

Mistress OF ROME

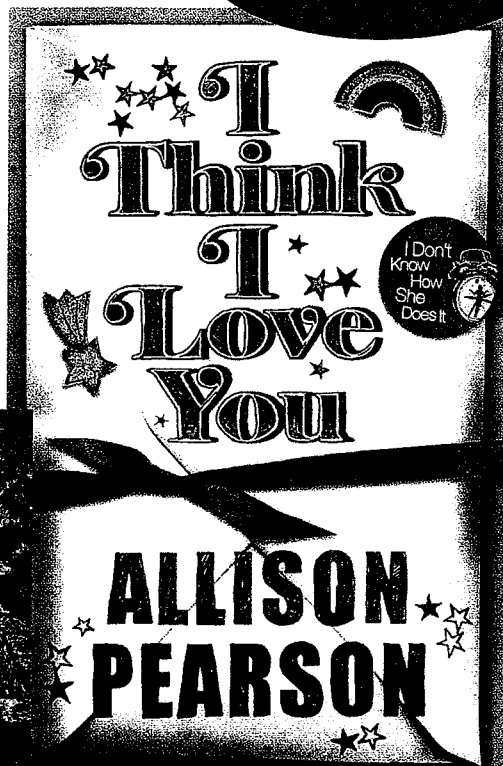
KATE QUINN

In the most brutal empire in history, a slave girl will rise to the heart of power...



THE POISON TREE

ERIN KELLY



I Think I Love You

by Allison Pearson (£12.99*, Chatto & Windus)

A dark romcom that centres around a tricky mother and daughter relationship, as well as the angst and joy of unrequited love



Inspired by the author's mad teenage crush on singer David Cassidy in the 1970s and her 13-year-old daughter's own current infatuation with *Twilight* actor Robert Pattinson, Pearson's second novel is a salient reminder that love hurts, whatever your age. Cello-playing Welsh schoolgirl Petra has an amazing encyclopaedic knowledge of Cassidy, but is far less confident negotiating her friendships, which are a minefield of bitchy rivalries. Twenty years on, life is just as problematic when Petra's turbulent marriage to a philandering musician finally breaks down, and she and her teenage daughter, Molly, herself a Leonardo DiCaprio fan, are left to pick up the pieces.

*Visit marieclaire.co.uk/goodbookclub to find out how to buy this book for just £5.79 at Amazon.co.uk, saving 60 per cent on the RRP (code CKV86K3E) {continued}

Mistress of Rome

by Kate Quinn (£6.99, Headline Review)

A riveting tale of gladiatorial Rome and two lovers caught up in the deadly machinations of a corrupt emperor

In this cinematic-style, epic love story, the leads are an impassioned gladiator and a beautiful Jewish slave girl. Orphan Thea has learned to survive by her good looks, wits and constant reinvention. Gladiator Arius is disaffected, dangerous and deadly when in combat within the Colosseum but, nonetheless, he soon falls passionately in love with his female slave. Quinn's evocation of Rome is glamorous and brutal, a heady mix of intrigue and combat, with added decadence and depravity when the slave girl is suddenly bought by the brutal Emperor. Separated, the lovers are determined to be reunited whatever the cost. An exhilarating read.

The Poison Tree

by Erin Kelly (£12.99, Hodder & Stoughton)

A psychological thriller about a dark secret between siblings that comes to light with dramatic consequences

A shadowy, impeccably told tale of passion, friendship and murder at the dilapidated north-London home of handsome, complicated Rex, his actress sister Biba, and a disparate crew of hangers-on. Serious, straight-A student Karen enters the riotous fray and falls under the spell of the free-spirited Biba and in love with Rex. As the long summer swelters, the siblings' fractured and troubled family history is slowly revealed, setting in motion a cataclysmic event that blows apart their lives. The repercussions reverberate down through the years, threatening to overwhelm Karen's fragile peace, as long-held secrets refuse to stay hidden.