To all at Text Publishing, who made me feel welcome there even before I signed with them, thank you. Particular thanks to Mandy Brett, without whom this book would still be very much an abandoned bottom-drawer memory. I cannot regard Mandy's wisdom, patience and skill highly enough.

To my other worlds outside of writing, thank you to my dearest friends Gordon Mander and Clare Sladden, for being there always. To my employer, Avid Reader Bookshop, and in particular Fiona Stager and Anna Sheen, thank you for letting me pursue my passion and giving me the best workplace in the world. To Mad Espresso, eternal thanks for letting me occupy a table and nurse one of your brilliant coffees for almost the entire rewriting process.

And finally, if it's possible to fall more in love with someone every day, then that's what I do. To my favourite, to the reason I live my life, Leesa Wockner, who, if she reads this, I hope will agree to marry me, despite the number of commas in this sentence.