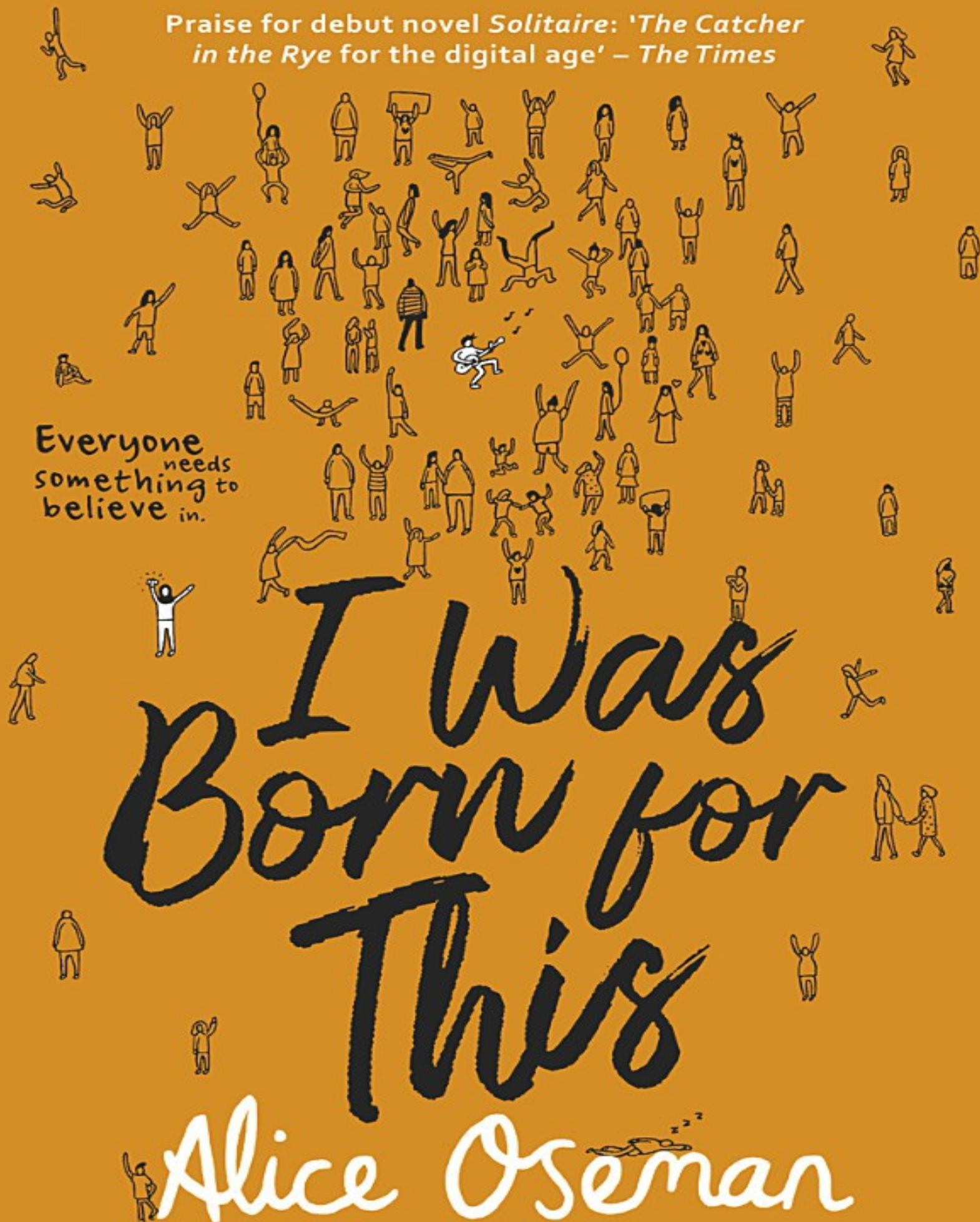


Praise for debut novel *Solitaire*: 'The Catcher in the Rye for the digital age' – *The Times*

Everyone  
needs  
something to  
believe in.

# I Was Born for This

Alice Oseman



I Was  
Born for  
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## Epigraph

‘children say that people are hung sometimes for speaking the truth’

– Joan of Arc

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# MONDAY

'i was in my thirteenth year when i heard a voice from god'

– Joan of Arc

## ANGEL RAHIMI

‘I’m literally dying,’ I say, putting my hand on my heart. ‘You’re real.’

Juliet, having just escaped my hug, is smiling so hard it looks like she might tear her face in half.

‘So are you!’ she says, and gestures to my body. ‘This is so weird. But cool.’

Theoretically, this shouldn’t be awkward. I have been talking to Juliet Schwartz for two years. On the internet only, yeah, but internet friendships aren’t that different to real ones nowadays, and Juliet knows more about me than my closest school friends.

‘You’re a physical being,’ I say. ‘Not just some pixels on a screen.’

I know almost everything about Juliet. I know that she never falls asleep before 2 a.m. and her favourite fanfic trope is enemies-to-lovers and she’s secretly a fan of Ariana Grande. I know she’s probably going to grow up to be the sort of wine-sipping middle-aged woman who calls everyone ‘darling’ and always looks slightly like she’s giving you evils. But I still wasn’t prepared for her voice (posher and deeper than it sounds on Skype) and her hair (she genuinely is ginger, as she’s always said, even though it looks brown on camera) and her size (she’s a full head smaller than me. I’m seventy feet tall so I should have been prepared for that one, really.)

Juliet flattens her fringe and I adjust my hijab and we start walking out of St Pancras station. We’re silent for a moment, and I feel a sudden wave of nerves, which is a bit irrational, since me and Juliet are practically soulmates – two beings who found each other in the depths of the internet against all odds and, just like that, we were a duo.

She’s the sharp-witted romantic. I’m the whimsical conspiracy theorist. And we both live for The Ark, the best band in the history of the world.

‘You’re gonna have to tell me where we’re going,’ I say, smiling. ‘I have no sense of direction at all. I get lost on my walk to school sometimes.’