

London Mum's



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FREE - Issue 43
Winter 2024-2025

Star!

Strictly's Karen Hauer
dishes juicy secrets
on her dazzling new
show 'Speakeasy'

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A perfect way to chase the winter away.

And when you're weary of the festive fray,
Curl up with books, and let your worries stray.
From Karen Hauer's secrets to Tom Fletcher's tales,
Our Book Buzz treasures, stories to unfold.

Our Booktastic Christmas Special, a literary gem,
With stories to delight both young and them.
From Christmasaurus to Speakeasy's dance,
A world of magic, at your command.

Letters from the North Pole, a whimsical delight,
Lance and the Magical Boiled Egg, shining bright.
Bedtime for Ella, a soothing tale to hear,
Roglins, a woodland adventure, drawing near.

Paws for Thought, a furry friend's delight,
A heart-warming story, shining bright.
For little ones who fear the dark, we've got,
Enchanting tales that banish every thought.

And for the parents, struggling to connect,
We offer tips, to help you re-reflect.
So let's embrace this season, full of glee,
With books and cheer, for all to see.

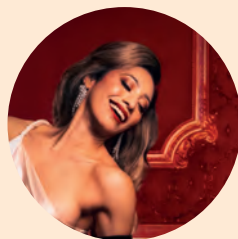
A Merry Christmas, filled with joy and grace,
From London Mums, with love and warm embrace.



Monica Costa

Editor in chief, Founder of London Mums and
mum of 18 year-old Diego
monica@londonmums.org.uk @londonmums

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THE BIG INTERVIEW: KAREN HAUER

Editorial

London Mums magazine is
produced by London Mums
Limited

Editor and publisher:

Monica Costa
monica@londonmums.org.uk

Editorial Assistant: Carolina Kon
info@londonmumsmagazine.com

Head of Partnerships:

Laura Castelli

Contributors: Emma Hammett,
Julia Minchin, Madeleine Neave,
Ranjeet Panesar, Diego Scintu

Photo credits: Tom Fletcher's
photo in black backdrop by Mikael
Buck, Tom Fletcher's photo in red
background by Edward+Cooke

POST: London Mums Limited,
74 Dowdeswell Close - London
SW15 5RL

CALL: 07900088123

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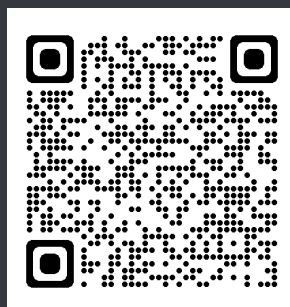
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Star Chat!

Exclusive! Strictly star Karen Hauer spills secrets on new show *Speakeasy*

By Monica Costa

I had the pleasure of sitting down with Karen Hauer, the renowned dancer from *Strictly Come Dancing*, to discuss her latest show, *Speakeasy*. We talked about the details of the new production, Karen's creative process, and the unique experiences of touring. Here is our conversation:

Monica Costa: Last year's tour had a different name, *Firedance*. What's the difference between the two shows?

Karen Hauer: *Firedance* was the first show that Gorka and I choreographed together. It was very fiery, with all the dances we loved, like salsas and paso doblés, set against a fiery background. We did it for three years, but the first year was cut short because of Covid.

We took some time off to come up with a new idea. We love dances like swings, Charlestons, and Argentine tangos, and these dances were born in the 1920's underground clubs during the prohibition era. The inspirations from *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Great Gatsby*, and other elements of that time period came together to create *Speakeasy*. We'll be taking the audience on a journey through various eras.

Monica: What's the most exciting part of *Speakeasy*?

Karen: It's the nostalgic feel, taking

.....
“We'll be taking the audience on a journey through various eras.”



people back to the 1920s with the costumes, storyline, and music. The Charleston, one of my favourite styles, plays a big part. The characterisation, the old-school poster, and the flapper-era costumes are all very exciting.

Monica: Can you tease me with your favourite dance from *Speakeasy*?

Karen: It's still early days, and we're creating everything as we go, but the Charleston and Argentine Tango are definitely in there. I love salsa too, especially the old-school style, so we're injecting a bit of everything.

Monica: Any crazy backstage stories from the previous tour that you can share?

Karen: Backstage is a show in itself. It's manic, with quick changes happening so close to the stage that the only thing separating the audience and me is a curtain. It's stressful and hilarious at the same time. We also have fun moments, like the little dance I did with Lou that we put on Instagram. Every tour is different, and with Gorka, we usually just high-five before going on stage.

Monica: Which vintage dance do you think will be the most glamorous in *Speakeasy*?

Karen: The American Smooth, with its big band, Frank Sinatra vibes, and homage to the Rainbow Room in New York, will be very glamorous. We'll have the beautiful feathery gowns and the elegance of the 30s and 40s.

Monica: Please describe *Speakeasy* in three words...

Karen: Mysterious, exquisite, dangerous.

Monica: What's the one thing you think audiences will be surprised to see?



Karen: The storyline is told entirely through dance, with no speaking on the microphone. The energy we bring and the difference between watching us on TV versus live is astonishing. People will feel the sweat, see the breath, and experience the unexpected.

Monica: You've been touring a lot. What's your favourite city to perform in and why?

Karen: In the UK, Glasgow is epic. The energy there is incredible, whether it's a matinee or an evening show. Performing in London, especially the West End, is also special because of the high standards and the thrill of dancing in my hometown.

Celebrity pages brought to you by *Bedtime for Ella* – a Giggly Furbottom Adventure





Monica: How do you unwind after a show?

Karen: I usually get into an ice bucket to relieve the muscles, then we travel to the next city. Gorka often drives, and we'll listen to Spanish music, maybe have a gin and tonic. We unwind by enjoying the journey and preparing for the next performance.

Monica: Do you get any time to visit the city if you only have one show?

Karen: We usually arrive the night before, and Gorka loves finding great brunch spots and coffee shops. We'll explore a bit in the morning before heading to the theatre for a tech rehearsal and then the show.

Monica: Are you also a choreographer of your show? Is it a lot more pressure doing both?

Karen: Yes, we choreograph our shows. It's not more pressure because we're

used to preparing our work. We have a great group of creatives around us, and we're very hands-on with the process, from music and costumes to lighting.

Monica: Where do you get the inspiration for all the *Strictly Come Dancing* choreography?

Karen: It depends on the celebrity and their abilities. We prepare a blueprint and then adapt it. It's a weekly injection of creativity, fitting everything into a short amount of time.

Monica: The schedule on *Strictly* must be intense. How do you manage it?

Karen: It's definitely intense, with a lot of technique and practice. But it's the popularity of the show that inspires people to dance and be sociable, which is amazing.

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The growing popularity of hUDOMA Pram Gloves has not gone unnoticed. They've won numerous prestigious awards, celebrated for their

thoughtful design and practicality. Most notably, they have been shortlisted for the Junior Design Awards for the Best Parent Product Innovation, it is just one example of how hUDOMA Pram Gloves continue to set new standards in the market.

hUDOMA Pram Gloves have also garnered a strong celebrity following. Among the many parents who have raved about the product, Kate Ferdinand stands out as one of the most vocal fans. As a celebrity mom, Kate's endorsement has brought even more attention to hUDOMA, cementing the brand as a must-have for stylish and practical parenting. Her social media posts frequently showcase how much she loves the gloves, often noting how they've become a key part of her daily walks with her children.

In short, hUDOMA Pram Gloves have transformed the experience of parenting in cold weather. Their award-winning design, celebrity endorsements, and ability to combine fashion with functionality have made them a game-changer in the market. For parents seeking reliable and stylish pram accessories, hUDOMA Pram Gloves are an absolute essential, helping families enjoy every moment of their outdoor adventures — no matter the weather!

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Star Dad!

Tom Fletcher on The Christmasaurus, Parenting, and the Magic of Storytelling

Tom Fletcher, one of the UK's most beloved children's authors and a founding member of McFly, is back with a brand-new Christmas adventure. In this exclusive interview, I caught up with Tom ahead of the release of *The Christmasaurus and the Night Before Christmas*, just published in time for the festive season. Known for his infectious enthusiasm for storytelling and his love of Christmas, Tom gives us a glimpse into the wild ideas behind his new book, the chaos a Christmasaurus would cause in a McFly rehearsal, and how his children continue to inspire his work. With over 10 million copies of his books sold worldwide, Tom has become a master at blending his creativity across music, parenting, and literature. Let's explore the mind behind the magic.



Monica: You've become a bit of a Christmas expert in your books, especially with *The Christmasaurus*. What's the wildest idea that popped into your head while blending *The Night Before Christmas* with your dinosaur creation in *The Christmasaurus and the Night Before Christmas*?

Tom Fletcher: There's been plenty of wild ideas! I think the idea of blending Santa's sleigh with a dinosaur to create a flying Christmasaurus was one of the craziest. It's like two childhood dreams colliding - dinosaurs and Christmas magic! The thought of a dinosaur delivering presents really made me laugh, and it just felt like such a cool way to make the story more exciting and, well, dinosaur-y!

Monica: I can imagine! If *The Christmasaurus* was to drop into a McFly rehearsal, what kind of chaos or fun would unfold? Any band moments that inspired scenes in the book?

Tom Fletcher: Oh, chaos for sure! I reckon the Christmasaurus would probably knock over all our gear and eat Danny's guitar strings! There's definitely a bit of McFly in the Christmasaurus' mischievous side, especially in how he creates havoc, but always with a heart of gold. Some of the band's energy definitely inspired moments in the book - like when the Christmasaurus tries to join in with the elves' party, that's probably how we'd behave backstage after a gig!

Monica: Speaking of energy, seeing your stories illustrated must be such a thrill. Did any of the illustrations in *The Christmasaurus and the Night Before Christmas* remind you of your own childhood Christmases?

Tom Fletcher: Definitely! Shane Devries, the illustrator, has this amazing ability to capture that magical feeling of Christmas. There's one illustration of a cosy living room on Christmas Eve that brought back so many memories of being a kid and waiting for Santa. It really does take me back to those special childhood moments - sitting by the tree, too excited to sleep.

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The tour bus would be an absolute wreck with the Christmasaurus on board!

Monica: That sounds beautiful. As a parent, your kids must be a big part of your creative process. Have they ever surprised you during story-time by adding their own twists or sparking new ideas?

Tom Fletcher: Oh, all the time! Kids are so imaginative, and sometimes they'll just throw



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**"The band's energy
definitely inspired
moments in the book!"**



something unexpected into the mix, and it's brilliant. My eldest once turned a bedtime story into a full-blown adventure with a rocket and talking animals, and I remember thinking, 'Why didn't I think of that?!' They're my best source of inspiration, for sure.

Monica: What's the funniest bedtime story request you've ever gotten from them? Did it inspire any of your books?

Tom Fletcher: One night, my son asked for a story about a "Dogasaurus" - a dog that's also a dinosaur. I had to make it up on the spot, and it was absolutely bonkers! I haven't turned that into a book... yet! But who knows, it might make an appearance in the future!

Monica: I love that! Speaking of favourites, which of your books do your kids claim is 'the best'? Have they ever called you out on a plot twist?

Tom Fletcher: Oh yeah, they definitely have their opinions! They love *The Christmasaurus*, but they're very honest. Once, my son said, "Dad, why didn't this character do that?" and I had to admit he had a point! Kids are the toughest critics but also the most rewarding ones too.

Monica: Switching gears a bit - have you ever had a moment where a song lyric turned into a story idea, or vice versa?

Tom Fletcher: Absolutely! My brain doesn't really separate music from storytelling; they're both ways of creating worlds. I've had song lyrics that sparked story ideas and sometimes, while writing a book, a line will pop into my head that ends up becoming a lyric. It's a fun crossover.

Monica: How do you think McFly's tour bus would look if *The Christmasaurus* joined the tour? Any band adventures that could make it into a future book?

Tom Fletcher: The tour bus would be an absolute wreck with the Christmasaurus on board! But it would be so much fun - snow everywhere, Christmas lights tangled up in all the equipment. I could definitely see some of our backstage adventures making their way into a kids' book one day. We've had some pretty hilarious moments!

Monica: What's one backstage McFly moment that you think would make an epic scene in a children's book?



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**"My children are
my best source of
inspiration."**

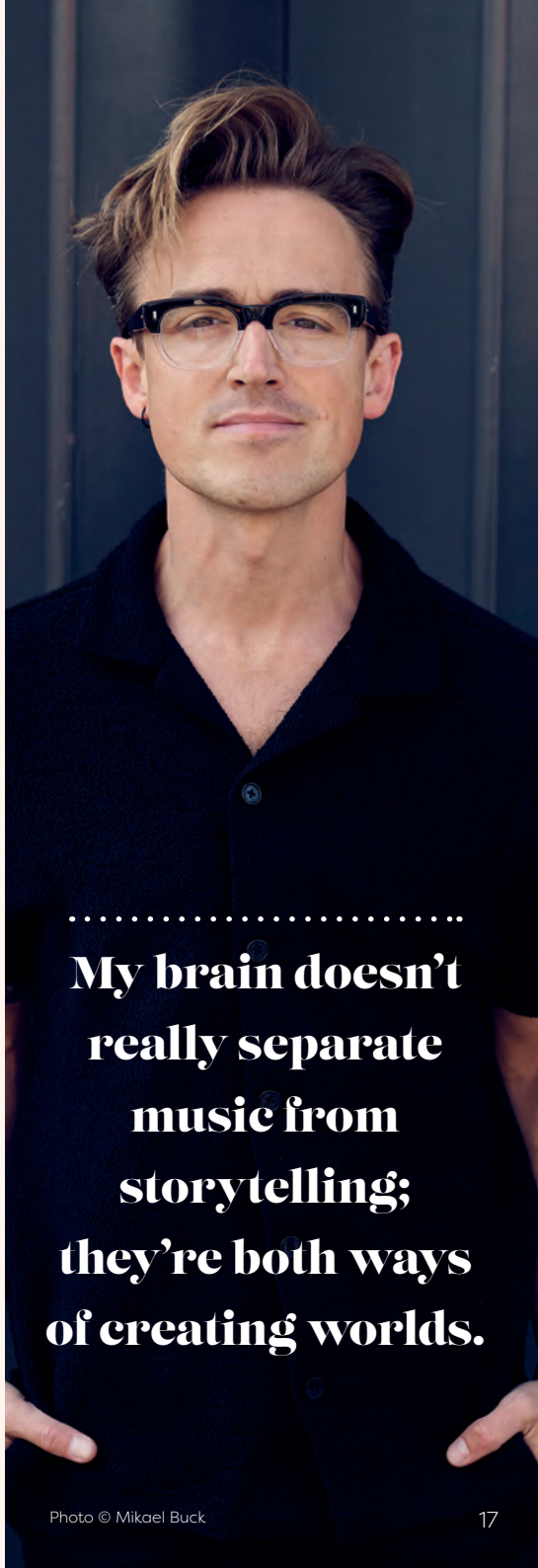
Tom Fletcher: There was this one time when we were on tour and we had a snow machine backstage for one of our Christmas shows. It malfunctioned and sprayed snow everywhere – it was like a blizzard! That would definitely make an epic scene in one of my books.

Monica: If *The Christmasaurus* formed a band, what would its first tour look like? Any past *McFly* tours that would fit into this magical world?

Tom Fletcher: I think the *Christmasaurus*' band would have to tour in the North Pole! It would be a snowy, sparkly, magical affair with reindeer as the roadies. Our *McFly Christmas* tours would definitely fit in that world – lots of fun, energy, and a touch of Christmas chaos!

Monica: Thanks so much for your time, Tom. We can't wait for the release of *The Christmasaurus* and the *Night Before Christmas*. It sounds like the perfect festive read!

Tom Fletcher: Thanks, Monica! It was great chatting with you. I hope everyone enjoys the new adventure!



.....

**My brain doesn't
really separate
music from
storytelling;
they're both ways
of creating worlds.**

Book Buzz!

Letters from the North Pole by Annie Atkins and illustrated by Fia Tobing

A delightfully festive book for children aged 3+



Five children from all around the world write to Santa Claus with ideas for Christmas gifts and are amazed when he writes back! Discover five letters from Santa that children can pull out and read, each accompanied by a blueprint for their gift made by the elves in Santa's Workshop. In each letter the hidden world of the North Pole is revealed, from how reindeer can sleep standing up to what snacks Santa would like left out on Christmas Eve and how he gets round the world so quickly. But will the gifts the children have requested be made in time?

This nostalgic, festive tale is written and art directed by Annie Atkins, the legendary film prop designer of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *Isle of Dogs* and *Box Trolls*, and beautifully illustrated by Fia Tobing.



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Book Buzz!

How to get your teenager out of their bedroom. The ultimate tools and strategies for understanding, connecting with and being there for your teenager.

BE THE PARENT YOUR TEENAGER NEEDS.

Parenting expert Anita Cleare draws on her 20 years of experience to provide practical solutions to the many challenges of parenting modern teens. Her tried and tested methods really work.

Teenagers withdraw to their bedrooms for all sorts of reasons, from gaming and digital socialising to acute self-consciousness and low mood. The problem is, when teens won't talk, it's hard for parents to know what's going on and how best to respond.



The book reveals:

- A blueprint for how to get a reluctant teenager to spend time with you. Strategies for addressing challenges such as compulsive gaming, excessive phone use, and social anxiety.
- The four key drivers behind teenage behaviour.
- How to communicate effectively (without nagging) and build connection.
- This book will equip you to be the parent your teenager needs, helping you both successfully navigate the challenges of those teenage years.
- This much-needed book fills a niche that today's parents are crying out for.
- Most parenting guides focus on the younger years or are set in an era when dealing with a teen absorbed in their digital devices and disengaged from family wasn't an issue. Other books on teens tend to focus on specific teenage needs (such as ADHD, mental health, etc.) and ignore the difficult emotions parents experience when teens push them away.
- Anita is an expert, but she aims not to overload the reader with too much science.
- The text only includes the psychology and neuroscience that the reader needs to know to make real changes. Case studies and real-life scenarios provide solutions to common challenges when living with teens.

The author:

Anita Cleare (MA, AdvDip) is a parenting speaker, writer and expert who supports working parents to balance successful careers with being a parent. She writes the award-nominated 'Thinking Parenting' blog (www.anitacleare.co.uk) and delivers expert parenting seminars, webinars and one-to-one support. Anita has studied child developmental psychology to postgraduate level and is an accredited Triple P® parenting coach.



Book Buzz!

An Anthology of Exquisite Birds

***An Anthology of Exquisite Birds* is a stunning, informative guide to birds. Written by best-selling author and science writer Ben Hoare, this gift book explores more than 100 exquisite birds, from rock dove pigeons to the harpy eagle.**

Perfect for ages 7 and up, Ben takes the reader on an incredible journey through the skies, with stunning photography and wonderful illustrations by Angela Rizza and Daniel Long that capture the colourful and extraordinary world of birds.

Ideal for children and adults that are fascinated by these animals, Ben explores avians from their claws to their feathers. *An Anthology of Exquisite Birds* is packed full of information to help readers discover more about these incredible creatures. This book is a visual discovery of all things birds - from their habitats, to their anatomy and even their behaviour.

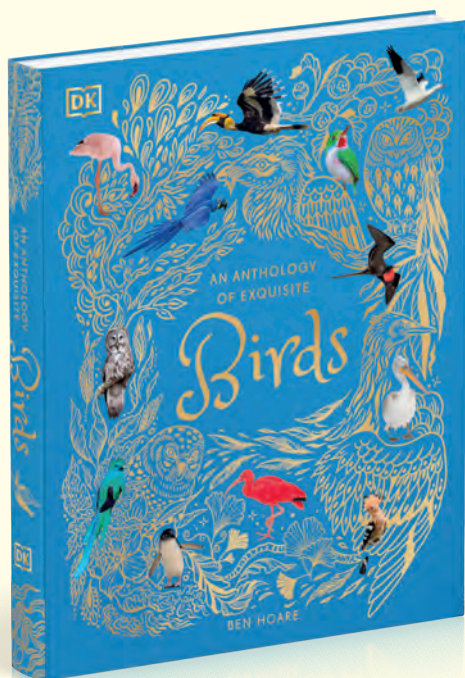
From the majestic green peafowl and its dramatic mating dance, to the miniature bee hummingbird that flaps its wings 200 times a second, this stunning collection showcases many of the world's most extraordinary birds. Detailed photography is paired with storybook descriptions that will captivate young readers, whether it's finding out about condors and cuckoos or swans and starlings. Features on eggs, feathers, nests, and other key topics explore the enormous variety of avian adaptations.

There is also a visual index packed with reference information, including the size and range of each species. With foil on the cover, gilded edges, and a ribbon for keeping your place, *An Anthology of Exquisite Birds* makes a beautiful gift this Christmas!

The author:

Ben Hoare is a science writer and editor, and the author of the hugely successful *An Anthology of Intriguing Animals*, as well as *The Wonders of Nature*, *Nature's Treasures*, and *The Secret World of Plants* for DK. He is passionate about nature and sharing his knowledge of the natural world.

***An Anthology of Exquisite Birds* by Ben Hoare. DK. £20. Out Now.**



Book Buzz!

***Paws for Thought:* Life Through a Dog's Eyes**



Life Through a Dog's Eyes, debut author **Elaine Jacques' *Paws for Thought* offers a heart-warming, entertaining glimpse into life as seen by Monty, her beloved Border Collie. This delightful collection of short stories follows Monty from his puppy days as the runt of the litter to his adventures in adulthood, filled with humour, love, and companionship.**

Dog lovers will adore the insights into Monty's world, as he narrates his journey through friendships, mischief, and his special bond with his owner, Elaine. Whether you're captivated by his playful antics or touched by his loyalty, Monty's tales are sure to warm hearts and bring smiles.

Elaine's writing brings to life the bond between dogs and their owners, showing why they truly are man's best friend. Her passion for animals shines through, inspired by her own journey with Monty and her love of creatures great and small.

Praise for *Paws for Thought*:

"This story of Monty, the runt who chose Elaine as his mum, is full of heart. A great insight into his emotions and experiences." – Mr G Freeman



"A thoroughly entertaining and joyful read about a dog and his adventures." – Robin

"A wonderful book that brings Monty's world to life with fun illustrations and stories that are impossible to put down." – Phil

The author:

Elaine Jacques grew up in Winchester, though she spent much of her youth in Spain. After returning to the UK at 18, she pursued English studies and later explored the world, including volunteering in African animal conservation. Her love of animals and deep affection for Monty inspired her to write this joyful collection of stories.

Where to buy:

Paws for Thought is available in hardcover (£14.99), paperback (£9.99), and Kindle (£2.99) on Amazon, Waterstones, and other book retailers.

Perfect for dog lovers, this charming book will be a favourite to revisit again and again!

Book Buzz!

New children's book *Bedtime for Ella* helps kids overcome night-time fears



Bedtime for Ella, a new children's book, offers a fun and imaginative way to help young readers tackle night-time fears. Written in a rhyming format, the story follows Ella, a young girl who encounters a friendly monster named Giggly Furbottom in her bedroom. Rather than being scared, Ella learns that laughter is a powerful tool to face her fears, turning what could have been a frightening experience into an exciting adventure.

The book, aimed at children aged 3 to 7, focuses on themes of courage, friendship, and the power of imagination. Through her interactions with Giggly Furbottom, Ella demonstrates how children can overcome fear with humour and trust. The story highlights the importance of building positive relationships and shows how bravery and a sense of wonder can transform difficult moments into opportunities for growth.

Bedtime for Ella is the first in a series of planned books featuring the character Ella and her adventures in the magical world of Storyland. At the centre of these stories is **Goose in Gold**, Ella's grandfather and a storyteller who creates exciting tales for children. Storyland, the fictional setting, is a vibrant world filled with golden fields, sparkling lakes, and fantastical creatures, designed to engage young readers' imaginations and provide an escape from reality.

The book also introduces key developmental benefits for young readers. According to the author, *Bedtime for Ella* aims to teach:

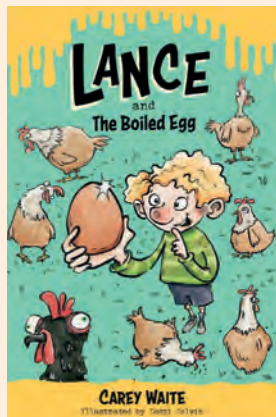
- **Creativity and Imagination:** Vivid descriptions of Storyland and its characters encourage children to think beyond the ordinary.
- **Courage and Adventure:** Facing new challenges alongside Ella helps young readers understand the excitement of overcoming fears.
- **Friendship and Trust:** Ella's relationship with Giggly Furbottom underscores the importance of forming trusting friendships.
- **Appreciation of Nature:** Through Storyland's diverse settings, children learn to value the natural world.
- This is the first book in a planned series, with future titles like *Ella's Forest of Letters* and *Ella and The Magic of Seven!* set to continue Ella's adventures.

Bedtime for Ella is available now on Amazon, offering parents a fun, engaging way to make bedtime a positive and imaginative experience for their children.



Book Buzz!

***Lance and the Boiled Egg*: A hilarious breakfast adventure that never ends!**



Carey Waite's new children's book, *Lance and the Boiled Egg*, offers a whimsical twist on the classic magic porridge pot tale, capturing the imaginations of young readers and adults alike. The story revolves around 8-year-

old Lance, who is given a boiled egg at breakfast, only to discover it has an extraordinary ability to refill after each spoonful. Despite his best efforts to finish the meal, and to the disbelief of his father, the egg just won't disappear so he turns to his best friend Otto the dog for help.

The book transports readers to a nostalgic era, where Sunday lunches featured roast beef and jam roly-poly with custard. Waite's humorous portrayal of Lance's father — who initially threatens Lance to finish his food but later dreams of fame through the magical egg — adds a layer of entertainment for adults who might remember similar parental meal-time struggles.

Waite, who admits it took him over three decades to complete the story, thanks publisher Rev. Charles Custard for encouraging him to finish the story. Children are enchanted by the endlessly refilling egg, while parents find themselves reminiscing about their own childhoods.

The author cleverly leaves the story open-ended, encouraging young readers to use their creativity by submitting their own conclusions to the tale — an interactive feature sure to provoke discussion.

Beautifully illustrated by Dotti Colvin, *Lance and the Boiled Egg* is as visually captivating as it is imaginative. The drawings bring the story to life, capturing the playful energy of Lance's world and encouraging readers to engage with the narrative.

Waite's book has already garnered rave reviews on Amazon. One reviewer enthused, "It's a great story... the ending is very imaginative. Kids will love it!" Another praised its thought-provoking nature, saying, "The ending has certainly got them thinking!"

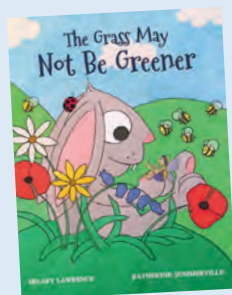


Lance and the Boiled Egg is published by The Custard Press and is available in paperback (£6.99) and Kindle (£1.99) on Amazon. For young readers aged 5-9, this charming tale of magic and mischief is sure to become a bedtime favourite.

Available now on Amazon.

Book Buzz!

The Grass May Not Be Greener: A fun, uplifting new children's book on self-acceptance



Hilary Lawrence's *The Grass May Not Be Greener* is the engaging first book in her *Life's Great Morals* series, designed to inspire children aged 3-7. This delightful story teaches a timeless lesson about self-acceptance and

appreciating what you have, perfect for parents looking to share meaningful values with their little ones.

In the story, Bunny, a rabbit who's bored with his life, meets a fairy who grants him the chance to live as different animals. Bunny's transformations into a bee, elephant, snake, and fish offer him new perspectives, but he soon realises that every creature has its own challenges. Ultimately, Bunny learns that life may look easier for others, but the grass isn't always greener on the other side.



Lawrence's engaging, rhyming narrative is beautifully paired with vibrant illustrations by Katherine Summerville. Each page draws children in, making this book a joy to read aloud. Additionally, educational elements like fun



rabbit facts and the origin of the proverb add extra value for curious young minds.

Parents and teachers alike have praised *The Grass May Not Be Greener* as a new bedtime favourite that also serves as an excellent tool for developing early literacy skills. It's more than just a story – it encourages children to build self-worth, self-esteem, and self-love.

What makes this book even more special is Lawrence's commitment to giving back. She is donating 100% of profits to children's charities, including Kids OR, which provides life-saving surgeries to children in low-income countries, and The Reading Clinic, which helps children with dyslexia.

Praise for *The Grass May Not Be Greener*:

"Charming rhyme and illustrations that captured my kids' attention... We'll definitely be buying the rest of the series!" – Rosie

"Bright and cheerful illustrations bring this delightful tale to life. It's a wonderful way to teach children that every animal, just like every person, has its own challenges." – Karen Mason

Where to Buy:

The Grass May Not Be Greener is available in paperback (£9.99) and Kindle (£5.99) from Amazon, Waterstones, and Barnes & Noble. Other books in the series include *Loose Lips Sink Ships* and *A Leopard Never Changes Its Spots*.

For more information or to purchase, visit [Amazon](#) or [Waterstones](#).

Book Buzz!

Unleashing Imagination: Let Kids Be Kids with Frances Bildner

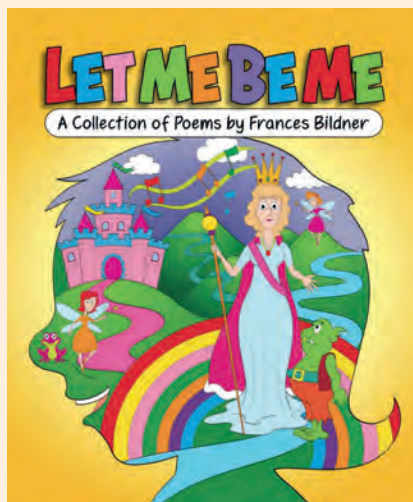
Frances Bildner, an acclaimed artist and writer, invites readers to rediscover the magic of childhood in her latest collection of poetry, *Let Me Be Me: Putting Play, Friendship and Imagination Centre Stage*. This enchanting book, priced at £6.99 and available on Amazon, captures the essence of what it means to let children explore their creativity without adult interference.

Bildner, who has been a champion of child-led creativity since founding Creative Wiz Kids in New York City in 1990, passionately advocates for allowing children to develop at their own pace. Her work highlights the profound benefits of play, friendship, and imagination – elements that are crucial for emotional and social growth. The vibrant illustrations by Kris Lilliman complement Bildner's rhyming verses, making the book visually engaging for both children and adults.

In *Let Me Be Me*, Bildner's poems serve as a poetic plea for adults to step back and allow children to thrive. She expresses that true development occurs when children are free to engage with their imaginations and interact with peers, a theme echoed throughout her body of work, including her previous publication, *The Adventures of Four Creative Wiz Kids – All Aboard the Chocolate Bar*. This book, also available on Amazon, celebrates the whimsical adventures of imaginative children and serves as a reminder of the joy that creativity brings.

Readers have praised *Let Me Be Me* for its engaging content and meaningful messages. Reviews highlight its ability to foster discussions between adults and children, making it an ideal choice for family reading. Marion Nathan describes it as "a book full of imagination," while Linda Smith calls it "a real treasure" that parents and children will adore.

Bildner's commitment to nurturing the creativity of children shines through her works, which aim to inspire both youngsters and their caregivers. The author's extensive experience in the arts, combined with her personal passion for promoting playful learning,



makes *Let Me Be Me* a must-read for anyone looking to enhance their understanding of childhood development.

***Let Me Be Me* is a heartfelt reminder of the importance of letting children be themselves, inviting readers to embrace the creativity that flourishes when children are given the freedom to play. For more information on Bildner's work, visit www.creativewizkids.com.**

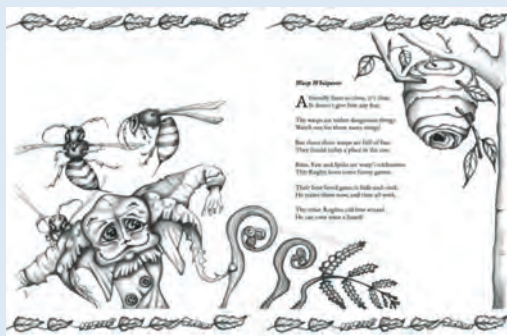
Book Buzz!

Roglings – Embracing Shakespeare’s Iambic Rhymes, New Tales of Woodland Creatures Enthrall Young Readers



With whimsical hooves and delightful floppy ears or horns, Anna Spencer invites young readers into the enchanting world of Roglings – super-friendly and sensitive

beings that dwell hidden in the woods. Her captivating book shares the adventures of these magical, poetic, and songful creatures through easy-to-read, humorous tales that are sure to become story time favourites.



Kids Adore These Characters!

The illustrations are absolutely stunning, and the concept of “Roglings” is incredibly engaging. This charming collection of rhymes about mysterious woodland creatures is truly captivating. Anna’s ability to breathe life into these tiny, hidden beings is nothing short of magical. We can’t help but wonder – are there more books in the pipeline? The allure of the Roglings is so enchanting that it feels ripe for expansion into other media, perhaps even an animated series!



Children will undoubtedly fall in love with the Roglings. The imaginative adventures you’ve created will not only entertain them but also spark their creativity and curiosity. With unique characters and an enchanting storyline, these tales are bound to capture their hearts and ignite their imaginations.

The author Anna Spencer says:

“If you had told me four years ago that I would publish a book, I wouldn’t have believed it! I never imagined doing this until I started creating Roglin drawings, which seemed to possess their own character – there was so much more to them than what met the eye. My family suggested that I write a few sentences to accompany each drawing, to give the illustrations greater context. I thought it was a fantastic idea, but soon realised that a couple of sentences simply wouldn’t suffice!

I decided to take two online courses about children’s literature and poetry. They were incredibly insightful, and after some time, I felt ready to submit my manuscript to publishers. I was unsure how it would be received, but I am thrilled to share that Roglings was accepted and published by Nightingale, part of Pegasus Publishers! Now, people can meet the Roglings! I’ve started visiting local primary schools with my book, and the feedback from both teachers and children has been fantastic!”

Roglings has received five-star reviews and is highly recommended by readers!
This charming book is the perfect Christmas gift for children aged 4-9 years old.

More info: www.roglings.com

Book Buzz!

New novel *Rumours of Magic* enchants with Wizard's Daughter's quest to clear her father's name



A fresh and captivating entry into the world of fantasy literature, *Rumours of Magic* by Les Attridge weaves an enchanting tale of magic, mischief, and the lengths one daughter will go to in order to clear her father's tarnished name.

Set in a world where sorcery meets an industrial revolution, the novel is aimed at readers aged twelve and above and offers a blend of dark intrigue and humour.

At the heart of *Rumours of Magic* are two wizards: Wimlett, whose life was tragically cut short due to a faulty Life-Timer, and Dennis, a power-hungry sorcerer with ambitions of ultimate control. Wimlett's premature death leaves his daughter, Eydith, with the daunting task of not only clearing his name but also

securing her place at Havrapsor, the prestigious magical university.

Seventeen years after Wimlett's untimely demise, Eydith embarks on a quest to reveal the truth about her father's death and thwart Dennis, who is on a dangerous hunt for a powerful artefact that could make him the most powerful wizard in the realm. Wimlett, however, isn't entirely gone; granted a ghostly form by Death's assistant as compensation for his early demise, he offers Eydith vital assistance from beyond the grave.

Les Attridge's richly detailed world, which draws on Arthurian and mythical influences, captivates readers with its seamless blend of machinery and magic. The novel's intricate plot requires readers to pay close attention, but the effort is richly rewarded with a well-paced, page-turning narrative. Fans of fantasy literature will appreciate the balance of darkness and humour, as well as the imaginative portrayal of Death and his assistants.

Described by readers as both entertaining and funny, *Rumours of Magic* is perfect for fans of fantasy looking for something unique. **The book is available in paperback and Kindle formats through Amazon and major bookstores including Waterstones, Barnes & Noble, and WH Smith.**



Book Buzz!

Uselessness and Laziness: Bursting with values and virtues - New book triumphs with messages that set kids up for life



Providing much-needed support to those kids who struggle on a daily basis, *Uselessness and Laziness* wows young readers with its overarching message of

setting yourself apart from all those things in life that give you strife. Uplifting and motivational, the friends introduced in this book are possibly the best literary buddies any young person can have.

Author Ann Tayo and illustrator Nathan Hackett's *Uselessness and Laziness* is a book like no other. Standing head and shoulders above most literary offerings supporting those youngsters who find themselves part of this country's burgeoning mental health crisis, the protagonists in this book are destined to become literary BFF's to all five to eight-year-olds.

Simple in its format, this rhyming and vividly illustrated tale also comes with an audio link, which enables readers to independently immerse themselves in this enlightening and impactful tale.

With a concluding message that says, 'So set yourself apart from the things that give you strife, and set yourself free to follow the Way, the Truth, and the Life', *Uselessness and Laziness* is a book that, perhaps, all of us, regardless of age, could benefit from reading.

The story:

A fun-filled uplifting and captivating story written in rhyme to brighten, enlighten, motivate, encourage and make you smile.

The author says:

"Cutting across the ages and is written in rhyme, it is vividly, beautifully, graphically illustrated, it is fun, it is recited on a link, and it encompasses a powerful inspirational motivational message to brighten, enlighten, uplift, and empower. I've shown it to university students who love it, parents and professionals who identify with it and children who adore the images. It tackles mental health in a light-hearted yet powerful way."

The Author:



Ann Tayo says: "I am a poet; I love to write but I am a barrister by profession. I try to unlock and release the best in people and enable them to achieve and have a better perspective and perception of themselves."

Published by Gatekeeper Press, *Uselessness and Laziness* is available to purchase in hardcover (ISBN: 978-1662948275) priced £16.99, paperback priced £10.49 and Kindle format (£6.30) on Amazon.



The Rock Hound Named Creative Jewellery Designer of the Year at the 2024 UK Jewellery Awards

Susi Smither, founder of The Rock Hound, has been awarded **Creative Jewellery Designer of the Year** at the 2024 UK Jewellery Awards. This accolade follows her earlier win as **New Designer of the Year** in 2017, just two years after launching her brand.

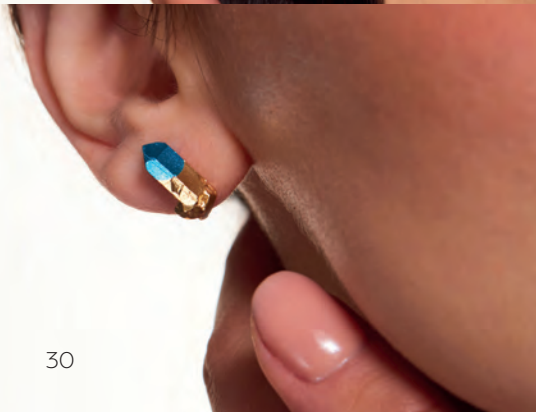
The prestigious event, often dubbed the “Oscars of the jewellery industry,” took place on 26th June at Old Billingsgate in London. With nearly 600 attendees, the 32nd edition of the awards celebrated excellence in jewellery design, ethical practices, customer service, and retail success.

Susi impressed the judges with her commitment to sustainability, particularly her use of recycled silver sourced from medical X-rays. Over the past year, The Rock Hound has achieved notable milestones, including participating in London Fashion Week, collaborating with La Maison Couture at Selfridges, and winning two awards during Milan Jewellery Week.

Candidates were judged on five submitted pieces, their design journey, and ethical sourcing practices. The judging process is conducted under Chatham House Rules, ensuring fairness and transparency, with the final decision made through a secret ballot.

Based in East London, The Rock Hound is known for its striking, responsibly sourced jewellery. Founded in 2015, the brand is a Fairmined Gold Licensee and collaborates with global artisan lapidaries and gemstone mining partners.

For more information, visit the **Retail Jeweller Awards website** or explore **The Rock Hound's collection** at www.therockhound.com. Follow them on Instagram @therockhound or shop their unique designs at Selfridges.



London Mums' Top Christmas Picks



The **STEALTH XP-Eclipse Gaming Headset**, **LED Streaming Mic**, and **LED Headset Stand Bundle** offer affordable, high-quality gear for gamers and streamers. Available from STEALTH



The Trybke Steel Balance Trike, **Wilac Classic Car** and **Wheely Bugs** are stylish and fun, classic ride-on toys for young children Available from www.hippychick.com



PO.P's exclusive Moomin collaboration celebrates Tove Jansson's 80th anniversary with soft, organic cotton clothing for all ages. Available at www.polarnopyret.co.uk



Tish Lyon 14k Gold Jewellery
Give the gift of elegance with Tish Lyon's 14k gold pieces - perfect for luxury piercings, available at John Lewis, Oxford Street.





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