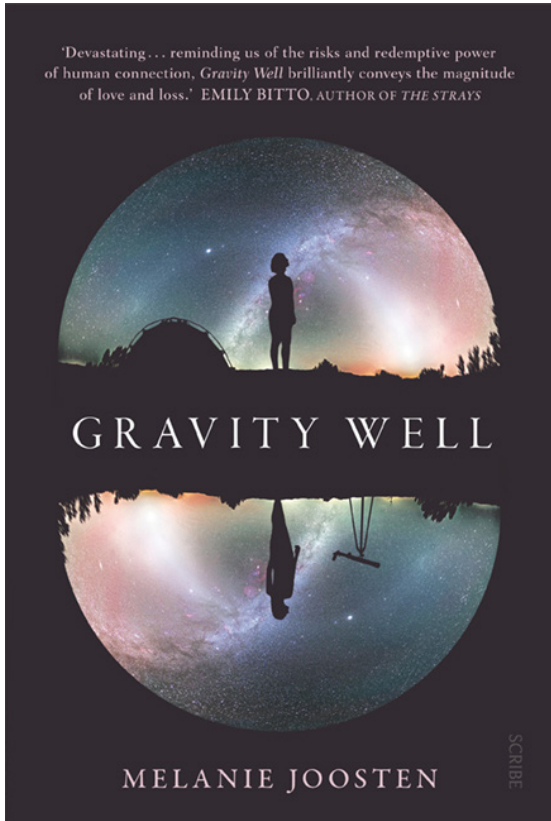


# Gravity Well

MELANIE JOOSTEN



## BOOK DETAILS

Format: Paperback  
ISBN: 9781925322057  
RRP: \$29.99



## AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

*Gravity Well* is Melanie Joosten's second novel. Her first, *Berlin Syndrome*, has recently been made into a motion picture directed by Cate Shortland. Her essay collection *A Long Time Coming* was released in 2016.

Lotte is an astronomer who spends her nights peering into deep space rather than looking too closely at herself. When she returns to her hometown after years in South America, reeling from a devastating diagnosis, she finds that much has changed. Lotte's father has remarried, and she feels like an outsider in the house she grew up in. She's estranged from her former best friend, Eve, who is busy with her own life, and unsure of how to recover the closeness they once shared. Initially, Lotte's return causes disharmony, but then it is the catalyst for a much more devastating event — an event that will change Lotte and Eve's lives forever.

If families are like solar systems — bodies that orbit in time with one another, sometimes close and sometimes far away — what is the force that drives them? And what are the consequences when the weight of one planet tugs others off course?

The long-awaited second novel from the award-winning Melanie Joosten, *Gravity Well* is a striking and tender tale of friendship and family: both the family we are born to, and the family we choose. Deeply compassionate and profoundly moving, it is a heartrending portrait of how we rebuild when the worst has happened.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. The book follows two different characters and a number of different timelines. Why do you think the author decided to do this rather than telling the story chronologically?
2. Did you like Lotte and Eve? Do you think it matters whether they are likable or not?
3. In what ways are Lotte and Eve different to each other? And considering this, why do you think their friendship endures?
4. Why do you think Lotte chooses to study astronomy?

## REVIEWS

‘Melanie Joosten’s devastating second novel reminds us of the risks and redemptive power of human connection. *Gravity Well* brilliantly conveys the magnitude of love and loss, even as its exquisite planetary imagery reveals how small we truly are.’

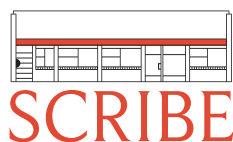
**EMILY BITTO**, AUTHOR OF *THE STRAYS*

‘Masterfully constructed ... Though there is loss at the centre of *Gravity Well*, Joosten knows that the most urgent observations about life come from making sense of the unfathomable. This is a carefully crafted, emotionally cathartic novel. Our journey away from suffering, Joosten suggests, begins with our movement towards each other.’

**GRETCHEN SHIRM**, *WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN*

‘[Joosten’s] characters are faced with all the complexity of the modern world, and sometimes the decisions they make turn out to be wrong. Watching them face the consequences makes for riveting reading ... This is the work of an elegant and vital novelist, someone fully engaged and grappling with the multitude of difficulties involved in the way we live now.’ **LOUISE SWINN**, *SYDNEY MORNING HERALD*

5. Lotte was very close to her mother but after Helen dies, Lotte questions whether she knew her mother at all. Does Lotte accept that her mother had an affair? Or does she choose not to know? How might this information change her memories of her mother?
6. Why does Lotte want a career so badly? Would her commitment to her career and the way she puts it before her relationships and family be considered in the same light if she was a man?
7. Lotte chooses not to find out whether she has the gene defect that caused her mother’s cancer. Why do you think she makes this decision?
8. Why is Lotte so upset with her father for his relationships, first with Alison and then with Eve? Do you think she has a right to be upset?
9. How would you feel if your best friend married your father? Was this a selfish thing for Eve and Tom to do, or should Lotte have been more accepting?
10. In the aftermath of Mina’s death, Eve finds that she has to continue with life, as much as she doesn’t want to. Do you think she will ever come to terms with what happened?
11. How do mothers and fathers grieve differently? And how does this affect Tom and Eve’s marriage?
12. If you were Tom, would you blame Eve for what happened to Mina? Would you be able to forgive her?



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