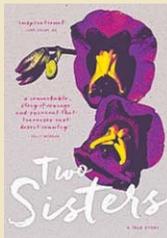




## BOOKED IN

REVIEWS ROBYN DOUGLASS,  
NICK HOPTON, SAMELA HARRIS



### MEMOIR

**Two Sisters**  
Ngarta Jinny Bent,  
Jukuna Mona  
Chuguna, Pat Lowe,  
Eirlys Richards,  
Magabala Books,  
\$24.99

In the 1950s and '60s, white Australia was working on its recovery after WWII. In the remote northwest, life was going on as it had for centuries. Two stories here are translations of Ngarta and Jukuna's accounts, recorded before the women died, and the Walmajarri versions are in the book. They are an amazing glimpse into an utterly different way of life. The women were nomads before they settled at stations. They were masters of their environment; knew how to get water in the desert, who had been walking nearby and when family was close. What they ate, who they met, how they celebrated and grieved: their stories are relics in a way of life under increasing pressure.

**Verdict: priceless**



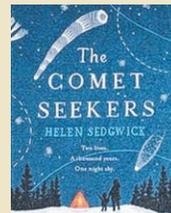
### BIOGRAPHY

**Grant & I**  
Robert Forster  
Hamish Hamilton/  
Penguin, \$35

Formed in Brisbane in 1977 by uni students Robert Forster and Grant McLennan, The Go-Betweens were an indie band that never had mainstream chart success, but were championed by UK music mags and loved worldwide. The group broke up in 1989, reformed, then ceased again in 2006 upon the death of McLennan from a heart attack at 48. Forster has delivered an engrossing insight into his friendship with his introverted, singer-songwriter mate while documenting the highs and lows of The Go-Betweens' battles with record labels. The book is also a wonderful insight into the punk, post-punk and '90s music scenes, detailing the band's

brushes with the likes of REM.

**Verdict: interesting**



### FICTION

**The Comet Seekers**  
Helen Sedgwick  
Harvill Secker, \$32.99

Of all astronomical phenomena, comets evoke the greatest sense of mystery. In a remarkable debut, Sedgwick explores their role in science and superstition, and brings together the destinies of Roisin, an Irish country girl with a scientist's fascination for comets, and Francois, a Frenchman raised among matriarchs believing comets have a mystical connection with the dead. She traces their childhoods with an exquisite eye for detail that brings a tear to the eye. In icy Antarctic wastes, the characters find in each other a common ground. Sedgwick's intermingling of science and the otherworld finds substance in the scientific detail which underscores the narrative; it's not surprising to discover she has a PhD in physics.

**Verdict: other worldly**