



To celebrate the 1 year anniversary of PaperBound, we are having our 1st ever

Twitter

All welcome Friday 10th September 2021



7-8.30pm (UK time)

#PBMagChat

With brilliant guests



Lesley Parr



Bex Hogan





Clare Weze



Amy McCaw



© Copyright 2021 PaperBound Magazine

All works of writing and art © Copyright 2021 retained by contributors.

All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used or reproduced in any manner without written permission, except in an educational setting where attribution must be given to PaperBound Magazine and the contributor (exception below*).

*The creative writing and artwork included in PaperBound Magazine may not be used or reproduced in any electronic or print medium, outside of this issue, without the consent of the writer / artist.

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 writing, 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.

If you are interested in contributing to the magazine please see full submission details on our website.

Website: www.paperboundmag.com Email: paperboundmagazine@outlook.com Twitter: @paperboundmag Instagram: @paperboundmagazine Facebook: @paperboundmag

Edited by Emily Ould, Lucy Mohan and Rayan Phillips.

Masthead design by Carys Tomos Cover Illustration by Rūta Čiutaitė

Additional images have been sourced from Pixabay and Pexels.

PG/ YA — some stories may include content that could be unsuitable for some younger readers, and that parents / guardians might want to check first. Please look out for these symbols in top left corner.

For information on advertising in PaperBound Magazine, please email: paperboundmagazine@outlook.com



Dear Keaders.

Can you believe it? It's been a whole year since our 1st issue last September. Huge thank you to everyone who has supported and read the magazine over the last year. We are so glad you're enjoying it.

Our 5th issue is a bumper special full of spinetingling spooky content. But don't worry if spooky is not your thing, we've got a few non-spooky interviews and book reviews for you to enjoy too. We had a record number of submissions for this issue and so we couldn't help but expand our shortlist to include an extra few. There are illustrations, poems and stories featuring witches, vampires, haunted houses, creepy dolls and so much more. Perfect for the **Halloween** season. Keep your eyes peeled for our submission winner too—we found it incredibly difficult to pick one from such a wonderful range of writing and illustrations, so we've chosen a runner up too.

There's also a bumper number of fantastic author interviews, spooky writing tips and book reviews! Thanks so much to all of our autumn contributors. We really wanted our 1st anniversary issue to feel special, and we really think it does.

To **celebrate** our anniversary, we would like to **invite** you all to a special PaperBound Twitter Chat on 10th September at 7pm BST, where we will be chatting to six brilliant authors who have all featured in the magazine over the last year. Bring some questions, or just pop along to say hi!

This issue is full of spooky stories, so please remember to check the top left hand corner of our featured writing for any age restrictions or trigger warnings.

If you'd like to be a part of a future issue, please get in touch. We're always on the look out for new writing and illustrations as well as interviews and book reviews. Check out our website for more details.

We hope you enjoy the autumn issue as much as we do.

Happy screaming (... we mean 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.

www.paperboundmag.com

paperboundmagazine@outlook.com







Contents

New Spooky Writing & Illustrations

6 Don't Judge a Spell Book by Its Cover

by Myles McLeod

12 A Lighthouse in the Sky

by Jonny Syer

26 Best Friends Forever

by Louise Finch

34 Poppet

by Catherine Ogston

40 The House with No Heart

by Dorian Hampton

48 The Night the Street Disappeared

by Truly Johnston

60 Up the Stairs

by Meg Small

70 Meet the illustrators

Read all about this issue's featured illustrators: Rūta Čiutaitė, Jayne Leadbetter, Victoria McDonald and Wilm Lindenblatt.

Regular Features

11 Spooky Bookshelf

This issue's bookshelf is full of spooky, magical, edge of your seat recommendations for middle grade and young adults. Happy Reading!

19 New Releases

Read all about recently released books and those coming soon!

43 Book Review Corner

We asked you about the books you love. Find out what you told us in the Book Review Corner.

45 Printable Writing Prompts

59 Quizzes

Interviews

8 Joanna Nadin

We caught up with **Joanna Nadin** to chat about her brand-new middle grade novel, *No Man's Land*.

23 Philip Womack

Philip Womack tells us what to expect from his new novel, Wildlord (out October), and shares his writing tips.

28 Lucy Hope

Lucy Hope spoke to **Anne Manson** about her soon to be released debut novel, *Fledgling*. Out November!

36 Hannah Gold

Hannah Gold chats to us about the inspiration behind her debut novel, *The Last Bear*.

53 Lesley Parr

Lesley Parr tells us all about her debut middle grade novel, *The Valley of Lost Secrets*.

66 Julia Tuffs

We spoke to **Julia Tuffs** about toxic masculinity, magic, and her debut YA novel, *Hexed*.

Special Features

31 Writing Good Villains

YA author, **Sarah Daniels**, shares her top tips to create an unforgettable villain.

56 Top Tips for Writing the Supernatural

Author of *Mina and the Undead*, **Amy McCaw**, reveals how she weaves the supernatural into her writing.

Once downloaded, this contents page is interactive. To jump to a page just click on the article you want to read.





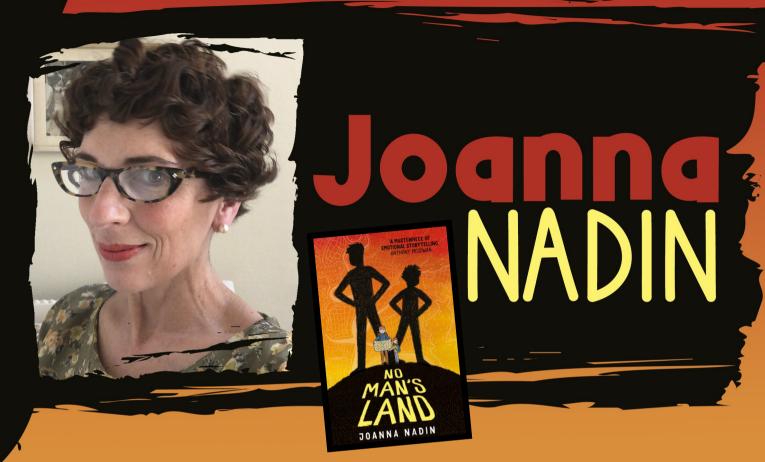
Myles McLeod

Myles is a BAFTA winning writer and one half of The Brothers McLeod. He is the creator and head writer of Circle Square, currently airing on Channel 5's Milkshake! He is the author of the well-loved Knight Sir Louis book series. His poems have appeared in The Best Ever Book of Funny Poems, Shaping the World, and The Bee is Not Afraid of Me.

www.mylesmcleod.com
Follow Myles on Twitter: @poetrypicture



INTERVIEW



Author Joanna Nadin chatted to us about the inspiration behind her new middle grade novel, No Man's Land.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEW NOVEL, NO MAN'S LAND, AND A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT INSPIRED IT?

No Man's Land tells the story of a new version of England – Albion, run by a far right-wing government – and two boys, ten-year-old Alan and five-year-old Sam, who, a matter of weeks away from World War 3, are secretly evacuated from Bristol (now Brigstowe) to a women's commune on the Tamar estuary between Devon and Cornwall –

the eponymous No Man's Land. What follows is Alan's narrative as he tries at first to get used to a wilder life, then, when his Dad doesn't show up, resolves to escape to rescue him, Sam in tow. It was written in a state of rage on the back of Donald Trump's increasing abuse of power, and the UK's vote to leave the EU. Trump has, thankfully, gone. But our world still feels apocalyptian at times.

NO MAN'S LAND MIMICS OUR CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE AND DOESN'T SHY AWAY FROM A FUTURE BRITAIN CHANGED FOR THE WORSE. IT WAS EASY TO RELATE TO ALAN'S FRUSTRATION OF ADULTS NOT TELLING HIM WHAT WAS HAPPENING, DO YOU THINK WE DON'T GIVE KIDS ENOUGH CREDIT FOR HOW **MUCH THEY OBSERVE?**

They hear and see so much – more, sometimes than we do – and of course they realise what's happening. That's why we need to talk about it – to reassure them that despite the mess of

No one hero or

heroine is ever going

to save the world -

too many books tell

us that. 99

the world, there is always hope.

THERE ARE SO MANY INTERESTING CHARACTERS IN NO MAN'S LAND. ONE OF **OUR FAVOURITE**

CHARACTERS WAS DAD. DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE SUPPORTING CHARACTER, AND IF SO, WHY?

Dad is a favourite of mine as well. He's modelled on the actor Joe Gilgun (I cast all my novels, so I can see the characters move and hear them speak better), whom I've always found mesmerising on screen – funny and moving too. My top favourite though is Ahmed, who's only in it for a short time, but who is bold and caring, and a great friend to Alan.

THE BOOK ENDS IN A WAY THAT PEOPLE MIGHT NOT EXPECT. DID YOU PLAN FOR IT TO END THIS WAY?

I did. I don't start writing a book without knowing exactly where it will end up, so I'd plotted out the final chapter before I'd started the first. I knew I wanted it to be realistic, as opposed to a classic happy ending, but offer hope as well.

HOW DO YOU HOPE READERS WILL RESPOND TO NO MAN'S LAND?

I hope readers will recognise some of what's going on in the world around us at we could end up if we don't make some changes. Most

the moment, and where importantly, I hope

they'll find some courage within themselves to realise they can help make that change. No one hero or heroine is ever going to save the world – too many books tell us that. In No Man's Land, as in real life, only by working together can we change things.



ALONG WITH BEING AN AUTHOR, YOU ALSO TEACH CREATIVE WRITING, DO YOU FEEL YOUR WRITING HAS IMPROVED/ DEVELOPED THROUGH TEACHING?

Of course. I learn so much from working with others, often hugely talented, writers, many of whom have gone on to be published. In fact, No Man's Land was partially inspired after a class working on voice in middle-

66 The more you do it, the better you get at it, so write every day, even if it's a diary, even if it's only a paragraph. 🥦

grade novels. My biggest tip is: read. If you read enough, you begin to absorb how story works. You'd be amazed at

how many students think they can get away with not reading. It's like a violinist imagining they can learn to play without ever listening to anyone else. On which note, practise as well.

> Writing is no different to violin here either, or sport. The more you do it, the better you get at it, so write every day, even if it's a diary, even if it's only a paragraph. Slowly it will become more of a muscle memory and you'll find the right

words leaping to your fingertips all of a sudden. 🕫

WE'D LOVE TO READ WHAT YOU COME UP WITH. SEND YOUR WRITING HERE: paperboundmagazine @outlook.com

JOANNA'S WRITING PROMPT

Imagine you're being evacuated from your home and everything you know, either alone or with a sibling or friend.

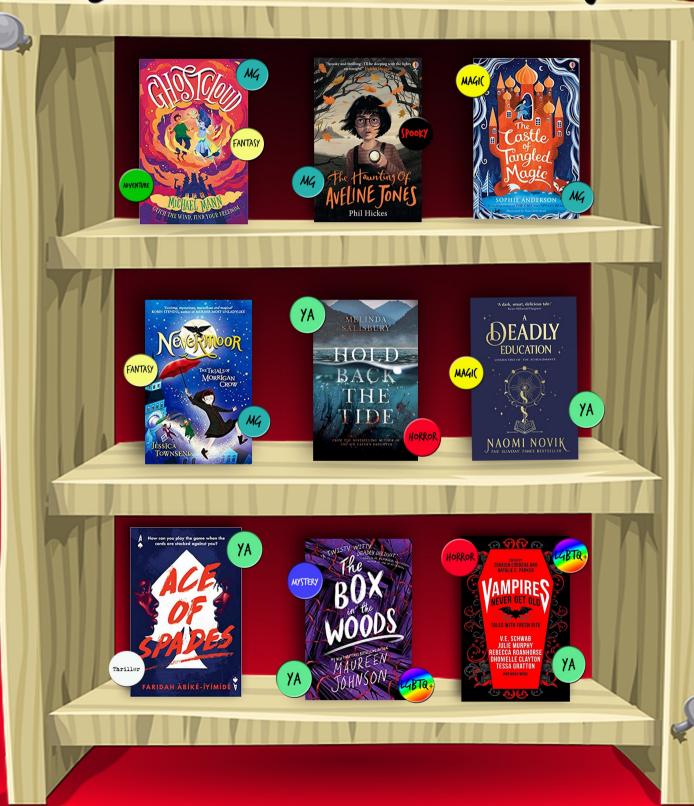
Write about the journey to the new place and how you feel as you travel. What will you miss? Are you glad to be going somewhere safer, or do you wish you could stay behind and, if so, why? And then tell us about the first moment you see your new home, and the people you're going to be living with. Are they welcoming or scary? Why is it different to where you are now?

JOANNA NADIN

Joanna Nadin is the author of more than eighty books for children, teenagers and adults, including the bestselling Flying Fergus series with Sir Chris Hoy, the award-winning Worst Class in the World series, and the acclaimed YA novel Joe All Alone, which is now a BAFTA-winning BBC drama. She lives in Bath, and teaches at the University of Bristol.



NO MAN'S LAND IS PUBLISHED BY UCLAN AND IS OUT 2ND SEPTEMBER 2021





A Lighth Sylven Syer Super Sup

izard Hightower was three hundred and thirty years old and lived in a lighthouse chiselled from the top of an ancient mountain. Across the centuries, men, monsters and the occasional flock of seagulls looking the wrong way, tore into the mountain sides, pockmarking it with caves and cavities.

This mountain that was now stuck in the wrong place.

The Wizard sent requests for supplies to the nearby villages he could see below, who were more than happy to give the unknown being in the sky above them anything he wanted.

Months passed.

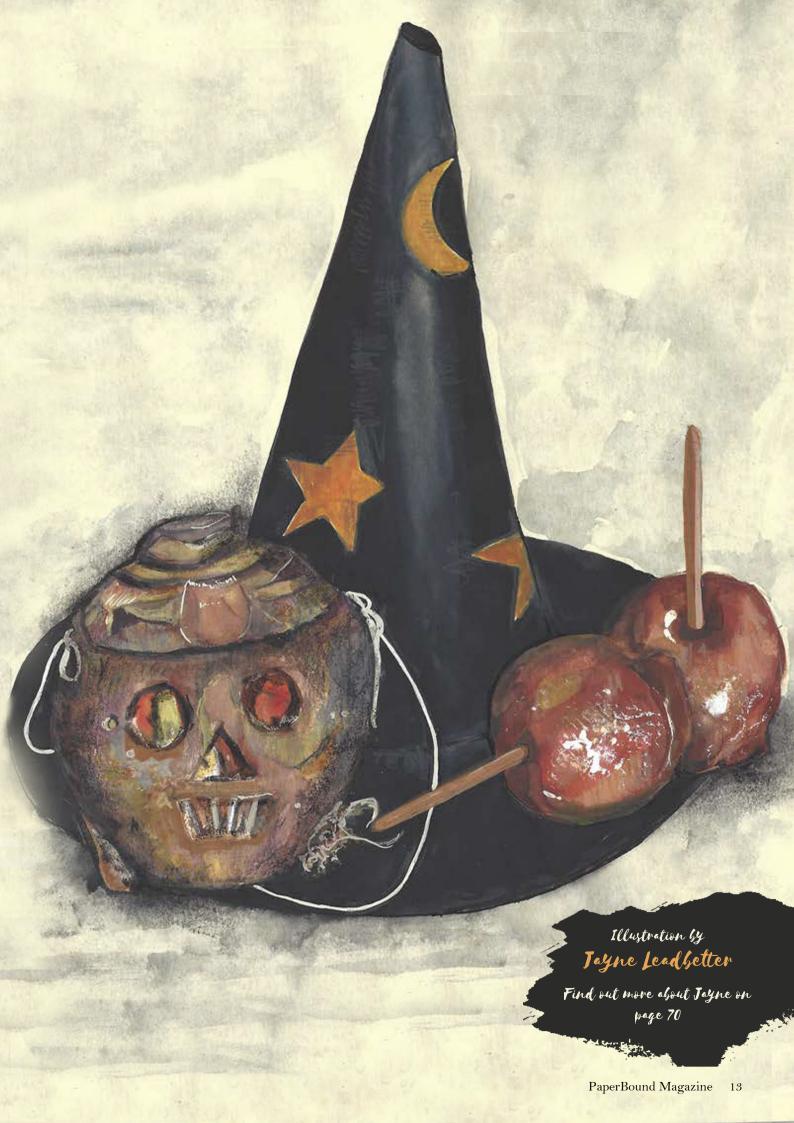
It was a clear day, not a cloud above or below. Hightower was standing on the edge of his lighthouse balcony holding an ornate brass telescope. Inside was an elven lens.

The magic of elves - unlike wizard magic, which is all incantations and the waving of big sticks - works by imagination. It's the reason they can make wooden toys one day and razor-edged weapons the next. An elf could use the telescope to see a sparrow sleeping in its nest thousands of miles away but Hightower, lacking all things imagination, could barely see beyond his garden gate.

What he did see was somebody opening it.

A sharp black fingernail lifted the latch. Attached to the other end of the nail (by way of a wrinkled finger, worn hand and crooked arm) was a woman wearing a pointy black hat. She walked with a bent back, as though forever searching the ground, as her feet shuffled against the loose stone garden path.

Hightower ran inside and hid behind his best dragon horn chair. A brass knocker



slammed three times against the outside of his wooden front door.

'I know you're in there, wizard,' said the woman. Her voice was croaked, as though she had a frog in her throat, and that frog was a long-term smoker.

The woman mumbled a few words, and the lock went click. Hightower screwed his eyes to the sound of the front door creaking (which was annoying because he only oiled it last week).

'Love what you've done with the place,' she said, scratching her nails against the red bricked wall. She shuffled over to the skull of a water dragon hanging above the fireplace, took off her muddy boots and curled her toes into a soft feathered rug. If the rug weren't already dead, the smell of her feet would have killed it.

Hightower emerged from behind the chair and grabbed his staff, before running up a twisting wooden staircase in the middle of the room. Green magic leaped from the wizard's staff towards the woman. The magic paused mid-air, took one look at her face, and ran back into the staff with a whimper.

'How did you get here, Halfwart?' asked Hightower, not really wanting to know the answer.

T've been on this stupid mountain all year,' said Halfwart. 'I was on the way to your house with a party of goblins when you transported us to this place. The goblins are all dead, couldn't handle the transportation. I hope you're happy with yourself. They had families.'

Hightower snorted. He should have known the witch would bring goblins, dirty witch tricks. He calmed himself.

'How did you survive for six months?'

'Witches are far more capable in the wild than wizards.'

'Seagulls?' ventured Hightower.

Halfwart wretched.

'I knew the population was decreasing.'

There was a certain look a witch could give in these situations, it was a look that made a wizard feel like a child who was being told off for staying up past his bedtime, and Halfwart, being arguably the greatest witch alive, was making Hightower feel like a toddler.

'Fine,' said Hightower. 'If you will not leave then you must want something. What is it?'

Halfwart gestured towards two dragonhide chairs next to the fireplace. They both sat, cautiously.

'I need your help to get back home,' said the witch. 'Neither of us can do it alone.'

'I'd rather suck a ferret.'

'I wouldn't recommend it. They taste worse than seagulls.'

Hightower folded his arms.

'That's settled then,' said Halfwart. She picked up her boots and walked into the master bedroom before reappearing moments later with a blanket. Hightower was plunged into a milky-red darkness as the blanket landed on his head. Halfwart locked the bedroom door behind her.

Brooding under the blanket, Hightower considered his options. He could try to kill her while she slept, but she was no doubt prepared for that. Instead, he poured himself a large glass of wizard whiskey and went to the balcony. Beneath his feet the villages twinkled like fireflies.

More than anything, he wanted to go home.

*

Hightower woke in his armchair to the sound of bacon frying and the smell of fresh bread. His kitchen - usually for decoration only - was alive. A metal knife, floating by its own accord, chopped slices of bread against a wooden board, and the sink was doing the dishes.

Halfwart strolled into the kitchen wearing surprisingly colourful pyjamas for a witch. Her hair looked thinner in the morning light. She helped herself to two slices of bread and several bits of charred bacon.

'Did you make me one?' asked Hightower.

'No, I bloody did not,' said Halfwart, tearing into the bacon sandwich. 'Who do you think I am, your mother?'

Hightower rubbed his head as he made himself a bowl of dry oats, and joined Halfwart on the balcony. A few wispy clouds were passing below, and the moon was still visible in the morning sky.

'I've not seen a view like this since the battle at Dragon Top, do you remember?'
'I was a little preoccupied running away from the dragons you unleashed,' said

Hightower.

'Don't be such a baby, nobody died, nobody who mattered anyway. The stone of Astaroth was mine, been in my family for generations.'

'Oh,' said Hightower. 'I didn't know that. Queen Allegra told me you stole it.'

'Well, she would, wouldn't she. Skinny little brat.' Halfwart cleared her throat. 'I don't like this anymore than you, but like it or not, we are stuck with each other until this mess is sorted. After that we can return to the old ways. Agreed?'.

Hightower did. Halfwart waved her hands, filling the wizard's bowl with milk.

After breakfast, Hightower showered and changed into a clean blue robe. Then, making sure Halfwart went first, he guided the witch up the winding staircase. It occurred to him that he had never seen the witch from behind and to his surprise the view was not unpleasant.

The room at the top of the staircase was humid and smelled like a hamster's cage. In the middle where there would usually be a giant lightbulb was instead a large blue bird, its white feathered chest rising and falling to a light snore.

'Where did you find a sapphire phoenix?' asked Halfwart. Her eyes widened. Hightower reached through the cage and stroked the phoenix's feathers. They felt cold and as brittle as a fallen leaf.

'It was given to me when I was a boy. I've raised her since she could fit in my pocket. I think she is the reason we are here.'

'I don't understand,' said the witch. Hightower opened the cage door and Halfwart jolted to close it. 'What are you doing? She will escape.' The blue phoenix opened a lazy eye and tilted its head to the side.

'That's the problem, she won't. As you know, when a phoenix dies, they are reborn in flames, rising again from their ashes. To do this they have to return home.'

'So, this phoenix brought us and the mountain here?' asked Halfwart.

'Yes, this is her home, I'm sure of that, but for whatever reason she will not leave, and I can't move this mountain again until she does. Her magic is too powerful.'

Halfwart rubbed the hard skin on her chin.

'Have you tried setting her on fire?'

'Wouldn't do any good. She'd just absorb the flames. No, I'm afraid she's a stubborn old bird, a bit like you. Neither of you will leave my home.'

Halfwart chuckled, thought for a moment, and then slapped Hightower around the

back of the head.

'We will have to find another way,' said the witch. She descended the stairs into the main part of the lighthouse and picked up the elven telescope from the mantelpiece.

'We can use this,' she said. 'I didn't mention it before because any magic we find will take us longer to get back, but we have no choice.'

Hightower squeezed the sides of his head and took a deep breath. 'First of all, don't touch my stuff. Second, it does not work, I've tried.'

She pushed past the wizard and disappeared onto the balcony. A storm was beginning to gather, with clouds so thick none of the villages could be seen below. Halfwart held the telescope up to her one good eye and twisted the end.

For ten minutes she did not speak, adjusting the focus of the telescope and scanning the horizon.

'There,' she said.

'What is it?' asked Hightower. 'What do you see?'

'Look for yourself,' said Halfwart.

'I can't, it doesn't work for me.'

'Do wizards really lack that much imagination?'

'Perhaps if you tell me what you imagined, I might have a better understanding of how the damn thing works.'

The witch frowned. 'I imagined what might be out there. Dragons with fire red scales shadowing the trees. Another witch going about her business poisoning annoying teenage girls or turning posh men into frogs. A perfect home to retire, a small cottage in the woods with the occasional trespasser to keep myself entertained. And then I saw something real, the wings of a small creature. The wings were transparent, like silver threaded through a glass leaf. There were at least twelve of them living in a small willow tree by the side of a lake.'

Hightower looked at Halfwart with his mouth open. All this time he thought she was nothing more than a selfish, magic hungry witch, but this was a side to her he had never seen, a side he liked.

'What does it mean?' asked Hightower.

The witch lowered the telescope and, smiling a single toothed grin, asked, 'How much do you know about fairies?'



It is not difficult for witches and wizards to steal the magic of fairies and so, when it was done, the unlikely adventures of Halfwart and Hightower began. The fairy magic got them a little closer to home. Next, they used the telescope to find the magic of the trolls and, after that, the magic of the giants. Over time, the magic between them grew and blossomed, bringing them closer together and closer to home.

Six months later they reached the ocean.

Halfwart and Hightower sat on a stone beach, the warm waves lapping against their ankles.

'I see it,' said Hightower with excitement. It was the farthest his imagination had ever allowed him to look.

Through the telescope he could see a mountain with a lighthouse at the top, a lighthouse that was engulfed with blue phoenix flames.

Hightower passed Halfwart the telescope.

'I wonder what set her off,' said Halfwart.

Hightower shrugged.

'What now?' he asked.

18

'We could go back,' said Halfwart. 'Between us we have enough magic to move mountains.'

Hightower fumbled with a handful of small stones, his hand almost touching hers.

'And if I would rather keep going forward?'

Halfwart smiled, before giving him a playful slap around his head.

'Then we will keep going forward,' said the witch.

The distant sky burnt blue long into the night and from the ashes rose a small blue



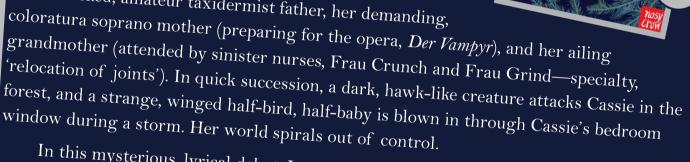
FEATURE

REVIEW

FLEDGLING BY LUCY HOPE

REVIEWED BY ANNE MANSON

Deep in the Bavarian Forest stands a fortress-like house, perched on a rocky cliff and full of fabulous inventions: steam-powered lifts with foot brakes, mechanical morphine pumps, winches, pulleys, and a collection of stuffed owls who may or may not have other-worldly powers. Cassie Engel races through the house, kicking stubborn pipes, oiling cogs, untangling wires, repairing boilers, and caring for her shell-shocked, amateur taxidermist father, her demanding, colorature correspondents.



In this mysterious, lyrical debut, Lucy Hope spins a tale that transports the reader to a world that is part folktale, part gothic period drama (*Edenburg, Bavaria, 1900*), and entirely surreal. The weird discoveries that send Cassie and her friend, Rafael, running to the dusty castle library to research, elucidate long-held secrets of the Engel family—dark secrets that are finally closing in on Cassie's family. Will she be able to save them in time?

I could hardly put *Fledgling* down. Intriguing at the beginning, it rockets to a climactic series of events that kept me turning the pages faster and faster and led to a cathartic, surprise finale. The quirky house full of mechanical and taxidermied wonders is in fact a symbol of the Engel family itself and their attempts to preserve and protect themselves from the often-brutal outside world. Their unfolding tale, with all its suspenseful twists and turns, is really a story of the complexities of family love. A must-read debut from a brilliant new author.

FLEDGLING IS PUBLISHED ON 4TH NOVEMBER 2021 BY NOSY CROW AND IS AVAILABLE TO PRE ORDER NOW!

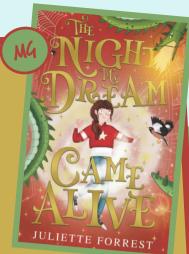
YOU CAN READ ANNE'S INTERVIEW WITH LUCY HOPE ON PAGE 28



THE NIGHT MY DREAM CAME ALIVE BY JULIETTE FORREST

REVIEWED BY KEVIN COBANE (TWITTER: @KEVC46)

The Night My Dream Came Alive is a heart-warming and fast-paced adventure from the unrivalled imagination of Juliette Forrest. Featuring magic, mayhem, a cheeky talking mynah bird and a shop that sells your wildest dreams (and lots of cake), this is the story of a girl called Ollo who can't dream at night. Luckily for her there's a shop in town called the Dream Store which sells magical DreamDrops that guarantee the most extraordinary, nightmare-free adventures for children.



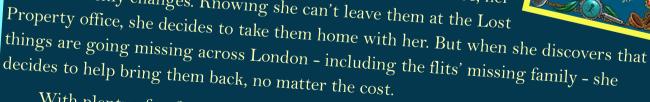
When Ollo lands a job at the Dream Store it seems like her desire to dream and be like all the other children will finally come true. However, when she ignores a premonition and a warning to avoid temptation, she sets off a chain of events that releases the Mother of All Nightmares. In an epic race against time Ollo must battle to defeat the nightmare and ensure that the harmony between this world and the dream world is restored. With themes of family, friendship, belonging, bullying and bravery this is a beautifully written story for everyone with big dreams.

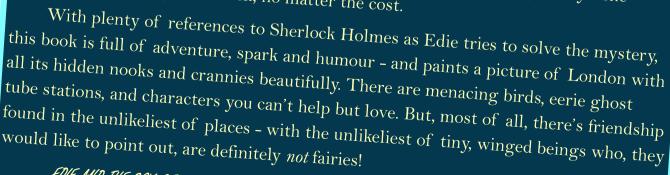
THE NIGHT MY DREAM CAME ALIVE WAS PUBLISHED ON 5TH AUGUST 2021 BY SCHOLASTIC

EDIE AND THE BOX OF FLITS BY KATE WILKINSON

REVIEWED BY PAPERBOUND

Edie and the Box of Flits by Kate Wilkinson is a wonderful middle grade novel that takes readers on an adventure through the London Underground, looking for lost things. When Edie Winter discovers a box of tiny winged people called flits on the Tube, her world suddenly changes. Knowing she can't leave them at the Lost Property office, she decided.





EDIE AND THE BOX OF FLITS WAS RELEASED ON 22ND JULY 2021, AND IS PUBLISHED BY PICCADILLY PRESS

PONY BY R. J. PALACIO

REVIEWED BY PAPERBOUND

Pony is the latest novel by R. J. Palacio. Although very different in premise to Palacio's earlier novel, Wonder, it's just as sensitive and inspiring.

FOREVERS

CHRIS WHITAKER

Set during the mid-1800s, the novel begins when 12-year-old Silas Bird wakes in the middle of the night to find three frightening horse-men have arrived to take his father away. Silas is left alone with his best friend Mittenwool, who is also a ghost. When a pony appears at the door, Silas decides to ride after the men and find his father. What follows is a story about family, friendship and bravery all neatly tied up in a string of mysteries which slowly unfold as you read the book.

Pony is rich with authentic detail, and is packed full of emotion. There is definitely more than one lump-in-your-throat moment. It is a book that will stay with you long after reading.

PONY IS PUBLISHED ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2021 BY PUFFIN





THE FOREVERS BY CHRIS WHITAKER

REVIEWED BY PAPERBOUND

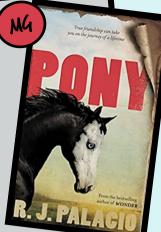
The Forevers by Chris Whitaker is the writer's first dive into the world of YA. The stunning cover subtly references the impending doom in the book, drawing you into the scary world of a group called The Forevers.

Set in a small seaside town, Mae and her friends have grown up knowing about a meteor that will eventually hit the earth. Now

they only have thirty days left. The book takes you through their journeys of self-discovery and trying to find meaning in a life that no longer has any consequences. It'll have you at the edge of your seat, wondering what's going to happen

The Forevers is thought-provoking and heart-breaking. It really gets you thinking: what would you do if you had only thirty days left to live?

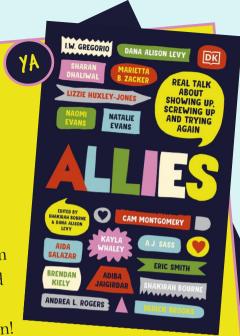
THE FOREVERS IS PUBLISHED BY HOT KEY BOOKS AND IS OUT NOW IN HARDBACK AND EBOOK.





ALLIES BY 17 CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED AND BESTSELLING YA AUTHORS REVIEWED BY PAPERBOUND

Allies is a phenomenal book full of contemporary essays by a host of incredible YA authors, reflecting on our individual prejudices and learning how we can all do better. With authors telling their own truths on racism, gender identity, disability, transracial adoption, feminism and more, this book inspired us in so many ways, helped us learn a lot more than we ever realised, and kept us reading long into the night. It's a hard read to put down!



resources, prompts, self-reflection ideas, and notes on further reading material on the What's more, inside its pages, there are helpful series of topics and truths from the authors and the editor.

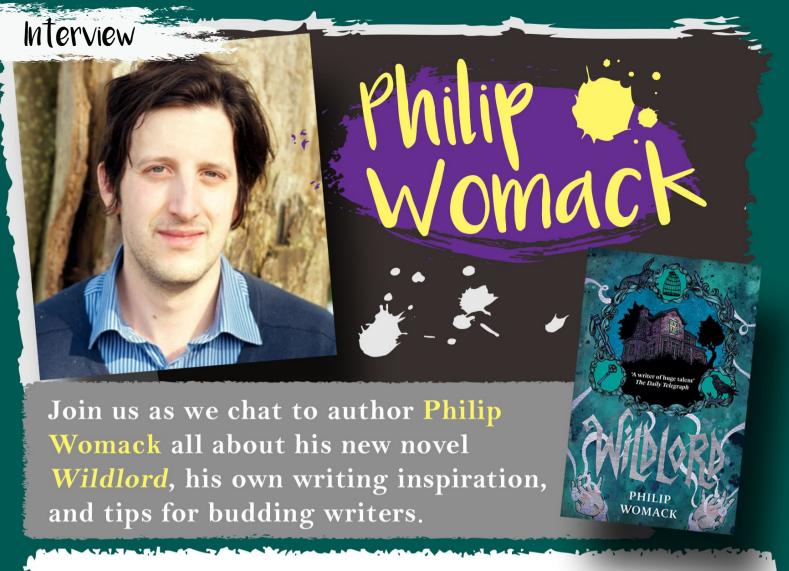
The powerful yet often conversational way that these authors tell their personal stories inspires readers to do three things; listen, reflect and act. Because we can all do better.

ALLIES WAS PUBLISHED ON 29TH JULY 2021 BY DK

IF YOU'RE A PUBLISHER OR AUTHOR, AND WOULD LIKE US TO REVIEW A NEW RELEASE, WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. PLEASE GET IN TOUCH: PAPERBOUNDMAGAZINE@OUTLOOK.COM



READERS, IF YOU'VE READ A BOOK WE'VE REVIEWED, OR ANY OTHER BOOK FOR MIDDLE GRADE OR YOUNG ADULT READERS, WE'D ALSO LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. SEE HOW YOU CAN GET YOUR REVIEW IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PAPERBOUND ON OUR WEBSITE. WWW.PAPERBOUNDMAG.COM



Can you tell us a little about your new novel. Wildlord?

Wildlord is about a teenage boy, Tom, whose long lost uncle invites him to stay with him on a farm in Suffolk. He's stuck at his boarding school for the summer, and so decides to escape without telling anyone. But when he turns up, he finds some very mysterious things going on, and discovers that the farm is menaced by strange forces, known as the Samdhya - and the people inside the farm are pretty weird too, including a silver-haired boy called Kit, and an enigmatic girl called Zita. It's a fantasy novel with some elements of time travel.

Wildlord is set in a different time period to many of your previous books, and aimed at teen readers. What inspired you to tell this story, and what do you hope readers take from it?

I've always loved folklore and fairy tales, and been fascinated by the idea of the Sidhe, or the Good Folk - the many names for fairies we have in these islands. They're quite strongly associated with mounds, and of course they can't cross running water or abide iron. In Suffolk, where I spend a lot of time, there are plenty of houses with moats - and when I saw this, of course my natural conclusion was that they must have been put there to stop the

Good Folk getting in. From there it was a short step to thinking about why they were being prevented from coming in - and from that came *Wildlord*. I have written novels in the past which are set in the present day - my first novel, *The Other Book*, was set in a country prep school; my second, *The Liberators*, was in London post-financial crash; and *The Darkening Path* trilogy begins and ends in our world.

AND THE PARTY OF T

good, convincing story - that seems like magic. I swallowed down books as a child and I always wanted to know how to write them. It's an ongoing journey, of course - as a writer, I learn new things every time I sit down to write a sentence. I think it's also something that, once started, is very difficult to give up, because you always want to go one better.

The state of the s

I don't really think of time as linear -

"As a writer, I learn new

things every time I sit

down to write a

sentence."

the past is all around us, and we are essentially in the future as we go about our daily lives. So I wanted to write something about time and how people think about it. I'm fascinated by

history, and by all the moments that contrived to make each and every one of us who we are. Sometimes it's dizzying to think of that chain of consequences.

It's also about a teenager finding his own place in the world. I hope that readers will enjoy the setting and the story, and that it will make them think about our own place in history.

Why did you decide to become a writer?

As long as I can remember, I always wanted to be a writer. There's something about the ability to create a story - a

Are you working on anything else at the moment?

I'm thinking about a sequel to Wildlord - we'll have to see. I had two books published in 2020, and it would be nice to see sequels for them too, in some form. I loved writing The

Arrow of Apollo, which is set in the ancient world, so we'll have to see about that too.

Why do you think fantasy is so appealing?

Fantasy speaks to us in many ways.

There's a danger with realist fiction
(which of course has its place) that it
can be too specific and therefore date
very quickly. With fantasy, you're
dealing with archetype, and metaphor,
which means that it can console and
inspire people in quite complicated and
mysterious fashions. Fantasy has been
with us since we told stories. When

you're a child and you listen to fairy stories, you don't think about them in terms of reality structures - you listen to them for deeper meanings that you can't articulate yet. I've never been a fan of the kind of criticism that says, oh

TAIL TO THE TAIL

well, fairy tales are all about kings and princesses with power structures and so forth. That seems to miss the point - they're stories in which people can imagine themselves as

princes and princesses.

Turn off your computer and your phone. Yes, yes, I know it makes me sound like a fuddy duddy or a Luddite. But computers take up enormous amounts of your emotional and creative bandwidth. They do things for you.

There are computer programs now which try to anticipate what you are going to write. Take a pen and a piece of paper, and go and sit in a park or a café or on top of a bus, and note down what you see, hear, smell. Look at people. Fiction

is ultimately about people.

Sum up your book in 3 words: Mysterious Park Hopeful

What are your top tips for young aspiring writers?

Read, read, read. That's number one.
Read everything. Read things you don't understand. Read them again when you're older. Then read them once more.
Read everything - poetry, prose, drama, non-fiction. Absorb things. Don't be put off by people who tell you that things are complicated or not for you. Just do it.

Write, write, write. I seriously mourn the loss of letter writing, with pens. It was such a nice and easy way to learn, subconsciously, how to tell a story. If you went to stay with a friend, you'd write a letter afterwards, and I soon learnt to tell a little anecdote. The fragmentation of most communication now, I think, is quite a worrying thing.

Philip's Writing Prompt:

Think of a place you know and love and have a character find a magical object hidden there.

We'd love to read what you come up with. Send your writing here:

paperboundmagazine @outlook.com

Philip Womack

Philip Womack is a British author and journalist, and his writing has appeared in The

Daily Telegraph, The Times, The Literary Review and TLS. His books for children and teens include the fantasy trilogy *The Darkening Path* and *The Arrow of Apollo*. The non-fiction *How to Teach Classics to Your Dog* was published in 2020.

Wildlord will be published October 2021 by Little Island, and is available to preorder in the UK and Ireland NOW!

> Twitter: @womackphilip Instagram: @philipwomackauthor Facebook: @philipwomackauthor





hat a bloody mess.

Under flat grey moonlight, the spatter contrasts with my white high-tops. Jackson Pollock in miniature. My wiggling toes make the canvas pulse like an arterial wall.

Jess, stop. Focus.

My blistered hands weigh the spade. Hasn't rained for weeks. The silver grass is brittle, ground hard. Two hours and this hole's still too short, too shallow.

I kick Beth's bare foot.

'You just gonna watch, lazy bones?'

She stares. No response. I run my tongue over a pointy canine. The chill night air's all earth and iron and my breath slips through it without clouding.

I grab Beth under the pits and heave. An ungainly wobble, a shove and she's down. The grave fills quicker than it dug.

Waiting time.

I sit beside the mound and watch an episode on my phone. Credits are rolling by the time the scrabbling starts. Second episode and the ground's heaving.

One filthy hand pops free, writhing and grasping. A silver friendship bracelet jangles, half-heart silver charm the twin of mine.

'I'm gettin' old here, babe!' I chuckle.

I'm not, of course. Not now. Never. But sun's up soon and I'm dead peckish. I grab my spade. Sigh.

Typical Beth, taking her time. Typical me, always digging her out of trouble.





ANNE: FLEDGLING IS SET IN THE PAST—A KIND OF SURREAL PAST. WHAT CAME TO YOU FIRST? SETTING? CHARACTER?

Lucy: The setting definitely came first, and partly came from my experience of

growing up in an ancient house in North Wales. I've always loved the look and feel of faded grandeur, dusty bookshelves, and buildings that take on their own

THE CHARACTERS CAME ONE
BY ONE AND THEIR VOICES WERE
JUST THERE IN MY HEAD, AS IF
THEY ALREADY EXISTED...

character due to their age, and was keen to build these things into the setting for *Fledgling*.

Fledgling actually began as an exercise on the MA Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University. Inspired by David Almond's Skellig, I created an alternative world with a cherub instead of Almond's angel. I decided to set it in the foothills of

the Bavarian Alps as I love how the little towns there are often dominated by huge rocks, easily large enough to hold a house - and high enough for a passing cherub to find its way into! I

started by writing 1200 words. And then the story just came to me—the setting, the atmosphere, the mother, the father, the hint of steam punk—over many, many sleepless nights. The characters came one by one and their voices were just there in my head, as if they already existed, so I didn't have to try too hard to find them.

ANNE: THE HOUSE FEELS A BIT LIKE A CHARACTER ON ITS OWN, AND ALSO A REPRESENTATION OF THE FAMILY GENERATIONS THAT CAME BEFORE CASSIE, YOUR HEROINE.

Lucy: Yes. When you grow up in an old house, you do feel a sense of the generations that lived there before you. My family house had chests full of unusual things and Edwardian dresses that would

FOR ME, WRITING IS A

JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

WITH SOME NICE AND SOME

TRICKY SURPRISES.

crumble under your fingertips as soon as you took them out. That was part of my childhood and part of my teenage years. I had a great uncle in North Wales whose mountainside house also inspired the

setting for *Fledgling*. There was no road going to it so he used to take his own steam train along the Ffestiniog Railway to his private platform above the house. As an ex-army officer, he had a dynamite license, and managed to get permission to blow up a driveway that zigzagged up the mountainside, and that's how we used to get to his house. Driving through its hairpin bends was quite a terrifying experience!

ANNE: YOU'VE REALLY PIQUED MY CURIOSITY ABOUT YOUR FAMILY. ARE THERE CHERUBS IN YOUR FAMILY? YOU HAVE TO TELL US.

Lucy (laughs): I haven't found any cherubs yet. We didn't have neighbours growing up and I lived inside my head a lot as a result. To have had my own cherub would have been amazing!

ANNE: WHAT PART OF THE BOOK WAS HARDEST TO WRITE?

Lucy: I would say the middle. The strange thing about the book is, as I was writing it,

> I really didn't know what was happening. I was entirely in Cassie's shoes. wondering what was going on. Things were happening around her, but what was the root cause of it all? Because it's

written in the first person, she couldn't see beyond that, and I couldn't either, which was a strange situation to be in, and quite scary. What would happen if I didn't find my way through this? But I think you have these moments when you're writing, and you take some time away to sit and think, and you realise: Ah! That's what's going on. Then, all the other things you've written tie together, and you think, how did that happen? I'm constantly mystified by the process of writing because I'm not a plotter. I always get that feeling of having to make myself sit and write

and coming away having not

entirely enjoyed the process. But then you get through it, and that's when the joy comes. And I love editing! For me, writing is a journey of discovery with some nice and some tricky surprises.

ANNE: DO YOU HAVE A WRITING ROUTINE?

Lucy: No. My writing routine normally means circling the house like a dog waiting to settle down, going to the fridge, finding a snack, having cups of tea, thinking, I just need to pop out and do that thing. So, I'm

pretty awful at getting started. I would love to have more of a routine.

ANNE: HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT A SEQUEL FOR *FLEDGLING*?

Lucy: I'd love to write one. It might sound strange, but I just love being in that world. It's a very happy place for me to be; it feels like home. I think the setting of your first novel is a place that you hold in your heart. And I think that's why everyone's first novel is the book of their heart.

LUCY HOPE

Lucy Hope grew up in North Wales, but now lives in the Cotswolds. After jobs ranging from designing websites to working in schools, she did a master's degree in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University. Lucy loves exploring the countryside with her husband and big, shaggy dog, Bronte, or can be found trundling around the UK in her Bongo camper van, seeking out ideas for her next story. Like most writers, when she's not actually writing, she loves eating cake (lemon drizzle or chocolate brownies in case you were wondering), sipping coffee and chatting to friends about all things books and writing.



FLEDGLING IS PUBLISHED ON 4TH NOVEMBER 2021 BY NOSY CROW AND IS AVAILABLE TO PRE-ORDER NOW AT WATERSTONES AND ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS.

INTERVIEW BY ANNE MANSON

Anne Manson recently won a City Writes competition for her short story, "Bones". She is working on her second novel, The Girl with the Hole in her Heart, a MG fantasy about a stolen pen, a lidless eye, and a mysterious Clockwork Artificer. She has published two short stories in PaperBound Magazine, "Winter" and "Happy Day", and has an MA in Writing for Young People from Bath Spa University.



YOU CAN READ MORE ABOUT *FLEDGLING*IN ANNE'S REVIEW ON PAGE 19

Top Tips

Writing Good Strains

Surah Daniels, author of The Stranded (out next year), shares her top villain writing tips.

There a soft spot for villains. And I know I'm not the only one. For many readers, a good bad guy is the best part of a story. Villains get the freedom to break the rules in a way that your main character never can. Here are some tips for writing a villain your reader will love.

What exactly is a villain?

A villain is a kind of antagonist - the person or thing that stops your hero from reaching their goal. They're the enemy of your main character, the big bad that's coming to threaten everything the main character loves.

Give them a reason to be bad

Your villain is the baddy, but there must be a reason for it, right? Try to think about your villain's origin story. Give them a tortured past so that they have a reason to do the bad things they do. One of the key characteristics of a villain is that they think what they're doing is either right or justified.

Make them a whole character

Villains do villainous things and we love that about them. But, they need to be a whole character otherwise they're going to feel like a cardboard cutout. Flat.

To make them well-rounded try to give them complexity. The aim is to make your reader understand how bad the villain is, but still have a tiny part of them that understands why they do the bad things they do. Show us what the villain loves, give them dreams of their own. You could even give them a redeeming quality.

Link them to the hero

Linking your villain to your hero raises the stakes of your story. Try connecting the fate of your hero to the fate of your villain. For even greater tension make it so that only one of them can succeed.

Make them slightly stronger than the hero

It's no good having a villain that's easy for your main character to defeat. Your story will be over too quickly and if it's not a challenge for the main character to defeat the villain, your reader won't feel satisfied. The villain has to be strong enough that it takes some serious effort to defeat them.

The villain's strength doesn't have to be physical. They could have a special skill, a magical power, an amazing piece of technology. They could be really clever. Whatever it is, there have to be points in your story where it feels like your main character has no chance of beating their enemy.

Give them a story of their own

Finally, don't skimp on your villain's story. Just like the main character, your villain needs a character arc. The things that happen during your story affect the villain too. By the end of your story the villain needs to be transformed by their experiences.

Sarah Daniels

Sarah Daniels writes stories from her home in rural Lincolnshire. She is the author of *The Stranded* duology, coming Summer 2022.

Follow Sarah on social media

SARAH DANIELS

COMING SUMMER 2022

Twitter: @SarahDanBooks
Instagram: @sarahdanielsbooks

If you've had a go at writing something inspired by Sarah's tips, or anything else in the magazine, tell us about it by emailing paperboundmagazine@outlook.com.

by Catherine Ogston



rs Rogerson called me all sorts of names: sweetie, pumpkin, dearie, lambkin.

But the one I hated most was poppet.

It made me feel like a stupid tiny doll she could put in her pocket, like I was full of stuffing and had no brain. She was my babysitter but it didn't mean I was a baby.

Then, when we were getting the extension, a real poppet came tumbling out of the bricked up chimney. Mum shrieked and Dad grimaced. She ordered him to get rid of it so he picked it up with a pair of barbeque tongs and carried it to the bin like it was a live explosive. Later, when I rescued it, it felt dirty— a couple of centuries of forgotten dust engrained in it, its floral dress now faded roses, its innards spilling out at odd places. It carried the faint scent of something herbal which made my nose wrinkle.

'You okay, poppet?' said Mrs Rogerson, her soft puffy face smiling at me. Her coral lipstick made her look odd, like her lips were pretending to be thirty years younger than the rest of her face. I nodded and placed the effigy in the bread bin for her searching hand to find later.

But the evening passed quietly.

One week on, I hid it under the sofa cushion where she liked to sit to

watch her blah-blah soaps. I waited for her to plump it up and discover its dastardly presence. But nothing happened.

When my parents asked Mrs Rogerson to stay over because they were going to a wedding, I put the figure under the spare bedroom pillow. I imagined her hand sleepily relaxing under the layers of cool fabric before her fingertips met with this demon doll, her terrified scream piercing the dark night. I could hardly sleep with the anticipation.

But my plan came to nothing. Mrs Rogerson left in the morning, smelling of pressed face powder and wearing her frightful lipstick, patting my hand on the way out.

That week I got a painful stye which made my eye ooze yellow pus and caused Ryan Jones to sneer at me, with an invitation for all his friends to join in. Then I failed my English test and Mrs Hutchinson lectured me about plagiarism, which I had to look up because I had no idea what it meant. To end the week, my best friend Rhianna stopped talking to me for no reason I could ascertain and, because she did so, all our sheep-like friends did too.

It was on Friday as I walked up the path to my house that I felt a strange lump in the lining of my coat. By touch alone I knew instantly it was the shape and size of the poppet, sewn into the layers, attached to me all week. My heart rat-a-tat-tatted in my chest.

The front door swung open. Mrs Rogerson smiled sweetly at me. 'You okay, poppet?' she said.

CATHERINE OGSTON

Catherine lives in Scotland and writes short and long fiction. Her young adult novel was longlisted for the Caledonia Novel Award 2020. Currently she is writing a novel for adults which was commended in the Exeter Novel Prize this year. In between writing she teaches and does lots of reading.

You can follow Catherine on Twitter @CatherineOgston



COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR NOVEL THE LAST BEAR?

The Last Bear is the story of 11-year-old April who accompanies her scientist father to a remote Arctic island. There are supposedly no polar bears left but, one endless summer's night, April spots something distinctly bear-shaped loping across the horizon. He is starving, lonely and a long way from home. Determined to save him, so begins the most important journey of April's life.

HarperCollins (my wonderful publisher) describe it as a celebration of the love between a child and an animal, a battle cry for the environment and an

irresistible adventure with a heart as big as a bear's. I always love that last line!

THE LAST BEAR DEALS WITH IMPORTANT ISSUES
THAT ARE VERY RELEVANT RIGHT NOW. COULD
YOU SHARE A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT INSPIRED
YOU TO WRITE IT, AND WHAT YOU HOPE
READERS TAKE FROM IT?

The Last Bear is a book very close to my heart and is basically about everything I love most in the world – nature, the planet and that unique, instinctive bond that especially exists between children and animals.

Although, it's first and foremost an

adventure story, there is a very important environmental message to the book – and this reflects my values and my own attempts to live as greenly as possible. I set the book on a real-life Arctic Island called Bear Island – so-called because of the polar bears which once lived there. But these days, because of the melting ice-caps polar bears can no longer reach the island which bears their name. Once I discovered this – there really was only one story to tell – and that was April's desperate quest to take Bear home.

Many teachers have already used the book in the classroom to showcase the dramatic loss of sea-ice in the Arctic and how this is impacting the polar bear population. This just makes my heart sing because one

of my primary goals behind *The Last Bear* has always been to empower our children to find their roar and know that no-one is too small to make a difference.

But it's not just a book for the classroom too. There's a line in the book which a lot of readers seem to pick up on. It's when April challenges someone who is questioning what impact she, as a little girl, can make. She replies: "But imagine if every person on the planet just did one single thing."

And yes, imagine if *everyone* reading the book made one positive ecological change to their lives? I wanted to write a book with hope. A book that would

inspire change. That would encourage children and grown-ups to realise it's not too late. We don't have to sit and wait for someone else to make change – we can be that change first.

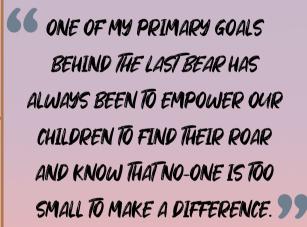
YOUR BOOK IS BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED BY LEVI PINFOLD. WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR TO BRING YOUR STORY TO LIFE?

In truth, I didn't have that much direct involvement with him! The art designer

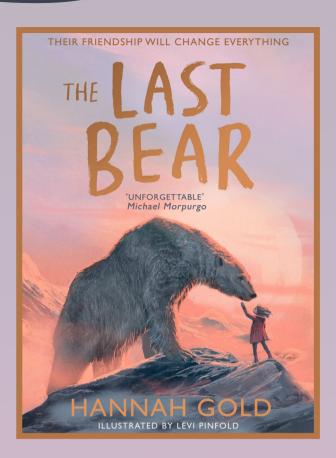
is the one who mainly communicates with the illustrator and decides what art the book is going to have and where any illustrations sit within the text. I was shown a rough copy and gave feedback but they were so stunning,

there really wasn't much to say other than just gasp. Levi has perfectly captured the bare, sweeping Arctic landscape, but at the same time the heartfelt bond between April and Bear.

For me, this was a book written with love and it feels like it's been illustrated with an equal amount of love too. And when I peel off the jacket to reveal the gold bear underneath, there are always gasps!







THE LAST BEAR HAS BEEN LIKENED TO BOOKS
BY PHILIP PULLMAN AND MICHAEL
MORPURGO. HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HEAR
COMPARISONS LIKE THESE? AND, ARE THERE
ANY WRITERS THAT HAVE INSPIRED YOU IN
YOUR WRITING AND LIFE?

If I'm really honest, I only think I was compared to Philip Pullman because we both have polar bears on the front cover!

Although I am a massive *Dark Materials* fan, if I had one author hero, it's definitely Michael Morpurgo. The themes he covers in his books – such as nature, helping animals and our bond with animals – are those which deeply resonate with me. When I signed my deal with HarperCollins Children's Books (who also publish him) I mentioned how much I admired his writing.

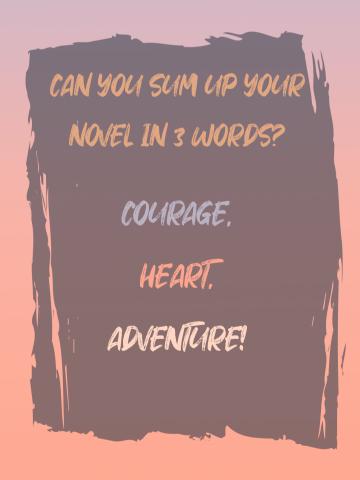
Fast forward a few months and they

asked me if there was anyone I would like them to approach to endorse the book? Obviously there is never any guarantee but straight away I said that I would LOVE Michael Morpurgo.

Things went very quiet and I put it out of my head, thinking he would be too busy . . . until one Friday afternoon I received an email from my editor with the subject header: Endorsement.

It was the best start to a weekend ever.

To be honest, I still feel like such a newbie that to be mentioned in the same breath as him in various reviews actually makes me laugh. I can only hope my career has his longevity and that readers still embrace my 50th book just as much as they have this one.



IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE WRITING TIP WITH AN ASPIRING YOUNG WRITER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

It took me a LONG time to get my breakthrough, so don't be hard on yourself if your earlier effects don't

gain much traction.
It's a process rather
than a race. Also don't
be self-conscious or
worry too much about
how good or bad
you are. When we
worry too much about
our writing and what
anyone else might
think of it, we are

thinking too much about other people's opinions or judgement of us. But writing, first and foremost, is about finding some spark of joy for ourselves and that's never been more important than now.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE YOU'RE WORKING ON?

I am on a 2-book deal with HarperCollins so am currently editing my second book. I can't reveal too much about it other than it features another

very large wild animal!

WHAT OTHER BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE YOU ENJOYED RECENTLY?

Too many to mention as I really think we are in a golden age of children's literature

right now – but ones which immediately spring to mind are *Starboard* by Nicola Skinner, *The Swallow's Flight* by Hilary McKay, and I LOVED *Boy, Everywhere* by A.M Dassau.

HANNAH GOLD

66 ... WRITING, FIRST AND

FOREMOST IS ABOUT FINDING

SOME SPARK OF JOY FOR

OURSELVES AND THAT'S NEVER

BEEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN

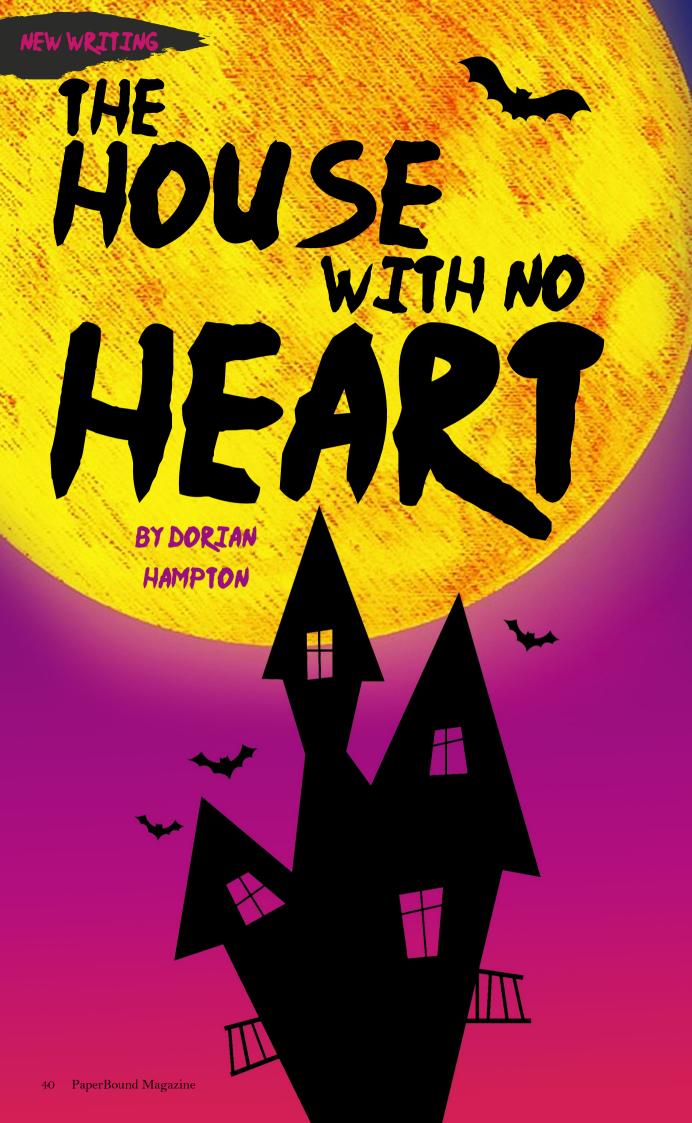
NOW. ??

Hannah Gold grew up in a family where books, animals, and the beauty of the outside world were ever present, and is passionate about writing stories that share her love of the planet. She lives in Lincolnshire with her tortoise, her cat, and her husband and, when not writing, is busy hunting for her next big animal story as well as practising her roar. *The Last Bear* is her debut novel.

WWW.HANNAHGOLD.WORLD

The Last Bear is published by HarperCollins Children's and is OUT NOW in both the US and UK. It will be coming out in various other countries soon.

Twitter: @HGold_author Instagram: @hannahgold_author Facebook: @AuthorHannahGold



The gate slowly opened It creaked and it groaned The path through the garden Was all overgrown.

The paint on the front door Had seen better times The creepers were cracking The walls as they climbed.

I reached out a hand And the door opened wide And I watched as the rats Scurried quickly outside.

The bats in the chimney All raced for the door I moved to avoid them But slipped to the floor.



The floor boards were rotten All sodden with mould As I jumped to my feet I shuddered with cold.

Then stood frozen in darkness And as it grew late An owl in the rafters Called for its mate.

Too soon I grew tired So lay on a bed Whilst the air swirled around me Like the breath of the dead.

The night passed so slowly So quiet, so still While I lay in the darkness In the night's solemn chill.





A black cat sat silent In the moon's failing light Then it slipped like a shadow Off into the night.

On a table a candle stood Alone and forlorn I lit it and quietly Waited for dawn.

When I heard in the distance A lonely cock crow A voice deep inside Whispered, "It's time to go."

I blew out the candle Ran as fast as I could Out into the sunlight Its warmth felt so good.

I'd done my bit I'd played my part I'd spent one night In the house... With no heart.

DORIAN HAMPTON

Dorian is from South Wales and has spent a great deal of his life studying one thing or another, and really enjoys writing of all kinds – even coursework and essays! Poetry has always been important to him ever since he was twelve years old and Miss Edwards, his English teacher at the time, encouraged him to write it. But, to be honest, it usually just ends up in the bin.

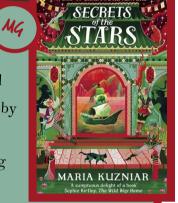
He only writes when he has something to say, although those who know him probably think he has far too much to say.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO THIS ISSUE. IF YOU'D LIKE TO WRITE A REVIEW FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE, GIECK OUT THE GIVEN PAPERBOUNDMAG. (OM/ SUBMIT

WE ASKED YOU TO TELL US ABOUT BOOKS YOU LOVED READING. HERE'S WHAT YOU SAID:

SE(RETS OF THE STARS BY MARIA KUZNIAR

WOW, what a stunning cover! It embodies the book so well and drew me in upon first glance! And yes, I know, don't judge a book by its cover but honestly this book is as beautiful inside as out. The second in *The Ship of Shadows* series, *Secrets of the Stars* is a thrilling fantasy adventure full of mystery, magic and wonder. It's such an



empowering novel with an enchanting tale. This is exactly the type of book I would have loved to read at nine years old and, even as a teenager, I was completely enthralled. The author created a tense and thrilling atmosphere, and it felt like magic was emanating from the pages.

I particularly loved the heist centred plot. It was engaging throughout and the characters felt alive from start to finish. Join Aleja and the crew as they travel around the world, seeking the next piece of a magical map. All they have to do is solve the puzzle, discover its location, sail there, steal it and stop their enemy from recovering it first! Oh, and of course, eat lots of cake.

I adored the relationships between the crew of the Ship of Shadows, especially Frances and Aleja's friendship which was supportive, fun and exciting to read about. The characters defeated the obstacles well, especially when they worked together. It was inspiring how the crew were all female; where they supported and lifted each other up. I recommend this book to everyone.

MIA aTHEYOUNGPRESS

IT'S BEHIND YOU BY KATHRYN FOXFIELD

I really enjoyed Kathryn Foxfield's debut novel *Good Girls Die First* so when I found out that she had come out with a second book, *It's Behind You*, I just had to read it and I was not disappointed.

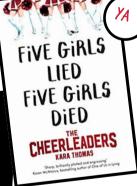
It's Behind You is about Lex Hazelton who is apparently so "pucking board [7]" (P.5) with life, that she signs up to be a contestant on the reality TV show 'It's Behind You'. All she has to do is spend the night in the Umber Gorge Caves with four other contestants to win. Sounds easy right? However, the caves have a with four other dangerous places, easy to get lost in and with the constant threat of rock falls history of being dangerous places, easy to get lost in and with the fact that they are they are a place that few would willingly choose to go. Not forgetting the fact that they are haunted by the Puckered Maiden who is said to rip out the hearts of those who go in the caves.

I enjoyed the book, because no one was as they seemed. On the surface, they may appear to be shallow reality stars but, as you dig deeper under the surface and the secrets that they keep come to light, they are a lot more complex than they first appear. They become real human beings and Foxfield uses them to tug at your emotions and make you hope that they survive the Umber Gorge Caves, the Puckered maiden and most importantly, each other.

Enter into the caves if you dare...

SARAH ROWE, (ORNWALL

YA



THE (HEERLEADERS BY KARA THOMAS

The Cheerleaders is a cleverly plotted YA thriller with secrets that begin unravelling from the first page, and don't stop until the very last.

A car accident, murder, suicide: there are no longer any cheerleaders in Sunnybrook, a town still reeling from the deaths of five cheerleaders, five years ago. The story follows Monica, the sister of the last cheerleader to die.

Although Monica wants to forget the past, clues start to resurface. Clues that suggest not everything happened quite as it seemed.

Kara Thomas is brilliant at constructing an addictive thriller and *The Cheerleaders* is no different. The past and the present are carefully woven together, slowly revealing the truth, keeping you guessing page after page. Full of authentic characters and twists at every turn, you won't be able to put this one down.

Warning: this book deals with a lot of issues and themes that some may find triggering.

PRINTABLE SPOOKY WRITING PROMPTS

Using one of these images as inspiration, write your own spooky story, poem or script! Use the questions to help get you started. We'd love to read what you come up with. Send your writing here: paperboundmagazine@outlook.com

Are you going to have any characters in your writing? Who are they? Give them names, ages, interests.



Where is your writing set? Why are the characters there? What do they want?

Use their senses. What can they smell, taste, hear, see? What textures are around them? Do they remind them of anything?





How will you make your writing spooky?
Is it the setting, the characters, the objects? Is something scary going to happen?

(REATE A SPOOK) (HARA(TER)

We've brought back one of our favourite writing prompts for our spooky anniversary issue. Design your very own spooky character. 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 of a story about your new character

PAPERBOUND PRINTABLE WRITING PROMPTS

FREEWRITING

Find out more about Rūta on page 70



nage a	as a starting	point, begin	writing a	na aon t st	op until th	e timer nas	run out.

we'd love to read what you've come up with.

New Writing



ren was bored of his street. Everything always looked the same. The roads were serious grey, the bushes crackling green, the cars baubles of silver, red and blue, all touched with the rusty yellow tinge of the old street light. He wished it was more interesting. He closed his curtains, barely looking at the view and crawled into bed with a sigh.

He was woken up just a few hours later by a strange, soft glow pushing through the window. He rubbed his eyes and looked at the red rocket clock next to his bed. 3am. He groaned. What was going on? He peeled back the corner of the curtain and gasped. Everything was white. There were wiggles and waves and bumps of shapes, but if it wasn't for the dark sky he would have thought he was looking at a blank piece of paper.

'Snow,' he whispered the word and his breath fogged on the cold window pane in a frosty cloud. *But it's only October*.

He grabbed his thickest jumper and pulled it on over his pyjamas. He tiptoed downstairs, holding his breath and avoiding the creaky third step. He pulled on his green wellington boots and his big coat filled with air and slipped out, silently, through the back door. The cold settled on his cheeks and the quiet seeped into his ears. There wasn't a soul or a sound. There were no lines of the path, no boundaries of the fence and no lock on the

gate; just the crispy, silent white. It was so perfect he almost didn't want to break it.

Almost. He took a deep breath, puffed his cheeks and took a GIANT step. The snow swallowed his foot to all the way above his ankle and he wobbled like a tightrope walker, his arms outstretched.

'Woah!'

He stomped to the front of the house, looking back as he went at the trail he was leaving behind. When he got to the road there was nothing but a rolling landscape. Where cars had been there were now hills, where the trees were there were white mountains. He climbed up the nearest snow hill (he was sure his parents' car was underneath somewhere,) and surveyed the land.

A shape was placed in a pool of tepid yellow light, in the middle of what was once the road. It sat still and upright, with its back to Wren and its tail curled elegantly around it. A fox.

Wren couldn't help himself. 'Hello!' he called. He was shocked at the snap of sound in the quiet, quiet night.

The fox's ears pricked up and it slowly turned its head. It had a handsome face and bright eyes. It gave a wide yawn to show it was unbothered by the boy and flashed its sharp canine teeth.

'Hello,' it replied casually.

Wren's jaw dropped. Had he heard right? Did that really just happen?

The fox grinned. A big, sharp grin. 'You humans are all the same,' he said. 'You act like you expect us to talk and when we do your minds explode.' Its eyes widened as it spoke the last word. Its voice was soft and gruff.

Wren tried to act cool. 'My mind isn't blown,' he said indignantly. 'I was just a bit surprised.'

The fox pointed its nose in the air and turned away. Wren gingerly climbed down the hill and took careful steps towards the animal.

'What are you doing out? This isn't human time.' The fox licked its red coat like a cat.

'The brightness of the snow woke me up.' Wren stood next to it. 'And you?'

'This is my time,' the fox said enigmatically. 'A fox doesn't want to miss a night like tonight.'

'Oh. Why's that?'

'I'll show you.' The fox stood and began to walk with poised graceful steps. Wren couldn't help but follow.

It paused outside what Wren eventually realised was number 32. There were white mounds and white hills where the green camellia bush and silver Toyota used to be. Even the front of the house had become a clean white slate of snow.

'Why have you stopped?'

The fox looked at Wren and raised an eyebrow. 'Don't you see?'

Wren examined the indescribable white shapes and shook his head. 'See what?'

'Look.' The fox pointed its nose in the direction of the white mound to the left and to Wren's surprise, the shape winked.

Wren jumped, alarmed.

The fox gave its slow grin. 'Ha! Humans.' It shook its head.

'Wha – what is it?' Now that he had seen it, Wren couldn't take his eyes off the large, blue eye blinking slowly at him.

'It's Maeve.' The fox spoke in a matter-of-fact way.

It lifted a graceful paw, waved and trotted on. Wren lingered, peering at the snowy.

blinking mound. He leaned closer to get a better look and the mound shook itself showering powdery snow all around him. Wren jumped and quickly turned to follow the fox.

As they walked the fox pointed out his snowy mysterious friends. 'That's Derek.' He lifted his nose in the direction of what was once a hedge outside number 40, and again Wren saw a large eye blink at him. Wren was sure he heard the snow-covered bollard yelp when the fox waved at it outside number 60. The night wasn't the blank silent canvas he had thought it was. There were noises and large blinking eyes everywhere.

'I can't believe there are so many...things.' Wren didn't know what to call them. 'Have they always been here?'

'There are 'things' everywhere if you care to look,' the fox said haughtily. 'The snow just helps *uncover* them.' The fox stopped still and its ears pricked forward.

'What is it?'

'Shhhh.'

It moved a few steps forward, leaving small curved footprints in the snow. It crouched, its ears moving in all directions. The fox took painfully slow steps, its foot hovering each time before it placed it. Then silently, it reared up onto its back legs and pounced into the snow, disappearing completely beneath the white.

Wren stared at the spot in the snow and held his breath. After a moment, two small black ears emerged and the fox crawled clumsily out. Its eyes were bright and glinting in the moonlight and it held something tightly in its jaw. The rat it was holding was limp and lifeless. The fox had the breathless energy of a hunter. He placed the rat at Wren's feet and grinned his big toothy fox grin.

'Voila,' it said proudly.

Wren recoiled. 'Well done.' He looked at the dead rat and started to feel slightly sick. 'Um... I think I should go home,' he said.

The fox lifted the rat in its hungry mouth, bowed its head gracefully, turned and slipped away. Wren felt lost. The road around him was eerie, bright and strange. He wished he could see the familiar trees and post box, the cars and fences. An eye blinked at him from a mound nearby. Wren waved and felt a cold chill. Looking down he could see

his footprints in the snow, big and shapeless. And next to his footprints were that of the fox; small, precise.

He followed the footprints back, trying not to see the eyes in the snow around him. When he felt he was close he broke into a run, splattering powdery snow on his pyjama legs. He reached the back door and paused to catch his breath. The world wasn't as quiet as it had been before. There was a drip, drip dripping. A steady stream of water was falling from the edge of his roof.

Wren quietly turned the handle, carefully took off his wet wellington boots and big coat, gingerly tiptoed back up the stairs and gratefully crawled into bed, pulling the quilt right over his head.

'Morning, sleepy head!' He was woken up by a noisy mum, crashing into his bedroom and pulling the curtains open with a loud swish.

Wren groaned and pulled the quilt tighter over him.

'Brr! Looks cold out there today. They say it might snow.'

'Might?' Memories of Maeve, Derek, the eyes and the elegant hunter fox came flooding back.

'Yes, I know! It will be strange to get snow on Halloween,' Mum mused as she bustled out of the room.

Wren dived out of bed to look out of the window. Everything was the right colour. The roads were serious grey, the bushes crackling green, the cars baubles of silver, red and blue and the roofs rusty brown and frosty. He was glad. He decided that he liked seeing the doors and walls and gates after all. He went back to bed with a smile.

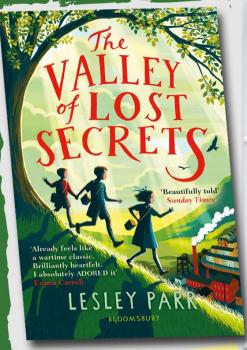
Downstairs his wet wellies stood quietly by the back door.

Truly Johnston

Truly is from South East London. She currently works in the public sector and writes poetry, short stories, children's fiction and songs. She enjoys her Sri Lankan / British heritage (particularly when it comes to food) and is a WriteMentor 2021 mentee for her middle grade children's novel.

You-can follow Truly on Twitter: @Trulywrites





Join us as we chat with children's author

Lesley Parr

about



esley

her recent novel

The Valley of Lost

Secrets

Could you tell us a little about your novel, *The Valley of Lost Secrets*, and what inspired you to write it?

It all came from a writing task when I

studied for a master's degree at Bath Spa
University. We were asked to write a short historical piece. When previously researching a different story, I discovered the true account of children finding a skull in a tree.

So I used that as a starting point for my own characters, setting and mystery.

How did it feel to put yourself into the shoes of your main character, Jimmy, while writing this book, and why did you decide to set it during wartime?

661 didn't ever see myself writing historical fiction, even though Ive always been interested in history.

I found it surprisingly easy to write from the point of view of a 12-year-old boy! I only realised after I'd written it just how much of me is in Jimmy. His loyalty to

his dad and nan, his resistance to change, his love of comics, his fear of small spaces is all me!

Oddly, I didn't ever see myself writing

historical fiction, even though I've always been interested in history. This whole book came from the chance to try a new genre. Once I'd started, I knew it was a story I wanted to tell.

AVAISTIC TO THE TOTAL OF THE PARTY OF THE PA

Your main characters go through a lot of change and emotional challenges in this book. What was the hardest part of writing it?

The emotional stuff isn't what I found difficult – my writing is very character-led

and how they feel and what they think pulled me through the story. It's pace and structure I found hard. The skills of my tutors and my editor got me through that! But that's okay - my husband calls it

Writing Top Trumps... I have accepted that no one can have a 10 in every category. And it's great because I'm learning with each new book.

The landscape is a big part of this book and Jimmy reacts to it strongly – particularly where he is from, and where he is evacuated to. Did you always want to use setting as a strong driving force for this novel?

I didn't plan to, I don't plan much to be honest! I need to write to get a feel for all aspects of my stories. I suppose the setting was bound to come alive for me (and therefore hopefully the reader) as it's what I know – a small, close-knit Welsh valley community. Because it's all so alien to Jimmy I was able to show it through his eyes and take the reader there with him. In one scene, Jimmy is on the mountain with his new friend Florence (another evacuee):

ALANA DAVILLACIO DE LA CAMBRATA

I love being so high,' she says, looking out over the valley. Tve never seen anywhere as lovely as this.'

And Jimmy says he tries to see what Florence sees. This is perhaps the first sign he's beginning to want to be there.

Are there any writers that have inspired you in your writing and life?

David Almond is always an inspiration as he writes so beautifully about working-class characters in working-class settings. He was a professor on the MA for which I studied and it took me about three times of meeting him to be able to have a conversation because I was in awe! And I love books by Patrick Ness; like David, he

writes with such simplicity to show real heart and grit. Emma Carroll is someone else I admire, as she proves historical fiction can be authentic to its era and feel fresh at the same time.

*Historical Fiction can be authentic to its era and feel fresh at the same time."

tries to see Florence se perhaps the he's beginn want to be authentic to its era and feel fresh at the same time."

Are there writers the

If you could share one writing tip with an aspiring young writer, what would it be?

people really speak! Adult characters, too!

The simplest words are usually the best.

It's easy to fall into the trap of overwriting when you're new to it (I definitely used to). Writing in first person from the point of view of a 12-year-old, I often have to simplify

my language. So I tend to use a thesaurus in the opposite way to how people usually do. I think of a word and look it up to find one a child would be more likely to use. This is especially important in dialogue. Think about how Can you tell us about anything else

you are working on?

My next book is called When The War Came Home (out January 2022) and is about a girl called Natty who, with her mother, moves to live with distant relatives. It's set in the

early 1920s when the world was still reeling from the Great War. It's about boys who lied about their age to go to war and how Natty helps them. And it's about how she learns to fight for something. It's quite political.

Lesley Parr

Sum up your book in 3 words:

Friendship

Brotherhood

Secrets

Lesley Parr grew up in South Wales, at the bottom of a valley and quite near a seaside steelworks. Now she lives in the middle of England (almost as far from the sea as it's possible to get) with her husband and their rescue cat, Angharad.

She shares her time between writing stories, teaching at a primary school and tutoring adults. Apart from books, rugby union is her favourite thing in the world, especially if Wales is winning. Lesley graduated with distinction from Bath Spa University's MA in Writing for Young People. The Valley of Lost Secrets is her first book.

www.lesleyparr.com

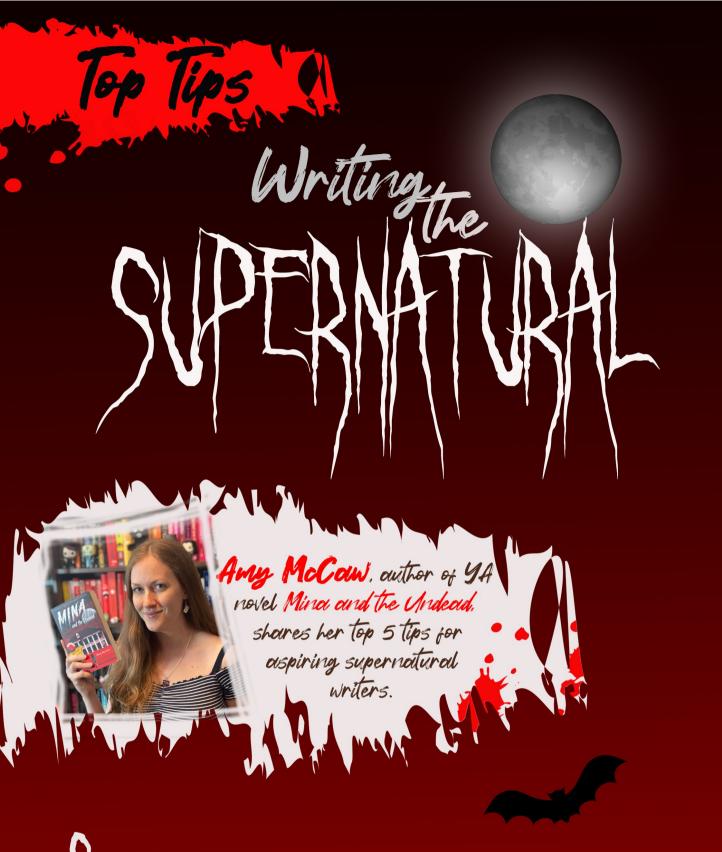
Follow Lesley on social media:

Instagram: @LesleyParr11

Twitter: @WelshDragonParr

The Valley of Lost Secrets is published by Bloomsbury Children's.

It is available NOW!



ome of my favourite books and movies have paranormal elements, and I love writing about supernatural subjects. These are some of the handy tips that have helped me to weave the supernatural into my books.

My first and most important tip is to read around the subject. Watch movies, play games, read comics and books. Figure out which elements of the supernatural interest you and what you might like to incorporate. Are you going with one supernatural creature or a variety? Are you planning to invent your own? I like knowing what's out there so I can decide which tropes to flip and which ones to lean into.

Once you've settled on your creature or other paranormal element, it's time to think about your mythology. I knew from the start that I was going to write

MYTHOLOGY

about vampires, so I had to figure out my own twist on the vampire myth. I read a lot of information books about vampires and made notes on vampire mythology from my favourite books and TV shows. That helped me work out what their powers and limitations would be and what other elements of vampire lore would make it into the book.

J. WORLDBUILDING

It's useful to work on the world of your book once you've decided on the mythology. Will your book

have a modern feel or be set in a historical timeperiod? Is it a fantastical world or grounded in reality with supernatural touches? My whole book sprang from the New Orleans setting after a holiday in 2012, and I went for the 90s setting for a couple of reasons. The *Interview with the Vampire* movie came out in 1994, and the New Orleans murder rate was at its highest during that time. I was interested in exploring how the vampire fascination of the mid-90s would work in the context of a serial killer plot.

You can now weave your mythology and world building into your plot. Think about how your supernatural elements will affect



your characters and story arc. Do your characters have powers? Do they know the supernatural is real from the start? The supernatural can be used to drive the plot forward and create conflict for your characters. The same goes for your world building. How can elements of the world provide obstacles or stand-out set pieces for your plot?

5. RULES

Keep checking for the consistency and boundaries of the

world. Vampires would be pretty dull if they had no limitations and no chance at all for the main character to triumph. Does the mythology you've built make sense? Have you kept track of your supernatural elements to keep them consistent?

Amy McCow

Amy is a YA writer and blogger.

She is the author of Mina and the Undead,
a YA murder mystery set in 1995 New

Orleans. Her main interests are books, movies
and the macabre, and her debut novel has
elements of all of these. If Amy's not at a
book event or reading, she can usually be found
scribbling away in her writing room, surrounded
by movie memorabilia and an
out-of-control signed books collection.

Unsurprisingly, she's a huge Buffy the Vampire
Slayer fan and has gone to conventions to meet
James Marsters more times than she cares to admit.

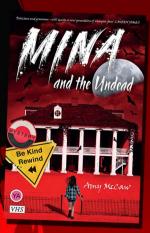
Amy also loves travelling and has a particular affinity for America. She's visited 29 states, 13 Man Vs Food restaurants and many bookish locations, including the cities where Twilight, Interview with a Vampire and Vampire Diaries were set.

You can find Amy on Twitter and Instagram as @yaundermyskin or YouTube under Amy McCaw.

Recommends

I hope that was an interesting insight into my writing process and that you might find something that works for you. If you're looking for books with supernatural elements, you could try my debut, Mina and the Undead, Harrow Lake by Kat Ellis, Good Girls Die First by Kathryn Foxfield or Last One to Die by Cynthia Murphy.

Mina and the Undead is published by UCLan Publishing and is available NOW!



Illustrations by

VICTORIA MCDONALD

You can find out more about Victoria on page 70

QUIZZES

ANSWERS ON PAGE 71



UNSCRAMBLE THESE ANAGRAMS
CLUE THEY ARE ALL BOOKS ON OUR SPOOKY BOOKSHELF

ESCAPED SOFA

NO REMOVER

TOUGH COLDS

TAG CONFISCATED LETHAL GEM

ACROSS

- 3 Who wrote 'The Valley of Lost Secrets'?
- 4 Who wrote 'The Last Bear'?
- What is the title of Jo
 Nadin's new middle
 grade novel?
- What is the title of Amy McCaw's debut novel?
- 9 What is the title of Philip Womack's new novel?

DOWN

- 1 What is the title of this issue's winning submission?
- What is the title of Lucy Hope's debut novel?
- 5 What was the topic of Sarah Daniels's Top Tips article?
- 7 What is the name of Julia Tuffs' debut novel?





BLACK CAT

DOLLS FULL MOON

GHOSTS
HAUNTED

HOUSE

PUMPKIN
VAMPIRE
WEREWOLF

NIGHT WITCH PUMPKIN WIZARD

E

VAMPIRE MAGIC WEREWOLF HALLOWEEN

R E RG H O E D z w 0 L L G Q R AI RYRMKRA S MRC 0 Z 0 0 W E E R В N O E R WP L K A W_{NM}

> CAN YOU FIND ALL THESE SPOOKY WORDS?

r c x E



lice couldn't sleep. How could she, with that *thing* her dad had bought downstairs?

It was, her dad insisted, a suit of armour. A piece of history, like all the other antiques he'd collected. But it wasn't like any suit of armour Alice had ever seen.

The lumpy body. The rusty, tarnished metal. The musty, dusty smell of it and how it slumped where it sat at the foot of the stairs. When she shut her eyes, she could picture it perfectly. Sitting there, in the dark, with its misshapen

limbs and its odd crooked helmet with the empty, staring eye sockets.

She imagined it crumpling forward, collapsing off the chair and onto the floor, and starting the long, painful climb up the stairs. Its armour would squeak, its fabric arms would rasp against the carpet. Its hands would thump, thump against each stair, and it would drag itself up. And up. And up. Until it was outside her door.

Alice opened her eyes. She stared at her dark ceiling and gripped her duvet tightly.

She wasn't sure if she could handle another monster. The Thing at the Foot of the Bed was bad enough.

If she shut her eyes almost all the way, and peeked through her eyelashes, she could see it. A silhouette almost shaped like a person. But it was too tall and too thin, its neck and arms and fingers too long to be human. Its face was blank, a shadow, but Alice knew it was watching her. It was always watching her.

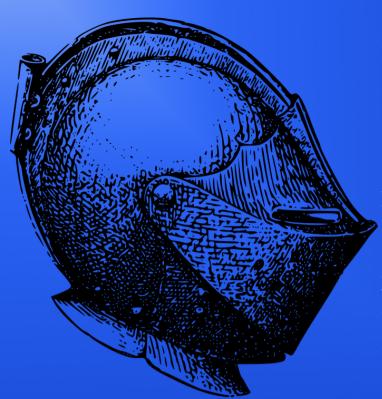
Last week, she had caught it reaching one long, long hand toward her. She had almost screamed the house down, and her dad insisted it was a nightmare.

But Alice knew better.

She knew, in her bones, that the suit of armour wasn't just a suit of armour, either.

The Thing at the Foot of the Bed shifted. It wobbled its empty face slightly to the left, like it was stretching its neck, then returned to its usual position. Alice watched it through her mostly closed eyes and felt her heart slowly crawling into her throat.

Since all the screaming, it hadn't tried anything. But if it was moving



now...

Thump, thump.

Alice's insides swooped like she'd tripped. She held very still and listened.

Water gurgled in the pipes. Rain pitter-pattered against her window. A breeze rustled through the trees outside.

It had been the pipes. The

floorboards settling. Someone closing a car door down the street.

It hadn't been something reaching for the bottom stair.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

Alice yanked the duvet over her head. It was dangerous, with the Thing standing there, but she couldn't help it. She needed to hide.

In the soft, stuffy darkness, her heartbeat felt very loud and very close. It raced as hard and fast as a thundering horse.

That hadn't been the wind. Not the rain or the plumbing, either.

It had been the grating squeal of rusted metal against rusted metal.

Thump, thump.

There it was again.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

It was coming closer. It was heaving its rusted, battered body up the stairs. Alice wanted to scream, but her thundering heart had lodged in her throat and no sound would come out.

Why had her dad brought it home? Why had he looked at that horrible thing and thought, yes, that'll look good in the living room?

Now it was coming.

Thump, thump.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

It was coming for her.

Thump, thump.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

Closer and closer and closer.

Thump, thump.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

Then silence.

Alice held her breath. She held it until her head felt like it would burst. And when she couldn't hold it anymore, and it whooshed out of her, a new sound made her choke on a startled gasp.

Click. Click. Click.

The sound of a doorknob rattling. Twisting one way then the other.

Click.

The sound of the latch opening. The sound of the door scraping softly over carpet.

Alice scrunched her eyes shut and clamped her hands over her ears. But with only her hectic heartbeat for company, it was even worse. She couldn't hear it. She couldn't see it. She had no idea if it was crossing the carpet. Crawling toward her bed. Reaching for her with its musty, lumpy hands—

Alice took a trembling breath. Peeling the duvet away from her eyes, she

peeked over it. She got a mouthful of flowery-tasting fabric as she gasped again.

It was there. It was in her doorway. The suit of armour. It was standing, not crawling, lopsided like it couldn't support its own weight.

Alice's brain swirled. She didn't breathe. She felt like a hedgehog in the middle of a road. Nowhere to run, and too frozen with fear to try.

In the corner of her eye, she saw the Thing at the Foot of the Bed shift. It twisted its long body to look at the armour as well. In the light spilling in from the landing, Alice thought she saw a flash of teeth as it smiled a horrendous smile.

Squeeeeeaaaak.

Metal shifted. With a staggering, lumbering lurch, the suit of armour stepped forward. Alice could only stare, cold spreading through her veins as she watched it approach. It wobbled, then righted itself, then lurched forward another step.

And that's when Alice realised it wasn't heading for her. It was heading for the foot of her bed. Its wonky hands surged forward and grabbed the Thing.

And squeezed.

The Thing hissed. Then it shrieked, a high sharp sound like a kettle boiling. It rang in Alice's ears as the Thing swelled. It squirmed and spat, but it couldn't escape. The suit of armour squeezed and squeezed and squeezed, until, without a sound, the Thing at the Foot of the Bed popped. Like a water balloon bursting, shadows scattered in every direction, and a cold, stale wind whipped through Alice's bedroom, stinging her eyes and tangling her hair.

When she winced and blinked and looked again, the Thing at the Foot of

the Bed was gone and...

Winner

The suit of armour was looking right at her. The shadows made its wonky helmet even wonkier, and Alice shivered when she met its empty eye sockets.

Only, they weren't so empty anymore. There was something there, something bright and soft, something that made Alice think of hot chocolate and holding hands and her dad's soft voice telling her stories.

The suit of armour turned toward the door. It stumbled back the way it had come. Pausing in the doorway, it looked back at her and gave her a slow, rusty nod. Then it stepped out into the landing, closed the door with a gentle *click*, and was gone.

That night, there were no nightmares. There was no tossing and turning, no constant panicked glances at the end of her bed. There was just soft, still darkness. The feeling of being safe and protected. And Alice slept the best she had in weeks.

Meg Small

Meg's head has always been full of stories. Since finishing an MA in Writing for Young People from Bath Spa University, she spends her time daydreaming about spooky stories and fantasy adventures – and sometimes writing them, too! When she's not writing, she can be found tending to her ever-growing army of succulents and spending far too much time playing videogames.

You can follow Meg on Twitter: @liminalace

Why we loved Up the Stairs

Up the Stairs is a fantastically written spooky story, that perfectly fit this issue's brief and subverted expectations. It was equal amounts of terrifying, brilliant and original, and that is why it is the winner of our Autumn 2021 Submission Competition.

Congratulations, Meg! A little prize will be on its way to you soon.



Can you tell us a little about your novel, Hexed?

Hexed is about Jessie Jones: new girl, witch and accidental activist. Jessie's life is turned upside down when her mum suddenly moves the family back to her home town on the Isle of Wight. All Jessie wants to do is fade into the background, coast, and avoid the attention of school douchebag Callum Henderson and his toxic cronies, but when strange and uncontrollable magical powers start to manifest during her period, flying under the radar becomes impossible. *Hexed* is about finding your place and your power and learning to love your differences.

Your novel deals with important and timely themes, such as sexism and toxic masculinity, and easily puts the reader in Jessie's shoes. What inspired you to write about these issues?

Donald Trump – amongst other things! It was really painful to watch as someone who had boasted about grabbing women's genitals was elected president and it was a moment in time that highlighted how little society values women and women's rights. I wanted to write something that looked at how ingrained it is in all aspects of society – our schools, our media, our courts, our government – but I wanted it to be

relatable and focus on what all girls experience and are forced to navigate through on a dayto-day basis.

These themes are woven into a story about witchcraft. Can

you tell us how you came up with the idea to combine these two things?

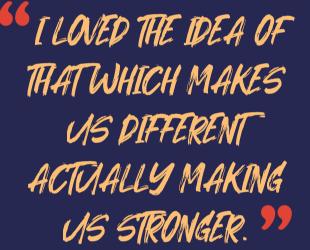
I was thinking about the recent surge in our reproductive rights being threatened and all the ways men in power try to control women and women's bodies (Britney, how can we help?!) and that led me to the witch trials; the way women were strip searched for Devil's marks and how anyone single or widowed could be suspected and tried. Even today, like hundreds of years ago, if women don't fit into a prescribed box – if we dare to be

angry or outspoken or stray out of our lane - we're labelled and shamed. I found the parallel interesting (and terrifying) and I loved the idea of that which makes us different actually making us stronger – which is how the period witch idea came about – wearing a super plus but being able to magic up your dinner and punish nasty boys!

The setting of Hexed is vividly portrayed. Vid you always plan on setting it on the Isle of Wight? What was it about this setting that you were drawn

I love the Isle of
Wight! My husband is
from the Island and we
lived there for a few
____years when our
children were small. It's
such a unique setting —
beautiful in places,
1950s seaside in other
places, removed from
the mainland and with a

population that doubles over the summer. I wanted to explore how someone would feel moving there from a big city, especially if that person was trying so desperately hard to be invisible – which is basically impossible in a small-town setting where everyone knows everyone and it's harder to escape! I also loved the idea of being on Jessie's journey with her as she falls in love with the Island and begins to appreciate how special it is.





Can you sum up your novel in 3 words?

> FUNNY, FEISTY, FFMINIST

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

That it's a rollercoaster of emotions and A LOT of waiting – waiting for edits, waiting for news, waiting until you're allowed to announce news, waiting for publication day...

What are your top reads from the last year and why?

Oooh, this is hard – there have been so many good books! For YA I'd say *The Yearbook* by Holly Bourne which is in her typical style of being frank and funny whilst also dealing with serious issues, and *Afterlove* by Tanya Byrne which is a gorgeous and heart-breaking love story.

JULIA'S WRITING PROMPT

If you had magical powers for one day only, what would you use them for (it doesn't have to be for good things!)?

Imagine what those powers would be and how it would make you feel to have them, but know that they were for a limited time.

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

Hexed is
published by
Orion
Children's Books
and is out NOW

JULIA TUFFS

After a brief (but fun) stint working in television and as a primary school teacher, Julia decided to take her writing dreams more seriously. She lives in South-West London with her family and ragdoll cats (Billy and Nora) and spends her time writing, reading, dreaming of holidays and watching too much reality TV. She aims to write the kinds of books that shaped and inspired her as a teenager. *HEXED* is her debut novel.



Instagram: @juliatuffs

Twitter: @JuliaTuffs

Would you * like to be involved in a future issue of Paper Bound?

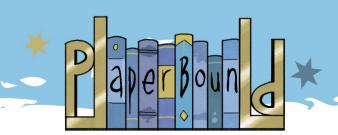
WRITE FOR US: WHETHER IT'S FICTION, POETRY, SCRIPTS, OR ARTICLES
ABOUT WRITING OR BOOKS — WE LOVE IT ALL. (HECK OUR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
FOR MORE DETAILS.

(REATE ART FOR US: WE ARE ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR ARTWORK TO DE(ORATE EA(H ISSUE. (HE(K OUT OUR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES TO SEE WHAT WE ARE (URRENTLY LOOKING FOR.

BE INTERVIEWED BY US: IF YOU'RE AN AUTHOR OF MG OR YA FICTION, AND HAVE A BOOK (OMING OUT, WE WANT TO KNOW! GET IN TOU(H!



YOU (AN FIND OUT MORE ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.PAPERBOUNDMAG.(OM IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, REA(H OUT ON SO(IAL MEDIA OR (ONTACT US AT PAPERBOUNDMAGAZINE DOUTLOOK.(OM





Rūta Čiutaitė

Rūta is an illustrator with a textile design background, which shows in her work where she uses lots of tiny textures and patterns. Her inspiration mostly comes from nature and fairytales, both in concept and the colour palettes she works with. Autumn is a great inspiration as well but,

no matter the season, she's always drawn to it!

Rūta illustrated the cover, contents page and printable writing prompts in this issue. We loved them so much that Rūta is the runner up in this issue's submission competition.

Congratulations, Rūta! A little prize will be on its way soon.

Instagram: @blue_rue_designs.

Etsy: BlueRueDesigns

Jayne Leadbetter

Kunner

Jayne is a full time high school teacher

in Sydney teaching; graphics, fashion and textiles,

film and video, and food technology. She was a fashion and textile designer in both the UK and Oz, and is now passionate about big hairy dogs, saving trees, and novel and script-writing.

Jayne illustrated 'A Lighthouse in the Sky' this issue.

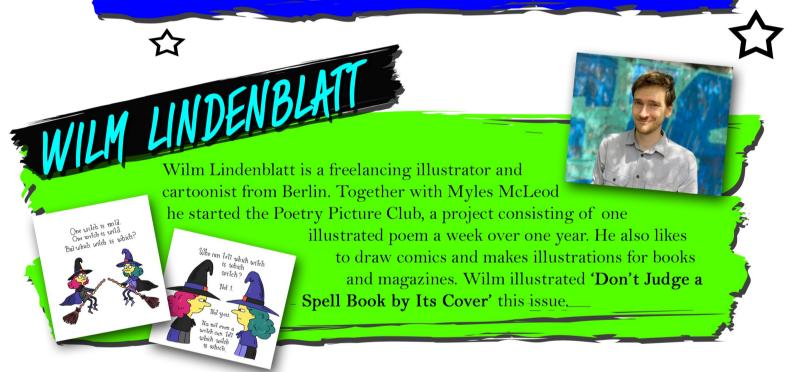
You can follow Jayne on Instagram: @jayneleadbetter





fimo clay characters. She's always enjoyed drawing and making up her own characters since nursery school age. She likes that an illustration can tell a story and quickly found her style to be fun and cartoon like. Victoria illustrated the Quizzes page of this issue.

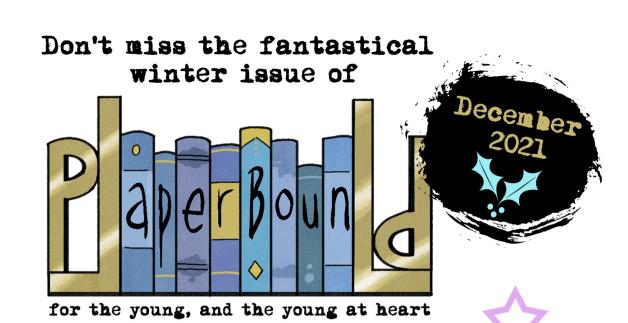
> You can follow Victoria on social media Twitter: @VLMcDonald1 Instagram: @victoriamcdonald_author and Facebook: @victoriamcdonaldauthor



IF YOU'RE AN ILLUSTRATOR AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOUR ART IN A FUTURE ISSUE, YOU (AN FIND OUT MORE HERE: WWW.PAPERBOUNDMAG.(OM









New Writing





Writing Tips



and more ...



Don't miss the winter issue of PaperBound this December. Follow us on social media for updates:

Twitter: @paperboundmag Instagram: @paperboundmagazine Facebook: @paperboundmag

www.paperboundmag.com