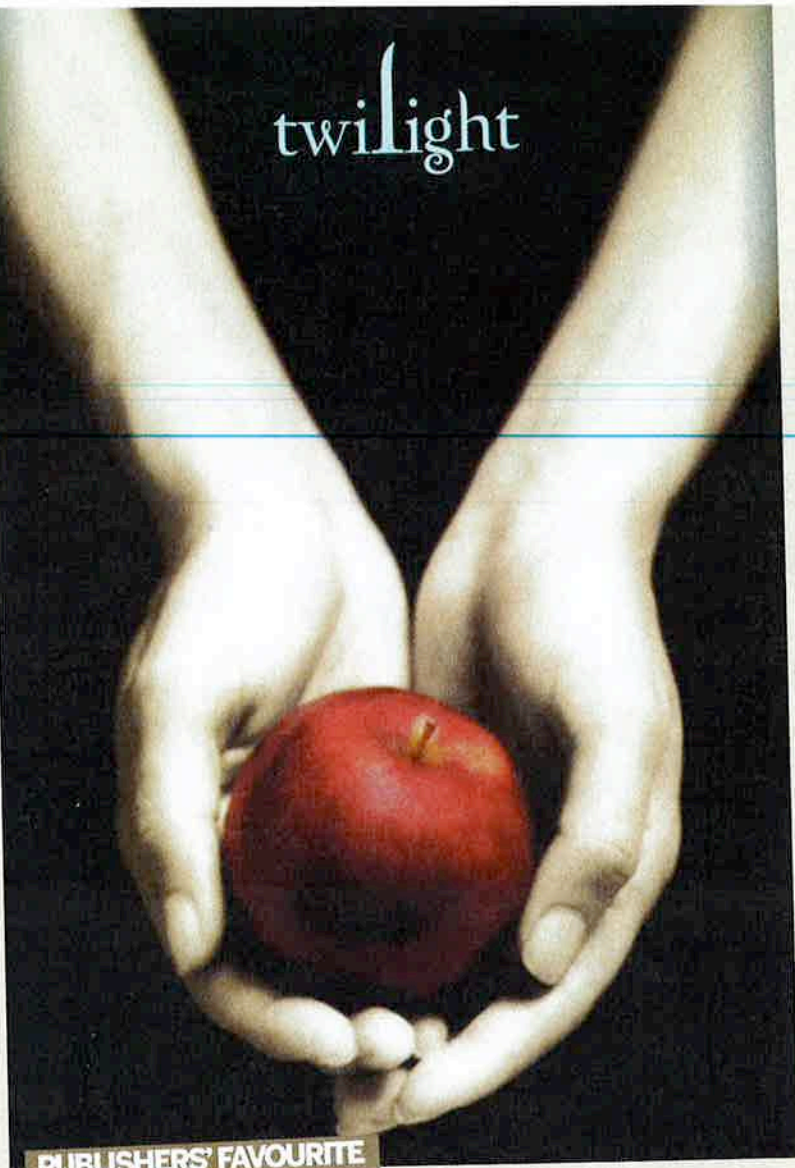


twilight

LITERARY

Politics, intrigue and the undead



PUBLISHERS' FAVOURITE

PARANORMAL POPULARITY

Fantasy and romance still a winning combination

The paranormal romance genre shows little to no signs of slowing down, with a raft of television and book deals in recent months. Despite what some commentators have started to label as saturation in the genre's market, which was driven into popularity primarily due to the worldwide success of the *Twilight* novels by Stephenie Meyer, major publishing houses have signed deals for trilogies of late.

Atom, the young adult (YA) imprint of Little, Brown has bought one such trilogy from author Amy Plum, with the first book, *Die For Me*, set for global release in May 2011. "Amy has used her amazing imagination and wonderful familiarity with the city to create a Paris unlike any I've ever read," said Atom editorial director Samantha Smith. The books deal with supernatural romance in the French capital, focusing on a group of 'revenants', immortal undead beings. Simon & Schuster has also bought a paranormal romance trilogy from author Elizabeth Miles, this time focusing on

'furies', with a view to publish in autumn 2011. Finally, Hodder Children's Books has bought another three-book series from Tonya Hurley, named *The Blessed*. Hurley previously wrote the New York Times bestselling-series *Ghostgirl*.

In the world of film, as well, the genre is taking off. Richelle Mead's *Vampire Academy* series is set for a big-screen adaptation, with the last book in that sequence having recently been released. In addition, the first part of *Breaking Dawn*, the adaptation of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series finale, is due for release in November 2011 – our report can be found on page 8 of this magazine. On television, The CW is enjoying high ratings from its own adaptation of LJ Smith's *The Vampire Diaries*, with another paranormal-tinged original series in the works, despite a series of misfires in recent years, such as *Moonlight*. Gollancz has, of course, launched its own paranormal romance line under Gillian Redfearn, and a range of releases are expected in 2011.



«OPINION»

LET'S TALK ABOUT EBOOKS

Arguments over 'high' prices of digital copies aren't as valid as people would like them to be

The subject of print's imminent demise seems to be one of those indefatigable subjects, ironically proliferated through the very medium for which the bell tolls. Over the last few years there's been an absurd amount of column inches dedicated to the subject, none of which seem to have offered a satisfactory argument that indeed, paper and ink is now obsolete. What is indisputable, though, is that this is now the era of the eBook's rise.

Accordingly, this leads on to questions about how publishers and what we would consider the usual route of publishing will survive. There are also debates about the value of eBooks, which is perhaps the more incisive route of inquiry than following those for whom the bloggers' bell tolls. The main opposition, from what I've heard, is the money paid. People simply don't want to pay physical prices for eBooks, and the common thought is that publishers shouldn't charge full whack for what is essentially an ephemeral product.

But it's just not the case. People often see things in black and white – I'm getting this much, so I'll trade this much, a physical book has to be stored, printed and shipped, but an eBook is

transmitted instantaneously, so it should cost a fraction of that as you don't have to store, print or ship it. An eBook isn't just a glorified PDF document sent to your Kindle. It represents so much more – the wages and time invested into the unsung heroes of publishing that are the copy editors, the publicists and the jacket artists to name a few. Not to mention the royalties paid to the authors, and the money it must make back against the advances given to said writers. To slash the eBook price of, say, China Miéville's *Kraken* would be to reduce the amount that could be invested in it. Quality in literature is important, and while the big houses can often be seen as uncaring of whether a book is the next big thing or not, it's not the case. The industry has to adapt, but demands for low prices and jubilant, euphoric worship of the latest trend in technology that will redefine life as we know it is not a sensible approach. Publishers, media, consumers and authors need to sit down, take it slowly, absorb the necessary details and develop a path forward that works for all parties without ridiculous knee-jerk reactions. And you can say what you like about print, but it's not dead.