



Lost for Words: A Novel

By Edward St. Aubyn

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Edward St. Aubyn is "great at dissecting an entire social world" (Michael Chabon, *Los Angeles Times*)

Edward St. Aubyn's Patrick Melrose novels were some of the most celebrated works of fiction of the past decade. Ecstatic praise came from a wide range of admirers, from literary superstars such as Zadie Smith, Francine Prose, Jeffrey Eugenides, and Michael Chabon to pop-culture icons such as Anthony Bourdain and January Jones. Now St. Aubyn returns with a hilariously smart send-up of a certain major British literary award.

The judges on the panel of the Elysian Prize for Literature must get through hundreds of submissions to find the best book of the year. Meanwhile, a host of writers are desperate for Elysian attention: the brilliant writer and serial heartbreaker Katherine Burns; the lovelorn debut novelist Sam Black; and Bunjee, convinced that his magnum opus, *The Mulberry Elephant*, will take the literary world by storm. Things go terribly wrong when Katherine's publisher accidentally submits a cookery book in place of her novel; one of the judges finds himself in the middle of a scandal; and Bunjee, aghast to learn his book isn't on the short list, seeks revenge.

Lost for Words is a witty, fabulously entertaining satire that cuts to the quick of some of the deepest questions about the place of art in our celebrity-obsessed culture, and asks how we can ever hope to recognize real talent when everyone has an agenda.

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Lost for Words: A Novel By Edward St. Aubyn Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Malcolm Craig becomes chair of the board awarding his country's top literary honor, the Elysian Prize. In describing what ensues, noted British novelist St. Aubyn takes on the publishing industry and the horse-trading and ax-grinding among authors, critics, and hangers-on surrounding such awards, including the popular (and promiscuous) Katherine Burns, whose novel is overlooked in favor of a cookbook mistakenly sent for consideration by its publisher; interpreted by some as a new form of modern fiction, it makes the short list. Not wanting to read much himself, Craig is joined by judges Jo Cross (whose major criterion is "relevance"), Vanessa Shaw ("good writing"), Penny Feathers (former mistress of the elderly corporate sponsor), and actor Tobias Benedict. "Young writers were the future," Craig muses, or "would be if they were still around and being published." As a novel about the ephemeral nature of book awards, *Lost for Words* may itself be ephemeral, but along the way, St. Aubyn offers a hearty satire, full of laughs and groans, with snippets from the candidates, including the novel wot u starin at, an unsparing look at Glasgow low life, which bookies (the gambling kind) make the favorite. --Mark Levine

Review

"Everything St. Aubyn writes is worth reading for the cleansing rancor of his intelligence and the fierce elegance of his prose..." ?Anne Enright, *New York Times Book Review*

"*Lost for Words* is especially witty... a hilarious commentary on the dissonance between the daily lives of authors and how they are perceived publicly." ?Maddie Crum, *Huffington Post*

"*Lost for Words* is... a satirical romp that showcases... [St. Aubyn's] Waugh-like talent for comedy and his unsparing eye for people's pretensions and self-delusions." ?Mikicho Kakutani, *The New York Times*

"*Lost for Words*... is an entertaining squib... [with] perfectly aimed satirical barbs." ?John Banville, *The New York Review of Books*

"St. Aubyn... executes his irony with phlegmatic and tightly controlled prose, underneath which lurks the trenchant exasperation of a veteran." ?Esther Yi, *Los Angeles Review of Books*

"[D]eeply eloquent writing... St. Aubyn's mastery of language--and the resonance it can hew--can't help but come through." ?Brian Gallagher, *The Seattle Times*

"*Lost for Words* is a withering satire... a deliciously irreverent novel." ?Jonathan Yardley

"St. Aubyn's is a subtle, dry, and often dark type of humor... [he] once again skewers privilege in a humorous way." ?Jason Diamond, *Flavorwire*

"*Lost for Words* [is a] savage field report. ...The best and meanest parts of the book are its pitch-perfect parodies of fashionable genres..." ?Eugenia Williamson, *Boston Globe*

"[*Lost for Words*] contains some of the best writing we're likely to read this year." ?Hannah Beckerman, *Huffington Post*

"A light-footed romp and a notable taboo-buster... a frisky satire on modern literary manners and the

funniest thing St. Aubyn has ever written.” ?*Sunday Telegraph*

“St Aubyn's powers of observation are as sharp as ever.” ?*Henry Hitchings, Financial Times*

“*Lost for Words* is a fizzing satire that neatly skewers all the contradictions of literary prize-giving... *Lost for Words* is very funny, but it also makes some serious points about what is good writing, who is best qualified to make judgments about it... [The Melrose novels] are the most extraordinary transmutation of personal horror into great art.” ?*Telegraph magazine*

“[St. Aubyn is] an adept observer of the elite with a devastating talent for dialogue...” ?*Chicago Tribune*

“A tangy jeu d'esprit... [St. Aubyn] is such a bitchy, brilliant prose writer that any impression this book is a mere scathing divertissement is amply compensated for by nearly every sentence.” ?*Metro*

“St. Aubyn has a cut-glass prose style, a gift for unexpected metaphor, and a skewering eye... [He] is a conjurer, able to take that greasy deck of cards and make it perform tricks of a sort rarely seen anymore.” ?*The Atlantic*

“... St. Aubyn offers a hearty satire, full of laughs and groans.” ?*Mark Levine, Booklist*

“*Lost for Words* is a... jaunty, often hilarious farce... very, very funny.” ?*Alexander Benaim, Bookforum*

“Edward St. Aubyn is among the handful of the current giants of English fiction. He has always had an eye for the sort of satire that does not exclude compassion and understanding; now that eye is trained on the absurd world of awarding literary prizes. The results are hilarious!” ?*Edmund White*

“A laugh-out-loud sendup of literary prizes . . . Both the author and the reader have great fun.” ?*Kirkus*

About the Author

Edward St. Aubyn was born in London in 1960. He is the author of a series of highly acclaimed novels about the Melrose family, including *At Last* and *Mother's Milk*, which was short-listed for the 2006 Man Booker Prize, as well as the novels *A Clue to the Exit* and *On the Edge*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Amy Mueller:

Reading a book tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that will give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. Plenty of author can inspire their reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only situation that share in the books. But also they write about the data about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their expertise in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write for their book. One of them is this *Lost for Words: A Novel*.

Michelle Favors:

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Carmen Hamm:

The book untitled Lost for Words: A Novel contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains her idea with easy way. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read this. The book was compiled by famous author. The author gives you in the new period of literary works. You can read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site and order it. Have a nice read.

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