



Stories for **THE SUMMER**

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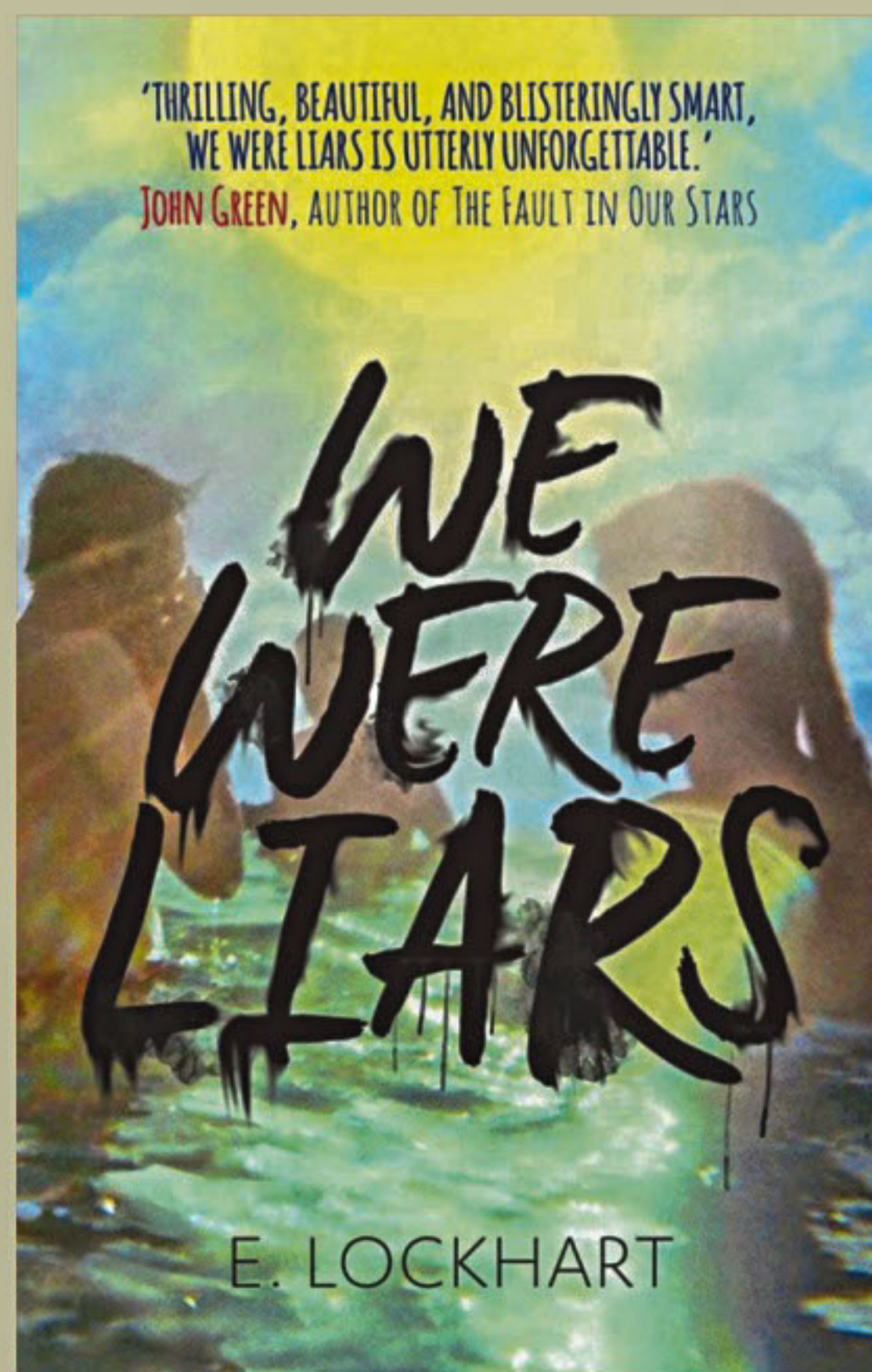
It's been an embarrassingly long time since I sat down to write something. Now, having survived a grueling season of exams, all I want to do is read and relax (and write about it). So here's a list of my favourite summer reads, i.e. books that I'm already asking/nagging/forcing my friends to read.

THE LITTLE PARIS BOOKSHOP

by Nina George

I found this nestled amidst classics in a shop that reeks of literature – a memento of my visit to Shakespeare and Co., Paris last winter. The book follows the journey of one Monsieur Jean Perdu, a Parisian who runs a special bookstore of his own. In a barge on the River Seine – his Literary Apothecary – Monsieur Perdu reads hearts and histories of every visitor and prescribes the perfect book (and the recommended dosage) that person needs. Soon, he sets off on a journey that brings to him things that his own life had been craving for years. Set against the backdrop of France at its most vibrant, Nina George's novel does-

n't just tell you how to recover from loss, it takes your hand and guides you through the slow and torturous process, stopping to point at the beauty in everything from literature, food and nature to relationships along the way. Dripping with the colour and taste of a French summer, it is without a doubt the most dazzling book I've ever read, with a special surprise for readers after the story ends.



WE WERE LIARS by E. Lockhart

Its back cover calls it a "sophisticated suspense novel". However, it is more than that. We Were Liars is one of the most gracefully written stories I've read. A private island off Martha's Vineyard welcomes the Sinclair family back to their summer retreat. The Sinclairs are the epitome of the sinfully rich – their homes and mannerisms as immaculate as their relationships are flawed. The grandchildren, however, are the best of friends. On the surface, it appears to be a story of love between cousins and friends, and how they enjoy their privileged summers together. But the hint of an underlying mystery – the missing pieces of Cadence's memory and the others' refusal to talk about something that seems to have happened - leaves you feeling uneasy. The climax reveals an explanation that is entirely unexpected and difficult to grasp. The book is chilling in its portrayal of the flaws of the elite and inexplicably poetic in its depiction of the characters and their bonds. It left me heartbroken, but mesmerised.

ONE HUNDRED NAMES by
 Cecelia Ahern

The thing about Cecelia Ahern's stories is that they are quirky; cheerful and often romantic, there's a certain weirdness to them that leaves you grinning. One Hundred Names struck a chord with the aspiring journalist in me. Kitty Logan, a disgraced reporter in the aftermath of a story that went wrong, struggles to fulfill the dying wish of her mentor and former editor. Left to write a story on a mysterious list of 100 seemingly unrelated people, Kitty goes on to find a unique mix of individuals from a personal shopper who turns down George Clooney for more compassionate customers to a pair hoping to make it to the Guinness Book of World Records. By the end, Kitty finds something she'd lost herself: her passion for journalism.

If you're an Ahern fan: **How to Fall in Love**, **Time of My Life** and **If You Could See Me Now** are other must reads that will leave you smiling for days.

In any case, happy reading!

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