

LAURA MARNEY

AUTHOR

First person narrative voice is the new black. *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn (Phoenix, £8.99) is an enjoyable enough psychotic romp until it just becomes ridiculous. It was the narrative voice that kept me reading, certainly not the plot twists or silly denouement. The engaging first person narration was also the attraction in David Nicholls's *Us* (Hodder and Stoughton, £20), covering similar territory of marital breakdown and disappearance but taking a much kindlier, albeit slightly sentimental route. *This Is What I Look Like*, a memoir from Theresa Talbot (Strident, £7.99), also has an irrepressibly naughty voice, but it is *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* by Karen Joy Fowler (Serpent's Tail, £7.99) that wins my Book of the Year. Stunning in its complexity and non-linear structure, and delivered through a compelling first person narrative voice, the tale of family secrets, shame, regrets and animal rights is an intelligent, thoughtful story, although it has completely ruined the PG Tips chimps for me.