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WRESTLE WITH THE WRAPPING AT CHRISTMAS NOT THE TYPE SIZE

- Brand new titles publishing in Large Print launch in the autumn

Eight brand new books by top authors including Alan Titchmarsh, Audrey Niffenegger, Josephine Cox and Clarissa Dickson Wright will be published in Focus Large Print on 14 October. In addition, a further bestselling 21 titles will be published, in time for the Christmas gift market.

“Anything that makes reading easier is to be applauded – a bright light, a quiet room, large clear print...what could be more enticing. Focus has all my support – two of my books have come out in Large Print and it makes them even more fabulous I think.”

Joanna Lumley

Do you struggle to read small print books? Do you have a friend or relative who loves to read but has given up? Many people would struggle to read these sentences simply because 'standard' size 10 font is too small.

Frustratingly, many people have the same problem when reading their favourite books and are exasperated they can't enjoy the same reading privileges as everyone else. Many of these people are life-long readers who are experiencing sight difficulties due to age. FOCUS is a new campaign which was launched earlier in the year by RNIB and its publishing partners to make popular and bestselling books in Large Print easily available on the high street.

The eight new titles published on 14 October are:

- *Born Bad* by Josephine Cox (HarperCollins)
- *Rifling Through My Drawers* by Clarissa Dickson Wright (Hodder)
- *We Are All Made of Glue* by Marina Lewycka (Penguin)
- *The Lost Art of Gratitude* by Alexander McCall Smith (Little, Brown)
- *Her Fearful Symmetry* by Audrey Niffenegger (Random House)
- *Assegai* by Wilbur Smith (Macmillan)
- *Knave of Spades* by Alan Titchmarsh (Hodder)
- *Climbing the Bookshelves: The Autobiography of Shirley Williams* by Shirley Williams (Little Brown)

There will also be a further 21 titles included in the campaign including Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach*, Paul O'Grady's *At My Mother's Knee* and Martin Clunes' *A Dog's Life*.

"I have always been a supporter of Large Print editions and I am delighted that my books are being included in this very worthwhile campaign."
Joanne Harris

The great thing about the Large Print books is that they look exactly the same on the shelf as their standard font counterparts. The cover and content is exactly the same; it is only the font that is larger – 16 point rather than the standard 10 point. All the books are published in a trade paperback format and are priced £12.99 when the standard trade edition is in paperback or £16.99 when the standard trade edition is in hardback.

Focus was first launched in April 2009 with a list of 53 great reads in Large Print appealing to a wide audience. The list included titles from bestselling authors Clive Cussler, Nicholas Drayson, Len Goodman, Cathy Kelly, Karin Slaughter, Barbara Taylor Bradford and Barbara Vine.

FOCUS was initiated and funded by Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), the Publishers Licensing Society (PLS). The books are published by RNIB in association with BBC Audiobooks, HarperCollins, Hodder, Little Brown, Penguin, Random House.

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Notes to editors

- The eight lead title authors may be available for interview. Please contact Colman Getty
- Review and competition copies are available from Colman Getty
- John Godber and/or Susan Duncan from RNIB may be available for interview
- Electronic images of logo, jacket visuals, authors are available from Colman Getty
- Every day another 100 people will start to lose their sight. There are around two million people in the UK with sight problems. RNIB is the leading charity working in the UK offering practical support, advice and information for anyone with sight difficulties. If you, or someone you know, have a sight problem, RNIB can help. Call the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999 or visit www.rnib.org.uk
- RNIB is a registered charity - number 226227
- The Publishers Licensing Society (PLS) is a not-for-profit organisation that serves the UK publishing industry by

working to protect publishers' rights, and leads on industry-wide initiatives involving rights management and collective licensing. It facilitates an orderly, legal marketplace for rights by providing licensing solutions that satisfy both publishers and users. PLS has mandates from 2,500 UK publishers ranging from multinationals to charity organisations, and is owned by three key UK publishing trade bodies: The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, the Periodical Publishers Association, and the Publishers Association.

The eight 'lead' books

The Lost Art of Gratitude by Alexander McCall Smith (Little Brown)

The sixth installment in the best-selling chronicles of the irrepressibly curious Isabel Dalhousie.

Isabel Dalhousie, philosopher and amateur solver of other people's problems, meets an old foe, Minty Auchterlonie, at a birthday party attended by their young children. Ambitious Minty, now the head of a small investment bank, is in trouble with her shareholders. Isabel becomes involved, and is drawn into a murky world of financial concealment. Minty is not the only high-flier in Isabel's life; her niece Cat has just become engaged to a tightrope-walking stuntman. Isabel fears his next job - and the engagement - could end in disaster. Meanwhile, her own boyfriend Jamie also has marriage in mind.

Born Bad by Josephine Cox (HarperCollins)

A poignant story of a man who had lived a life that was full of aching memories of his first love, of a place he loved and knew, and of a decision that drove him away. Now, after eighteen years, Harry is heading back home. He has no choice but he needs to know the outcome of what happened all those years ago and most

importantly he needs to find forgiveness.

Rifling Through My Drawers by Clarissa Dickson Wright (Hodder)

With her inimitable wit, treasury of tales and outspoken views, Clarissa Dickson Wright opens her diary and takes us on a journey around Britain and her life.

As celebrated cook and champion of the countryside, Clarissa recalls episodes from her life and describes her encounters with everyone from local farmers to Women's Institutes, supermarket managers to greyhound coursers. A lover of local traditions, she has attended events from the Whitstable Oyster Festival to the Hungerford Hochtide.

In a world of political correctness, *Rifling Through My Drawers* is a breath of fresh air and proves once again why Clarissa is one of the nation's true treasures.

We Are All Made of Glue by Marina Lewycka (Penguin)

Georgie Sinclair's husband has walked out. So when Georgie spots Mrs Shapiro, an eccentric old Jewish émigré neighbour with an eye for a bargain and a fondness for matchmaking, rummaging through her skip in the middle of the night, it's just the distraction she needs. A firm friendship is formed over the reduced-price shelf at the supermarket.

Then Mrs Shapiro is admitted to hospital and to Georgie's surprise, she is named as her next of kin. As Georgie steps in to help her new friend, she finds herself unravelling a mystery which takes her from Highbury to wartime Europe to the Middle East, and learning a bit about DIY along the way.

Assegai by Wilbur Smith (Macmillan)

It is 1913 and ex-soldier turned professional big game hunter, Leon Courtney, is in British East Africa guiding rich and powerful men from America and Europe on safaris in the Masai tribe territories. One of his clients, German industrialist Count Otto Von Meerbach, has a company which builds aircraft and vehicles for

the Kaiser's burgeoning army. But Leon had not bargained for falling passionately in love with Eva, the Count's beautiful and enigmatic mistress. Just prior to the outbreak of World War I, Leon is recruited by his uncle, Penrod Ballantyne, Commander of the British Forces in East Africa, to gather information from Von Meerbach. He stumbles on a plot against the British involving the disenchanting survivors of the Boer War, but it is only when Eva and Von Meerbach return to Africa that Leon finds out who and what is really behind the conspiracy.

Knave of Spades by Alan Titchmarsh (Hodder)

When Alan Titchmarsh left school at fifteen little was expected of him. An 'O' level in art is not the most obvious passport to success, but in the ancient greenhouses of the local nursery Alan found his spiritual home, learning his trade and the strange ways of human nature.

But the comfort and familiarity of his home in the Yorkshire Dales would soon be left behind as he journeyed south to college and then to Kew Gardens where he encountered rare plants collected by Captain Cook and a varied assortment of eccentrics in the world's most famous garden. Spells as a teacher and editor followed, until fate took a hand when he landed a job on BBC's Nationwide as their gardening presenter.

From the first steps in radio and television, to a career in broadcasting and writing, *Knave of Spades* is a warm and self-deprecatingly honest memoir. Alan Titchmarsh shows us just why he has become not only our favourite gardener, but a popular writer and broadcaster too.

Her Fearful Symmetry by Audrey Niffenegger (Random House)

Julia and Valentina Poole are normal American teenagers - normal, at least, for identical 'mirror' twins who have no interest in college or jobs or possibly anything outside their cosy suburban home. But everything changes when they receive notice that an aunt whom they didn't know existed has died and left them her flat in an apartment block overlooking Highgate Cemetery in London.

They feel that at last their own lives can begin... but have no idea that they've been summoned into a tangle of fraying lives, from the obsessive-compulsive crossword setter who lives above them to their aunt's mysterious and elusive lover who lives below them, and even to their aunt herself, who never got over her estrangement from the twins' mother - and who can't even seem to quite leave her flat. With Highgate Cemetery itself a character and echoes of Henry James and Charles Dickens, *Her Fearful Symmetry* is a delicious and deadly twenty-first-century ghost story about Niffenegger's familiar themes of love, loss and identity.

Climbing the Bookshelves: The Autobiography of Shirley Williams by Shirley Williams (Little, Brown)

'The role of women in our society has changed out of all recognition. But it has changed least in the House of Commons. I want to describe those changes and the resistances to them through the magnifying glass of my own life, a life that coincides with our turbulent post-war history.'

Shirley Williams was born to politics. As well as being influenced by her mother, Vera Brittain, her father George Caitlin, a leading political scientist, encouraged his daughter to have high ambitions for herself - including daring to climb the bookshelves in his library. Elected as MP for Hitchin in 1964, she was a member of the Wilson and Callaghan governments and was also the Secretary of State for Education. As one of the 'Gang of Four' Shirley Williams famously broke away from the Labour Party to found the SDP in 1981 and later supported its merger with the Liberal Party to form the Liberal Democrats. *Climbing the Bookshelves* is the voice of strong and passionate woman of luminous intelligence.