

## **Q&A for LoveReading – Sarah Stovell**

**What inspired you to come up with the concept for your latest novel, *Exquisite* – was it a real-life event, a daydream, an issue you wanted to explore?**

I have always been interested in the darker side of love and the damage people do each other, and I'm always keen to explore the impact of early experiences on adult relationships. The idea for *Exquisite* came out of these interests - what could happen if two damaged people fell so deeply in love that the love transcended the social boundaries they had usually lived their lives by?

**Can you describe how you developed this initial idea into a full-length novel?**

It's difficult for me to talk about the writing process in clear and coherent way. I'm never really sure how I do things. I just write and if it's no good, I go back and start again and if it's working, I keep writing and then I have a novel eventually.

**What kind of research did you do for your latest work?**

I didn't need to do any research for this one.

**How would you describe your relationship with your protagonists? Do you love them; do they irritate you; do they get under your skin?**

I don't form emotional connections to my protagonists. They have to get under your skin in order for you to write about them, but I don't love them. I think Alice is good fun and determined. I think Bo is a bit of a tit.

**What kind of books do you read: 1) when you're writing; 2) when you're not? Do you find you choose different genres/types depending on whether you're writing, or doesn't it matter?**

I don't read fiction when I'm writing. I usually read poetry and non-fiction then. When I'm not writing, I'll read anything. I don't like sci-fi or horror but I will read pretty much anything else.

**What was the last book you read?**

*Cuckoo* by Julia Crouch. I met her at the Bristol Crime Festival and she made me laugh so I decided to read her book.

**And what's the next book in your reading pile?**

*The Handmaid's Tale*. I can't believe I haven't read it yet, as I am a massive Atwood fan. '