

by Dominic Stevenson

The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart

The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart is the debut novel from Australian writer Holly Ringland. It's won awards worldwide, spent many weeks in the bestseller lists, and it's currently being adapted into a television series.

The novel follows the journey of Alice Hart, and it begins with Alice as a child seeking solace with her Mum in their garden as they both try to avoid Alice's abusive father, Clem Hart.

When the ultimate tragedy strikes, and Alice believes that she has left alone in the world, her Grandmother, Clem's mother, travels from across the country to take her to Thornfield – the flower farm which has been passed from mother to daughter for generations.

At the farm, Alice is introduced to the flowers of Thornfield – a collection of women who have made their way to the farm to work after suffering misfortune in life.

Collectively they support Alice in recovering from her childhood trauma.

As Alice grows, her Grandmother June begins to teach her the language of flowers of how they've guided women through their family. Even as Alice gets older and leaves the farm for the Outback, her life continues to be entwined with flowers.

Ringland has created something truly spectacular with this book. It's a coming of age story with bite, passion, sadness, and

as much richness as the earth that helps the flowers bloom.

She has created a world that is harsh, but somehow so inhabitable and you find yourself wanting to make the trip to Thornfield yourself. Each page of this book is sprinkled with a little magic and that compensates for the heartbreak that appears throughout.

It is an honest book, one that doesn't flinch when it comes to exploring what it means to be a person, to be a woman. On top of all this, Ringland also provides a lot laughs and heartwarming moments that will ensure that as you reach the final pages, you're longing for even more.

Holly Ringland is a name that is already gracing bookshelves around the world, and I hope she makes her way onto yours too. Her writing is stunning, her story lifts you up, and once you've learnt about the language of

flowers your walks in the park will never be the same again.

The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart is available for all bookshops, but if you can, make a beeline for your local bookshop to buy it – it's what Alice would want.

