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Opening Extract from...

Weird Things Customers Say in Bookshops

Written by Jen Campbell

Published by Constable

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WEIRD THINGS CUSTOMERS SAY IN BOOKSHOPS

Jen Campbell

Do you have any books
by Jane Eyre?

?

"So funny. So sad... Read it and sigh." - Neil Gaiman

WEIRD THINGS CUSTOMERS SAY IN BOOKSHOPS

Jen Campbell

CONSTABLE

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For bookshops and heroic booksellers everywhere
with thanks to our loyal customers,
without whom we wouldn't be selling books

&

to all the people within these pages
who've kept me on my toes,
made me smile and scared
the absolute hell out of me – thank *you*.

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TALES FROM

The Edinburgh Bookshop



The Edinburgh Bookshop [formerly The Children's Bookshop], Bruntsfield Place, Edinburgh, is an independent bookshop owned by Vanessa and Malcolm Robertson, also owners of Fidra Books publishing company. Their bookshop dog is Teaga, a Leonberger, who somewhat resembles Nana from Peter Pan.

www.edinburghbookshop.com.

CUSTOMER: I read a book in the sixties. I don't remember the author, or the title. But it was green, and it made me laugh. Do you know which one I mean?



CUSTOMER: Hi, I'd like to return this book, please.

BOOKSELLER: Certainly. Do you have the receipt?

CUSTOMER: Here.

BOOKSELLER: Erm, you bought this book at Waterstone's.

CUSTOMER: Yes.

BOOKSELLER: . . . we're not Waterstone's.

CUSTOMER: But you're a bookshop.

BOOKSELLER: Yes, but we're not Waterstone's.

CUSTOMER: You're all part of the same chain.

BOOKSELLER: No, sorry, we're an independent bookshop.

CUSTOMER: . . .

BOOKSELLER: Put it this way, you wouldn't buy clothes in H&M and take them back to Zara, would you?

CUSTOMER: Well, no, because they're different shops.

BOOKSELLER: Exactly.

CUSTOMER: . . . I'd like to speak to your manager.



CUSTOMER: My children are just climbing your bookshelves. That's ok, isn't it? They won't topple over, will they?

CUSTOMER: It makes me sad that grown up books don't have pictures in them. You're brought up with them when you're younger, and then suddenly they're all taken away.

BOOKSELLER: . . . Yes. It's a cruel world.



CUSTOMER: Do you have any books by Jane Eyre?



CUSTOMER: Hi, I just wanted to ask: did Anne Frank ever write a sequel?

BOOKSELLER:

CUSTOMER: I really enjoyed her first book.

BOOKSELLER: Her diary?

CUSTOMER: Yes, the diary.

BOOKSELLER: Her diary wasn't fictional.

CUSTOMER: Really?

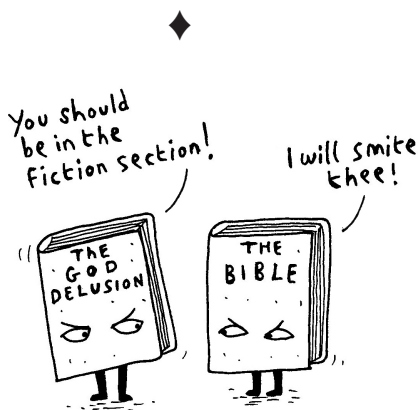
BOOKSELLER: Yes... She really dies at the end – that's why the diary finishes. She was taken to a concentration camp.

CUSTOMER: Oh... that's terrible.

BOOKSELLER: Yes, it was awful -

CUSTOMER: I mean, it's such a shame, you know? She was *such* a good writer.

CUSTOMER: Do you have any crime books involving speeding fines?



CUSTOMER (to her friend): What's this *literary criticism* section? Is it for books that complain about other books?

CUSTOMER: Do you have a copy of *Nineteen Eighty Six*?

BOOKSELLER: *Nineteen Eighty Six*?

CUSTOMER: Yeah, Orwell.

BOOKSELLER: Oh – *Nineteen Eighty Four*.

CUSTOMER: No, I'm sure it's *Nineteen Eighty Six*; I've always remembered it because it's the year I was born.

BOOKSELLER: . . .

WOMAN: Hi, where are your copies of *Breaking Dawn*? I can't see any on the shelf.

BOOKSELLER: Sorry, I think we've sold out of the *Twilight* books; we're waiting on more.

WOMAN: What?

BOOKSELLER: We should have some more in tomorrow.

WOMAN: But I need a copy now. I finished the third one last night.

BOOKSELLER: I'm sorry, I can't help you.

WOMAN: No, you don't understand, I've taken the whole day off work to read it.

BOOKSELLER: Erm . . .

WOMAN: I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS! NOW!

BOOKSELLER: Erm . . .

WOMAN: Can you call your wholesaler and see if they can deliver this afternoon?

BOOKSELLER: They only—

WOMAN: And then I can wait here for them.

BOOKSELLER: I'm sorry, they only deliver in the morning.

WOMAN: BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?

BOOKSELLER: . . . we have many other books.

WOMAN (*sniffs*): Do any of those have Robert Pattinson in them?



CUSTOMER: Do you have any books in this shade of green, to match the wrapping paper I've bought?



CUSTOMER: These books are really stupid, aren't they?

BOOKSELLER: Which ones?

CUSTOMER: You know, the ones where animals like cats and mice are best friends.

BOOKSELLER: I suppose they're not very realistic, but then that's fiction.

CUSTOMER: They're more than unrealistic; they're really stupid.

BOOKSELLER: Well, writers use that kind of thing to teach kids about accepting people different to themselves, you know?

CUSTOMER: Yeah, well, books shouldn't pretend that different people get on like that and that everything is 'la de da' and wonderful, should they? Kids should learn that life's a bitch, and the sooner the better.

CUSTOMER: Do you have that book – I forget what it's called; it's about people with large, hairy feet.

BOOKSELLER: Do you mean hobbits? *The Lord of the Rings*?

CUSTOMER: No.... erm – The Hairy Bikers.



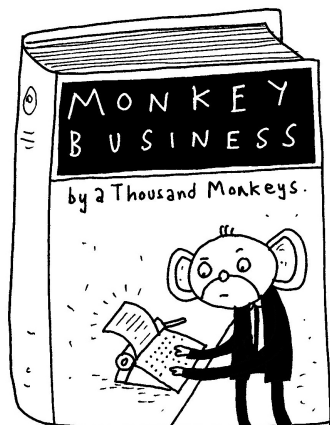
CUSTOMER: My granddaughter's looking for a book about Agnes's knickers.. do you know what I mean?

BOOKSELLER: Agnes's knickers... Ah! Louise Rennison can be found over here.

[*Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging*]



CUSTOMER: Do you have any pop-up books on sex education?



CUSTOMER: You know how they say that if you gave a thousand monkeys typewriters, then they'd eventually churn out really good writing?

BOOKSELLER: . . . yes.

CUSTOMER: Well, do you have any books by those monkeys?

BOOKSELLER: . . .



CUSTOMER (*holding up a copy of a Harry Potter book*): This doesn't have anything weird in it... does it?

BOOKSELLER: You mean, like, werewolves?

CUSTOMER: No (*whispers*) - gays.

BOOKSELLER: . . . right.