# Part one: five books I gave 5 stars to in 2018

I read a lot of great books in 2018 but did not manage to review them all. Instead I have written short reviews for the books that I gave five stars. I was lucky enough to read fourteen books that I thoroughly enjoyed so will break this post into two parts (read second part here).




*Here are five books I gave five stars to in 2018 (and links to two that I have already reviewed)!*

**The Gracekeepers** (My review)

**How To be Brave** (My review)

**The Tattooist of Auschwitz** (Goodreads synopsis)

This book is heart-wrenching and eye opening. It is based on the true story of a Jewish man who became a prisoner in Auschwitz in WWII; he was also forced to tattoo the identification numbers that are such a striking symbol and horrific reminder of the Holocaust onto many of the prisoners' arms. He used his position to try to help keep others alive with extra scraps of food, and fell in love with another prisoner. This book is so detailed and honest that it makes me shudder to think of what these people went through. The

writing is phenomenal and it is a struggle to put this one down. I was lucky enough to see the author talk at the local Writers Festival and she was so enthusiastic and interesting to listen to. Despite being about a horrific time in history, it is also a powerful and striking read about love, humanity and courage and is a hugely important story.

**Jane Eyre** (Goodreads synopsis)

I am so surprised by my reaction to this classic. My close friend has been at me to read this for most of the many years I have known her but I always put it off because romance books and classics did not interest me. I was so wrong! There is much more to this book than the love story. Following Jane from her childhood to when she becomes a governess, this novel looks at society, gender equality, family, morality and ethics. I did not know there was so much of a focus on Jane's earlier years and I think this is what really made me interested in the story. There are also many metaphors and symbolic messages in this book that add to the reading experience. If you're like me and have been uninterested in this one because of the genre or a hesitation regarding the older style of writing, I encourage you to give it a go and you might well be as surprised by your reaction as me!

**The Speech: The Story Behind Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Dream** (Goodreads synopsis)

I went into this non fiction book thinking it would be an analysis of the actual speech that Martin Luther King Jr. is most well known for, which interested me as a writing student. It is to a certain extent, but it goes much deeper and looks into the political and social side of what led up to the speech and the effect it had. It is interesting and thought provoking, and for an Australian who does not know a lot about American history, it was particularly enlightening.

**The Hunger Games** (Goodreads synopsis)

I read this book years ago when it was first released and then reread it this year for uni. I was surprised how much I enjoyed it again, even being a fair bit older this time around. There are some questionable themes in this book that have caused controversy (violence against children being the most shocking). However, it is a fast paced and intriguing story that looks at totalitarian governments, family, love, sacrifice, friendship and courage as it follows a girl who must literally fight for her life in a game forced upon society by a powerful government.

**The Arrival** (Goodreads synopsis)

The Arrival is a beautiful graphic novel about immigration. I do not read many graphic novels but read this a few years ago and then picked it up again this year for uni and am so glad I did. The drawings are absolutely stunning and, without words, shares the story of asylum seekers and the hardship, fear and sacrifices they face to make a life that is safer and happier for themselves and their families.

*Of this list, my favourites were The Gracekeepers, How To Be Brave, and The Tattooist of Auschwitz.*




I have been lucky enough to read so many great books this year!

Have any of these books made your five star list? Have you

read them and not enjoyed them quite as much as I did, or are any on your TBR?

Happy reading!