

A writing magazine

Paper Bound

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NEW

Issue 1 Autumn 2020

For the young, and the young at heart

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS WITH

Tracy Darnton
Jenny Moore
Marisa Noelle
Mo O'Hara
& Emma Read

DON'T MISS

Our Top Tips for
Writing
Horror

Inspiring Ideas
for
National Poetry Day

Why Write
YA Romance

Find out
what's on our
**Autumn
Bookshelf**

Meet this issue's
illustrators
inside

PLUS
MEET AUTHOR

Beth Cartwright

and read all
about her debut novel
Feather tide

New
Writing from

• Janet McDermott-Brown • Ella Walsworth-Bell
• Olivia Collard • Estelle Grace Tudor • Andrea Fowkes

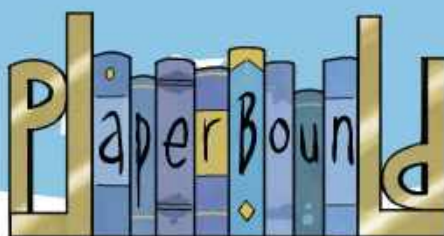
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PaperBound Magazine is a quarterly online magazine for the young, and the young at heart. It is dedicated to showcasing authors and illustrators of children's and young adult fiction. It strives to deliver inspiring content, new and exciting stories, book recommendations and top tips for aspiring young writers. PaperBound has been created by Emily, Lucy and Rayan who met while studying an MA in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University.

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to our very first BUMPER issue of PaperBound, a writing magazine for the young, and the young at heart. Our aim is to bring you useful writing advice, brilliant book recommendations, and get you writing creatively. Whether you are a young person, a parent, a teacher, librarian, someone who would like to write for young people or you just enjoy reading MG and YA fiction, we hope you find something useful within these pages.

There are a lot of people to thank for helping make this magazine a reality. As it's our first issue, we've all contributed something, but we couldn't have done it without all the wonderful submissions and contributions made by others. To all the writers and artists who submitted to PaperBound, thank you for trusting us with your stories and illustrations. Inside our first issue, you'll find the shortlisted entries we fell in love with. Don't forget to keep an eye out for the autumn submission winners (as it's our first issue, we've picked two!). A huge thank you also goes to those who have written articles and interviews full of inspiring advice. We'd also like to show our gratitude to all the authors we interviewed — thank you for making this magazine so special.

And lastly, thank *you* for taking a look at our brand new magazine. We are so very excited to be launching PaperBound into the world and hope you enjoy it as much as we've enjoyed creating it.

Happy reading!

Emily, Lucy and Rayan

If you would like to contribute to a future issue, tell us what you thought of this one, or contact us about anything else, we'd love to hear from you.

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this beautiful autumnal
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by
**Rūta
Čiutaitė**
- Blue Rue Designs

You can find more about our
illustrators on **page 59**



It's All About Autumn

By
Estelle Grace
Tudor

“Well, here we are again,’ Winter sniffed, sparkling in his snowy cloak. Snowflakes cascaded around him as he stamped his feet on the ground. He looked over to where Autumn was standing, resplendent in his new russet coat, arms thrown wide waiting to receive the gift of the new season from Summer.

Spring gave a sprightly groan from the distance as Autumn rustled impatiently.

‘He’s going to be incorrigible this year, especially with the full harvest moon,’ she observed from amongst the daffodils.

‘Can’t I keep it a little longer?’ Summer pouted, twirling the gift in her hand as if stirring an invisible drink, reluctant to let go of the long hazy days.

‘Absolutely not!’ Autumn stormed imperiously. ‘There is an order to everything, now hand it over, Summer.’ A sharp wind whipped towards Summer, fluttering her bright dress.

‘All right, no need to get all blustery,’ she blazed, passing the new season over

to him begrudgingly.

Winter rolled his arctic eyes at the familiar scene, while Spring yawned, distracted by two rabbits hopping by.

Triumphant, Autumn accepted the new season and flourished the gift like a baton, conducting his orchestra of colour. He swirled, faster and faster, changing the leaves from emerald green to copper, gold and fiery red. The crescendo threw out the tantalising scents of spicy pumpkin, toffee apple and smoky bonfire.

‘See you next season change!’ he dismissed the others crisply, painting the sky with the most glorious sunset.

Summer threw Autumn one last heated look as she bowed out. Spring gave a jaunty wave from afar, enjoying the soft drizzle covering her.


Winter stared coolly, indulging Autumn in his little show, biding his time when he would arrive in a flurry for the frosty finale. 



Illustration created by super-talented
Rūta Čiutaitė - Blue Rue Designs
find out more on [page 59](#)



Estelle Grace Tudor

When not searching the backs of wardrobes for Narnia, the bottom of the garden for fairies, or yet another castle, Estelle can be found with her nose in a book or a pen in her hand. Having previously worked at Cardiff Castle, she now writes full time while looking after her four children. She lives on the South Wales coast with her husband, children and crazy dog.

Twitter: @tinystar1410 **Instagram:** @from_the_desk_of_e_g_tudor

Interview

Beth Cartwright



Earlier this year, under lockdown, Emma Gibbs spoke to English author Beth Cartwright about her debut coming-of-age novel, *Feathertide*, and why it might not be what you expect.

This magical realism novel follows the story of Marea who is born covered in feathers and kept hidden in a house. In search of answers, she tries to find her father which takes her to the mysterious City of Murmurs.

The book has already been compared to bestselling fantasy novels, *The Bear and the Nightingale*

by Katherine Arden and *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern. However, Cartwright feels this comparison is misleading.

‘People expect fast paced action - it is not that kind of book,’ she said.

Cartwright revealed the book is more ‘gentle’ and ‘introspective’ compared with other fantasy novels. Instead of world

building, the magic is brought to the world we know and are familiar with.

‘There are no demons or dragons, instead the villain is self-doubt,’ she revealed.

The plot is driven by the protagonist, Marea, and her transformation. In the beginning, Marea ‘can only dream of escape’, but by the end ‘she has complete freedom

“It was the most uplifting but disappointing message I ever had.”

and has cast her independence. She is kind of no longer content with just staying still,' said Cartwright.

Cartwright grew up in Greater Manchester near the Peak District and returned there as an adult. However, she has also taught English in Greece, and worked in South America for a time.

'I would recommend travelling,' she said. 'Even leaving the house to go to the local forest or the wood.'

Cartwright has always written and suggested that parts of *Feathertide* are taken from childhood, but also bits of what she's seen and heard throughout her life.

'The birds probably came from my grandparent's garden,' she said.

Discussing how she got her publishing deal, Cartwright revealed it was in 'a very traditional way.'

She sent the manuscript to six agents, at which point it was more of a novella.

'It was not a novel, it was too short,' she said. 'I left it and went back to it. I didn't really hear anything. I didn't think I

would get a book deal,' she said modestly.

But then one day Cartwright received a call and almost didn't listen to the message, until she noticed it was a London number.

"...believe in what you are doing and the story you are trying to tell."

'I listened to the message – it was the most uplifting but disappointing message I ever had,' she said.

Her agent saw potential in her book, but it needed work.

'She could see something. She took that chance,' said Cartwright. However, she also noted that it's important to 'try and believe in what you are doing and the story you are trying to tell.'

Her agent eventually emailed to confirm the book deal with Penguin and they worked to polish the manuscript together for about a year. However, in its entirety, *Feathertide* was a 10 year writing project.

'I wasn't consistent in my writing,' she said. 'I'm not very brave and I'm not very confident. I sat on the idea of *Feathertide* for years.'



Cartwright refreshingly busts the myth that you need a completed manuscript, unwavering confidence, or a militant writing routine to bag a publishing deal.

When struggling for creative inspiration she turned to poems, but also enjoyed reading a number of current authors including Jeanette Winterson, Alice Hoffman and Jessie Burton.

‘I think Jessie Burton is a really intelligent writer,’ she said.


As for the editing process she revealed it was very ‘up and down’. Things would be ‘really slow paced’ and then ‘really fast’. In the end, the catalyst for finishing the book was her agent going on maternity leave.

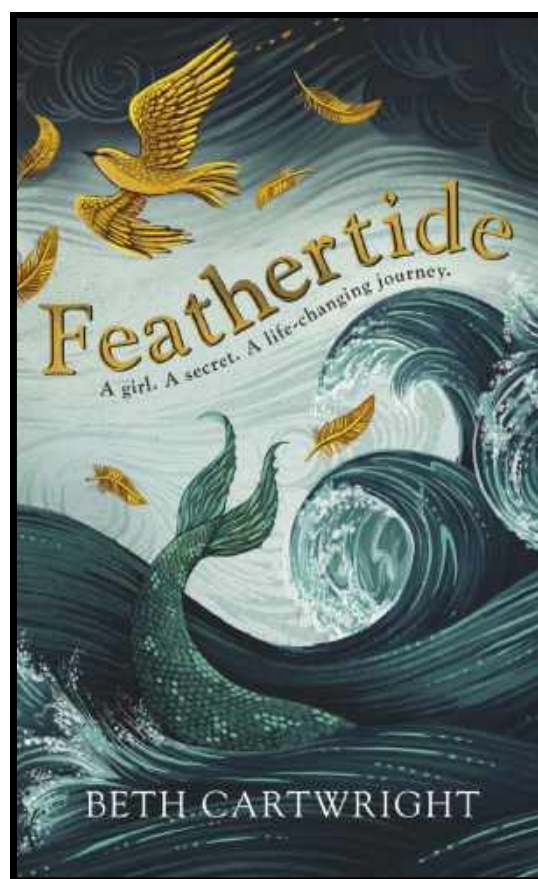
‘My timing has always been terrible,’ she mused.

The book launch was set back to July, not due to Coronavirus, but due to the book changing imprints.

When discussing the book launch and the inevitable feedback she said it now

belongs to the readers, but it’s ‘great when someone understands how your mind works.’

Having revealed that she landed a two-book deal, Cartwright confirmed that she has completed the first draft of her second novel – and we can’t wait to see what she writes next! 



Feathertide by Beth Cartwright is available now from all major book retailers.



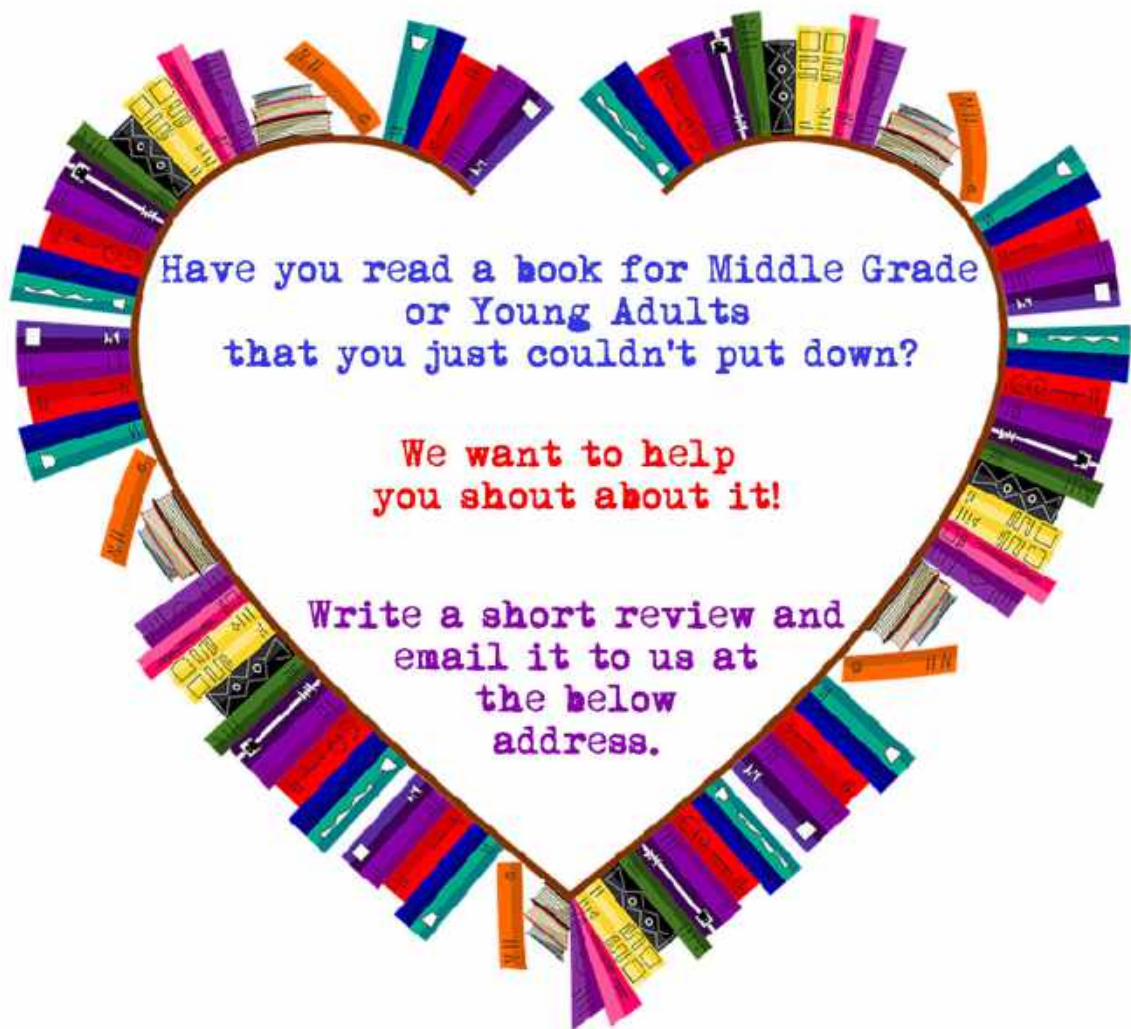
Emma Gibbs

Emma is an NCTJ qualified Journalist with by lines in Mancunian Matters, VIVA Magazine, Cornish Story and Cornish Guardian. She is also the founder of Emma's Travels With Books blog designed to help people read their way around the world. In her spare time she enjoys reading, exploring, and daydreaming.

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Book Review Corner



Send your reviews to paperboundmagazine@outlook.com.
We welcome reviews from all ages but, if you are under 18, please
get a parent or guardian to email your review on your behalf.
Please ensure your review is no longer than 250 words max. Reviews may be edited.
Don't forget to mention if it's something we've recommended in PaperBound.

We can't wait to hear what you've been reading!





LETTERS

We'd like to include a letters page in each issue, answering any of your queries, and hearing what you thought about our previous issues. If you'd like to ask us anything or share what you thought, get in touch.

Do you have a question about writing? Or perhaps you have a question about something you saw in our latest issue. We'll try and find you the answers.

Are you looking for a specific kind of book recommendation (kids and YA)? Drop us an email with the details and we'll get our thinking hats on.

Was there anything you particularly enjoyed in our magazine? We'd love to know so we can share your feedback in our next issue.

If there is anything you'd like to ask/tell us, please send an email to paperboundmagazine@outlook.com and put **PBLETTERS** in the subject line.

All letters to be a max of 250 words — we may edit the letters. If you are referring to a specific issue, please let us know which one. Make sure to include your name and location.

If you're under 18, please get a parent/ guardian to email on your behalf.

We look forward to hearing from you!

NATIONAL

POETRY DAY

1ST OCTOBER
2020

To celebrate National Poetry Day on 1st October, we have some advice from poet, *Elisabeth Hower Griffiths*, along with some simple ways to start writing poetry.

Just turn the page to get started!

You can find out more about National Poetry Day on the website: **nationalpoetryday.co.uk**

Top 5 Tips For Aspiring Poets



Elisabeth Hower Griffiths tells us about her experiences writing poetry and shares her top tips

A lot of people think writing poetry is easy. It's short, after all, and you could feasibly write a poem in twenty minutes and call it a day. Right?

Well, I mean, you *could*. It just might not be very good. Trust me, I'd know.

When I was 20, I thought I knew everything about writing poetry quickly. I wrote poems fast and hard, and rarely revisited one to check whether it held up after the first mad rush of excitement faded. Looking back now, I'm embarrassed to have put poetry out there with that slapdash confidence (and spend a lot of time now wishing I'd at the very least doubled the amount of effort I put into my 2015 collection).

But if I hadn't written poetry that way – carelessly, joyously – I'd never have learned what I learned about writing. I

might wish *Wishing For Birds* was better, but I treasure it anyway, because it's a little capsule of who I was and the way I thought back then.

The truth is that poetry's an intensely personal thing – terrifyingly personal – and so every poet approaches the writing of poems from a different angle, with a different aim. Two poets writing on the same topic will, without fail, produce wildly different poems. And that's what's so wonderful about it as a medium. The very unpredictability makes it magical.

I can't tell you how to find your angle or your voice, or how to get a collection published (mine was pure luck, I'm afraid), or what makes a poem successful. What I can do, though, is offer my five top tips for developing your eye for a good poem and for navigating the sometimes complex world of poetry.



Elisabeth Hower Griffiths

Elisabeth is a poet and aspiring novelist from the south west of England. By day she's a copywriter and by night she can mostly be found crying over edits to her first manuscript, a YA thriller called *Cliff Edge*.

Elisabeth's poetry collection *Wishing For Birds* is published by Platypus Press and available now.



elisabethhewer.co.uk

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1 READ ALL THE POETRY YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON

I'm always an advocate for buying collections wherever you can – poets make unbelievably small amounts of money from their poetry on the whole – but there is also lots of brilliant, brilliant poetry online for you to browse. Read the stuff that you don't like as much as the stuff you love. It'll teach you just as much.

2 GO BACK TO THE POEMS THAT MAKE YOUR HEART STOP AND TRY TO FIGURE OUT HOW THEY DID IT

There's a poem by C.T. Salazar called *Noah's Nameless Wife Takes Inventory* that took the top of my head off when I first saw it. I've read it about a million times now, trying to work out just why the format and the word choice makes my entire chest seize up. I haven't figured it out yet, and I might never. But I'll keep trying anyway.

3 DON'T BE AFRAID TO WRITE BAD POEMS

I've written so many. So many. Some of them even got published! Just like reading poetry you dislike, writing bad poetry is a vital part of the process. Nobody's good at something all the time. So write bad poetry. Put it in a drawer and forget about it. Who knows? It might turn out to be the spark for your epic one day. No creative endeavour is a wasted one.

4 SURRENDER TO THE WHIMS OF READERS

I've got two poems that I wrote aged 17 or 18 that go in circles to this day on Tumblr and Pinterest. I honestly have no idea what it is about them that so resonated with people. I don't even really agree with the messages in them myself anymore. But other people like them, and that's that. All I can do is be pleased that they've struck a chord, and thank everybody who's shared them and commented positively on them (and even got lines from them tattooed on themselves!). That support gave me the confidence to keep writing poetry, and – I'm quite sure – to keep writing, full stop.

5 FIND A COMMUNITY OF FELLOW POETS – BUT DON'T BE TOO EASILY SWEEPED UP IN THE DOMINANT 'AESTHETIC'

One of the main reasons I stopped writing poetry was that I fell into a really enthusiastic poetry community on social media, which started off as fantastic. However, my style was very different to what got noticed and popular among that community, and it fairly crippled me. I lost the confidence I'd always had in my poems and ultimately retreated from poetry altogether. Trust your voice. It's yours, nobody else has it, and that's the greatest thing in the world. The best poet communities will be on your level. They'll share advice, encourage you, and help you improve poem by poem. If you find a good one, it can help you in ways you could never imagine.

NEVER TRIED WRITING
POETRY BEFORE?
TURN OVER FOR NEW
AND EXCITING WAYS TO
START WRITING POETRY

Simple ways to start writing poetry

AS NATIONAL POETRY DAY IS COMING UP ON 1ST OCTOBER, WE WANTED TO CELEBRATE BY GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO GET STUCK INTO ALL DIFFERENT KINDS OF POETRY.

WE KNOW POETRY ISN'T EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE TYPE OF WRITING, BUT WHY NOT TRY JUST ONE OR TWO OF THESE METHODS? YOU MIGHT JUST FIND IT'S MORE ENJOYABLE THAN YOU THINK!

UT-OUT POETRY

This is by far one of the most creative ways to write poetry. Find a newspaper, magazine, or even a flyer, and cut out lots of different words. These could be related words or chosen completely at random. Once you're done, use those words to create sentences – they don't have to rhyme!



FREE VERSE

Free verse poetry has become a lot more popular in recent years and it's a great way to write down what you're feeling or how you react to the things going on around you. Usually, poems that are written in free verse can be full of emotion but they don't have to be. There are some really brilliant poems (and novels) in free verse and some people find it a lot easier to write this way.

The rules are: there are no rules.

RHyme

For those who feel confident rhyming, this is an excellent way to write poetry that flows off the tongue and can sound almost like a song. You don't have to choose dramatic and difficult sounding words, but you do need to make sure what you're writing makes sense and isn't there only because it rhymes.

BLACKOUT POETRY

Find an old book, newspaper or magazine. Rip out a page. Carefully select a few words to create a poem and blackout the rest with a marker. Simple! If you're feeling really creative you could create an image around the chosen words too. Just Google *Blackout Poetry* to see some stunning examples.



HAIKU

Originating from Japan, this type of poem is clever in small, subtle ways. They are, in total, only three lines long but the first and last line must have just 5 syllables, whereas the second line must have 7. This might sound tricky, but here's an example written by us so you can see what they look like:

*Nightfall is settling,
Upon the great prairie plains,
I wish you were here.*

LIMERICKS

Limericks can be a lot of fun and quick to write. They are only 5 lines long and, luckily, designed to be funny so you don't have to take yourself too seriously when writing them. The first, second and last lines all rhyme and have between 7-10 syllables. The third and fourth or 'middle' lines need to have between 5-7 syllables and rhyme too. If that sounds tricky, take a look at one of our limericks we have put together to show you:

There was once an old lady from Dover,
Who loved to run among fields of clover,
But one day she slipped,
And her ankles got nipped,
'Til a man found her faint in his rover.

IF YOU FANCY READING SOME POETRY, HERE
ARE A FEW GREAT SUGGESTIONS:

POETRY BOOKS FOR MIDDLE GRADE

Talking Turkeys by Benjamin Zephaniah, Puffin Books
I Am The Seed That Grew The Tree illustrated by Frann
Preston-Gannon, Nosy Crow Ltd.
The Lost Words by Jackie Morris and Robert
Macfarlane, Penguin Books Ltd.

BOOKS IN VERSE FOR YOUNG ADULTS

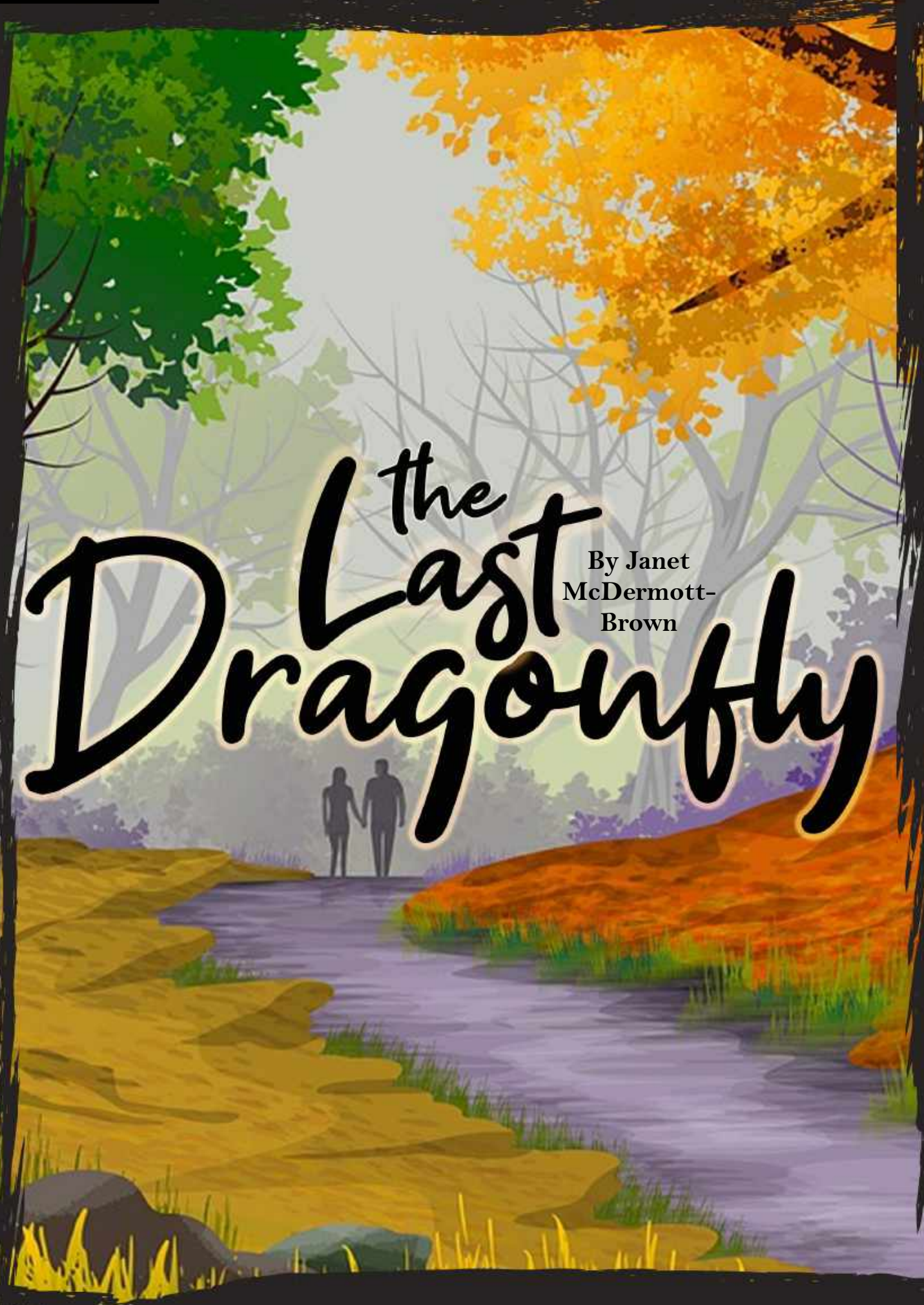
One by Sarah Crossan, Bloomsbury Publishing
Blood Moon by Lucy Cuthew, Walker Books
The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo, Egmont UK

There you have it!

These are just a few examples of popular poetry. There are lots more out there to try. Why not give it a go and send us examples of the poems you write so we can feature them in the next issue of our magazine?

Send your poems to
paperboundmagazine@outlook.com

We look forward to seeing what you come up with.



The Last Dragonfly

By Janet
McDermott-
Brown

I step out through the murky autumn door
To greet ghosts, silent and motionless.
A hint of winter hangs on my spiralling breath,
Then melts into the mist and fades like regret.

The damp air smells musty, ancient and surreal,
Whilst the milky fog presses down on my coiled body.
I brush past bushes dripping with dew,
Sagging sadly from the extra weight that they carry.

Spiders' webs decorate unused spaces like bunting,
Small droplets of water outline their fragile geometry.
Birds appear and disappear into phantom white shadows,
Half-hearted daylight seeping and never reaching its crown.

An ochre plumage of leaves scattered along my path,
Unseeing I skip through them with a childish heart.
In mourning for the summer, the blackbird's lonely song,
Reminding me winter is almost home.

Pumpkin fairies dance wildly on all souls' eve,
Tricking and treating over a monster's grave.
A chill in the air creeps through my weary bones,
The burnt embers of summer, bonfires and cones.

It's hard to hear with this muted sound,
Except the wretched cry of the last early bird.
With the worm in its beak still learning to turn,
My ode to the sun on this morning sojourn.

Take all the shepherds and bring them delight,
Bring me a poet on the outgoing tide.
The shadows retreat as nature closes her eyes,
Beyond the dreams of man and the last dragonfly.



Janet McDermott-Brown

Janet has a keen interest in poetry and children's writing. She enjoys supernatural/fantasy books and writing music.

Instagram: @jmcdermottbrown Facebook: JanetMcDermottBrown



WRITING HORROR



PAPERBOUND'S LUCY MOHAN SHARES HER FAVOURITE
HORROR WRITING TIPS AND WHY SHE THINKS THE
HORROR GENRE IS SO IMPORTANT

Original version published by Torchlight Anthology

What are your favourite types of books, films, TV shows? For me, they've almost always been some form of horror. And what better time is there to talk about writing in this genre than the season that brings us pumpkins, trick or treat and a little bit of Hocus Pocus?

Every day, I seem to learn something new about writing horror and I want to share a few of those things with you. So, here are three things that I've found useful and hope will be helpful to anyone thinking of writing some spooky tales this Halloween.



THE GENRE

I Before I start writing, I'm planning, and part of that means asking myself this question: **What genre am I actually writing?** It may sound a bit crazy, because the title of this article kind of gives it away. But, if I tried to define horror to you we might be here a while. There are so many different types of horror stories: monster-horror, techno-horror, slasher to name a few. There are also hybrids — where two or more genres are combined, like a horror-thriller, or horror-romance.

I learnt early on that if you don't work out what kind of story you're writing, it gets messy. So, once I decide whether it fits into a sub-genre like a *slasher*, or maybe a hybrid like a *romzomcom*, I immerse myself in this type of story.

Doing this helps me get my head in the right place. READ-WATCH-WRITE-REPEAT. This, unfortunately, means watching lots of film and TV too (I know, I know – but what can you do?).

READ
WATCH
WRITE
REPEAT

2

THE SCARE

Whenever I write a new story, it always raises a new set of challenges.

One of these is finding **original ways to scare readers**. Here are a few of my favourite tips:

- **Avoid clichés:** no one is going to be scared of something they've read a hundred times before. For a story to appeal to its readers they do need to be able to recognise the genre. However, twisting expectations and surprising readers is going to keep the genre fresh and leave them with the heebie-jeebies.
- **Get close to your characters.** Make readers care about them and all the things your characters care about. That way, when they are on that cliff edge, the reader is right there with them.


- **Build tension:** You don't always need gory moments. If you can create a sense of terror before anything actually happens, you're going to suck those readers right in. Often it's the thought of something that's the scariest thing of all.
- My final tip is to **write about what scares you**. This is likely to be more original than anything you've seen or read before. Remember, fear isn't always creepy footsteps on floorboards. Stephen King explains it better than I can: 'Monsters are real, and ghosts are real, too. They live inside us, and sometimes they win.' A personal struggle might be more terrifying than any monster could be. If you look carefully, you'll find elements of horror everywhere (and that's a pretty scary thought).

'OFTEN IT'S THE
THOUGHT OF SOMETHING
THAT'S THE SCARIEST
THING OF ALL.'

THE IMPORTANCE

3 We've come to the final point and, for me, one of the most important: **why write horror?** One of the challenges in horror isn't the writing itself, but ignoring the comments that describe it as 'trash' fiction, or that you should spend your time writing something else. This, to me, is not only incredibly wrong, but pretty sad and potentially dangerous. Telling you that you can only write (or read) a certain type of story is unlikely to encourage anyone. Like any genre, there will be bad examples, but there are also some fantastic horror stories out there with so much to offer (see our *Autumn Bookshelf* on the next page for some great MG and YA horror recommendations). Many people love to be scared and surely it's better to experience a *safe scare* like the ones found in books.

King ends his previous statement with: 'our better angels sometimes – often! – win instead, in spite of all odds.' I find it fascinating that many horror stories, especially Middle Grade and Young Adult, end with a sense of hope. And, in a world where real horrors are available at the click of a button, isn't hope something we could all have a little more of?

So, write what you want. Read what you love. After all, there are a great many things to be found in the dark, including the light. 

King, Stephen. (2011 edition) *The Shining* (Introduction). London: Hodder and Stoughton.

WRITING PROMPT:

**NOW IT'S YOUR TURN:
WRITE A HORROR STORY SET IN ONE OF THESE SPOOKY LOCATIONS**

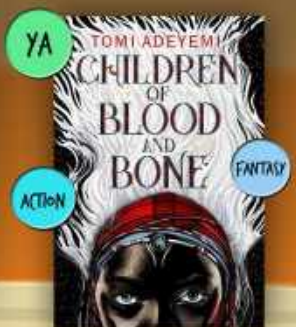
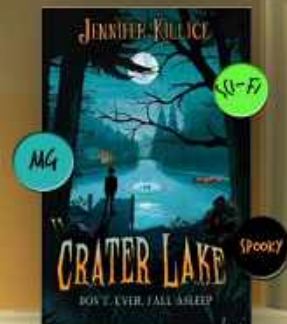


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Not a White Rabbit

By Andrea Fowkes

CJ bounces on his toes a couple of times, flexes his hands, trying to shake off some of the excitement that threatens to overwhelm him as he looks at the heavy metal door. He doesn't have long, ten minutes at the most, so if he only takes five he'll be out in plenty of time. Or maybe he could get away with seven; if everything Janie said was true, he'll want longer. Heart fluttering a little quicker, he reaches for the access panel, types in the password then flashes the 'borrowed' ID pass.

A gentle *click* and the door opens a crack, a slice of bright sunlight around its edge. A small wave of guilt sweeps over him as he remembers the way he had 'bent' the truth this morning. As long as he is quick, no one will know – it'll be fine. No harm done. He swallows, pushing the thought as far away from his head as he can and steps through the door.

The air is crisp, sharp, like fridge air. It makes the bare skin on his arms goose bump and his nose tingle. The sky is the bright, carefree-blue of easily

made promises. While the gravel under his boots scrunches, its grinding voice welcoming him with every step into the garden, it's the trees surrounding the path he's staring at. They are full of burnished-copper leaves, fluttering in showers to the ground with each swell of breeze, like rust coloured rain.

He looks out across the long green lawn and sees movement, a small shape running – no bounding, making for the hedge at the far end. He steps forward two or three paces, a rabbit or maybe a hare. A smell catches his nose. It takes a second for him to place it: smoke.

He turns to see some way off a pile of burning leaves, someone tending them. Raking more on, watching as the grey smoke curls lazily up, up, up and away into the endless blue sky. There are more leaves underfoot now he's moved further away from the door. They crunch in a satisfying way, so satisfying that he looks for a larger pile and jumps gleefully into them. He's no longer sixteen but back to being six again when the world was full of magic.

Janie was right. It's not what he expected. What did he expect? He's not sure now he's here in amongst the sunset colours. Janie, the oldest person he has ever met, has memories that span over a century and a half – well almost. That used to be a common thing before but now – now, she is rarer than snow and it almost never snows.



His eyes catch the way the bushes flicker at the edge of his vision and he tries to ignore it. Acknowledging it would spoil the effect, pretending to himself instead that it was another hare – don't they travel in pairs? He decides he's heard Janie say so. She would know, this was her world, his dad's childhood. His breath catches for a moment as an ache encircles his heart. He had all this for days, years even. There's a niggling feeling in the back of his head, something about time he had to remember. He's sure it was important but can't remember why. Why would anything matter when you have this?

He takes a deep breath of the cold smoky air, relishing the way it slightly chills his nose and decides to walk towards the hedge. Maybe he can find the hare. It was brown and aren't rabbits white?

He's halfway across the lawn, when he sees the forest, a deep mix of oranges, yellows and dark greens. *Deciduous*, the word springs to mind followed quickly by *evergreens*; these are the types of trees in the forest. Deciduous, they're the ones that lose their leaves – so careless. Perhaps, he thinks, he will build a house – no, a cabin from these careless trees. Strange he didn't see the forest from the path – he shrugs it off, perhaps there was just so much to look at all at once.

He's walking further on when his right shoulder suddenly shakes. He stops walking. Then his whole body shakes. His thoughts reel. Is it some kind of fit? Epilepsy? His mind starts to feel stretched as if trying to be in two



places at once. But the only other place he can remember other than here is the final one everyone goes to eventually and he doesn't want to go there, not yet. Not when there's so much to be discovered here.

He has a strange sensation of floating and he checks his feet are still on the ground. They are but he's all at sea inside, like liquid in a bottle sloshing around. He falls to his knees, closing his eyes tight, wishing it would stop. There are voices, muffled, arguing but either too far away or talking too quietly for him to distinguish the sounds into words.



When at last he slowly opens his eyes, his mother is leaning over him holding him tight by his shoulders. ‘What were you thinking? Going in with no one standing by ready to pull you out.’

He’s still caught between the two worlds. The chill autumn air in his nose, the sound of the leaves crunching underfoot while at the same time being with his mother in... in where? His eyes struggle to focus. There’s fluorescent lighting, he’s propped up on a brown sofa, lush green plants wave to and fro in the deluge as monsoon style rain hurls itself against the large wall-sized window beyond the desk: Mum’s office at N-cefX. Then he remembers the pass he ‘borrowed’ and can almost feel it burning in his pocket; that’s hers too.

‘What were you hoping to find there?’ Her eyes narrow. ‘Have you been talking to Janie again?’

He can feel his cheeks flush, so even though he thinks of lying, he knows his face has already given him away. So he decides to tell the truth, even though she will never understand. That he just wanted to see how things were before. When there were more than just the two extreme seasons they have today. See what his dad’s life was like when he was his age.

‘I just wanted to know...’ his voice trails off because he can’t find the words that fit.

His mum says more gently. ‘You’ve lots of questions for your dad. I know


you feel like you've lost him. It was all very sudden but we'll have him online soon. They've nearly uploaded him.' There is a slight dampness now around her eyes. 'Granma Janie means well but I'm not sure filling your head with stories of your dad is a good idea until we've adapted to our new life – just the three of us.'

'Dad will always be around though?' CJ asks, his eyes starting to fill up.

Mum squeezes his hand. 'Yes, of course.'

'And we might get lucky and find a body match.'

His mum nods. 'We're top of the list.'

There's a pause. 'Now,' she holds out her hand. 'I think you have something that belongs to me.' 



Andrea Fowkes

Growing up on the move gave Andrea a wonder for the world, a fascination for how it works and a belief that science is essentially practical magic. Andrea is a jewellery designer, mother to two teenage boys and is working on an MA in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University. Andrea currently lives in London with her family.

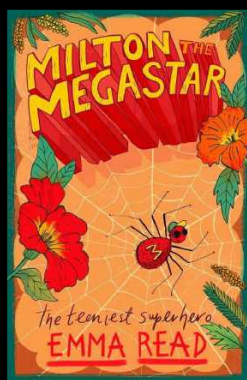
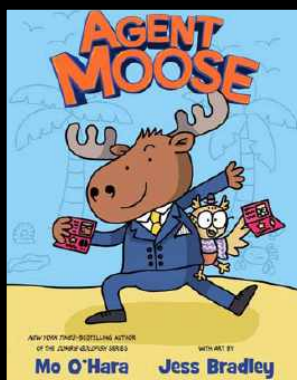
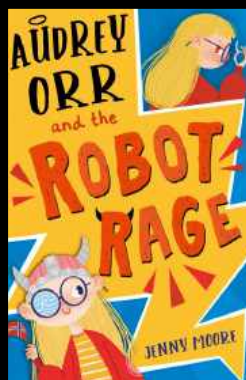
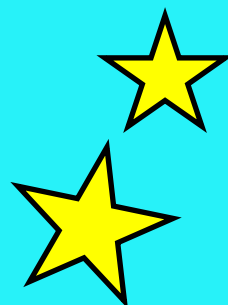
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Lockdown Books

WE'VE BEEN CATCHING UP WITH ALL THE BOOKS PUBLISHED OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, AND SPOKE TO FIVE AUTHORS ABOUT THEIR NEW NOVELS AND WHAT IT WAS LIKE BEING A WRITER IN LOCKDOWN.



Mo O'Hara



Photo by Hillary Jane Everitt

Can you tell us a little about *Cats in the Crater* and *Agent Moose*?

Cats in the Crater is the third book in the *Fangtastically Evil Vampire Pet* series (illustrated by the incredible Marek Jagucki). I've wanted to do a book with a flying volcano island evil lair for ages and I got to do it in this book. Dream achieved.

The idea for the series came about because we wanted to do a spin off series from the popular *My Big Fat Zombie Goldfish* books. I loved the idea of taking the villain from the first series and making him the hero in the spin off. I wanted to take the bully and put him in a situation where he could grow and learn. Mark is a young 'mostly evil' scientist who goes away to Evil Scientist Summer Camp with his vampire cat, Fang, and deals with being on the other end of bullying. It's about friendship and how we make choices, but it's full of evil science

gags and is action packed too. Think *Despicable Me* goes to Summer Camp.

I'm super excited about *Agent Moose*! It's my first graphic novel and it's with the absolutely awesome Jess Bradley! Working on *Agent Moose* was a huge learning curve in one way and actually extremely liberating in another. I started out as a writer doing scripts. I wrote comedy sketches for live sketch shows and radio and I wrote play scripts and storytelling pieces for performance. And I was an actor as well so scripts are my happy place.

When you write a graphic novel you write a script. It's action and dialogue and that's it. Writing it felt like coming home in a way. I could concentrate all my energy into creating these characters and making it all as exciting as possible for the reader. I thought of it as writing a movie or animation script really when

I was doing it. Thinking in scenes, cut-aways, reaction shots or close ups. It felt natural to write the script that way. Then Jess came on board and the collaboration really began. There is a vibe and look to the books that is the product of this magic collaboration of art director, editor, writer and the unbelievable imagination of this illustrator. I'm really proud of how it turned out and we're all excitedly working on book two at the moment!

What did you miss most about connecting with your readers during lockdown?

I really miss the kids. I tour a lot. I'm used to seeing hundreds or even thousands of kids a month so this has been weird. It feels a bit like: 'If you write the joke, but you can't hear the real life 8 year old laugh, is it actually funny?' I really was looking forward to connecting with my readers over *Cats in the Crater* and *Agent Moose*. I will be doing loads of online events and my website has lots of extra lockdown content to keep kids interested and keep them busy. It's not the same as going out and meeting readers though. I hope that next year I can tour again and hear the actual laughter once more.

"I hope that next year I can tour again and hear the actual laughter once more."

What is it like to be an author living in the UK with books published in the US?

I'm from the US originally (Blue Bell, Pennsylvania – oddly named after a real blue bell that hung in a school rather than the flower).

I love living in London and lots of my books are published here as well. Having books published successfully in the US has meant that I've been able to travel home more (to see family in PA) and also travel to sections of America that I never was able to visit. It's been amazing. I will always be both American and British (my heart sits somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic I guess).

Also, social media and YouTube have meant that I can connect with teachers, parents, librarians, booksellers all over the world. I've travelled around America, Europe and to Africa and the Middle East to visit schools and speak at Literary Festivals. It's been an amazing opportunity to widen my outlook and meet so many fantastic kids across the globe.

What were your favourite stories/books growing up? Do you think they helped to inspire the books you write now?

I loved Roald Dahl books growing up. *Matilda* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* were my favourites. And I discovered his books because of the movie, *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, so I'm never snooty about kids watching the movie version of a good book. It might lead them into a series they will love forever.

I loved the humour in Roald Dahl books too. I've always wanted to write comedy. The next books that really impacted me were *A Wrinkle in Time* and *A Swiftly*

Tilting Planet. I fell in love with Madeline L'Engle's writing and with sci-fi in general. The other really influential book that I discovered when I was about 12 or so was *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. It combined my love of sci-fi with Douglas Adams's brilliantly funny voice. I was hooked.

What's the best thing about being an author?

I honestly think the best thing about being an author is the connections. I've had the pleasure of meeting some extraordinarily talented people in this industry – Illustrators, editors, agents, other writers. I also get to connect with teachers, parents, librarians and booksellers and share a love of books! It's magic.

Lastly the connection with the readers is priceless. When I get a letter or a drawing from a kid it can make my day, my week, my year. I'm in my study as I write this, looking around at a painting that was given to me by a young girl who I worked with in Kuwait, a mosaic from a boy in Seattle and so many drawings, stories and poems from kids from my travels. They inspire me every day. They really do. 🐾



Mo O'Hara

Originally from America, Mo now lives in South London with her husband, her two kids and her two (slightly bitey) cats. Mo worked previously as an actress and comedy performer and now, as an author, Mo tours all across the USA and the UK and has also visited schools and festivals in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Mo and her big brother once brought back their goldfish from the brink of death! True Fact!

***Cats in the Crater* and *Agent Moose* are out NOW in the USA (you can buy it as an import from some independent bookshops and online in the UK). Both are published by Feiwel and Friends (imprint of Macmillan).**

Facebook: Mo O'Hara Twitter: @Mo_OHara Instagram: @mo_ohara_

Jenny Moore



*What can readers expect from your new book, **Audrey Orr and the Robot Rage**?*

A fast-paced mix of humour, adventure and travel... and robots, of course!

When Mrs Orr wins a luxury cruise to Norway, Audrey thinks she's hit the jackpot – until she realises the trip's during term-time. With her no-nonsense headmaster, Mr Stickler, on her case, she and Grandad hire a robot clone to take her place at school while she's gone. Unfortunately for Audrey, her robot double has other ideas...

Hopefully readers will enjoy the family aspect of the book too. Audrey's parents might be a bit on the embarrassing side, thanks to Mrs Orr's laminating obsession and Mr Orr's fungal toe blog and bottom-less stomach, but the strength of their family bond lies at the heart of the story. Audrey also owes a lot to her knitting-obsessed Grandad, who's like a grandparent, best friend and personal superhero all rolled into one.

As it's our autumn issue, we wondered what you imagine Audrey likes to do on a chilly autumn day.

She'd either be curled up in a chair, designing a new comic strip, or drinking hot chocolate and watching quiz shows with Grandad, shouting out all the answers and sharing silly jokes.

*Where do you find the inspiration for your stories? Where did the idea for **Audrey Orr** originally come from?*

Ideas for stories pop into my head all the time – I don't always know where they come from, if I'm honest. I *do* remember with *Audrey Orr* though. It was a few years ago now when there were a lot of stories in the press about fines for taking children out of school during term-time. I remember thinking it would make for a funny story if someone hired a supply pupil to fill in for them while they were gone. We were planning a Norwegian cruise around the same time, to celebrate a special birthday (I lived in Norway as a young child but the rest of my family had

never been), so combining the two meant the holiday became a bit of a research trip too. I even knitted a pink Viking helmet like the one Grandad knits for Audrey, so that I could test it out on location!

“I remember thinking it would make for a funny story if someone hired a supply pupil to fill in for them...”

Have you ever had writer's block or other writer problems? How do you deal with it?

I've never really suffered from writer's block, thank goodness. I usually have lots of different writing projects on the go at the same time, so I can switch between them if need be. I'm no stranger to procrastination though and can fritter away entire hours on writing-related social media and chasing down research rabbit holes, rather than face the dreaded blank page.

What works best for me is having a couple of hundred words jotted down in longhand before I start (ideally written

the night before). Sitting down to type them up doesn't feel nearly as daunting as sitting down to start work from scratch. By the time I've finished, adding a few extra sentences in here and there, I'm already in the swing of things and it's much easier to keep going.

How have you found writing during lockdown? Is there anything you miss?

I did find the first couple of months really hard, writing-wise. The combination of a lack of mental energy and trying to publicise my new book when the whole world was upside-down meant I didn't write very much at all. I've got into a proper rhythm now though and am making good progress with a new project which feels great.

I miss seeing my critique groups in real life but Zoom has definitely helped. I was also looking forward to library events this year, as *Audrey Orr* is one of the selected books in this year's Summer Reading Challenge. But on the plus side, I've been able to attend webinars and virtual workshops that I'd never have been able to get to in real life. 📖

Jenny Moore

Jenny Moore writes for all ages and has published over a hundred short stories and poems across five continents. She was the first ever UK winner of the Commonwealth Short Story Competition and was shortlisted for the Greenhouse Funny Prize. Her previous middle grade book, *Agent Starling: Operation Baked Beans* is also published by Maverick, and she has a third title (*Bauble, Me and the Family Tree*) due out at the end of September. She lives in Devon.

***Audrey Orr and the Robot Rage* is published by Maverick Arts Publishing and is out NOW. It's widely available in the UK and can be purchased worldwide through Book Depository.**

Twitter: @JennyWriteMoore Facebook: @JennyMooreWriter Instagram: @jennymoorewrites



Emma Read



*What can readers expect from your new book, **Milton the Megastar?***

More of the same ... spidery fun and mishaps. Milton being brave and doing the right thing against the odds, to a backdrop of Zoe as Spider Warrior, Ralph being a most loyal buddy and Audrey looking on with a raised eyebrow!

Something new ... Saving the environment and an endangered spider species in Hawaii, taking on a ruthless businessman's bulldozers, meeting new friends and finding out what family really means.

As it's our autumn issue, we wondered what you imagine Milton likes to do on a chilly autumn day.

Milton *loves* the autumn! Although he's a house spider and doesn't like cold weather, autumn means a log pile in Zoe's house, which is his favourite place to play. It's

quite a busy time for him though, as Hallowe'en approaches and he's out doing positive spider promotions, and posing for Zoe as she makes spider cookies and cupcakes.

Where do you find the inspiration for your stories? Where did the idea for Milton originally come from?

My ideas come from all over the place! Often something just pops into my brain – a setting, a 'what if this happened' question, or a character, but they're just as likely to be inspired by a dream, a feeling or a comment.

With Milton, I was mulling over how the media is changing the way young people view celebrity. These days anyone can become famous, not by being an actor, a singer or a sports star, but simply by accident. It got me thinking about finding unwanted fame, like publicly shamed dogs in fancy dress on

YouTube! Then I remembered the unfairly vilified spiders in the tabloids and I thought maybe I would tell their story.


What piece of advice would you give to young aspiring writers?

Don't give up – writing is for life, not just for English lessons! Practise as much as you can. The more you write, the better you will get at it, but keep in mind that not everyone will like what you write, and that's OK. Plenty of people will, so write for them.

“Don't give up – writing is for life, not just for English lessons!”

How did you keep creative during lockdown? What are you most looking forward to once it is over?

I won't lie, it's been hard. I have two children in primary school, and the whole family have been sharing the dining room to write, work, and home-school, so it's been chaotic, noisy and distracting. But also, friendly, fun and supportive. No one has felt alone. Although at times we might've wished we were!

I'm looking forward to passing someone in the street and not stepping away from them as if they are contagious! But mostly, coffee in a café with a friend and a nice piece of cake that wasn't made by me. 



Emma Read

Emma is the author of the Milton series (Chicken House): MILTON THE MIGHTY, one of *The Times* Best Children's Books of 2019, and MILTON THE MEGASTAR, out now. She is a WriteMentor Spark mentor (<https://write-mentor.com/>), workshop leader and reader for both WMCNA and Bath Children's Novel Award. Her passion is for writing and reading middle grade fiction and particularly books for younger readers which encourage a lifelong love of reading.

www.emmareadauthor.com

Milton the Mighty was released in June 2019 and is available so far in the UK and The Netherlands, with two more territories TBA soon. **Milton the Megastar** was released in April 2020 in lockdown! Both books are published by Chicken House.

Twitter: @emmydee73 Instagram: @ediereadie
Facebook: @emmareadauthor

LOCKDOWN BOOKS CONTINUES ON PAGE 49,
WHERE WE TALK TO YA AUTHORS,
MARISA NOELLE AND TRACY DARNTON.

WHIZZ BY OLIVIA COLLARD BANG

I hate bonfire night.

I hate the booms and the pfffts and the horrible screeching. I hate the way the big ones make the windows rattle and I hate the way I can still hear them through my headphones.

What I hate most are the crowds.

Anna gets upset that we have to stay home every year, because otherwise I close my eyes and scream when people push past me, and I get hitty. And gougey. I don't understand how anyone can be around so many people zipping up coats and laughing and shouting and pushing and slushing and apologising and other kids crying. Not to mention the pop, pop, popping of the wood as it burns.

Anna still has the scars from last time.

I love animals, because they make a lot more sense than people. People ruin everything. Scientists can explain nearly everything about animals, like how tigers

are stripy because it makes them harder to spot in the tall grass, or how anteaters have long tongues that can move like fingers so they can grab termites out of their big mounds. Or how termites live in big mounds to keep away from anteaters.

I love animals. Animals don't talk with their faces.

Miss Hayes smells like burnt coffee and dust and lemon marmalade and always wears a necklace with a hare on it because her mum gave it to her, and her mum is dead now. I know that because she told me so and when she told me, a drop of water fell on her chest, which was probably a tear falling from her chin. I don't know for sure though, because I don't look at people's faces when they talk to me, and I was more interested in the fact that hares are better than rabbits because hares don't need to live in groups.

I like to be alone, too.

Miss Hayes says I'm too smart to learn about photosynthesis the way we are in class. Putting cress in a cupboard and watching as the stems predictably start to spiral and turn yellow isn't *stimulating enough* for a girl who reads at a Year 9 level, so she gives me my own projects to work on alone.

I'm not allowed to do group work, anyway.

The other kids get frustrated when I can't hear them through my headphones, even though that's the whole point of them. When they come at me with their marmite sandwich hands and try to take my headphones off, I get hitty and maybe a little bit scratchy. Sometimes, if the smell of marmite is too strong or their sticky hands touch my hair, I get a bit gougey, too.

Gouging is not allowed at St Bernard's Primary.

So, I work on my own projects. My project last year was about hedgehogs.

I like hedgehogs. They have little mousey faces and big hard spikes and their name makes sense. They're called hedgehogs because they grunt like pigs do and pigs are sometimes called hogs and hedgehogs live in hedgerows. So, we call them hedgehogs because it sounds better than hedge-pigs. It's a very literal name. I have been told I am a very literal person.

Hedgehogs are nocturnal, which means they are awake when it's dark. Things become nocturnal because it's harder for predators to spot them in the dark. For my project, I wanted to learn why hedgehogs bother to be nocturnal when they make so much noise grunting like they do, anyway.

When an animal evolves without predators, they don't develop the same defences as other prey creatures. They can't leap like gazelles. They can't sneak like mice. They can't shoot hot acid out of their bums like those caterpillars on David Attenborough documentaries.

Blue Dad says the kiwi birds in New Zealand have this problem. I call him Blue Dad, because he has blue eyes. My other dad is Tall Dad, because I used to call him Brown Dad, but Aunt Sally said that sounded racist. My dads are the only people I look in the eye, because they don't look away when I stare too long.

Blue Dad says kiwis can't fly, they're nearly blind and nearly deaf, and they stumble around loudly like Tall Dad does when he gets home from the pub on a Friday evening. Because the main population of New Zealand, for millions of years, was birds and insects. No predators to hide from. But then people came along and ruined everything, because people always ruin everything.

British people brought hundreds of rabbits 11,617 miles on their boats, because they missed the rabbits in the countryside. Which, if you ask me, is a stupid reason to bring rabbits 11,617 miles on a boat.

Rabbits get seasick. Rabbits also breed very quickly, so suddenly there were too many rabbits in New Zealand. So, they brought weasels and stoats 11,617 miles, to eat the rabbits. But the weasels and stoats ate the loud, blind, flightless kiwis instead, because rabbits are harder to catch.

Unlike people, weasels and stoats aren't stupid.

What I learnt doing my project at the back of the class, aside from the fact that Casey Ludlow stepped on a slug and was getting slime all over the floor, was that hedgehogs aren't quiet because they don't need to be. Even though hedgehogs, unlike the poor kiwis, evolved with predators like badgers and foxes. Their big spikes are a good enough defence alone. When they curl up and spike out, they look like little brown fireworks, too dangerous to eat.



But again, people ruined everything.

Hedgehogs like to hibernate in big piles of sticks, because they're safe and warm. Or they used to be, anyway. Before people all over Britain started building piles of sticks every year and setting them on fire. Even the hedgehogs' big spikes can't protect them from burning.

Last year, our dads took us to the fireworks.

They said that because I had gone a long time without hitting and my headphones were helping to keep me calm, that we should go and see them for Anna. I said yes, because I love Anna. They said it was just a little whiz bang.

When we got there, Anna took my hands like she does when she needs me to look at her face. So, I looked at her face.

'Jessie,' she said. 'I love you.'

'I know,' I said.

'Can I please go to the front with Blue Dad? I'll come and see you right after the display?'

'Okay,' I said. I squeezed her hands, because that's how I show that I mean something when I say it. I'm still learning how to understand the things people say without words.

I stayed at the back with Tall Dad. It's not good for me to be in crowds. He got on one knee even though it was muddy so I could look into his eyes.

'I know I normally say you have to hold my hand when we're out, Jessie,' he said. 'But if you think holding your headphones down will help to keep you calm, you can do that. As long as you stay close. Are you sure you don't want to go back to

the car with me?’

‘Yes.’ I squeezed his hand because, at that moment, I was sure I was okay.

‘You’re amazing,’ he said.

‘Isn’t your knee getting wet?’ I said, clamping down my headphones.

Then the display started.

Even at the back with my headphones on tight, it was hot and loud and there were so many people moving around us. Everyone was cheering. It smelled sweet and smoky of fire and mulled wine and bad hotdogs and it was too much. And with every boom my body shook and with every person pushing past I closed my eyes and screamed as I remembered the hedgehogs, hedgehogs, hedgehogs.

Burning.

Tall Dad tried to take my hand, but I ran forward anyway. Through the crowd. To Anna. To the fire. To the hedgehogs.

I don’t know for sure what I did, but Anna still has the scars.

Anna doesn’t love me anymore. 



Why we love Whiz Bang

We thoroughly enjoyed all the stories featured in our first issue. However after much discussion, Whiz Bang was unanimously chosen as our **Autumn 2020 Winner**.

It captured the season vividly and, although the ending wasn’t necessarily a happy one, the descriptions, voice, rhythm, inclusivity and humour made it something really special and this issue’s winning writing submission.

Congratulations, Olivia!

A little prize will be on its way to you soon.

Olivia Collard



Olivia is an MA Writing for Young People student at Bath Spa University. She’s an aspiring lesbian aunty, a coffee hater, and is currently working on her first YA novel about two girls falling in love.

Blog: oliviapresseswords.wordpress.com
Twitter: @OliviaRSC

Why I Write YA ROMANCE

PaperBound's Emily Ould tells us what it is about YA romance she loves so much

Why do I write YA romance? What is it about it that makes it so compelling I just have to get to my keyboard and *write*?

What is there that makes it so different, yet so universal?

To be very honest, when I first sat down and starting writing this, I didn't know. I hadn't ever really thought about it with much intensity

before because it's just a natural thing that I do. It just happens. I guess, on a basic level, I love writing YA romance because it makes me feel good – I get wrapped up in these stories and I feel like I know what I'm doing. I might not know where my

plot is going or where my characters will end up, but it's definitely an avenue I feel most comfortable with.

It's always when reading YA books that I feel most connected with the

"I started to realise life is a little more complicated than that."

characters. They're flawed. They're emotional. And (especially if it's me writing) they're more than likely head over

heels in love with somebody – and, if they're not, then they're well on their way to getting there.

I love that about YA romance. There's all kinds of boundaries that haven't been figured out yet when it comes

to adolescence and liking someone seriously for the first time. First love can be fast and sweet, yet brutal all at the same time. Maybe that's not what motivates some readers when they read this genre, but it's what motivates me. Because YA fiction, whether it's a focal plot point or just blithely mentioned in the story, is full of hormones. It's full of the buzz of romantic attraction, with characters experiencing it for

the first time, and then not knowing how to navigate it. In life, and especially when we're teenagers or adolescents, we make mistakes. We get heartbroken. And we learn from it. Or maybe there's a happily ever after in there somewhere after all – we hope. The point is, love is what makes the world go round. So they say.

When I was growing up, my head was full of love stories. They were bursting to get out. All I wanted to write about was two people falling in love, getting together, maybe they have a dramatic fight and make up, the end. But as I matured as a writer and grew up a *lot*, I started to realise life is a little more complicated than that. You can't just make two characters fall in love and be done

with it. You have to create a reality around them, throw challenges their way, and, sure, maybe even break their heart a little bit. They need to *feel* those emotions



and live through them, just like anybody else. Plus, so much more can be going on that hasn't got anything to do with the cliché, but much loved, hottie who lives next door. Who does your main character rely on? Who do they tell their secrets to? What are their friendships like? Do they

have a healthy family dynamic, a dangerous one, or none at all? Are they happy the way they are, where they live, and who they surround themselves with, or do they want to ditch it all and recreate themselves as someone new? And, if they do, then *why*? Well, that, my writerly friends, is up to you.

Most of my main characters in the fiction I write are sixteen or seventeen, so they're in that cusp of adulthood where they have the freedom of not yet being an adult but they're still able to take on a bit of responsibility. For some characters, that responsibility might be different than others. For example, I once wrote a character who was embarrassed about being a young carer, and kept it a secret


from the guy she liked, but it turned out he had secrets too. My point is, you don't know other people's stories until they invite you to be a part of their own. Your characters have to be well grounded, structured realistically, and you need to get why they act the way they do. You don't have to know all this as you start out, or even halfway through writing your story, but by the end you should have a fairly good grasp on who they are. That's the magic of storytelling. You create these characters and then by the end of your writing, they might have just become your best friends.

So I write YA for lots of reasons. First, it's because I want to write love stories since falling in love for the first time is so memorable, sudden and fast.

Even painful.

Secondly, it's because I love creating stories that feel like they could realistically happen in places that we already know. But, ultimately, I guess it's because I love writing about people. People who are launching themselves into adulthood, who may or may not choose 'the right path' but can share how they get there with readers.

When you're young, your future can be so unstructured. The horizon seems endless. And you determine its course with your actions. But, the thing is, the future is wide open. I want my characters to grab hold of it and never let go.

I think, above all, that's what I love about writing YA the most. 

Writing prompt

Write about two people meeting for the first time.

- Do they know they're meeting each other, or do they meet by accident?
- Is it set somewhere that you know well, or somewhere you've never been before?
- Is it instant attraction, or a love/hate relationship?
- What do they have in common? Do they have anything in common?

Don't worry if you don't know all the answers straight away. You may discover that the more you write, the more you'll find out about them.

If you get stuck, use one or more of these images as inspiration.

We'd love to read what you come up with.
Send your writing to paperboundmagazine@outlook.com



PRINTABLE HALLOWEEN WRITING PROMPTS

Cut out the characters, settings and things and place them upside down in three separate piles (or use little bags). Take one from each pile until everyone has a different character, setting and thing. Now create a story that includes all of these features. You could even use this in a classroom — just print out several copies so you have enough options for the entire class.

CHARACTER

VAMPIRE

WITCH

GHOST

WEREWOLF

HUMAN

DOLL

SETTING

FOREST

GRAVEYARD

DESERT

FROZEN LAKE

ABANDONED HOUSE

SWAMP

THING

APPLE

SPELL BOOK

PUMPKIN

SKELETON

FULL MOON

CANDLE

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR SPOOKY STORIES.
SEND THEM TO PAPERBOUNDMAGAZINE@OUTLOOK.COM

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE

(CREATE A CHARACTER FOR



HALLOWEEN



Your character could be scary or friendly, young or old. It's totally up to you. Feel free to invent your own creature; you could take the teeth of a vampire and combine it with the invisibility of a ghost, or choose another exciting combination. This is your character, so get creative!

Draw your creation in the box below. Label the different parts of your character and explain what they show us about them (e.g. sunglasses because they don't like sunlight = VAMPIRE).



Write the opening paragraph to a story about your new character

FREEWRTING



Set a timer (1, 2, 5 minutes — you decide). Using the image as inspiration, start writing and don't stop until the timer has run out.

[illegible]

Marisa Noelle

YA



Tell us about *The Mermaid Chronicles: Secrets of the Deep*.

The idea of the book came from a song. *Train* is one of my favourite bands, and when they released their new album, *California 37*, way back in 2012, one of their songs leapt out at me. Entitled *Mermaid*, it really conjured the image of mystery and secrets in the ocean and undiscovered tropical paradises. It mentions the Puget Sound, and I decided to set the second book in the series there too. Having grown up loving the ocean and living part of my life in California, I decided to set the book in San Diego, Ocean Beach, which I know well and seemed to fit the vibe of the song perfectly!

When did you begin writing?

I have not always written. I did little stories when I was a kid and teenager but never took it very seriously. I was more of a math and science kid and kind of took it to heart when my mom told me I had great ideas, but didn't know how to write! But, I have always loved reading. I am a total bookworm and for some reason it never occurred to me to venture

into that world for a career. It wasn't until I developed an anxiety disorder halfway through my degree that I turned to writing. First through poetry as a way to express and exorcise what I was thinking, then later to novels. I'd always had an idea or two floating around and wanted to try it out. But I'd never had any formal training, and once I wrote that first draft of an adult sci-fi (with no dialogue and only at 45k words!), I realized I needed tuition and embarked on learning as much as I could. Everything snowballed from there and I discovered the more I wrote, the more I loved it. It became my therapy. The only thing that could get me out of my own head.

**“I discovered
the more I
wrote, the
more I loved
it.”**

What's the best piece of writing advice you've ever been given?

Back when I was seeking my first agent, I stumbled across a familiar name in the Artists and Writer's Yearbook, and realized that an old school friend of mine was now an agent. I reconnected with him and we had a very nice lunch to talk all things books. I was only really beginning my journey at the time, but what he told me still resonates. He said "Persevere." Keep writing and never give up. That is the key to all success. Whether you are traditionally published, indie or self-published. It won't happen unless you keep going. Writing is hard and the rejections sting, but you gotta keep trucking. It's the one piece of advice I now give out too!


How has lockdown impacted the writing side of life?

I haven't suffered for creativity or ideas. I'm lucky that I've always been very productive and can get a first draft out very quickly. But, trying to do that while home schooling 3 boys, live through a house renovation and train a new puppy is a lot to handle in one go. I also mentor for aspiring MG & YA authors through the Write Mentor programme. So I've had to slow down and prioritise what I need to

get done each day/week etc. It can be frustrating, but there are pleasures in having this time with the family at home too.

What's your favourite thing about interacting with readers?

One of the reasons I wanted to write was to be able to touch a person in the way that my favourite books have touched me. So when I hear that one of my books is a reader's favourite of all time, or that they want to be the character, or demand to know when the next book in the series is coming out, it fills me with such joy. Not only have I made the reader feel amazing, but I am fulfilled in that achievement.

Before lockdown, I visited one of my old schools to give an assembly on reading for pleasure. I was delighted to see how they'd all dressed up as characters or abilities from my book, *The Unadjusteds*, and to hear how much they loved it. 

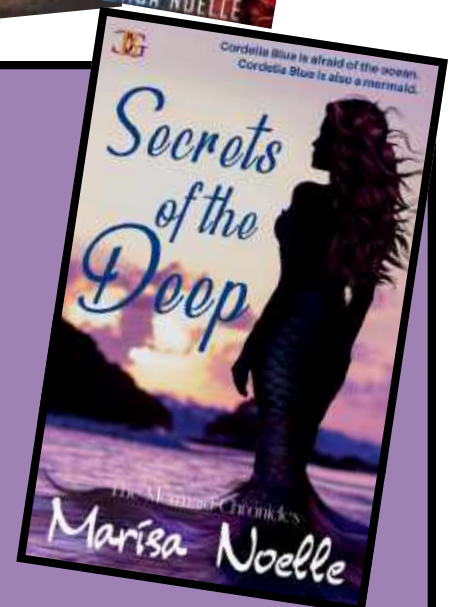


Marisa Noelle

Marisa Noelle is the writer of middle grade & young adult novels in the genres of science-fiction, fantasy & mental health. *The Unadjusteds* and *The Shadow Keepers* were released in 2019 and *The Mermaid Chronicles – Secrets of the Deep* in June 2020. She is a mentor for the Write Mentor program that helps aspiring MG & YA authors.

www.MarisaNoelle.com

Secrets of the Deep is published through Champagne Books and is available NOW.



Tracy Varniton

YA



Can you tell us a little about *The Rules*, and the inspiration behind it?

The Rules is a YA thriller about Amber on the run from her prepper dad. Her whole childhood has been spent preparing for disaster like civil unrest and pandemic (!) and having to live by her dad's extreme set of rules. Now she has to stay hidden from the man who taught her everything she knows about survival and staying under the radar. The rules are kicking in again even though she's tried so hard to forget them. What's her dad got planned as the ultimate prepper's bunker, and is the pull of the rules too strong, or are rules always meant to be broken?

The Rules began life as a short story which was published in the YA anthology *I'll be Home for Christmas* in 2016. After lovely reader feedback, the publisher asked me to think about working it up into a novel. I had some fixed points from the short story and then quickly decided that the reason Amber was estranged from her father was that he was a prepper who took it too far.

I was really fascinated to think about the effects all that dwelling on disaster could have on somebody, and also how rules are used in our everyday lives. The story takes off for me once I have those key points which interest me.

Why did you choose to write YA fiction?

I like writing intelligent, thought-provoking books and YA is the natural home for that. You can be creative in how you tell stories and the themes you explore. The readership is so engaged and there's plenty of interaction between authors and bloggers/readers.

What's the one thing you wish you'd been told before becoming a writer?

That I'd have to spend so much time *not* writing. I wish I was better at social media – and liked doing it more.

Did you always want to write?
What do you love most about it?

I wrote when I was younger but honestly had no idea back then it was something people could choose to do long term. My creative writing got buried under A levels and a law degree and becoming a solicitor. It wasn't until much later that I went back to writing. I wish I'd started earlier, so my advice to any young writers is to find a way to keep writing alongside the demands of school/uni/work/family. Bizarrely I quite like the editing phase when you hone your rough draft into a novel. The ex-lawyer in me relishes getting out my red pen and working through line by line. But I also love that writing means I can get in the head of my characters and know exactly what they'd say and do. You start with a blank sheet of paper and end up with 'people' who feel very real.

“You start with a blank sheet of paper and end up with ‘people’ who feel very real.”

Tracy Darnton

Tracy is a writer for children and young adults. Her previous novel *The Truth About Lies* is a thriller about a girl who remembers everything and was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize.


The Rules is out now and published by Stripes (Little Tiger).

Twitter: @TracyDarnton

Instagram: @tracydarnton

How did you keep creative during lockdown? How do you hope to interact with your readers once it's over?

Like many, I struggled with concentration at the beginning but eventually settled into some kind of routine because, well, deadlines! I got back to my 'fluffier' younger writing before my darker YA. I enjoyed 'attending' sessions run by the Society of Authors and online festivals like Hay. I played so many games, enjoyed the Grayson Perry Art Club and painted some truly terrible artwork. Does watching Netflix series count as creative?

The best bit about this whole author process is interaction with young readers and I miss that so much. One of the last events I did before lockdown was the Concorde Book Award in Bristol with many different schools, celebrating reading and being interviewed with the other authors. It feels like another planet now. And I was so looking forward to taking part in YALC again which has a whole YA celebratory atmosphere of its own. I hope it's not too long before we're able to have those kind of events again. 





HERE ARE A FEW MORE BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THAT CAME OUT DURING LOCKDOWN:



EARLY READER:

Bug Belly Babysitting Trouble by Paul Morton

MIDDLE GRADE:

Troo Friend by Kirsty Applebaum

The Infinite by Patience Agbabi

Fire Boy by J.M. Joseph

Storm by Nicola Skinner

Where the Wildnerness Lives by Jess Butterworth

Crater Lake by Jennifer Killick

Sky Pirates by Alex English

The Unadoptables by Hana Tooke

The Wild Way Home by Sophie Kirtley

Wilde by Eloise Williams

YOUNG ADULT

Read with Pride by Lucy Powrie

Felix Ever After by Kacen Callender

Clap When You Land
by Elizabeth Acevedo

Blood Moon by Lucy Cuthew

The Fascinators
by Andrew Eliopoulos

The Henna Wars by Adiba Jaigirdar

The Life and Medieval Times of Kit Sweetly by Jamie Pacton

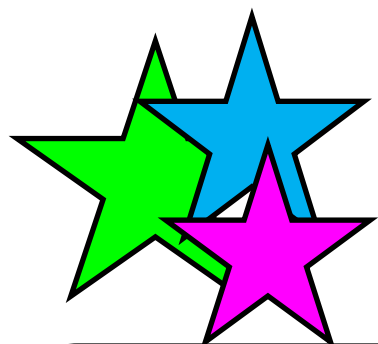
By The Book by Amanda Sellet

Hideous Beauty by William Hussey

Wonderland by Juno Dawson



IF YOU'VE READ ANY BOOKS DURING LOCKDOWN
AND WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW ONE FOR OUR
NEXT ISSUE, WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.
FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 10



QUIZZES



FILL IN THE BLANKS

THINGS TO DO WITH AUTUMN

1. _ALL_ _G L_A_E_

2. _UM_ _I_S

3. B_N_IR_

4. D_W_ _I

5. _AL_ _W_ _N

SOLVE THESE 5 ANAGRAMS

(TIP: THEY ARE ALL BOOKS ON
OUR AUTUMN BOOKSHELF)

ECHOING TRUTH WISH

.....

ORCHESTRA COPIES

.....

WHITE CONTENTED SHRUBS

.....

RATHER HELPLESS BATTLE

.....

REAL RACKET

.....

FIND ALL THE AUTHORS THAT WE'VE
INTERVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE. TRY AND
FIND THE TITLES OF THEIR BOOKS TOO!

BOOK AND AUTHOR SEARCH

C M D V A B H Y H E E A B C S R W A C O M R P J
S W G D R G N D R F G S P A J L Y S V E A S G M
T A L J J M C F Y V A S D T A L H A L T I I E T
J U T G R G F L B T R F A S V A E M O N B S C H
V C O G S E C H J D T G E I S F L R B F I N O G
D O P I H S A J C G O I R N T R L A L C G F D I
F G O P D O M V F G B F A T B R E T N N I V T R
R S S F T O B D D S O W M H I L O S Y Y J G D W
C N M E T M B N P T R G M E R R N A W T W O J T
E M N P P T O E E R E T E C C E A G J M C P V R
O S Y F H N A D E A H J L R J P S E H G P V J A
T D V Y T E S I D C T D H A Y P I M L F A F O C
S I L M P G H T E Y D C R T M L R E L J D F S H
L W E L H A M R H D N O M E M B A H J E S J E T
P U S M H N A E T A A S N R S Y M T W D R E R E
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R U I O U J A F E N E S S A E F N I I I W O B W
O C S I E W T G R G R T W T H L I M W G D O U C
H U G N Y S U N C D D T B U T M G G B N B R D P
O E C O T I U P E S U M O O H A R A P S C E R Y
M B F T J N L E S T A G H E B T H I J D A J R D

CATS IN THE CRATER

AGENT MOOSE

AUDREY ORR AND THE ROBOT
RAGE

MILTON THE
MEGASTAR

SECRETS OF THE
DEEP

THE RULES

FEATHERTIDE

BETH CARTWRIGHT

TRACY DARTON

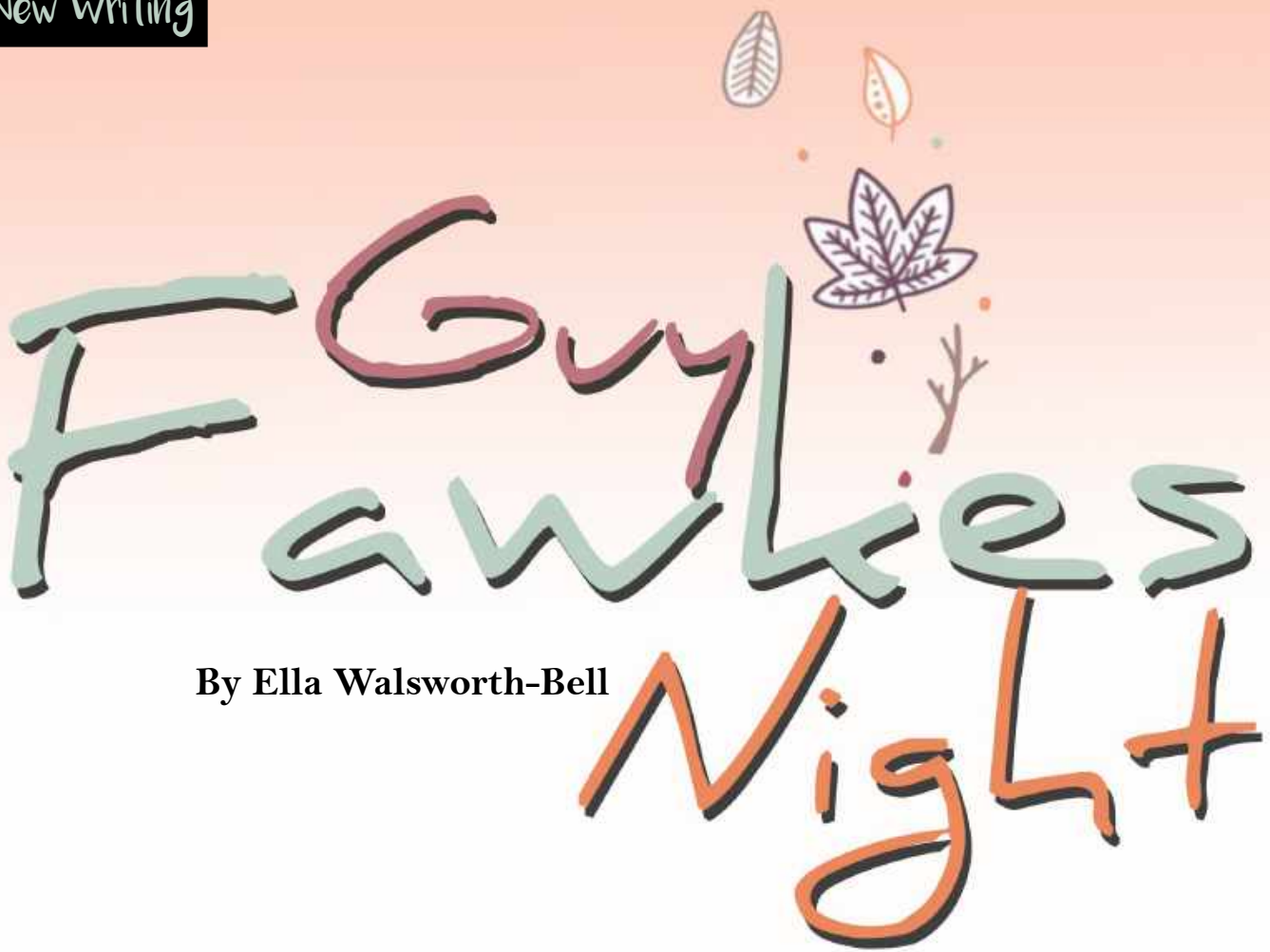
MARISA NOELLE

EMMA READ

JENNY MOORE

MO O'HARA

ANSWERS ON PAGE 60



Guy Fawkes Night


By Ella Walsworth-Bell

I loved Guy Fawkes night when I was a little kid. The all-enveloping darkness, the frisson of danger as sparklers were lit, the oohs and aahs at the fireworks.

We always went to the bonfire down by the Scout Hut. The whole village turned out to see if the Scouts could light it. Or whether they'd mooch around in their shirts and neckties, shoving firelighters grimly into a wet pile of wood.

Now, life has changed. Mum and me, we haven't been to a fireworks display in years.

It's my baby brother, see.



When Reuben was tiny, I was allowed to push him down to the field in his heavy pram, wrapped in a blanket. Mum wanted him to see



the Scouts' bonfire. It was on, despite the cold rain. We got there, and he cried. Big warm tears sliding down his cheeks. Wailed with fear when the Catherine Wheels went off. Those squealing firecrackers were the worst – the ones that cry out like stabbed pigs as they spin into the night sky. The stinging smoke in his eyes, the noise, the crowd. All of it, way too much.

A year later, he was four, and I was eight. We tried again.

That night, Reuben ran off. Wearing his favourite green T-shirt and shorts. They were soaked through; he wouldn't put his jacket on. I rushed after him in a panic, busting through the people in the crowd. My heart beat like a machine-gun, my face burned hot with shame and fear. I found him dipping his head under the safety rope, launching himself toward the fire.

'Want my Guy,' he said, lower lip trembling.

On top of the unlit woodpile lay our home-made Guy, cloth legs and arms akimbo. Mum hailed a Scout, who pulled it down.

Disaster averted, I found my brother a glow-stick to amuse him. Minutes later, I stood at the sink, rinsing his face with cold water. He'd bit into the stick and chewed the blue gel. I heard the fireworks that year, but didn't actually see them. Mum was busy trying to read the small print on the packet, checking the glow-sticks were really non-toxic.

SENSORY PROCESSING DYSFUNCTION:

Some children struggle to regulate the sensory input from their immediate environment. They can be over – or under-sensitive – to light, sound, touch, smell and taste. Easily overwhelmed, they exhibit ‘meltdown’ behaviours.

Mum took him to a specialist when he started school, because he didn’t cope.

He got the diagnosis, and it fits him perfectly.

I think I understand, now.

This year, I’m a teenager, and I’m at a new school myself. I’m braver. And we’re both more prepared. We drive to the bigger, more organised fireworks display in the nearest town. Holding a hand each, we walk Reuben slowly from the car park. We’ve arrived late on purpose, so it’s a little quieter. Clusters of people are dissipated across the grass at the cricket ground.



Guy Fawkes Night
is illustrated
by the brilliant
Katie Ruby Miller


Find out more about Katie
in our illustrator special
on page 59

My little brother wears noise-reduction headphones to block sudden noises or loud music that may distress him. I should be embarrassed by the big phones pinned to his head, like over-sized Mickey Mouse ears. But I'm not. It's far worse when he runs off, shouting and wailing. I know, from before.

Mum's got pictures at home, stuck on the fridge. Reuben knows our schedule, and he knows tonight is different. So he's ready for the sickly smell of candy floss at a stall, and the high buzz of the noisy crowd.

My new friends from school are there and I chat to them. They think Reuben's cute, with his big blue eyes and his scruffy uncut hair.

We know people here, even though it's in town, rather than just down the road. Mum waves at someone from work, and talks to a couple she knows from when I was a baby. The atmosphere is relaxed: there's pop music playing, and there's no smoky, unpredictable fire. My brother smiles and bounces with excitement.

I get down to his level like Mum's told me to. I put my hand gently on his arm. Point at the sky. There's a countdown over the loudspeakers and we all know what to expect. He cranes his neck back and the sparkle of fireworks is reflected in his dark eyes. He likes being hugged, but only if he knows it's coming. I make the Makaton sign for 'cuddle' and hold him tight. He's happy, and so am I. 

Ella Walsworth-Bell

Ella has lived in Cornwall since the age of five, when her parents moved ashore after living aboard a sailing boat. She works as a speech therapist and writes short stories, which often lean towards the mystical and the bizarre. Ella is currently working on her first novel.



MEET THE ILLUSTRATORS

KATIE RUBY MILLER



Armed with a 2H pencil, her creativity and wit, Katie uses her arsenal of skill and years of industry experience (as a Graphic Designer, Illustrator and Greetings Card & Gifting Product Designer) to create awesome illustrations and designs.

Since leaving her full time job in September 2016 and becoming a full-time freelance Illustrator, Katie has been fortunate enough to design an award winning website (<https://www.mymustard.co.uk/>) and have some of her greetings cards stocked in Paperchase.

Originally from Hertfordshire, Katie lives and works from her 32ft Narrowboat that she cruises the Grand Union Canal with her two cats. Katie illustrated *Guy Fawkes Night* in our debut issue

Instagram:
@katierubyillustration

WWW.KATIERUBYILLUSTRATION.COM



Rayan Rhys Phillips

Rayan is a writer who uses art to visualise their stories. They usually create character designs and love using traditional media to draw and paint.

Rayan illustrated *Whiz Bang* in our debut issue.

Twitter: @rayanroar



Winner

Rūta Čiutaitė



Instagram:
@blue_rue_designs

Originally from Lithuania, Rūta came to study textile design at Falmouth University. She started working as a graphic designer in her third year, but after two years she found her true path in illustration. Rūta illustrated *All About Autumn* in our debut issue and is also our second Autumn 2020 Winner for her above illustrations. We loved them so much, we put one on the cover.

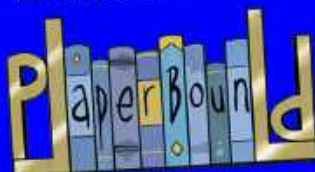
Congratulations, Rūta!

A little prize will be on its way to you.



CARYS TOMOS

Carys is a Welsh illustrator and graphic designer who creates a lot of character concepts, zines, and typography. Her main inspirations come from music, games, and dungeons and dragons. She graduated from Cardiff Met university with a degree in illustration.



We wanted to say a huge thank you this issue to Carys for creating our brilliant masthead. We love it!

Twitter: @Carys_Tomos

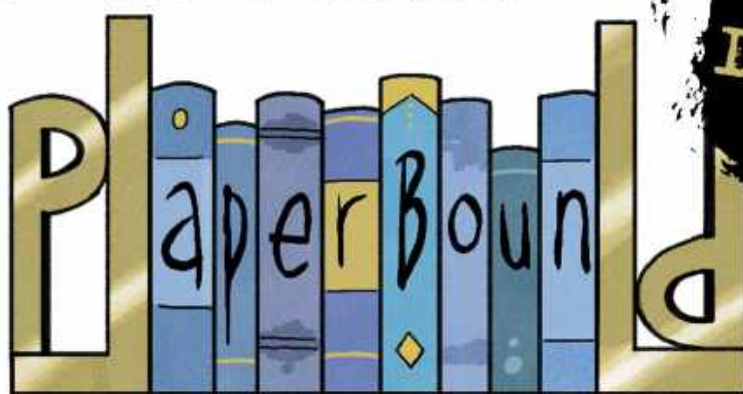


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for the young, and the young at heart

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December**



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Author Interviews

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