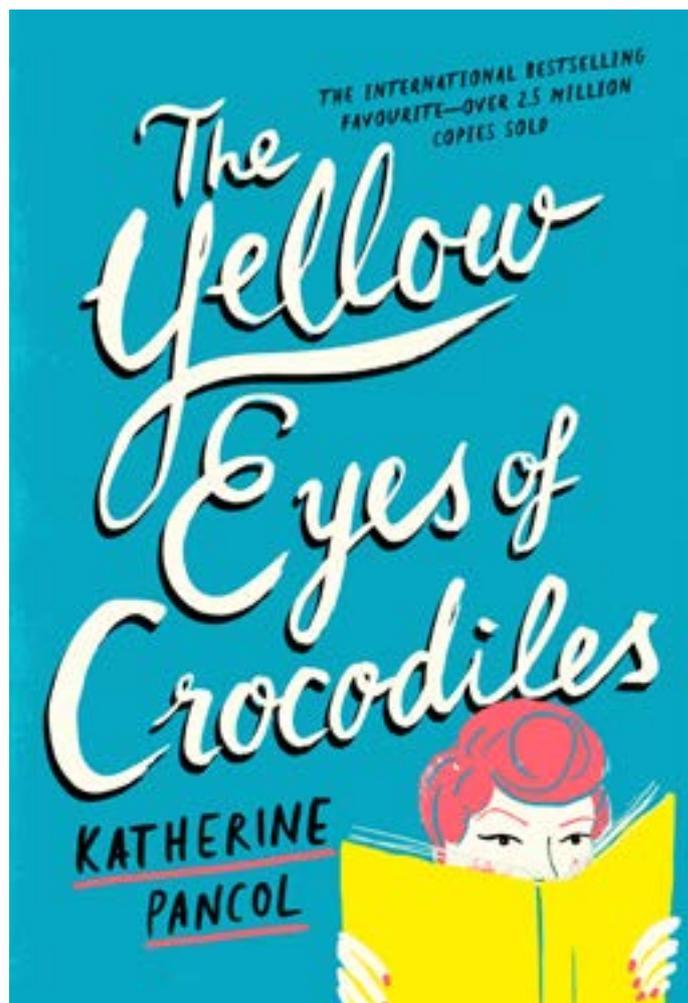


ALLEN & UNWIN



READING GROUP NOTES

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About the book

'...a clear-eyed, warmly funny tale.' - *Kirkus Reviews*

This novel is the story of a lie. But it is also a story of laughter and tears, of life itself.

When her chronically unemployed husband runs off to start a crocodile farm in Kenya with his mistress, Josephine Cortes is left in an unhappy state of affairs. The mother of two is forced to make ends meet on her meagre salary as a medieval history scholar.

Meanwhile, Josephine's charismatic sister Iris seems to have it all - a wealthy husband, gorgeous looks, and a tres chic Paris address - but secretly she dreams of bringing meaning back into her life.

And then a dinner party changes the sisters' destinies.

Iris is seated next to a famous book publisher to whom she spins a tale of the 12th century romance she's writing. When Iris charms him into offering her a lucrative deal for her book, she offers her sister a deal of her own: Josephine will write the novel and pocket all the proceeds, but the book will be published under Iris's name.

All is well - until the book becomes the literary sensation of the season ...

About the author

Katherine Pancol moved from Casablanca to France when she was five. She studied literature and initially became a French and Latin teacher, before turning to journalism. While working for *Paris-Match* and *Cosmopolitan*, she is noticed by an intuitive publisher who encourages her to begin writing.

The Yellow Eyes of Crocodiles has been a huge success in France and the rest of Europe where it has sold over 2.5 million copies and has now been translated into thirty-one languages. Katherine Pancol lives in Paris, France and updates her blog every week on her website <http://www.katherine-pancol.com>.

Reviews & Quotes

"Thought Parisian women are perfect? Think again. A delicious treat about separation, sisterhood, and turning tables." - Inès de la Fressange, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Parisian Chic*

"Lucky you! You're about to succumb to France's most irresistible writer! At the end of this delicious, tender, funny, heartwarming novel, you'll feel as if Iris and Joséphine are part of your family." - Tatiana de Rosnay, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Sarah's Key*

"Pancol deftly manages the constellation of characters in a cleareyed, warmly funny tale." - *Kirkus*

"Pancol's runaway French bestseller is a satisfying Cinderella story. ... delicious." - *Publishers Weekly*

“No wonder Katherine Pancol’s books are all bestsellers, reading her feels like coming home. Her characters become like friends and family members, and you long to know how they get on. *The Yellow Eyes of Crocodiles* has all the quirks, tensions, and belly laughs that family, friendship, and sisterhood can entail.” - Cécile David Weill, author of *The Suitors*

For discussion

- ☞ Iris and Josephines’ families are probably ones to escape but over 2.5 million European readers have fallen in love with them. Did you? How does Pancol achieve this?
- ☞ ‘Pancol is at her most interesting when she writes about Joséphine’s financial worries and the anxiety that hangs over the family; the giddy relief when money comes her way is delicious’ (*Publishers Weekly*). The serious issues of this novel anchor the froth and fun of the plots and subplots. Do you agree?
- ☞ Iris and Joséphine are unlike in almost every way. What do they—or could they—learn from each other?
- ☞ Discuss the ways that love and money intertwine in this novel. What, if anything, is the author trying to convey?
- ☞ Writing becomes a transformative process for Joséphine. Discuss her path from beginning to end in this novel?
- ☞ Surrounding the major plotline of the writing of Joséphine’s novel, there are many subplots. How do these subplots weave in and out of the story and to what effect?
- ☞ Dishonesty is present, in one form or another, in most relationships in this novel. Is the author saying that this is a universal truth?
- ☞ Hortense suffers most from the divorce of her parents and their altered circumstances. Is Hortense’s behaviour ultimately helpful to Joséphine?
- ☞ Antoine’s African experience changes him. In what ways do you see that occurring?

Suggested further reading

The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barby

The One Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson

Le Divorce by Diane Johnson

Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand by Helen Simonson