



# BOOKS IN A BAG

## KIT 32A

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## BACK ON TRACK

**AUTHOR:** Tricia Stringer

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Ketty Cliff's couture dressmaking business is thriving but the same can't be said for her staff. Lately, cracks have appeared in the team's harmony, testing relationships and causing issues with customers. Worse, the rumour that Ketty has lost her touch is circulating. So when Ketty's old friend Carlos suggests a holiday by train - on the iconic Ghan, no less - Ketty decides to take her surprised staff with her in the hope of fixing what ails them.

But it's not turning out to be the cure-all Ketty had hoped for. Her protective second-in-command, Judith, doubts Carlos's intentions and sows suspicion in Ketty's mind. Her younger staff members, Birgit and Lacey, are beset by relationship disasters and financial worries, whereas invaluable employee Ning is under pressure from her family to retire, and seamstress Tien is terrified of everything outside her comfort zone - especially the outback.

Each new stop on the way, and the surprising behaviour of some of the other passengers, affects the group and reveals something more about each of them. As the train pulls deeper into the mesmerising outback, matters seem set to come to a disturbing crescendo. Ketty must sidestep the drama, reunite her troubled workers and save her business and relationships. But will her transformative magic work to bring them all back on track?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tricia Stringer is a bestselling and multiple award-winning author. Her books include *Keeping Up Appearances*, *Birds of a Feather*, *The Family Inheritance*, *The Model Wife*, *Table for Eight*, seven rural romances and a historical saga set in the unforgiving landscape of nineteenth-century Flinders Ranges. Tricia grew up on a farm in country South Australia and has spent most of her life in rural communities, as owner of a post office and bookshop, as a teacher and librarian, and now as a full-time writer. She lives on the traditional lands of the Narungga people, in the beautiful Copper Coast region, with her husband Daryl, travelling and exploring Australia's diverse communities and landscapes, and sharing her passion for the country and its people through her authentic stories and their vivid characters.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ketty booked the train holiday hoping it would be 'some kind of magical fix-it elixir' for the problems with her staff. Do you think it was a good idea? Was it successful?
2. Ageism is a theme in the story. Do you think old-age is a use-by date? Or is it just a number?
3. Judith has an instant dislike of Carlos and sees all his actions in a bad light. Why do you think that it?
4. Ketty nearly always sees the possibility of relationships for other people and yet she struggles to see the possibility of a relationship with Carlos. Why is that, do you think?
5. Which character or moment in the novel evokes the strongest emotional response from you and why?
6. Have you ever travelled on the Ghan or taken another long train journey? How did it compare?

