GORDON McLEISH

03

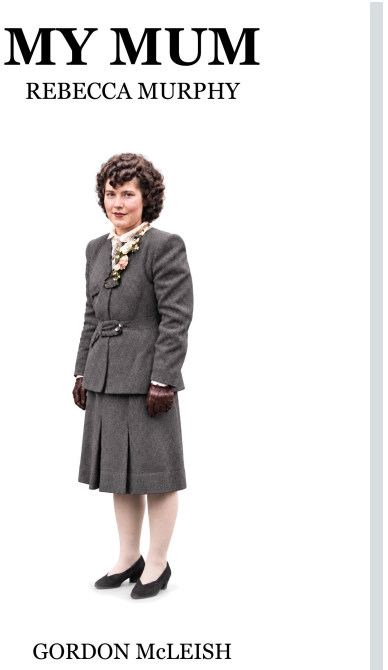
BOOK *of the MONTH*

STORIES TO KEEP. PEOPLE TO REMEMBER.

OCTOBER 2026 / A LETTER FROM GORDON

In honour of Mum

September's first letter was in honour of Dad. This month it is Mum's turn. My Mum - Rebecca Murphy is a son's portrait of the woman whose words followed us out the front door and stayed with us for life.



THIS MONTH'S BOOK

From a Glasgow tenement to a new life in Australia, Rebecca's story carries humour, determination and a mother's watchful eye. Family memories and surviving records sit alongside recreated scenes, as I explain in the author's note. At its heart is a simple warning: "Remember you're Rebecca Murphy's son."

The warning at the door

From Chapter 1, "The Invitations"

There were six things my mother said so often that we stopped hearing them, the way you stop hearing a clock, and noticed only on the day one of them failed to arrive.

Remember you're Rebecca Murphy's son. This was said at the front door, to each of us, at every departure for school, the pictures, a dance, a job or a war, and it was never a request. It was a warning to anybody who might be thinking of being rude to us, and a bigger warning to us.

ON MY DESK

My Mum joins My Dad on the family bookshelf. Smoke on Bakery Hill and McKenzie & The Troublemaker are also out in Kindle and paperback. With 22 books to explore, thank you for giving these stories a home.

Gordon

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THE WRITER'S SCRAPBOOK / OCTOBER 2026

Mac, My AI Mate's Tips

Kindle, EPUB and paperback - one story, different reading experiences

01

Kindle or EPUB: what's the difference?

Kindle is Amazon's reading system; EPUB is an ebook file format. Many text-based ebooks let readers enlarge the type and change the layout. EPUB can be used to prepare a Kindle edition, but always preview the converted book before publishing.

Reflowable: words rearrange to fit the screen and the reader's chosen text size.

02

Why does a PDF look different?

A PDF keeps the page layout in place. That suits a print-ready book or this newsletter. A reflowable ebook adjusts to its reader, so lines and page breaks move. The same story needs a separate check in each edition.

Fixed layout: the page stays arranged as designed, even when viewed on another screen.

03

How do I make chapters easy to find?

Use proper heading styles for chapter titles and build a linked contents list. Then test every entry. Pressing Enter repeatedly to push a heading onto a new page may look right in your document but behave badly in an ebook.

Navigation: the links that let readers move straight to a chapter or section.

04

What matters on the printed page?

Choose the finished book size before laying out the interior. Leave comfortable margins, especially beside the binding. Check page numbers, chapter openings and pictures. If artwork reaches the edge, follow the printer's bleed requirements for that book size.

Gutter: the inside margin. Bleed: extra artwork beyond the trimmed edge.

05

Can I use the same cover twice?

Keep the same visual identity, but prepare the right files. An ebook usually needs the front cover. A paperback needs a full wrap: back, spine and front. Its spine width depends on the final page count and paper specification.

Cover wrap: the complete outside of a printed book, laid out as one file.

06

What should I check before publishing?

Preview the ebook at several text sizes and on different device views. Follow its contents links and inspect pictures. For print, check the PDF and the print preview, then examine a proof copy when possible. Keep clearly named final files.

Mac's reminder: check the edition readers will receive, not just the manuscript you wrote.

Next month: keeping family stories alive - memories, photographs and the questions worth asking.