great Reads Award:

1. Get your books from your school library, public library, or local booksellers.\*
2. Read the books! Read the books on your own, try out some paired reading, enjoy the books in small groups or as a class! It's up to you :)
3. Judge the books - check out the website for guidelines.
4. Get voting!

Go to the LAI School Libraries Group website at  
<https://schoolibrariesireland.com/great-reads-award>  
or  
Scan this QR Code to vote for your favourites



**\*Schools: Don't forget to register online for  
a chance to win a free pack of books!**

Thank you for taking part!  
You are supporting debut Irish  
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and helping to promote reading.

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