

Cinders

magazine

VOLUME ONE ISSUE THREE

Living to learn

the bookworms
take over



FEMINISTS * BEAUTY AND THE BEAST * RIVERDALE



EDITORIAL

Editor

Méabh McDonnell

Co-Editor in charge of Social Media

Grainne Coyne

Contributors

Teresa Mulhern

Rosie Feerick

Melissa Eilers

Jenna Reimer

Baska Szostack

Proofreading

Jenna Reimer

Layout and Design

Méabh McDonnell

ONLINE

www.cindersmagazine.com

Email: cindersmagazine@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/cindersmag

Twitter: @cindersmag

cindersmagazine.tumblr.com

Hi Everyone,

I can't believe we're already publishing issue three! It seems like only yesterday that we were beginning this journey and now we're half way through our first volume! It's very exciting and we can't wait to share the second half of this year with all of our readers.

These were an exciting two months for the Cinders team. We kicked off with a lovely Galentine's day themed gathering where we chatted, complained and drank delicious tea!

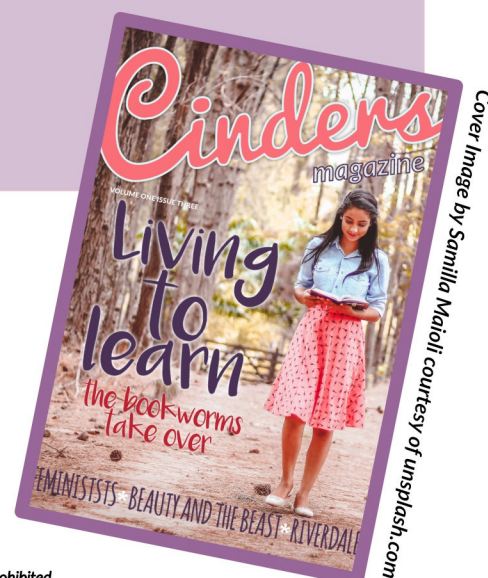
Later on we had the pleasure of speaking with Rosita Sweetman about feminism and Claire Hennessy about writing, teenagers and her latest novel. We also were delighted to attend the launch of Meg Grehan's *The Space Between* in Dublin. Read our review of *The Space Between* on p43.

We were delighted to welcome some new contributors for this issue. From a truly unique travel story from Melissa Eilers to Baska Szostack's *Beauty and the Beast* inspired artwork, there are some real treats in the pages for readers.

This issue is inspired by learning and reading in all its forms. The much talked about *Beauty and the Beast* adaptation caught our imaginations and inspired us to think about Belle, a girl who is empowered by books and knowledge. We look at some of our favourite women throughout history, our contributors best study tips (thanks to Aisling O'Halloran for the idea) and unusual interpretations of the famous *Beauty and the Beast* tale.

Cinders readers and writers are passionate about books and learning in all forms. That's what drove the making of this issue. Knowledge is power after all. We hope you agree,

Méabh



Cover Image by Samilla Maioli courtesy of unsplash.com

CONTENTS

VOLUME ONE ISSUE THREE

3 CINDERS SAYS

We give you our low-down on everything we've been listening to, watching and reading this month.

8 FEMINISM FORWARDS

Cinders editor, Méabh McDonnell sat down with author Rosita Sweetman about how the feminist movement has changed since the 70s.

10 OUR HISTORICAL HEROES

We look at some of the most interesting women from history, who are all worthy of more research!

12 SCHIZOPHRENIA: DISPELLING THE MYTH

Psychologist Teresa Mulhern gives us an in-depth look into schizophrenia.

14 CRAM THE RIGHT WAY

Our *Cinders* contributors and writers give their tips on how best to approach studying for exams.

16 OUR FAVOURITE FICTIONAL FEMINISTS

Back by popular demand we look at even more of our favourite fictional feminists from popular culture.

18 BETTY VS VERONICA IS NO MORE

We've been addicted to *Riverdale* since it landed online. Grainne Coyne looks at one of the most famous friendships in pop culture.

21 TEENAGE DREAMS

Cinders editor Méabh McDonnell catches up with author Claire Hennessy about teenagers, her new book and writing.

24 BEAUTIES AND THEIR BEASTS

We've always had a soft spot for *Beauty and the Beast*. For that reason we decided to investigate some 'unconventional interpretations of the tale.

32 ED IS BACK

Rosie Feerick gives us the lowdown on Ed Sheeran's new album, *Divide*.

34 ULTIMATE 10S HEROINES

This month our throwback theatre looks at the ultimate heroines from the editorial staff's fave 10s tv shows



ARTS AND PROSE CORNER

38 12 things I wish I could tell my 12 year old self by Jenna Reimer

40 Discovering a Unique Connection by Melissa Eilers

42 Steal Belle's Style by Baska Szostack

43 Book review corner - reviewing *The Space Between* by Meg Grehan

44 A list of quotes about learning to inspire your day

Cinders says...

From films to art to music to television Cinders magazine looks at what has us clicking our heels this month...

WE'RE READING ...

It's been a few months of hectic work for us here at Cinders so settling down with a good book has been our go-to method of relaxation. Check out our book reviews on page 43 for our full length review of Meg Grehan's *The Space Between* - but for a quick scan here are some of the books that we were glued to for this issue!

Strange the Dreamer by Laini Taylor

Strange the Dreamer is pure magic. that's no surprise because it's written by Laini Taylor, who writes only beautiful things. Her *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* series is a thing of pure beauty and her *Dreamdark* series are the badass fairytales that you wish your twelve year old self had. *Strange the Dreamer* is no different. She invents a completely new world for this series full of gods and lost cities and magic and dreams. I'm not going to tell you anything else but that Lazlo Strange is a librarian with a singular dream - to find the lost city of Weep. I guarantee if you read it you will.

A Court of Mist and Fury by Sarah J. Maas

I've actually been listening to a lot of audiobooks lately. I've discovered the joys of listening to a story in the car. In preparation for the release of *A Court of Wings and Ruin* in May I've been listening to the series. The books are read by Jennifer Ikeda - who is a fantastic narrator. I wasn't sure how I would feel about someone else's voice inside my head but boy was I glad I gave it a chance. Sarah J. Maas has a great way of taking our favourite fairytales and re-writing them into bad-ass heroines and Jennifer Ikeda has a talent for bringing them to life. You won't be disappointed, whatever format you decide to experience this.

The Space Between by Meg Grehan

The Space Between is a beautiful poetry novel written by Irish author Meg Grehan, Reading it was definitely one of the highlights of our month, a gorgeous love story and a beautiful examination of mental illness, we couldn't put it down. Read our full review on page 43!



WE'RE WATCHING...



Timeless

While we're at a loss at the sudden surge of time travelling shows on our TV screens in the last few months, there is one that definitely stands out amongst the many – *Timeless*. While there is still no confirmation as to whether it will be renewed or not, *Timeless* ticks the boxes in many regards. From a strong cast of lead and supporting female characters, POC characters and LGBT+ characters, it is a show leading the way when it comes to representation on television. Each episode features the time team of historian, Lucy, scientist, Rufus and soldier, Wyatt travelling back in time in a time machine's lifeboat to make sure the "villain" Garcia Flynn doesn't destroy history in some way. But what's most enjoyable about this show is not just the famous figures they meet in their time travelling exploits, but it's never the figures you expect. From Roger Fleming to Katherine Johnson, we see a different side to history and seeing the time team fangirl or react to historical characters is a delight to watch. The creators constantly and brilliantly acknowledge about how many POC have been erased from history, including even Rufus himself. There needs to be a season two not just because we want to figure out what Rittenhouse are up to, but mostly because shows like *Timeless* need to stay on the air for all the reasons listed above and more.

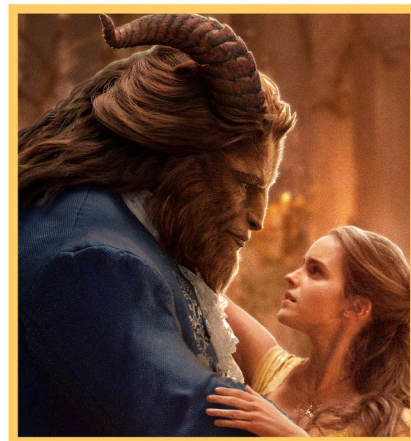
A Series of Unfortunate Events

If you loved the original book series and were unhappy with the film adaptation, then those feelings can be put to rest thanks to Netflix's latest adaptation. Starring and partly produced by Neil Patrick Harris, *A Series of Unfortunate Events* is funny as it's quirky. This show is not just meant for the kids out there, but has many nods and strong messages that the adults can appreciate too. Neil steals the show as Count Olaf, but the varied range of characters and wonderful settings makes this show enjoyable as it is addictive to watch. We also cannot forget to show our appreciation for Sunny's sassiness, Violet's patience and amazing invention skills, and finally, Klaus' refusal to put up with blatant sexist treatment towards his sisters. If there is a show you need to binge watch ASAP, this is it.

WE'RE GOING TO SEE

Beauty and the Beast

It is a tale as old as time and loved by many as a result. But we would be a little remiss if we didn't admit that we were a bit hesitant that Disney was dabbling with this much loved classic again. However our fears were put to rest when the live action lived up to the original and more. Whether it was Emma Watson singing her heart out about wanting independence and adventure, or the ever impressive Luke Evans and Josh Gad dancing and sauntering around as Gaston and LeFou, we were there for it. The fact Disney have included an open-ish, LGBT+ character is a small step, hopefully it is something that will open more doors in the right direction.



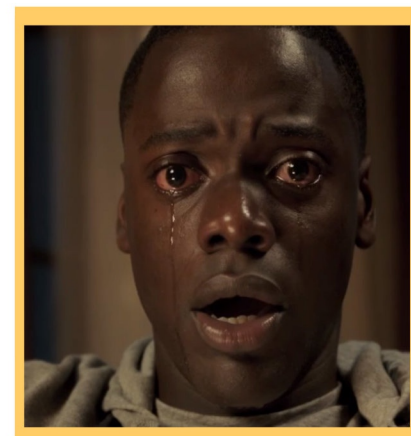
Hidden Figures

This is a film that you need to see for so many reasons. Not only does it tackle the untold tale of three great women: Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughn and Mary Jackson. It highlights how women, especially POC women can be erased from history. It's a story that tackles racism, sexism, maths, the difficulties of being a single, working mother, difficulties of being a married, working mother all while trying to ensure a safe entry into outer space for America's first astronauts. But what's so beautiful about this film is despite the obstacles these women unjustifiably faced and even though they had to work ten times harder than the average person to prove their worth, as Taraji P. Henson puts it, they still got on with the job. We're delighted that these women are getting the recognition they deserve, I'm only sorry it has taken this long in the first place.



Get Out

Girl, you need to see *Get Out*. Written and directed by first timer Jordan Peele it's brilliant - I mean it's also terrifying - but it's fantastic. What Chris (Daniel Kaluuya) thinks will merely be an awkward but mandatory family trip, to see his girlfriend Rose's (Alison Williams) family turns into something much more sinister. We're not going to give away what happens but suffice to say that it will leave you unable to properly sleep for a couple of nights - and definitely not meet any new people. It's a brilliant portrayal of racism in a post Obama America that really sticks with you after you've left the cinema. Both the leads are fantastic, particularly Kaluuya and they are supported by a very talented cast. Check it out. You won't be sorry.



The Sound of Music

Cinders contributor Jenna Reimer has been re-visiting musical classic *The Sound of Music*. It's made the rest of us rewatch it too - all we need is to see those rolling hills and that perfect shot of Julie Andrews and feel like we're kids again. As someone who teaches music part time, I sing Do-Re-Mi about once a day. There is something especially nostalgic and lovely about *The Sound of Music* - with great songs and a timeless story - what more could you want? It's also fascinating to know that it was based on a real family - actual VonTrapps and an actual Maria. I once read a TV summary that said this movie has everything. And it does: music, romance, nuns and daring escapes. Don't be afraid to go back and revisit it too!





WE'RE LISTENING TO...

Lorde - Green Light

Green Light is nothing like Lorde's last album, but it doesn't make it any less enjoyable. It's a song that is sad, but so uplifting at the same time. This is a song that you can easily shake yourself around to and even attempt to dance as effortlessly as Lorde herself does in the actual music video (but maybe not on top of any actual cars like she does). Liability is also another song by Lorde which was released not long after Green Light, and is slightly more downbeat, but is just as impactful. While Liability is moving and enjoyable for Lorde's own unique voice, it is nowhere near as empowering as Green Light, but we mean in that in the best sense. Either way, we are counting down the days till June, when her new album Melodrama will finally be released and our eager ears can be put at rest.

Cinders- self titled album

They say great minds think alike and we absolutely agree. Cinders - the band - got in contact with us to tell us just that - they share their name with us. So we just had to check them out. And were we happy that we did! Cinders have a gorgeous rich acoustic sound, think a little bit of Iron and Wine, James Vincent McMorrow and Bon Iver. Their album is full of music that would be the perfect soundtrack for your next road trip. With their Americana tones the whole album makes for great listening but our particular favourite was Last Year's Winter. We're hoping to get in touch with Cinders soon so watch this space...

Katy Perry - Chained to the Rhythm

Katy Perry is back and with a catchy tune at that. Whilst we love Katy for her marching on Washington last January, we're still not too happy with her not so nice subtle digs at Britney Spears. But either way, we can't ignore the fact that Chained to The Rhythm is a catchy tune and has underlying messages about our generation, the social media age and if her performance at the BRITS was anything to go by - digs at the leaders of the UK and USA. Art is a great way to get your message across and for sure, Katy makes hers pretty clear.

Feminism forwards

This month we had the pleasure of speaking with author, journalist and feminist Rosita Sweetman. Author of *Father's Come First* - which we reviewed in issue two of Cinders - Rosita gave Méabh McDonnell her impression of feminism today, how it has changed in Ireland since the 70s.

WHAT WITH the strides that the feminist movement has taken in recent years for privileged women of the developed world, it can be easy to forget how much more change is needed - but also how recently in Ireland that women's power was so much less prominent and so reliant on the men in their lives. But that is the world that Rosita Sweetman's *Father's Come First* is set in. Rosita wrote the small but powerful novel when she was living in East Africa and thinking of home.

The book is the coming of age story of Lizzie while she tries to figure out how to fit in, how best to be a woman and live up to the expectations that are put on her by her family, her teachers and society. It's a very different world from the one we have now. Rosita sees some changes as extremely positive, "Isn't it brilliant that more young people are more willing to say that they are feminists," she said. She saw this through the reaction from people after the book was rereleased.

"It was one of the things that has been a really nice surprise after Lilliput republished it, was that young people really got it. I thought it was going to seem really weird to young people but it did seem to have some relevance for them so that was really interesting."

Rosita pointed out that feminist energy is returning among young people, young women care about being seen as feminist in a way they haven't since the 60s and 70s. "I felt really strongly that the feminist energy which has been dormant is really coming up again. More strongly even than before because there are so many more young educated women dying to have a voice. I feel it's a really optimistic time to be a woman. We know so much more."

I asked if she still thinks that, given the outcome of the US election? "Even with Trump. Look at the Women's March - it was fantastic. The Trump win and everything is pretty horrendous and the big business that he's pushing around him but what's amazing is seeing how many passionately real feminists there are in America, people who really care about values for a good long time - there's Trump trashing around but there are hundreds of thousands of people saying 'not in our name' that's up lifting at the same time."

"I look at my daughter Chupi now and I think wow- a daughter of the revolution! She's got her own business, is thriving, you know there was never any question for her that she would make her own way," she continued.

It can be very easy to forget just how recent it is that attitude for women. While reading the book I really identified with Lizzie and with her perspective as a young woman but the struggles that she was going through that were a product of the time - her whole reliance on men that felt like something I hadn't experienced.

"I FELT REALLY STRONGLY THAT THE FEMINIST ENERGY WHICH HAS BEEN DORMANT IS REALLY COMING UP AGAIN"

Rosita agreed, "It was just the reality, the guys had all of the money it was a totally skewed equality and relations. The women movement's has certainly opened up relations but there's still a long way to go."

And while double standards still exist for many women, particularly those who are in less privileged positions, Rosita smells the winds of change.

"Double standards will exist until the end of time! I think it's loads better, so much of the hypocrisy has gone, there are pebblestones in it but we are growing up as a nation slowly. Look at the marriage equality referendum, I think the eighth amendment is going to be repealed, it's on its way it's not going to go back now."

She sees that as coming from an improvement in attitudes from young people today. "I look at the openness and clarity of your generation and my children's generation and it's just so different. Positively so. It's centuries ahead of most people in power. I suppose every generation is a new generation and a new reality."

This is interesting as I pointed out to Rosita that most young women, myself included, who identify themselves as feminists now, wouldn't have always done so - everyone had their own journey to becoming one.

It took time and learning for our attitudes to become inclusive.

"The book I'm working on at the moment for Lilliput is called 'Feminism Backwards' and it's about exactly that, the journey towards becoming a feminist. It's a development of consciousness. It's sort of like becoming politically aware."

That balance is central to Rosita's beliefs, the balance between these two energies, between any two energies. "I think that it's the core of the world. It's yin-yang, it's the balancing opposing energies that are equal, male-female, whatever you call them, that is where the balance is. It's absolutely necessary for both powers to be equal to have the right things to happen. One of the things with the alt-right I feel is it's just so male. All of these guys just look so desperately male - it's not the way that we're meant to live - we're meant to live mixed up! All ages, all sexes, all groups, we're not meant to hive off of a particular energy, then it just goes mad!"

The way forward she believes is acknowledging that feminism and female energy go hand in hand. We can't help but completely agree with her. "I think feminism it's right there at the core of our own female energy, and moving forward it's about taking cognisance of that fact."



Photograph by Roya Ann Miller at the Women's March on Washington in January of this year.

Our Historical Heroes

It's no secret that many of the most noteworthy women from history have unfortunately been forgotten. Inspired by the fantastic story of *Hidden Figures* - we've compiled a list of some of the fascinating women throughout history who we believe are way too interesting not to research some more!

Nellie Bly

For me, Nellie Bly is something of a hero. Nellie Bly, was an American journalist born in 1864. She was also a writer, industrialist, inventor, and a charity worker who was widely known for her record-breaking trip around the world in 72 days, after of Jules Verne's fictional character Phileas Fogg. Her best known journalistic feat was an exposé where she faked insanity to do an undercover investigation of a mental institution from within. For this story she agreed to feign insanity to investigate reports of brutality and neglect at the Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island. Her report, later published in book form as *Ten Days in a Mad-House*, caused a sensation and brought her lasting fame. Following her marriage she retired from journalism and became the president of the Iron Clad Manufacturing Co., which made steel containers such as milk cans and boilers where she invented numerous new products. She launched a new kind of investigative journalism and was an absolute pioneer in her field and is one of my favourite women from history.



Pauli Murray

Anna Pauline "Pauli" Murray was an American civil rights activist, women's rights activist, lawyer, Episcopal priest and author. She was someone who fought hard for others. In 1940, Murray sat in the whites-only section of a Virginia bus with a friend, and they were arrested for violating state segregation laws. This incident, and her subsequent involvement with the socialist Workers' Defense League, led to a career goal as a civil rights lawyer. She enrolled in the law school of Howard University, where she also became aware of sexism. She called it "Jane Crow", alluding to the Jim Crow racial segregation laws. Murray graduated first in their class, but was denied the chance to do post-graduate work at Harvard University because of her gender. She earned a master's in law at University of California, Berkeley, and in 1965 she became the first African American to receive a Doctor of Juridical Science degree from Yale Law School. As a lawyer, Murray argued for civil rights and women's rights. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Chief Counsel Thurgood Marshall called Murray's 1950 book *States' Laws on Race and Color* the "bible" of the civil rights movement. Murray served on the 1961 Presidential Commission on the Status of Women and in 1966 was a co-founder of the National Organization for Women.



Nancy Wake

Nancy Wake served as a British Special Operations Executive agent during the later part of World War II. She became a leading figure in the maquis groups of the French Resistance and was one of the most decorated servicewomen of the war by the Allies. After the fall of France in 1940, she became a courier for the French Resistance and later joined the escape network of Captain Ian Garrow. By 1943, Wake was the Gestapo's most wanted person, with a 5-million-franc price on her head. After reaching Britain, Wake joined the Special Operations Executive. Vera Atkins, who also worked in the SOE, recalls her as "a real Australian bombshell. Tremendous vitality, flashing eyes. Everything she did, she did well." Training reports record that she was "a very good and fast shot" and possessed excellent fieldcraft. She was noted to "put the men to shame by her cheerful spirit and strength of character." She died in 2011 at the ripe old age of 98.

Ching Shih

Ching Shih was a prominent pirate in middle Qing China, who terrorised the China Sea in the early 19th century. She personally commanded over 300 junks manned by 20,000 to 40,000 pirates — men, women, and even children. She entered into conflict with the existing empires of the time, such as the British, the Portuguese and the Qing dynasty. She was one of the few pirate captains to retire from piracy. She is considered to be the most successful female pirate and one of the world's most powerful pirates in history. She inherited her position as head of a pirate fleet following the death of her husband. Ching Shih immediately began maneuvering her way into his leadership position. The Red Flag Fleet under Ching Shih's rule could not be defeated—not by Qing dynasty Chinese officials, not by the Portuguese navy, and not by the British. She even captured Richard Glasspoole, an officer of the East India Company ship *The Marquis of Ely*, and seven British sailors in 1809. In 1810, amnesty was offered to all pirates by the Chinese government, and Ching Shih accepted it, ending her career that same year. She kept her loot and opened a gambling house. She died in 1844, at the age of 69.



Yoshioka Yayoi

Yoshioka Yayoi was a physician and women's rights activist, who founded the Tokyo Women's Medical University in 1900, as the first medical school for women in Japan. She was also known as Washiyama Yayoi. Yayoi grew up in the 19th century when women's education was frowned upon. She graduated from the *Saisei-Gakusha* school of medicine, and received the 27th medical license granted to a woman in Japan. Realizing the difficulty of this career path for women in Japan, she resolved to start her own school of medicine, which she did before she was 30 years old. The graduates of the Tokyo Women's Medical School (renamed the Tokyo Women's Medical University in 1998) were not allowed to practice medicine until 1912, when the Japanese government permitted women to enroll in the national medical examination. By 1930, almost a thousand women had gone through Yoshioka's school. Yayoi was awarded the Order of the Precious Crown in 1955, and the Order of the Sacred Treasure posthumously in 1959.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

DISPELLING THE MYTH

Schizophrenia is a psychological disorder that many of us have heard of but few of us could define.

Psychologist **Teresa Mulhern** gives us a window into schizophrenia and how it can affect those who have it.

WHEN I was a teenager, the term “schizo” was commonly misunderstood and used to refer to somebody who held two opposing views of something at the same time (e.g., “I am so schizophrenic about that”), or people commonly believed schizophrenia referred to somebody who had a split personality. As I entered college and began to familiarise myself with psychology, I realised how wrong this view actually was.

While the word 'schizo' itself does in fact mean split, this does not refer to a split personality but a split brain. As such, this means that sections of the brain don't effectively communicate with one another, resulting in the symptoms associated with schizophrenia, ultimately leading the individual to be “split off” from reality. Given the prevalence of schizophrenia (at least 26 million people globally are affected), I was pretty shocked to learn that there was such a misunderstanding about this psychological disorder.

But what are the symptoms associated with schizophrenia? These are separated into three categories: positive, negative and cognitive symptoms. The word “positive” in this sense means the presence of symptoms that are not seen in non-schizophrenic populations, while “negative” symptoms involve the absence of certain behaviours associated with healthy populations.

Positive symptoms include the presence of delusions. These delusions can include delusions of persecution – that “they” are out to get you; delusions of reference – that some environmental event holds a special meaning or message for you (e.g., they may believe that there are hidden messages being directed towards them in the media); delusions of grandeur – that you are an important figure, such as Jesus or have special powers; and delusions of control – the belief that your thoughts are being controlled by others.

Some common delusions of control include thought broadcasting (“My private thoughts are being transmitted to the government”), thought insertion (“Somebody is planting thoughts in my mind”), and thought withdrawal (“The government is stealing my thoughts!”).

As you can imagine, this is an incredibly frightening experience for somebody with schizophrenia; however, there are additional positive symptoms, including hallucinations (generally referred to as psychosis, and these generally are related in some way to the individual's delusions) and disordered thoughts and speech.

Disordered thoughts and speech can involve a person rapidly switching from one topic to another, with no connection between one thought and the next, the use of made-up words or phrases that nobody else understands, repeating words and phrases over and over again, and the meaningless use of rhyming words. These positive symptoms respond very well to medication, meaning that these symptoms of schizophrenia can be managed.

"WHILE, THE WORD "SCHIZO" ITSELF DOES IN FACT MEAN SPLIT, THIS DOES NOT REFER TO A SPLIT PERSONALITY – BUT A SPLIT BRAIN."

On the other hand, negative symptoms can include the absence of emotional expression (e.g., inexpressive face, including a flat voice, lack of eye contact, inability to experience pleasure, and blank or restricted facial expressions), lack of interest or enthusiasm (lack of desire to form relationships, and a difficulty with motivation and self-care), seeming lack of interest in the world (this can include social withdrawal and an apparent unawareness of the environment), and speech difficulties and abnormalities (including an inability to carry out a conversation and speaking in a monotone).

Negative symptoms have a greater impact on an individuals' quality of life and functional ability than those of positive symptoms. People who demonstrate greater negative symptoms generally have experienced a history of poor adjustment prior to the onset of schizophrenia, and their response to medication is often limited. Because of these symptoms, people with schizophrenia find it difficult to cope with everyday tasks, including work and household tasks. Suicide and self-harm are extremely common among those with a diagnosis of schizophrenia, with around one in 10 taking their own life.

Finally, individuals with schizophrenia also experience cognitive symptoms or dysfunction. Deficits in cognitive abilities are generally regarded as a defining feature of schizophrenia. The degree to which an individual experiences these cognitive deficits predicts how functional they will be, their occupational performance, and how successful they will be in maintaining treatment. Cognitive symptoms include poor "executive functioning" (the ability to understand information and use it to make decisions), trouble focusing or paying attention, problems with "working memory" (the ability to use information immediately after learning it), long-term memory, and verbal learning and memory.

In 2013, the diagnostics manual used to diagnose psychological disorders, including schizophrenia, was revised (DSM-5). This now states that in order to meet the diagnosis of schizophrenia, two diagnostic criteria must be experienced by the patient for more than a month, while the individual simultaneously experiences a significant impact on their social or occupational functioning for at least six months. The individual must show at least one positive symptom, and one negative or cognitive symptom.

Schizophrenia generally manifests in late adolescence and early adulthood. A combination of both genetic and environmental factors play a role in the development of this psychological disorder. The environmental factors associated with the development of schizophrenia include the individual's living environment, exposure to viruses when in the uterus, malnutrition before birth, drug use and parental stressors.

It's crucial to remember that schizophrenia requires long term treatment including medication which works by reducing psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, paranoia and disordered thinking. However, it is not a cure for treating the negative symptoms associated with the disorder, as such treatments such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and group therapies can help to remediate the difficulties associated with this.

If you have experienced any of the issues discussed in this article please contact your General Practitioner.

Please find the phone numbers for Childline here: 1800 666 666

Samaritans: If you are in need of immediate support call: 116 123

Cram the right way...

We know that April is the month of rain, chocolate and - unfortunately- exam preparation. Exam prep is an unfortunate reality of life and we've turned to our Cinders contributors to see what helped them most during those dreaded days of post-its, flash cards and conjugating verbs!

Research shows that the best way is to do kind of sprints of study and switch between topics to keep the brain active and engaged. 25 mins on one subject-5mins break, then onto another topic. Also- keep note taking to a minimum- the fewer words you have to remember, the better.

-Teresa Mulhern

Use your phone to record yourself saying your bullet points of stuff you should learn, like history essays and things like that. Really helped me!

-Ellen Tannam

I found post-its and bullet points most helpful but I also think that it's so important to take a break and let your mind rest. I think that's one of the things I perhaps would have liked to change when I was in school around exam season and the junior and leaving cert years. I spent so much time stressing and getting anxious over grades that sometimes no study happened at all. So when it came to college, I finally realised that going for a walk before study and after made all the difference, just to clear my mind but also to reflect what I had gone over that day. It's different for everybody but setting out a timetable helped me too and having 20-30 mins per subject/module was really the best way to focus on different subjects especially if they weren't similar. I found it would stop boredom but make sure I had goals and get them done. I sometimes had study groups and found them to be helpful for subjects I was really struggling with like maths or physics, sometimes a different perspective can make all the difference.

- Grainne Coyne

Visual aids: doing up separate word documents or flash cards with Need To Know info. Keep them all in a safe spot or folder. Also, eat and sleep! Make sure you get at least eight hours the night before your exam. If your exams are spaced out, take the evening off after you get out of the exam hall and do something lovely!

-Emer McHugh

For me, the best thing that I remembered doing was the "post-it trick". Worked best for memorising facts, I used it mainly for history (dates, definitions, key events etc.) and for languages (verbs and key vocals). I'm sure it's a familiar one but it worked wonders for my brain. You get two post-its and write a date (e.g. 1973) on the top one and the answer on the second one (Roe v Wade court case). Every time you get it right you put a tick on the post-its and when you get 10 ticks you're sweet! I had them all over my bedroom walls and I doubled them up so I'd have on the top one the verb "corner" and then on the bottom one "to eat" and somewhere else on the wall it would be the english on top, Spanish on the bottom.

- Claire Sheil

For all you fellow procrastinators out there: take a deep breath. Don't look at the mound of books on your desk as one single task - because then it's that much harder to face into. Instead think of it as lots of mini tasks - 'I have to revise French verbs for the next 30 mins'. Or 'I have to do two maths questions'.

I found that once I made the task seem a bit smaller - it was easier to approach and I was less likely to put it off. Also try and use things you already have to hand. If you are making flash cards then that's great because your revising the information as you make them but don't spend three hours creating a colour coded 'study timetable' - and then doing no work.

Finally, echoing what the others have said: rest - especially the night before the first exam. Take an hour before you go to bed, eat something you love and watch something crappy on TV. At that point you're not going to cram much more into your brain and you'll hopefully be a bit more relaxed when you go to sleep.

- Méabh McDonnell

FAVOURITE FICTIONAL FEMINISTS

Back by popular demand, we decided that there just weren't enough of our favourite fictional feminists in our last issue. So we decided to just keep on going with a second list devoted to some of our other faves.

JANE is the protagonist of the CW's fantastic *Jane the Virgin*, a single mother, who is incredibly devoted to her family. The series kicks off with her being 'accidentally, artificially inseminated' leading to her unexpected pregnancy. Jane is a wonderful character to watch, optimistic and brave but grounded - she never becomes annoying. Jane is of course supported by a host of strong, brilliant women from her headstrong mother Xiomara, to her level-headed, forthright grandmother Alba. Jane's decision to remain a virgin at the beginning of the series is unconventional, but she consistently uses her agency to make the decision for herself. She never judges other characters for their sex lives and makes her own decisions about her own. Jane faces multiple obstacles in her life but remains the strong, kind, forthright character we all love.

JANE VILLENEUVE

IF YOU haven't seen *Mad Max: Fury Road* - then get out from under the rock you've been living under and relax into one of the most feminist movie spectacles of the last ten years. Furiosa, played by Charlize Theron, is the short haired, one armed, prized driver of Immortan Joe's fleet. She begins her story by breaking out his captured brides and escaping with them, headed for an Eden-like land of her childhood. Despite the movie's name, she, not Mad Max, is it's main character. She proves herself to be badass and strong and heroic. She takes the women away, determined to set them free. She does this without seeking reward or without any regard for her own safety. She is strong and resourceful, pushing the other characters forward and inspiring the wives to take up arms to defend their own freedom. She is the one who ultimately defeats Immortan Joe and returns to his citadel to claim victory for the citizens.

FURIOSA

MARTHA Jones, how we miss thee! One of our long time laments about *Doctor Who* is that Martha only received one season. Martha Jones was one of the best companions that the Doctor never noticed, and is one of the most impressive women to ever take the role. She accompanies David Tennant's Doctor on some of his most iconic adventures - she meets Shakespeare, faces off against the Master and finds herself at the end of the world. She has a fantastic moment during the third series episode, *The Family of Blood*, where she proves her doctor's credentials when she recites the name of every single bone in the human hand - a truly cheer-worthy moment. Martha is brave and resourceful and has one of the best, most assertive exits from the TARDIS and the Doctor's life. She is one of the most heroic characters ever to grace *Doctor Who* - and deserves to be remembered as such!

MARTHA JONES



I CAN'T write a list about feminist heroes and not include Eowyn from *Lord of the Rings*. I just can't. Arwen and Galadriel are incredibly cool as well but I can remember being 12 years old, sitting in a cinema and watching Eowyn don her armour and sneak out as part of the Rohirrim. There are few more cheer-worthy moments than when she faces off against the Witch King of Angmar and defeats him by the very fact that she is a woman - delivering the immortal line "I am no man!". Eowyn is the girl who was raised by men, who was taught how to fight and emerges as a 'shield maiden' of Rohan. In the book her constant need for war is replaced after her own healing for a need to heal others. This disappointed me as a child reading it, it felt like some of her fire was diluted. But she makes the decision herself and still has agency. Her decision to make something out of her life is a positive one, as it's pointed out that she had planned to die in glory on the battlefield and now has to figure out how she is going to go on living her life. She's still one of my favourite female characters and always will be for her complexity and her strength and her adamance that no one will tell her who or what to be.

EOWYN

REBECCA Bunch is the bubbly, hard-working and anxiety-filled protagonist of *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. Rebecca is the girl who did everything right. She studied hard, she got the great job at a law firm in New York and despite all of this she was dreadfully unhappy. A chance meeting with her teenage ex-boyfriend has her hop on a plane and move to his home town of West Covina California. Which, although it sounds like a ridiculous move, it's exactly the one our Rebecca needs. West Covina becomes her home, where she makes new friends and even more bad decisions. It helps that she narrates her life through brilliantly written, thoughtful songs. Rebecca is a staunch feminist, and although she has trouble showing people that she cares, her principles towards other women are almost always on point. All of her female friendships feel genuine and are some of the best aspects of the show to watch. She is continually commenting on double standards for women and men and is an example of a successful woman who embraces her femininity. Rebecca may have problems in her personal life, but she is a smart and engaging character to watch and really feels like someone you might know.

REBECCA BUNCH

TO BE fair we could have listed most of the women in Studio Ghibli's back catalog and we'd have an interesting list of complex, intelligent feminist characters but Lady Eboshi is one of the most interested in equal empowerment. Of course, so is Nausicaa of *Nausicaa: Valley of the Wind*. Lady Eboshi is painted as the antagonist of Hayao Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke* but it's her feminism and socialism that are her redeeming character traits. She is the leader of the newly built Irontown and has created an independent industrial community incorporating all people as workers. It's mentioned that she 'went around buying up the contracts of every brothel woman she could find' and the women are incredibly loyal to her. They also are all hard workers in the iron plant. The lepers are her engineers, but she is certainly using them for her own ends. They're all treated like equals by Lady Eboshi - although her equality doesn't reach to the Princess of the film's namesake. Lady Eboshi is a character who's downfall is her pride and her arrogance but she is a staunch feminist and she does learn from her mistakes - eventually. She's one of Ghibli's more complex characters but she is also one of its richest, one of its most important.

LADY EBOSHI



Betty Vs Veronica is no more in **RIVERDALE**

Riverdale is the newest teen TV show to grace our TV and computer screens. Brought to life by the CW, they are continuing a fantastic trend by showcasing a brilliant, relatable female friendship. **Grainne Coyne** takes a look at their fresh interpretation of Betty and Veronica!

LIKE many of the great TV shows I've become obsessed with recently, I was initially sceptical about *Riverdale*. *Riverdale* seemed like a carbon copy of all the teen angst dramas that have already been over-crowding TV since the 1990's. At the beginning *Riverdale* does seem to fit that narrative, but on closer inspection *Riverdale* seems perfectly self aware of its teen drama origins and has a real tongue in cheek attitude towards it.

Riverdale is based on American comic sensation, *Archie Comics*, which has been running for seven decades and has now been picked up for the CW and is also available on Netflix. It's your friendly typical teen drama - with a creepy mystery thrown in.

The first episode reveals that all was not what it seemed in the sweet, wholesome, town of Riverdale. Golden boy teenager Jason Blossom is missing which has the whole town spinning on its axis. But that's not our favourite part of the show.

In the original comics Archie Andrews is the main focus, the audience's eyes. And one of the most fundamental plots that followed him was whether he would choose to go out with Betty, the proverbial girl next door, or with Veronica, the local femme fatale. Both were constantly in competition with one another for Archie's affections. But *Riverdale* makes a smart choice and dispenses with this plot quickly.


The show focuses on Betty and Veronica's friendship instead - they are affectionately known as 'Beronica' in the fandom. This is in focus to the point that many in the fandom (including myself), can see the possibility of a future romantic relationship between the main female protagonists (they did kiss in the very first episode).

But for now, for all intents and purposes Betty and Veronica are just friends. Which we are all for - the more great female friendships on TV the better!

In a refreshing departure from most teen dramedies Betty and Veronica are good friends to one another.

New in town, Veronica is a fish out of water coming from the glamorous streets of Manhattan to small town America that is Riverdale. Veronica is like a mini Blair Waldorf from her perfect outfits to the *Breakfast at Tiffany's* references. On the other hand Betty seems to be the wholesome, girl next door who wants to see the best in everyone, just like season one, Serena Van Der Woodsen (don't get me started on the Jughead and Dan Humphrey similarities).

But instead of petting Veronica and Betty as possible rivals to one another - the creators have chosen to make their friendship the cornerstone of the show.

An illustration of two female characters from the TV show Riverdale. On the left is Betty Cooper, with blonde hair tied in a ponytail with a blue hair tie, wearing a pink sweater over a white collared shirt. On the right is Veronica Lodge, with dark hair, wearing a dark blue top and a pearl necklace. They are both looking towards the viewer.

Veronica goes out of her way to befriend Betty, stands up for her when Cheryl Blossom plans to deliberately exclude Betty from the cheerleading squad and tries to set her up with Archie, even if it doesn't end well.

And any conflicts surrounding Betty, Veronica and Archie are quickly resolved by the end of the second episode with some bonding over milkshake at Pop's Diner.

It just goes to show that *Riverdale* is incredibly self-aware and while nothing in life is perfect I feel the third episode is where the show surpassed itself.

It tackled everything from white privilege to feminism, slut shaming and rape culture and for a CW teen show it was impressive.

When it came to Archie's new found interest in music and his desire to become Josie and the Pussycat's "song writer", Josie sets the record straight for Archie. She tells him that for her and her band mates, it's a constant battle to gain the same recognition that he would achieve easily, due to the privilege of his own race and gender.

She also highlights the racial threats her mother received when she took the position of town Mayor. Josie makes the point that for anyone who is a POC it is still a constant struggle to gain equality and equal treatment.

But what I admired about this scene most was instead of making Archie defensive about this, they have him listening respectfully to Josie and acknowledge that even though he has just decided to take up music, he is still at an unfair, advantage to Josie because of the privileged position he is in. It's a refreshing perspective to show. But that wasn't the only highlight.

Everything I love about Betty and Veronica was cemented in this episode, because they echoed everything I have said I love before when it comes to how female, friendships should be depicted on television.

Their friendship is paramount in episode three. But as well as that Betty and Veronica's consistent support of other women in this episode was a priority. They ensured that those women had a voice and took back control of their own narrative. It's empowering to watch.

The show also achieved what *Stranger Things* failed to and gave justice to Barb, or at least to Barb's actress guest starring as Ethel Muggs. Seeing Shannon Purser back on my screen again smiling was everything. It's just another example of *Riverdale*'s self awareness that they included it. #justiceforethel was a nice little nod to the show that made Shannon famous.

The episode takes some heavy themes and deals with them effectively. Veronica is slut shamed for going on a date with the captain of the football team, Chuck Clayton, where he lied about exactly what happened on said date.

Veronica being Veronica refuses to take this lying down and calls him on out on it. We soon learn that this slut shaming is unfortunately nothing new for Riverdale's football team. They secretly compare sexual encounters with girls in the high school and rate them from 1 to 10. Most of them are false but of course the girls are quick to point out that even if they're true slut shaming anyone is never okay.

One of the beautiful things about this episode is how new found journalist, Betty, stands up for Veronica throughout. Likewise, it's great how Veronica has Betty's back, but also stands up for the "beautiful, young, strong, intelligent women" of Riverdale High. It also acknowledges that sexist behaviour can be present in both men and women as we see with Cheryl Blossom. This behaviour is on display from the beginning of the series from Cheryl, but most obviously in the third episode, when she calls the victims of the football team's book, "sluts". But instead of branding her as the enemy to Betty and Veronica's mission for justice, Cheryl later joins them in their conquest to find out the truth.

It adds to Cheryl's growth as a character when she learns that her brother Jason had also badly treated Betty's sister Polly, as result she acknowledges this to Betty and apologises.

They got justice in the end through unorthodox methods, to say the least, but Chuck revealed the truth of what really occurred between him and Veronica. It was great to see that even though the female leads may not always get along or agree, they were united in ensuring that justice was had and that sexist and misogynistic behaviour towards their female classmates was not acceptable in any case.

I also love how the creators choose to gain a better understanding of Cheryl Blossom through an odd but interesting friendship with Veronica. This friendship is further developed into the fifth episode and beyond.

I am fully aware that the inevitable love triangle of Archie, Betty and Veronica is will come to fruition and life won't be rosy with Veronica and Betty all the time. I still like how much this show has surprised me with messages of female empowerment, female friendship, POC feminism, but maintains a level of entertainment and intrigue at the same time. *Riverdale* is well worth the watch.





TEENAGE Dreams

Claire Hennessy has been a published writer since she was twelve. Since the release of her first book *Dear Diary*, she has been at the forefront of Irish teen literature. Now as a children's book editor and author she has even more feathers in her very large cap! Méabh McDonnell had a chat with Claire about her last book *Nothing Tastes as Good* and her upcoming release, *Like Other Girls*.

Let's get started with first things first: between being an editor, an author and frequently writing articles for different publications, you must never stop working! When do you sleep?

Claire: Yes. It's kind of a problem, I need more sleep!

How do you fit it all in?

Claire: Sometimes I don't. I often feel guilty for not doing enough but I think that's really normal for freelancers working in the arts, you do have to take on so many things to pay the bills. Or sometimes I will see something going on that is good for the world of kid-lit or YA and you say to yourself, 'Oh, this is a really cool thing and I really want to do it!' Then you end up looking at your schedule and realise - I have not factored in sleeping or tidying things! I think there's a constant attempt to try and make sure that I'm not taking on too much!

You've been in the writing world since you were twelve - I remember reading your first book, *Dear Diary* and being so impressed that someone who was my age could produce a book! You then continued as a teen author. What did you pick up from that experience?

Claire: I think that the experience of being in school and having a book deadline but also having to do my homework was important. Like you can't go into school and say, well I haven't done my maths homework because I had a book deadline!

It's easy to forget how full a teen's schedule is between all of the work they have to do in school but also all of the work they have to do outside of it as well!

Claire: Absolutely! Adults kind of moan about having to take work home, teenagers are just expected to do it. It's ridiculous really, I mean, they're spending so much time in school in a very intense learning mode and then they're expected to go home, eat, and spend two, to three, to four, more!

Do you find it harder getting into that teen mindset now than you did when you were a teenager?

Claire: I still find it very easy to get inside that head and I think the reason is because as a writer you're always trying to improve and grow and I would hope that I'm always trying to become a better writer. A big part of that is empathy with characters of all kinds and I still read an awful lot of YA fiction and I think that helps to stay in that mind frame.

"ADULTS KIND OF MOAN ABOUT HAVING TO TAKE WORK HOME, TEENAGERS ARE JUST EXPECTED TO DO IT."

Do you think that your own experience as an editor informs your writing?

Claire: Not to a huge extent when I'm writing the first draft because if you have 'editor brain' on all the time you'd never get anything written, but I think it has helped my instincts a little bit. I think particularly it helps with the opening of novels. When you've read 20 manuscripts in a row that open with 'A teenager waking up and getting out of bed, going about their morning routine, looking in the mirror so they can describe themselves for the reader', you're thinking maybe avoid this! But I'm also very conscious about trying not to get too jaded about those types of clichés, I think they do come from how we were taught to write stories in school. Like, 'You need to describe the character, and you need to set the scene and you can't do this and you can't do that'. And you realise out of school that you were being taught those things for your vocabulary, not for your writing.

With being an editor on one hand and writing on the other, what do you find informs the themes of your own writing?

Claire: That's quite a deep question, I think there is a little bit of feminism in there, I always try to have a bit of humour in there, I think that it's very difficult to write about everything that teenagers are going through without having a bit of humour. Even if it's black humour! I hope that there's a sense of empathy with teenagers, because I think it can be a really tough time in their lives, which makes for great dramatic potential!

You use humour to great effect in *Nothing Tastes as Good* with Annabe. So often I found myself thinking 'Oh, she didn't just say that but at the same time, she's so funny!'

Claire: Annabel is a bit of a wagon. I think if you had the story without Annabel being herself, being a little bit snarky, then it might just be 300 pages of misery! With *Nothing Tastes as Good* I really wanted to try an unusual narrative style, something I hadn't tried before! I didn't want to tell the story from just Julia's point of view, so bringing Annabel in gave me two characters who worked well together. It was really fun to write.

It comes across as very entertaining and it's refreshing because so often books that are 'about' a serious topic fail to have that much humour. It doesn't feel like a voice that is talking down to the reader or trying to teach them a lesson.

Claire: I hope so. I find that can happen a lot in books about eating disorders, especially about why she has an eating disorder.

We always want the reason for something like that, whereas we never want that for a story where someone has cancer. So I really wanted to avoid that, or a big reveal moment when Annabel realises 'Oh my god, I'm sick because this happened!'

It's not the way it works in real life, people don't have an epiphany moment of realisation and then change everything about their lifestyle. It's much more gradual. Especially when dealing with something in your head.

Claire: Initially I was a little reluctant because there was a part of me that was wondering 'am I allowed to write a book about an eating disorder, something that I have never experienced personally? But when someone described it as not just writing about an eating disorder but writing about mental illness - I felt much better about how I would represent it. I'm so glad that that's a connection that people are making because I think that so often people treat eating disorders as 'oh they're diets gone wrong' when really they are diets gone wrong but in a mental health way.

I think because it's a mental health disorder that can manifest in a physical way people often expect someone suffering with one of them to be stick thin or morbidly obese when in reality it's not necessarily going to be obvious. It's about their behaviours and so much more than that.

You're releasing a new book in May aren't you?

Claire: Yes, I am. It's called *Like Other Girls*. It came from a place where I look at Irish reproduction laws and am filled with rage so I felt that we really needed the YA abortion novel in Ireland right now. It's been a project that's been on the cards for two years.

" I THINK THERE IS A LITTLE BIT OF FEMINISM IN THERE, I ALWAYS TRY TO HAVE A BIT OF HUMOUR IN THERE, I THINK THAT IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO WRITE ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT TEENAGERS ARE GOING THROUGH WITHOUT HAVING A BIT OF HUMOUR. EVEN IF IT'S BLACK HUMOUR!"

I presume the title is taken from the phrase 'Oh she's different, she's not like other girls'?

Claire: It is and also the main character is bisexual as well - or as she describes herself 'an equal opportunities cuddle slut'. So it's that she also *likes* other girls! It works on so many levels!

You don't get enough bisexual lead characters, do you?

Claire: No you do not. I think there can be this awkwardness around bisexuality in the queer community. With any marginalised community there's always the in-fighting, it's not just this happy place where 'oh everything's wonderful and everyone agrees with everyone else! So in the book we have sexuality and we have reproductive rights! And we have a musical because - why not?!

With all of those different topics and themes, do you do much research for your books?

I kind of do more passive research than active research. Like in terms of I'm more likely to write about something that I've already read a lot about and then read additional material in that field. I do that rather than take I topic I don't know anything about and decide to write about it and start from scratch. I'm not someone who likes research for the sake of researching. Writing about how tricky it is for women who have crisis pregnancies in Ireland all I needed to do was read the newspapers!

It's something that's very topical right now and it definitely seems like the right time to be writing about it.

Claire: It's something that I've been annoyed about for a long time. I also wanted to write about abortion in a compelling way that also tells a good story. I think it's a difficult thing to do because the more interesting narrative arc is the woman has an abortion and regrets it but that's not the story that I wanted to write. That might be the more dramatically interesting story but it's not representative and because this is such an important issue and that's not the story that I wanted to tell. At the same time I didn't want to have the story be 'now everything's fine and perfect and rosy' because that's not dramatically interesting. So it was about figuring out how to tell this story while also keeping it dramatic and compelling but also representative and not preachy. I was conscious all the way through that I was writing a novel and not a manifesto. I wanted to have some light moments in their too -that's why having the musical in there was so important! I mean, everyone loves a musical!

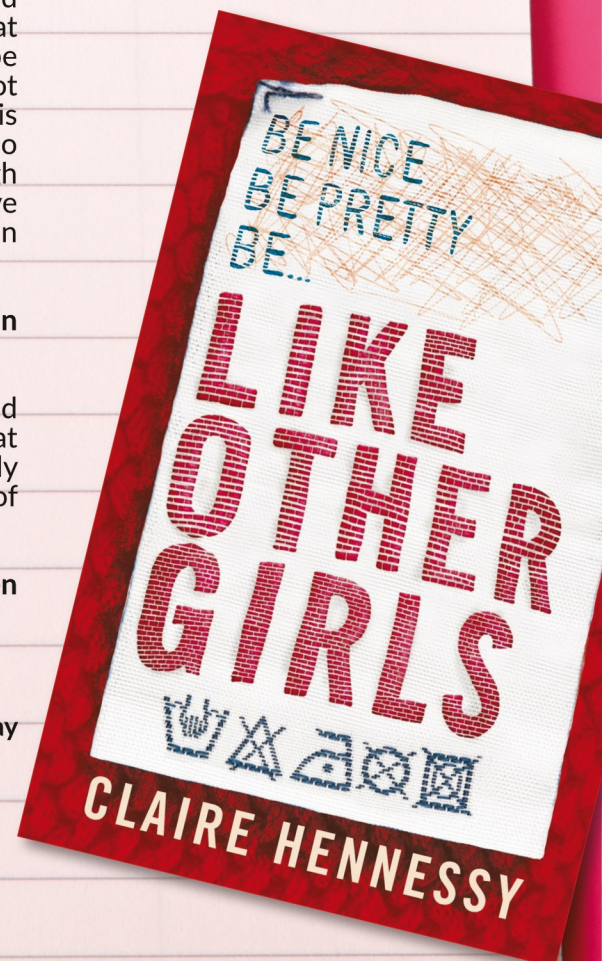
Is there any genre you haven't worked in that you might like to in the future?

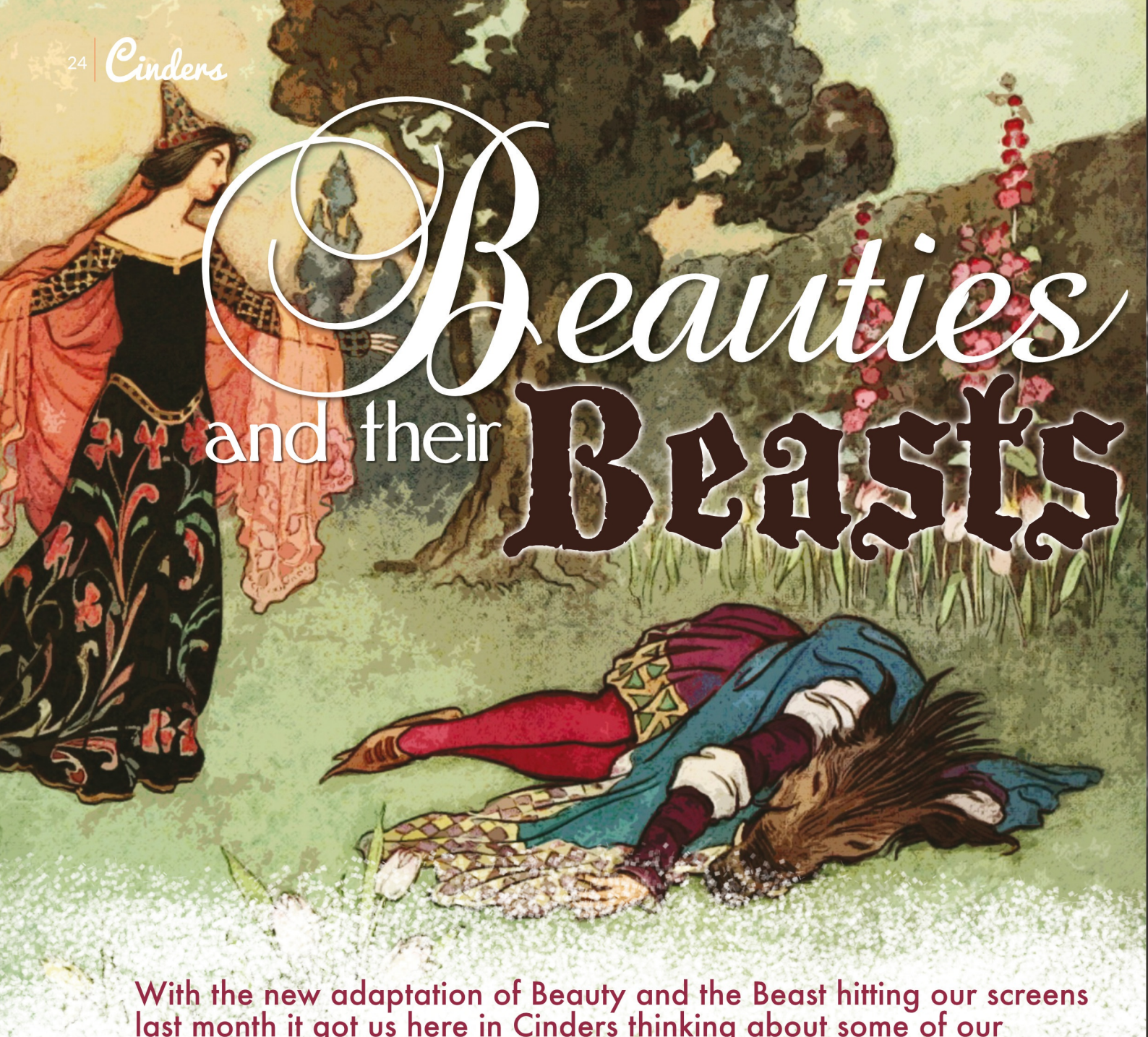
Claire: At some point I do want to write a sci-fi novel, but I find world building really tricky! There are definitely new things like that I want to try but I feel that I've identified the things that really interest me, like sad teenage girls dealing with stuff, with a bit of humour! But ultimately I'm keeping an open mind!

If there was one parting thought you could leave young teen readers and writers what would it be?

Claire: It's okay to be weird.

Like Other Girls is published by Hot Key Books and will be released on May 25th. Pick up a copy in all good bookshops both online and off.





Beauties and their Beasts

With the new adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast* hitting our screens last month it got us here in *Cinders* thinking about some of our favourite unconventional interpretations of the classic fairytale.

Méabh McDonnell looks at different ways the tale as old as time has been interpreted over the years.

A TINY ladybird edition of *Beauty and the Beast* was my favourite book as a child. The Disney animated movie also held a special place in my heart – it still does in fact. *Beauty and the Beast* is a complex story. On the one hand it's the magical tale about how love is all you need. It's the concept that rings true with most people in love – it doesn't matter what the person looks like – if you love them, you love them.

On the other hand it's a story where a young woman's freedom is claimed by a vicious domineering beast who then proceeds to win her over by granting her 'freedoms' within what is a very well furnished prison.

It's hard to reconcile that with the happy story of love conquering all. Some people find that too much of a turn off, others might point out that fairytales were written in a time where they were meant to be more gothic than sweet. Regardless of which side of the fence you fall upon, *Beauty and the Beast's* enduring nature as a story is undeniable.

This is why I decided to compile some of my favourite interpretations of this classic story that I feel really capture the best Beauties and even better Beasts. Some are closer to the original tale than others but all have a special allure to me.



La Belle et La Bête

directed by Jean Cocteau

EVERY ardent Beauty and the Beast fan needs to experience this early adaptation of the iconic fairytale. Jean Cocteau's 1946 version of the tale is considered the best by many critics, with its gothic influences and beautiful cinematography. The story is closer to the original fairytale than the Disney adaptations. Beauty (literally Belle in this French adaptation) lives with her father - a merchant and her two sisters. As per the original story her father steals a rose for Beauty from the Beast's garden. For this, a much more cat-like Beast imprisons him. Beauty selflessly agrees to take his place. Each night the Beast then asks her to marry him, knowing that she won't break his curse until she says yes. This is a much more gothic take on Beauty and the Beast and a truly beautiful one. Every scene inside the castle is creepy and gorgeous. A particular highlight is the candelabras around the castle which are all held by human hands (moving human hands). This is no friendly enchanted castle with singing teacups and silverware - this is weird and very beautiful. If you enjoy your fairytales more Grimm than Disney, then this one is for you.



Penelope (2006)

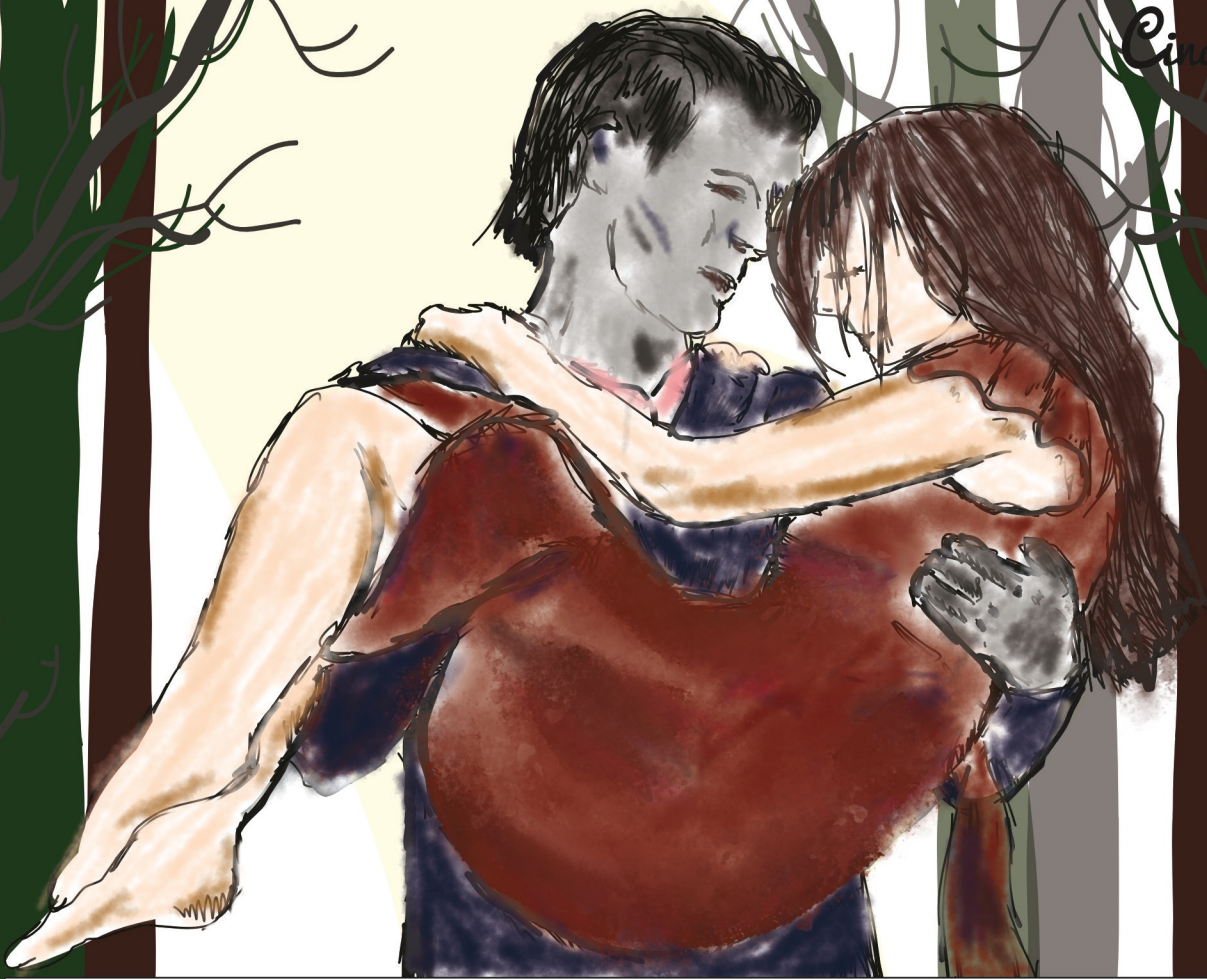
PENELOPE is an unusual little duckling of a movie. The story of a girl who is - due to a convoluted family tree- cursed to have the face of a pig until she is 'accepted by one of her own kind' (aka a rich person). In an interesting role reversal - Penelope herself is the 'beastly' character who is locked away because of the curse. She is hidden from the outside world because of her pig-snouted face. But despite having James McAvoy as a love interest - in many ways she's the beauty too. She's also hunted by arrogant selfish Gaston-like figures who want nothing but to make a scapegoat of her.

The film is a modern fairy tale, from the mansions to the costumes. It may be a little clunky in spots but has a sweet story. The story of the girl who is born with the face of a pig is a plot that's just too much fun to pass up. It has the fairy tale beats of the 'beast' locked up in the tower - for whom acceptance is the only cure.

It also has the best costumes, if you like flowing coats and fabulous scarves. Sometimes I do find myself wishing that the beautiful Christina Ricci was a little more pig faced - she looks positively cute with a pig's nose. But at the same time, the performance is charming and the story's heart is most definitely in the right place. It has a nice element of female friendship when Penelope does venture out into the world and meets the single most interesting character in the story - aside from Penelope herself - Reese Witherspoon's witchy looking bike messenger. The two develop a friendship that is often denied women in fairytales and it makes a refreshing change.

Mostly the film looks at how fame and notoriety can often go hand in hand when Penelope is exposed to the world and how acceptance is something that we all struggle with. It's worth a watch if you're into a fairytale with a little bit of whimsy and a girl who knows herself very, very, well.





Sunshine by Robin McKinley

ROBIN MCKINLEY likes the story of Beauty and the Beast so much that she has written two different direct adaptations of the story. *Beauty and Rose Daughter*. Both of these are her own interpretations of the classic story in novel form - and if that's what you're looking for then you should absolutely check them out. Especially *Beauty*, which bears a striking resemblance to the Disney 1991 rendition - although was written more than ten years earlier! But if you're interested in a more unconventional interpretation, then I strongly recommend you check out *Sunshine* - which is the best book about vampires I've read in the last ten years. No wait! Don't run away now that I've mentioned it's about vampires! *Sunshine* is set in a world where vampires are the apex predator in the world. Entire cities and towns have been taken over by them- only to be combatted by wards and charms developed by black market magic wielding witch families. Of course that's not what the story is focussed on. Instead, it's about badass baker, Rae, who finds herself in the wrong place at the wrong time and gets herself kidnapped by vampires. These vampires then use her as a potential meal to offered to their enemy - an ancient vampire named Constantine.

Rae and Constantine develop a tenuous friendship, she doesn't want to be eaten and he has no interest in giving his enemies the satisfaction of eating her. Neither is presented as being particularly interested in the other when they meet but they find a common ground in their interest in stories. It's the story of Beauty and the Beast she tells him to first convince him that he should keep her alive.

Once again the saving power is with the Beauties - where Rae has to think of a way not only to save herself but to save this vampire who has been just as trapped as she has. And then she has to deal with the consequences. One of the best aspects of *Sunshine* is the depth of the world that Robin McKinley has created, a world where there are demons and weres and magic-wielding people in among the police officers and accountants and bakers. It also spends just as much time telling you how Rae bakes cinnamon roles as it does about vampire lore. And it makes both just as interesting. Most vampire stories have some element of the Beauty and the Beast tale woven in - and *Sunshine* is one of the looser interpretations, with a very empowered Beauty at its helm - but it's *Sunshine* that executes it best if you ask me. If you like your vampire stories mixed in with some good recipes then *Sunshine* won't disappoint.



Uprooted by Naomi Novik

HOW many times have you heard the story of the beautiful young woman sacrificed to a dragon? Probably too many – but Agnieska is not your typical beautiful young woman and her dragon is more of a wizard. Agnieska spent her whole life preparing for the day her beautiful best friend would be taken by The Dragon – a local wizard who takes a young village girl as his servant every ten years. However on the day of their choosing Agnieska displays an unusual talent: unbeknownst to her, she's a witch. The Dragon then begrudgingly takes her on as his apprentice. Neither likes the other, and both are continually frustrated with their combative methods for casting spells but all the same, they develop a unique partnership. They team up against the malevolent force that is 'The Wood' taking on another consistent fairytale trope – the deep dark wood.

Agnieska is a resourceful and compelling heroine, the thing she is most willing to fight to the death for is not the Dragon but her family and her friends.

Truly the best thing about *Uprooted* is the fantastic friendship that exists between Agnieska and her best friend Kasia: the girl who was meant to be taken. She fights harder for Kasia than for anyone else in the story, and she never gives up on her. Kasia herself becomes something of a super hero and the two make a formidable team. The Dragon is a prickly character. He is old and powerful and is clearly lacking in social skills – but in a change to the traditional tale his exile is self imposed rather than due to a curse. Apprenticing Agnieska makes him soften and bend some of his implacable rules. She peers behind the veneer of the angry, beastly wizard into the face of a hard-working, socially awkward perfectionist. It's not a perfect retelling of *Beauty and the Beast*, but like *Sunshine* and *Valiant*, it offers a much more pro-active heroine and a wider ranging adventure. This is one for the girls who were more interested in the enchanted sorceress than Belle and wanted to see what she could do with some real magic.

Valiant by Holly Black

HOLLY BLACK is probably the best name ever for an author of fairytales. *Valiant* is a beautiful urban fantasy retelling of Beauty and the Beast set in New York City. Val is a teenage runaway who ends up tangled in a dangerous bargain with a troll named Ravus who lives in an abandoned subway station. This is a gritty retelling of the story if there ever was one. Val's meeting with the Ravus is the result of her new found addiction to a Fae drug which leads her to being bound into his service. Val is a refreshing treatment of the 'Beauty' character that we have all come to know so well. She's by no means helpless but does end up in Ravus service from a place of extreme vulnerability, what with her homelessness and addiction. We're often told that she is very pretty but she also has hair shaved down to her skull. During her time in Ravus' service she learns to wield a sword and fight. She is not your typical Beauty. And Ravus is not your typical Beast. He is gruff and angry but also shown to be extremely intelligent, working to help faeries blend into the human world. He also has an extreme sense of honour and duty. Val does indeed have to go to great lengths to save him and win his heart. There is no doubt that this 'Beauty' is well and truly the hero of the story. *Valiant* offers a different look at Beauty and the Beast, one without imprisoned towers and instead one with deadly bargains and dangerous drugs. With a host of memorable characters, *Valiant*, is Beauty and the Beast with edge and grime. It's also incredibly beautiful. If you like *Valiant* be sure to check out Holly Black's *Tithe* and *The Darkest Part of the Forest* for more dark fairy tales.



A Court of Thorns and Roses

by Sarah J. Maas

SARAH J. MAAS has made a career out of her unusual badass interpretations of fairytales. This is the author who wrote *Cinderella* as an assassin in her first series *Throne of Glass*. Her second series has two very different interpretations of *Beauty and the Beast*. The first novel - *A Court of Thorns and Roses* - is the story of Feyre, a young huntress who kills a faerie and finds herself locked into servitude of a man who is a beast when in the human realm but a masked faerie on his own side of the wall. He and his court have a rapidly approaching deadline to be permanently placed under a dreadful curse. The faerie beast, Tamlin, begins to fall for her, and she for him but what she doesn't realise is that she is the key to their survival. The story follows most of the traditional beats of *Beauty and the Beast* up until the last third - which is where things get really out of hand. That being said, it's to story's credit. The series continues with *A Court of Mist and Fury* - which is the far superior story, because every beat that you felt was wrong about *Beauty and the Beast* is rectified in the best possible way. Only this time the story mirrors another different kind of *Beauty and the Beast* tale - that of Hades and Persephone. Hades was the Greek god of the underworld who kidnapped Persephone, daughter of Demeter, goddess of spring. Demeter rescues Persephone but because Persephone ate six pomegranate seeds she is bound to stay in the underworld for six months of the year and become its queen.

A Court of Mist and Fury takes this story as its departure point but interprets it in a very interesting way. Feyre is suffering from her ordeals in the previous book and has to find her own way out of darkness. The second book deconstructs *Beauty and the Beast* and examines what can happen when a protagonist outgrows her role in a story. When she becomes more than just the Beauty and becomes someone with real power but has to deal with the consequences of her actions in the previous book. With some swoon-worthy scenes, this is the *Beauty and the Beast* retelling for the romantic badass. With some great friendships and female empowerment, this is the fantasy that you will binge.





Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

YOU might think I'm crazy for including *Pride and Prejudice* in this list, but hear me out. I'm not just slipping it in because I love Jane Austen and everything she does - I have a point. I really do. *Pride and Prejudice* has definite undertones of *Beauty and the Beast*. We have the young, well read woman who is headstrong and confident in herself and we have the prickly stand-offish man who doesn't socialise with people but lives in a beautiful castle. (Pemberley is a castle in my imagination.) Mr Darcy is the Austenian Beast. He's misunderstood and aloof. Lizzie is the girl who he falls in love with but who doesn't reciprocate his affections - until she sees his good side. Until she sees the man that he is and can be. That's not to say that there aren't distinct differences between the two. To start with Lizzie isn't trapped at any point with Mr Darcy; she isn't forced to walk away from her life to be with him. However she is almost forced into that with Mr Collins.

We also see her stick to her guns when Darcy declares his love for her that she won't simply accept him because of his riches.

Everyone, even if they've never ever encountered Jane Austen, knows that Mr Darcy is the ultimate love interest. Lizzie Bennet is the girl we all want to be: confident, strong and smart. She's also so, so, funny. And then we meet supposed love of her life - Mr Darcy - a gruff, rude, insulting, snob who looks down on her and her family from the first moment that we meet him. He's a beast - a horrible creature. It's difficult to comprehend how funny, smart, interesting Lizzie could ever fall for him! And he does himself no favours. He is prickly and arrogant and mean but as he opens up, we - and Lizzie - get to see a different side to his personality. At its core *Beauty and the Beast* is a story about looking at people differently and not judging someone by your first impression. And *Pride and Prejudice* is nothing if its not about the mistake of judging someone only by your first impression of them.

ED IS BACK

Love him or loathe him the release of Ed Sheeran's *Divide* proves that the young ginger singer isn't going anywhere any time soon. **Rosie Feerick** gives us the lowdown on the album and tells us why we should definitely give it another listen.

ED SHEERAN is back. It's hard to believe that his last album *Multiply* (X) was released back in June 2014. Songs like 'SING' and 'Thinking Out Loud' have not tired since their release. His hugely popular single 'Photograph' was released in May 2015 and the leading song 'All Of The Stars' of the movie *The Fault in Our Stars* both helped ensure his rise to radio dominance. This January marked the return of the redheaded singer/songwriter.

2017 began with Ed dropping two singles from his new album entitled *Divide* (÷). 'Castle On The Hill', a song dedicated to his home county of Suffolk, is a blend of homesickness and memories of growing up. The familiar comfort of childhood friends and having a certain grá for the place you hail from is of course relatable across the shores, making it a worldwide hit. "Castle On The Hill" is my preferred of the two singles" said Sheeran in an in-depth interview with producer Zane Lowe. Explaining the differences between both songs, Ed commented: "Most guys say 'Castle On The Hill' is their favourite, most women prefer 'Shape Of You'. I don't know what that says. Perhaps guys like remembering their youth and girls like to dance!" 'Shape Of You' is the most successful tune of the album thus far, and it is no surprise. Just shy of half a billion views on YouTube in two months and Sheeran's first number one hit in the USA, the song has reached number one in twenty nine other countries.

While on hiatus in 2016, Sheeran travelled the world with his girlfriend, Cherry Seaborn, who grew up in the same town as him. You can pick up from the record the influence of different world music experienced by Sheeran. The opening track 'Eraser' brings us up-to-date with where Sheeran is at right now. The rap remarks on his dealings with fame.



"CASTLE ON THE HILL" IS MY PREFERRED OF THE TWO SINGLES SAID SHEERAN IN AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH PRODUCER ZANE LOWE. EXPLAINING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BOTH SONGS, ED COMMENTED: 'MOST GUYS SAY 'CASTLE ON THE HILL' IS THEIR FAVOURITE, MOST WOMEN PREFER 'SHAPE OF YOU'. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT SAYS. PERHAPS GUYS LIKE REMEMBERING THEIR YOUTH AND GIRLS LIKE TO DANCE!'"

"IT'S SAFE TO SAY SHEERAN HAS COMPOSED THE NEW GALWAY ANTHEM. WHETHER YOU LIKE THE SONG OR NOT, I SUGGEST YOU GET USED TO IT."

It serves as a mental vent, like a stream of consciousness and reflection. Balancing public perception and keeping himself grounded, he mentions the pitfalls of fame: *'I'm well aware of certain things that can befall a man like me'*. Acoustically it is less stripped back than his typical rap songs, with a guitar riff and beat consistent throughout verses and chorus. Lyrically it is as raw as ever.

John Mayer makes a guest appearance on the track 'Dive', contributing a classic Mayer-style guitar solo which perfectly aligns with the most soulful of the fifteen tracks. Following as fourth track on the album is 'Shape Of You', the chart-busting tropical house tune. It's been compared to Sia's 'Cheap Thrills', but stands strong in its own right. Sheeran's guitar provides a strumming beat until the chorus. It is an epic dance tune with that marimba sound that is taking over pop music. The lyrics are quick and precise. Sheeran does what he excels at, singing about lust and genuine affection, mixed with shots at a club.

'Perfect' is the song with which Sheeran has placed his greatest expectations. A new kind of 'Thinking Out Loud', but this song being solely written by Ed himself. The orchestral arrangement adds another dimension that is not usually explored by his one-man performances.

The new album boasts two songs deeply rooted in Irish traditional music, 'Nancy Mulligan' and 'Galway Girl' (the latter having no reference to Sharon Shannon's version). Galway Girl is a hip-hop trad song that reached number one in Ireland within hours of its release. It's safe to say Sheeran has composed the new Galway anthem. Whether you like the song or not, I suggest you get used to it. Sheeran has confirmed he intends to film the music video for the single in Galway, planning to feature local dancers. This nod to Irish fans comes from Sheeran's own Irish genealogy and his record-breaking success in the Irish charts. Pride in being Irish runs on high as one of the top selling artists in the world shines a light on trad music.

Two other bonus tracks have Sheeran singing Spanish and Twi, a language spoken in Ghana. Both are great upbeat tunes and have the potential to appeal to a whole new listening base (savvy marketing skills on Ed's part). Balancing the positive vibes of these songs are a couple of heartbreakers. 'Happier' paints a picture of Sheeran recognising an ex-lover's happiness with someone new, and through his words we watch from a distance with him. 'Supermarket Flowers' is a quiet dedication to his grandmother that will have you in tears in a minute. This album will have you reduced to tears, forced to dance and jump about and leave you wanting to listen to it all over again.

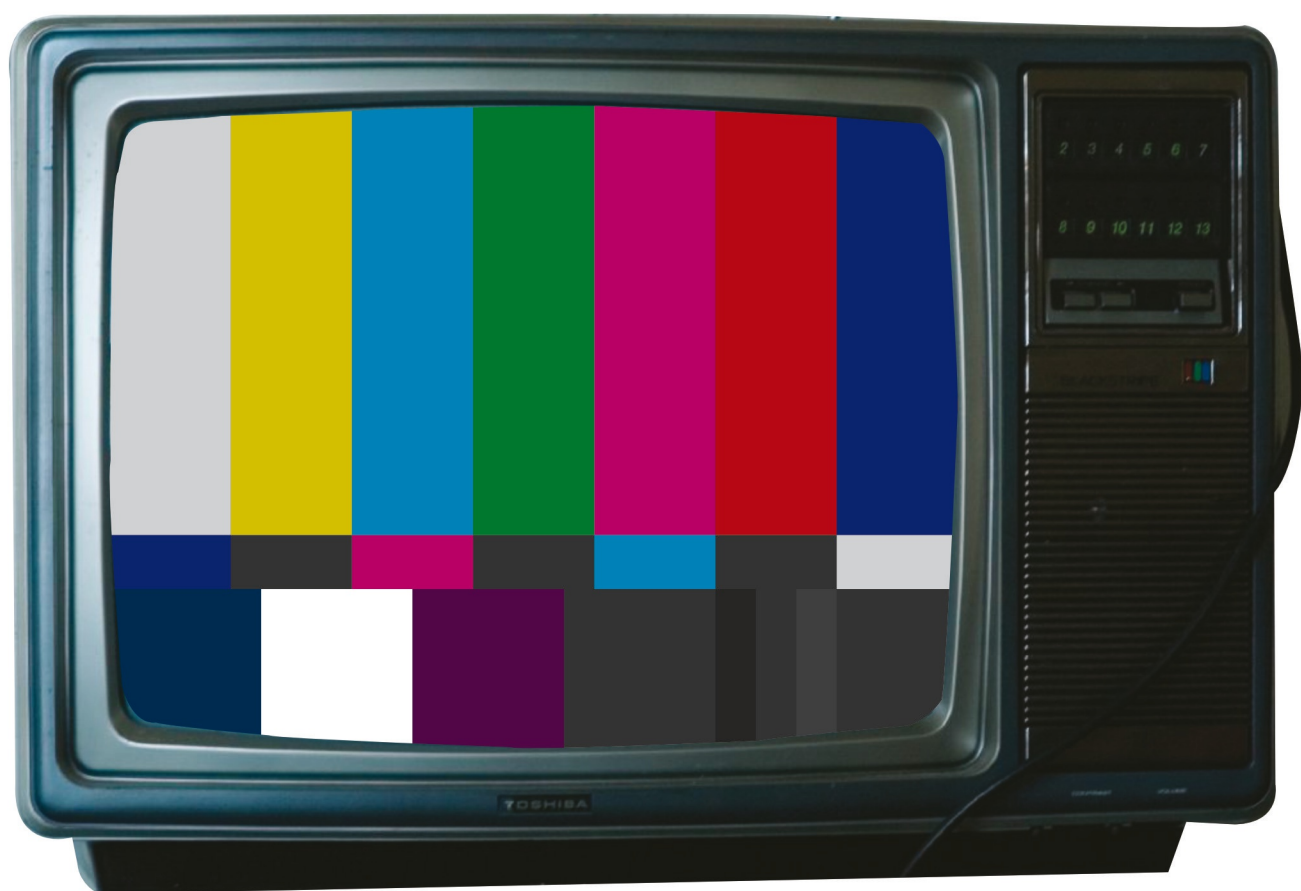
With 'How Would You Feel?', 'Heart don't Break Round Here', 'What Do I Know?' and 'New Man' the album is complete. The blue-themed album is gaining traction each day, and as Ed Sheeran graces multiple magazine covers and contributes to this year's Red Nose Day, his fame increases.

Divide is available now. Whether you're on Apple Music, Spotify or good old YouTube, I urge you to give it a listen.



ULTIMATE 10s HEROINES

Last month we looked at some of the best television heroes of the 00s. This month we stick to the present where co-editor **Grainne Coyne** looks at just how far we've come when portraying female characters on the small screen.



SANSA STARK

GAME OF THRONES is a joy to behold for the many strong female leads within the show. While it is hard to single out the show's amazing kick ass ladies, Sansa stands out for her ongoing character growth from season one. She has gone through a lot of trauma since the loss of her family, but this has only made her stronger, darker, and most definitely someone to watch out for in the final season.



AMY ROUDENFELD

FAKING IT may have been off of our screens for three years now, but it paved the way for a positive portrayal of a LGBT+ female lead. Amy was adorable as she was heart-breaking, from watching her fall in and out with her best friend Karma, to the confusing journey of discovering her own sexuality. It's a shame *Faking It* ended when it did but we're glad that we got the opportunity to see some of Amy's own journey.



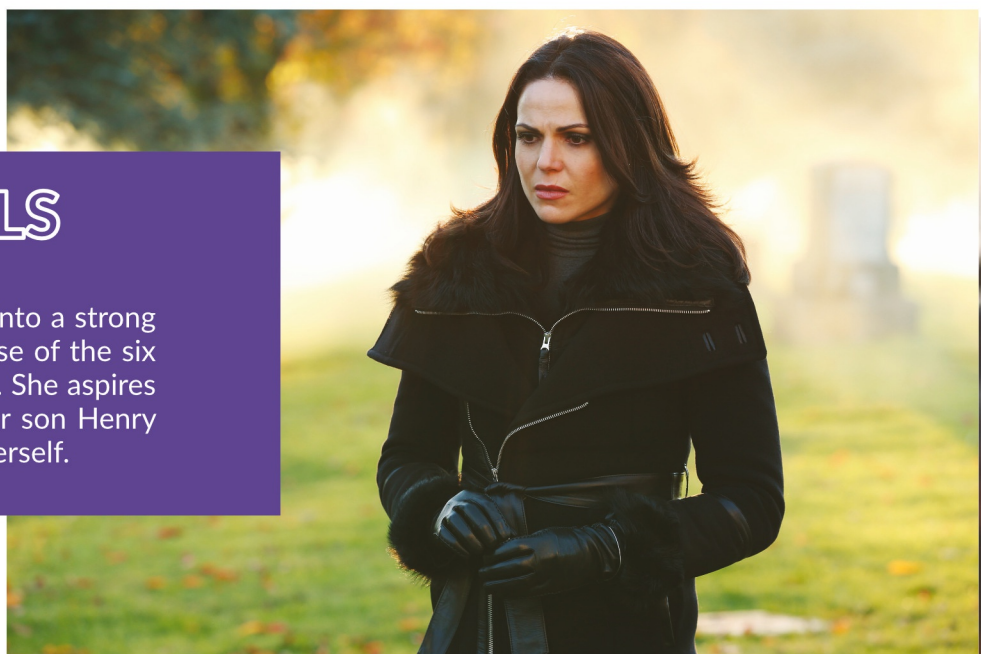


GINNY BAKER

GINNY'S no-nonsense attitude in the world of major league baseball is a sight to behold. Not only is it a joy to have a multi-faceted POC female lead, but it's also wonderful to see this amazing character take on so much. From tackling her own mental health problems to the sexist behaviour she endures for doing something she loves Ginny is a badass. It would be a crying shame, if Fox did not give *Pitch* the second season she deserves.

REGINA MILLS

THIS Evil Queen has grown into a strong heroine throughout the course of the six seasons of *Once Upon a Time*. She aspires to be a better woman for her son Henry and now, most importantly herself.



ELEVEN

WE'VE discussed Barb at length, but we can't forget the silent, but violent heroine that is Eleven of *Stranger Things*. She may be little but her love for her friends and Eggos is not to be underestimated. She is brave, she stands up for friends and strangers she's just met and most importantly, for all of this she sacrifices herself in the process. Eleven is a hero, not a monster and we hope she sees this in season 2.

EMMA SWAN

WE'RE back with *Once* for good reason because Emma Swan is a character who deserves recognition in her own right. A saviour, a princess and briefly a Dark One, Emma has come a long way. A closed off reluctant heroine; she has brought down her walls and let love into her heart in so many ways. She is a source of strength and while we worry for what's ahead for Emma, we are glad we've been on this journey with her since she first stepped into Storybrooke all those years ago.



DAENERYS TARGARYEN

DAENERYS Is coming for the iron throne and we are so here for it. She has gone from princess to slave to Khaleesi to Mother of Dragons to Breaker of Chains and finally, Queen. She is a leader who tries to be fair and listen to those around her, but sometimes, she leads with her heart instead of her head. While some would argue that is what makes her weak, we think it is what would make her a better leader in the long run. We are team Daenerys for the Iron Throne, final season depending and everything.

JESSICA JONES

JESSICA is grumpy, messy, drinks too much and is rude as hell, but most importantly, she does not care what you think of her. Like Emma Swan she's a reluctant hero, but still manages to save everyone in her own way. She is a survivor, a fighter, takes her own sexual abuser head on and most importantly, is the female anti-heroine, TV needs now more than ever.



12 things I wish I'd told my 12 year old self

Inspired by Méabh McDonnell's letter to her 16 year old self, in issue one, Cinders contributor **Jenna Reimer** wrote a letter to her 12 year old self giving all the advice she wished she knew then.

1. *As a 12 year old, you don't know yet how much you love books and TV shows and movies. You're going to fall in love with Doctor Who and Firefly and Throne of Glass, and it's going to change who you are forever.*

2. **Invest in your friendships. They're the only thing that matters.**

3. **Friends change. Become okay with the way in which life and circumstances and people change, and how that makes friendships different. Friendships end and start and they exist somewhere between the two. Be open to that.**

4. **Make your own decisions.**

5. *Be a feminist already. Don't waste your time fighting the pro-environment and pro-human rights agendas. The environment is cool, being a woman is cool, being gay or straight or trans or anything else is cool, and your voice of support is important.*



6. The Sound of Music is the most beautiful and touching film of all time. Its messages will be useful to you for your whole life, I wish you would discover it sooner.

7. One of your biggest regrets in ten years will be that you never had the courage to tell the boys you liked in high school how you feel. If you tell someone, you can let go of it instead of wondering "what if." But trust me, things will work out in that department any way, even though right now it doesn't feel like they will.

8. *If there's an opportunity available to you that you won't regret, don't hesitate to do it. Don't be afraid to do things.*

9. Don't try to always be more mature than you are! It's okay to act your age!

10. It's okay to have a female body, it's okay to like male bodies, it's okay for males to like your female body. It's okay to be alone with boys, to be honest about liking them. You don't have to be 'cool' about it. And you don't have to be afraid of your own attractiveness.

11. *Read more. There's infinite wisdom in fiction.*

12. You're cooler than you think you are. You're more beautiful than you think you are. It's hard to rise above the negative things that other people have told you about yourself, but you are exquisite.



DISCOVERING A UNIQUE CONNECTION

Melissa Eilers has travelled to many places throughout the world and met many unique and interesting people. But it was her trip to Rishikesh, India that was one of the most significant. She shared her incredible experience with us.

"The more you imbibe this and come home, even without effort or intervention, others will somehow benefit from your existence...in ways that maybe you are not aware of..." -Mooji

ON DECEMBER 11th, 2016 at 11pm Swami Atmaswarupananda passed away. At the Shivananda Ashram in Rishikesh, India.

He was a Canadian man, who left the life he knew 42 years prior to his passing. Dedicating himself to a life of sincere spirituality. Following the teachings of his guru, Swami Chidananda.

Thirsty to get to know this man, I found myself at his doorstep on November 24th, 2016.

Most others who find themselves there are on the path of spiritual understanding. My intention, however, was unmistakably unique. It was my first trip to India, my first visit to an Ashram, and my first time having the pleasure of being introduced to Swami Atmaswarupananda, my grandfather.

Yes, this man was my Grandfather.

The complete story of his journey, and the journey of my Auntie, Swami Amritrupananda, has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I have always been told that he is declared an inspiration to many searching for spiritual release. Though I have just simply been mesmerized and intrigued about this man who has been nothing more than a figment of my imagination.

There really wasn't much advice I could find on how to introduce yourself to your Swami Grandfather.

Although, all of that uncertainty seemed to wash away as soon as our eyes met. I wasn't even given a second to think before I found myself embraced by his arms.

I have to say, for a man who has been described as a serious and dedicated spiritual seeker, he was a lot more grandfather-like than I could have imagined. He was stern but charming. Grumpy but sweet.

However, a few days after I arrived, he became ill. He was 91 years of age, so it was not much of a shock.

It being India, resources were expectedly limited. So myself, my Aunt, and others close to him came together to help in all the ways we could.

"MOST OTHERS WHO FIND THEMSELVES THERE ARE ON THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING. MY INTENTION, HOWEVER, WAS UNMISTAKABLY UNIQUE. IT WAS MY FIRST TRIP TO INDIA, MY FIRST VISIT TO AN ASHRAM, AND MY FIRST TIME HAVING THE PLEASURE OF BEING INTRODUCED TO SWAMI ATMASWARUPANANDA, MY GRANDFATHER."

The night before last I was sitting alone with him at his bedside. He was needing 24-hour care at the time, and it was my turn with the night shift. It was around 1 o'clock in the morning. He was having trouble sleeping. However, I was struggling to stay awake. While still laying down in bed, he grabbed my arm and pulled me down.

"I would send you off to bed, but I don't think it's the right thing to do", he said to me.

After some time I raised myself up. There was silence for a few moments before he gestured for me to help him sit up. He had a spark of energy.

At the end of his bed was a cabinet, with a collage of family photographs sent to him over the years. One by one, I brought them over to him. I asked him of his journey. Of his life back in Canada. About my grandmother, who had passed away herself about 20 years prior.

"Do you miss her?", I asked.

It was around 2:30am when when someone had come down to his room to watch over him for a while.

"AT THE END OF HIS BED WAS A CABINET, WITH A COLLAGE OF FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS SENT TO HIM OVER THE YEARS. ONE BY ONE, I BROUGHT THEM OVER TO HIM. I ASKED HIM OF HIS JOURNEY. OF HIS LIFE BACK IN CANADA."

Later that morning, after getting a few hours of rest, I returned.

A friend informed him, "Your granddaughter has arrived."

"Yes she has", he said softly. "In many ways".

I held his hand. He smiled back with unmistakable contentment and peace.

It was later that night when he had finally passed. Nearly two weeks after he had first fallen ill. His restless spirit was finally released.

Out of all the places that I had seen, all of the faces that I had met, all of the experiences that I had journeyed through; nothing could have prepared me for such a remarkably beautiful happening.

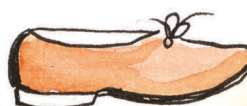
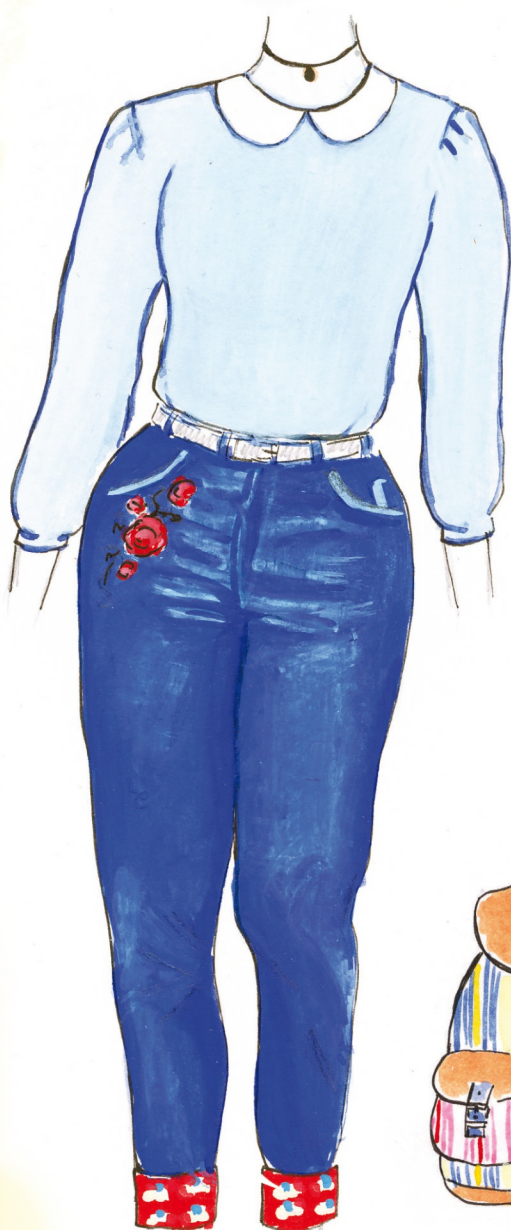
I do not feel mournful by his passing. Rather I feel an overwhelming sense of gratefulness and joy of our coming together. As divine intervention would have it, everything happens for a reason. I'm not certain if I have completely grasped the reason as to why I ended up there for these moments. Maybe there is still more I have yet to uncover behind it all. All I can say is that I would not have had it any other way.

I finally felt ready to go home after two and a half years of travels and adventures.

Cheers Grandpa Swami.

Steal Belle's Style

by Baška Szostak



BOOK ~~REVIEW~~ CORNER



THE SPACE BETWEEN BY MEG GREHAN

SPOKEN word novels are a new trend in YA literature. We saw it with last year's highly successful *One* by Sarah Crossan and Meg Grehan's *The Space Between* uses the same format. And it uses it so very well.

Once you are a few pages into *The Space Between* it's difficult to imagine the book being written in anything but verse - it's the absolutely perfect format to tell Beth's story.

The Space Between is a beautiful examination of how mental health disorders can pin someone inside their own mind and then how through small but significant battles they can work their way out and live with them.

Beth is not okay. She has made a decision to remain within her house for a year. She is falling in on herself and only going further down when she meets Mouse. Mouse is friendly and kind and fluffy and warm.

With Mouse comes his owner, Alice. Alice is bright and brave and friendly, and with her help Beth starts to come out of herself piece by piece and slowly get back in touch with her heart.

The beautiful language that is used in *The Space Between* is rich and full. Its disjointed rhythm is immersive and feels like thought rather than narration. Each fabulous verse makes you want to read them aloud as you go and hear each syllable.

THE BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE THAT IS USED IN THE SPACE BETWEEN IS RICH AND FULL. IT'S DISJOINTED RHYTHM IS IMMERSIVE AND FEELS LIKE THOUGHT RATHER THAN NARRATION. EACH FABULOUS VERSE MAKES YOU WANT TO READ THEM ALOUD AS YOU GO AND HEAR EACH SYLLABLE.

Language surrounds every aspect of *The Space Between* - it's how Beth comforts herself, by hiding in books. It's how she and Alice make a connection and it's what she is both running from and misses most - the bookshop. The love of language is obvious and the best stanzas and verses are some of the simplest.

There is a harrowing chapter where the repetition of the words 'shut up' beats the helplessness and anguish that mental health disorders can unleash. Without ever specifying what exactly it is that Beth is suffering with it paints a stark picture of depression and anxiety and the difficulty of escaping from it.

But fight her way out of it Beth does. *The Space Between* is a beautiful depiction of how friends and lovers can help us through the hard times, while never 'saving' us from them. Beth has to save herself.

It shows that 'recovery' takes time but persistence is rewarded. It's also a lovely depiction of what it is like to fall in love with another person. To learn little pieces of them, then bigger pieces. It shows the value of someone simply standing beside you, willing to fight your battles not for you - but with you.

There are no happy endings in *The Space Between* - there is something more like a happy beginning.

So, if you need help fighting the good fight and want something to propel you along the way, read *The Space Between*. Remember how nice it is to walk with someone else. Let it remind you that life is too messy for prose, life needs stanzas and verses picking out the points that make sense. That life needs a happy dog to remind you of the good things.

The Space Between is one of them. I'll definitely be reading it again.

- Reviewed by Méabh McDonnell

EIGHT OF OUR FAVOURITE *quotes about learning*

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

— Dr. Seuss

"Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."

— Abigail Adams

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

— Maya Angelou

"EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD."

— NELSON MANDELA

"The highest result of education is tolerance."

— Helen Keller

"The only thing better than education is more education."

— Agnes E. Benedict

"I raise my voice, not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back."

— Malala Yousafzai

"I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT WHEN YOU EDUCATE A GIRL, YOU EMPOWER A NATION." -
QUEEN RANIA OF JORDAN