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**Pick of the 2011 page-turners**

January 16 2012 at 01:15pm

**Best non-fiction of 2011:**

***From a Clear Blue Sky: Surviving the Mountbatten Bomb*** by Timothy Knatchbull (Hutchinson). At 13, in August 1979, Knatchbull’s identical twin Nicolas died with his grandfather, Lord Mountbatten, a member of the British royal family.

It is a gripping story of tragedy, violence, love and redemption, and ultimately of forgiveness, understanding and healing. Seldom has there been a more powerful rendition of personal loss in the face of historical events, bringing the many sides together in an unforgettable journey. It includes a cameo of the queen.

[Other recommendations:]

Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? by Jeanette Winterson (Jonathan Cape)

Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness by Alexandra Fuller (Simon and Schuster)

Olive Schreiner: the other side of the moon by Heather Parker Lewis (ihilihili)

Stones Against the Mirror by Hugh Lewin (Umuzi)

The Hare with Amber Eyes: A Hidden Inheritance by Edmund de Waal (Vintage Books)

Challenging Beliefs: Memoirs of a Career by Tim Noakes, with Michael Vlismas (Zebra Press)