



RENARD PRESS

PRESS RELEASE

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Contacts: Will Dady, Publisher • will@renardpress.com

RENARD PRESS ACQUIRES THE ZEBRA AND LORD JONES BY ANNA VAUGHT, A BEAUTIFUL, FABLE-LIKE TALE SET DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

- The long-awaited new novel by a prolific, acclaimed writer.
- A beautiful, fable-like tale, filled with hope and compassion.
- Follows renewed interest in animals during the Second World War, and a documentary on Radio 3 about the escape of the zebras in particular.
- To be supported by a series of events and publicity.

Renard Press is thrilled to announce that it has acquired UK and Commonwealth rights to the seventh book and third novel, *The Zebra and Lord Jones*, by writer, columnist, campaigner and teacher Anna Vaught, from Kate Johnson at Wolf Literary. An unusual and sweeping fable, the novel is an antidote for our times, set in the first half of the twentieth century across different countries, but largely in a tiny corner of South West Wales in the house where the author's grandmother and great grandmother once lived. Starring real historical figures – toffs and fascists, leaders and poets – and addressing hard themes of colonialism, class, the suppression of indigenous culture and exploring intergenerational trauma, the novel was stimulated by the author seeing Carel Weight's 1941 painting of a real event, 'Escape of the Zebra from the Zoo During an Air Raid'. It is, in many ways, 'a true story'. However, as Vaught explains, when the story begins, 'It is not only a book about a man and a zebra. And it is not only true.'

Synopsis:

A listless aristocrat, Lord Jones, finds himself in London during the Blitz, attending to insurance matters. A zebra and her foal, having escaped from the London Zoo during a bombing, cross his path, and he decides to take them back to his estate in Pembrokeshire. Little loved by his fascist-sympathiser parents,



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something in Lord Jones softens, and he realises he is lost, just like these zebras.

The arrival of the zebras sparks a new lease of life on the Pembrokeshire estate, and it is not only Lord Jones but the families his dynasty has displaced that benefit from the transformation. Full of heart and mischief, *The Zebra and Lord Jones* is a hopeful exploration of class, wealth and privilege, grief, colonialism, the landscape, the wars that men make, the families we find for ourselves, and why one lonely man stole a zebra in September 1940 – or perhaps why she stole him.

Anna Vaught is an English teacher, Creative Writing teacher, mentor, editor and author of several books, including *Saving Lucia*, *Famished*, *Ravished* and *These Envoy's of Beauty*. Her short creative works and features have been widely published, and she has written for the national press and has had a column with *The Bookseller* and *Msllexia*. In 2022 Anna launched The Curae, a new literary prize for carers. Anna is also a guest university lecturer, a tutor for Jericho Writers, and volunteers with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. She is the mother of three sons, comes from a large Welsh family and lives in Wiltshire. *The Zebra and Lord Jones* is her third novel and seventh book.

Renard Press Ltd
124 City Road
London EC1V 2NX
United Kingdom

020 8050 2928

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