

#SoAatHome | How I write – in conversation with Cerrie Burnell
Thursday 21 May 2026



1

00:00:01,153--> 00:00:03,468

So hello, welcome everyone.

2

00:00:03,492--> 00:00:06,468

Welcome to the Society
of Authors event today,

3

00:00:06,492--> 00:00:09,628

How I write – in conversation
with Cerrie Burnell.

4

00:00:09,652--> 00:00:12,196

Oh, they've said lots of
lovely things about me.

5

00:00:12,221--> 00:00:13,628

So I'm Jasmine Richards

6

00:00:13,652--> 00:00:17,988

and I am an award-winning
author, editor and screenwriter.

7

00:00:18,012--> 00:00:19,028

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Um...

8

00:00:19,052--> 00:00:22,398

I write on a show called JoJo
and Gran Gran, and PJ Masks.

9

00:00:22,422--> 00:00:25,668

So if you're a four-year-old,
I'm a freaking celebrity right now.

10

00:00:25,692--> 00:00:26,948

Same thing with Cerrie, right?

11

00:00:26,972--> 00:00:28,285

If you're of a certain age...

12

00:00:28,310--> 00:00:31,268

-Yeah, but it's
more 14 year olds.

13

00:00:31,292--> 00:00:32,388

than four year olds.

14

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00:00:32,412--> 00:00:34,198

-Yeah, but... Yeah, but I bet...

15

00:00:34,222--> 00:00:37,271

Oh, we'll get into it, but do you get
like stopped in supermarkets and stuff?

16

00:00:37,295--> 00:00:39,828

It'll be such a visceral
reaction for them, right?

17

00:00:39,852--> 00:00:41,371

-It's really...

18

00:00:41,395--> 00:00:42,743

So it used to be for...

19

00:00:42,768--> 00:00:45,049

This is when I was on CBeebies,
it used to be 4-year-olds.

20

00:00:45,073--> 00:00:48,508

And now it is teenagers,
obviously, without their parents.

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21

00:00:48,532--> 00:00:51,388

And that feels really meaningful

22

00:00:51,412--> 00:00:53,348

and really lovely, because

23

00:00:53,372--> 00:00:55,651

it's hard being

a teen, isn't it?

24

00:00:55,676--> 00:00:56,698

And...

25

00:00:56,723--> 00:00:59,428

You know, some of them don't

always have the confidence,

26

00:00:59,452--> 00:01:01,545

but they're, you

know, they're always...

27

00:01:01,570--> 00:01:04,308

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They always break into a smile

28

00:01:04,332--> 00:01:06,308

when they realize that it's me

29

00:01:06,332--> 00:01:09,358

because I think CBeebies

is such a beloved

30

00:01:09,383--> 00:01:12,028

time in their lives

31

00:01:12,052--> 00:01:13,514

and... and such a...

32

00:01:13,539--> 00:01:14,539

Um...

33

00:01:15,146--> 00:01:16,168

Yeah, it's... it's...

34

00:01:16,193--> 00:01:19,988

People are very loyal

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to that... that brand.

35

00:01:20,012--> 00:01:21,868

It feels crude
to call it a brand,

36

00:01:21,892--> 00:01:24,096

but that sort of
world, that channel.

37

00:01:24,121--> 00:01:25,121

-Yeah.

38

00:01:25,145--> 00:01:26,908

And that happened
at such a formative

39

00:01:26,932--> 00:01:30,052

age for them. Like, it would be
such a strong memory for them.

40

00:01:30,396--> 00:01:31,708

I love that.

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41

00:01:31,732--> 00:01:33,096

-Sorry, back to you Jasmine.

42

00:01:33,121--> 00:01:34,841

-Yeah, like, this is
going to be a disaster.

43

00:01:34,865--> 00:01:36,052

We're not going to do it.

44

00:01:36,052--> 00:01:37,468

Okay...

45

00:01:37,492--> 00:01:40,308

So, yes, I'm Jasmine. I run
a company called Storymix.

46

00:01:40,332--> 00:01:42,731

We're a fiction studio,

47

00:01:42,755--> 00:01:45,268

which is just a fancy way of
saying we're a book packager,

48

00:01:45,292--> 00:01:48,591

which also means that I work with
lots of other fantastic creatives,

49

00:01:48,615--> 00:01:50,588

and we come up with
ideas for kids' books.

50

00:01:50,612--> 00:01:53,478

We have a specific focus
on centring kids of colour

51

00:01:53,503--> 00:01:56,428

in stories full of joy and
adventure, and that's what we do.

52

00:01:56,452--> 00:01:57,628

Um...

53

00:01:57,652--> 00:02:00,748

And I've been doing that
for the last 7 years or so.

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54

00:02:00,772--> 00:02:03,158

Right. Audio description.

55

00:02:03,182--> 00:02:06,388

We might get into a bit, actually,
why we do these audio descriptions,

56

00:02:06,412--> 00:02:09,068

but just to describe
what I look like,

57

00:02:09,092--> 00:02:10,656

I am a black woman

58

00:02:10,681--> 00:02:12,788

with glasses

59

00:02:12,812--> 00:02:14,548

and I'm wearing a green jacket,

60

00:02:14,572--> 00:02:18,525

which is quilted and is perhaps
too hot for the room that I'm in.

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61

00:02:18,550--> 00:02:20,348

And I smile a lot,

62

00:02:20,372--> 00:02:22,308

especially when I'm

talking to people I like.

63

00:02:22,332--> 00:02:24,468

Less so when it's

people I don't like.

64

00:02:24,492--> 00:02:26,028

Okay, so...

65

00:02:26,052--> 00:02:27,668

This event is part of our

66

00:02:27,692--> 00:02:31,468

#SoAatHome Spring/Summer

2026 programme

67

00:02:31,492--> 00:02:36,710

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and part of the 2026 Awards
wrap around event series.

68

00:02:36,735--> 00:02:40,148

The Society of Authors

Awards and Summer Party

69

00:02:40,172--> 00:02:42,071

will be taking place at

Southwark Cathedral

70

00:02:42,095--> 00:02:43,828

on Thursday 18th of June,

71

00:02:43,852--> 00:02:47,268

where Cerrie will be

the keynote speaker.

72

00:02:47,292--> 00:02:48,588

It's very exciting.

73

00:02:48,612--> 00:02:51,596

The ceremony will also

be live streamed online.

74

00:02:51,621--> 00:02:55,068

Still buy your tickets, guys,
and register for the live stream via

75

00:02:55,092--> 00:02:56,943

the links posted in the chat.

76

00:02:56,968--> 00:02:59,668

Our wonderful moderator
will be putting all of those links

77

00:02:59,692--> 00:03:00,785

in the chat for you.

78

00:03:00,810--> 00:03:03,851

This event is free for all,

79

00:03:03,875--> 00:03:05,788

as in this event
we're doing right now.

80

00:03:05,812--> 00:03:08,348

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It's free for all, but
if you can afford,

81

00:03:08,372--> 00:03:11,588

please consider donating to the
Society of Authors Access Fund,

82

00:03:11,612--> 00:03:13,308

which provides grants to authors

83

00:03:13,332--> 00:03:16,516

so that travel, subsistence,
childcare costs, and access needs

84

00:03:16,541--> 00:03:19,308

aren't barriers to authors
taking part in events,

85

00:03:19,332--> 00:03:21,148

residencies, and retreats.

86

00:03:21,172--> 00:03:23,825

We suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

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87

00:03:23,849--> 00:03:26,711

So those links will
also be in the chat.

88

00:03:26,711--> 00:03:28,868

You can also

89

00:03:28,892--> 00:03:30,751

help the Society of
Authors Access Fund

90

00:03:30,775--> 00:03:34,588

by making a purchase on our
virtual bookstore on Bookshop.org,

91

00:03:34,612--> 00:03:38,108

where you can find books by writers
taking parts in our events programme.

92

00:03:38,132--> 00:03:40,668

So there will be
books by Cerrie.

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93

00:03:40,692--> 00:03:43,148

One of my books
will be there as well.

94

00:03:43,172--> 00:03:46,388

Go and have a look and buy
for the children in your lives,

95

00:03:46,412--> 00:03:49,711

or for yourself, because actually
grown-ups should read kids' books too.

96

00:03:49,711--> 00:03:53,751

There's going to be 45
minutes or so of chat,

97

00:03:53,775--> 00:03:55,911

including 10 minutes for
questions and answers.

98

00:03:55,935--> 00:03:58,628

We were sent a brilliant
question in advance, which

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99

00:03:58,652--> 00:04:00,711

is going to kick us off.

100

00:04:00,711--> 00:04:03,351

There are captions,
so do please turn on

101

00:04:03,375--> 00:04:05,788

the closed captions if
you'd like live subtitles.

102

00:04:05,812--> 00:04:08,105

There will also be a
recording of this event.

103

00:04:08,129--> 00:04:09,748

You can find it on the website

104

00:04:09,772--> 00:04:11,208

via their resources page.

105

00:04:11,233--> 00:04:13,763

There's also a Vimeo, don't

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know if that's how you pronounce it.

106

00:04:13,787--> 00:04:15,748

There's also a Vimeo channel.

107

00:04:15,772--> 00:04:19,348

Those links will also
be posted in the chat.

108

00:04:19,372--> 00:04:21,548

Right, so as we're going along,

109

00:04:21,572--> 00:04:24,988

if you have any questions, do post
them in the question and answer box.

110

00:04:25,012--> 00:04:27,523

You can post them
anonymously if you like.

111

00:04:27,548--> 00:04:28,948

Um...

112

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00:04:28,972--> 00:04:30,788

Try not to put it in
general comments

113

00:04:30,812--> 00:04:32,188

because it can get a bit messy,

114

00:04:32,212--> 00:04:34,159

and we'll try to
get to all of them.

115

00:04:34,183--> 00:04:36,068

We'll try and leave
enough time for questions.

116

00:04:36,092--> 00:04:38,108

But Cerrie and I can chat.

117

00:04:38,132--> 00:04:39,258

Anyway,

118

00:04:39,282--> 00:04:42,788

I would now like to introduce
you all to today's guest,

119

00:04:42,812--> 00:04:43,948

Cerrie Burnell.

120

00:04:43,972--> 00:04:47,065

Cerrie is an author, an
actor, and ambassador

121

00:04:47,089--> 00:04:49,428

best known for her
work on CBeebies,

122

00:04:49,452--> 00:04:52,308

a role which has earned
her critical recognition

123

00:04:52,332--> 00:04:54,711

and being noticed
in supermarkets

124

00:04:54,711--> 00:04:57,518

and a devoted fan base.

125

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00:04:57,542--> 00:04:59,708

During her time on CBeebies,

126

00:04:59,732--> 00:05:01,348

she has broken down barriers,

127

00:05:01,372--> 00:05:02,711

challenged stereotypes,

128

00:05:02,735--> 00:05:04,348

and overcome discrimination

129

00:05:04,372--> 00:05:08,668

to become one of the most visible
disabled presenters on kids TV.

130

00:05:08,692--> 00:05:11,791

Cerrie is the author
of 15 children's books,

131

00:05:11,815--> 00:05:13,348

including Snowflakes,

132

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00:05:13,372--> 00:05:17,428

which she adapts for the stage
of Oxford Playhouse in 2016,

133

00:05:17,452--> 00:05:21,108

and the Harper series, which is
a World Book Day title in 2016.

134

00:05:21,132--> 00:05:23,748

She also created her
own one-woman show,

135

00:05:23,772--> 00:05:25,428

The Magical Playroom,

136

00:05:25,452--> 00:05:29,428

which premiered at the
Edinburgh Fringe in 2013.

137

00:05:29,452--> 00:05:31,388

Since leaving CBeebies,

138

00:05:31,412--> 00:05:34,548

Kerry has appeared in the

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BBC continuing drama Doctors.

139

00:05:34,572--> 00:05:36,548

I didn't know that.

140

00:05:36,572--> 00:05:39,068

-I think it's now
ended, hasn't it?

141

00:05:39,092--> 00:05:41,148

I think it's no
more, but I was in it

142

00:05:41,172--> 00:05:42,788

just before the pandemic.

143

00:05:42,812--> 00:05:44,383

I was in it for a...

144

00:05:44,408--> 00:05:46,411

a summer or something.

145

00:05:46,435--> 00:05:47,952

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-Oh, it's a shame it's ended,

146

00:05:47,977--> 00:05:50,725

because I know lots of screenwriters
have cut their teeth on Doctors.

147

00:05:50,749--> 00:05:52,868

Like, really important
training ground

148

00:05:52,892--> 00:05:54,548

to build up that
scriptwriting muscle,

149

00:05:54,572--> 00:05:55,868

so that is a shame.

150

00:05:55,892--> 00:05:57,651

But I didn't know
you were on that.

151

00:05:57,675--> 00:06:00,291

Okay, and made the
eye-opening documentary

152

00:06:00,315--> 00:06:02,228

Silenced for the BBC.

153

00:06:02,252--> 00:06:04,548

Her non-fiction book,

I Am Not a Label,

154

00:06:04,572--> 00:06:09,028

was an Amazon US 20 best

children's non-fiction book of 2020

155

00:06:09,052--> 00:06:11,311

and was the overall

Children's Choice winner

156

00:06:11,335--> 00:06:14,711

of the SLA Information Book.

157

00:06:14,711--> 00:06:17,370

Goodness me, you've

been... you've been busy.

158

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00:06:18,096--> 00:06:20,748

-It's true. I deserve

a rest, don't I?

159

00:06:20,772--> 00:06:22,711

[laughter]

160

00:06:22,711--> 00:06:23,878

-Um...

161

00:06:23,902--> 00:06:25,908

Okay, Cerrie,

162

00:06:25,932--> 00:06:28,268

well, tell us what

you're wearing today.

163

00:06:28,292--> 00:06:29,711

Why don't we start with that?

164

00:06:29,711--> 00:06:31,988

-Yes, so when I tend to do...

165

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00:06:32,012--> 00:06:35,028

I do audio descriptions in all
of my Zooms and meetings,

166

00:06:35,052--> 00:06:36,956

whether people have
asked for them or not.

167

00:06:36,981--> 00:06:40,788

And what I tend to open
with is, in the spirit of inclusion,

168

00:06:40,812--> 00:06:42,948

I'm going to audio
describe myself.

169

00:06:42,972--> 00:06:44,548

So I'm a white woman.

170

00:06:44,572--> 00:06:47,388

I've got longish blonde hair.

171

00:06:47,412--> 00:06:49,388

It looks quite messy today.

172

00:06:49,412--> 00:06:52,651

The weather's lovely, so
I've got a summery dress on,

173

00:06:52,675--> 00:06:53,988

which you can't quite see,

174

00:06:54,012--> 00:06:57,308

but you can see the
frilly, colourful sleeves.

175

00:06:57,332--> 00:06:58,748

They're sort of blue and pink.

176

00:06:58,772--> 00:07:01,628

I also have a
visible disability.

177

00:07:01,652--> 00:07:03,228

I have an upper limb difference,

178

00:07:03,252--> 00:07:07,068

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which again, you can't really
see on this particular screen.

179

00:07:07,092--> 00:07:09,628

And then I'm also dyslexic,

180

00:07:09,652--> 00:07:12,868

which is not something you
would know by looking at me,

181

00:07:12,892--> 00:07:14,628

but if you are my editor,

182

00:07:14,652--> 00:07:17,383

you would definitely
be aware of it.

183

00:07:17,407--> 00:07:19,988

-Oh, goodness,
I'm dyslexic as well.

184

00:07:20,012--> 00:07:22,348

We should talk a
little bit about that,

185

00:07:22,372--> 00:07:24,890

being a writer and being
dyslexic. We'll get onto that, go on.

186

00:07:24,914--> 00:07:25,914

-Yes.

187

00:07:25,938--> 00:07:28,748

And I... yes, I'm at home

188

00:07:28,772--> 00:07:31,228

and I'm in one of the
spaces that I write in,

189

00:07:31,252--> 00:07:34,508

and I am in front of
some very jazzy wallpaper,

190

00:07:34,532--> 00:07:37,468

which has peacock
feathers on it,

191

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00:07:37,492--> 00:07:39,108

but if you look closely,

192

00:07:39,132--> 00:07:42,711

you might also see

it's got a little leopard.

193

00:07:42,711--> 00:07:44,628

Or some leopards on it as well.

194

00:07:44,652--> 00:07:47,868

So yes, exciting wallpaper.

195

00:07:47,892--> 00:07:49,891

I have, like, a feature wall

196

00:07:49,915--> 00:07:52,068

in all of the rooms of my house,

197

00:07:52,092--> 00:07:54,668

and during the pandemic

I was in one room

198

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00:07:54,692--> 00:07:58,348

particularly, in front
of butterfly wallpaper.

199

00:07:58,372--> 00:08:00,388

So people would not
always know my name,

200

00:08:00,412--> 00:08:02,468

but they'd be like, oh,
the butterfly lady, let's...

201

00:08:02,492--> 00:08:05,228

We need to speak to
the butterfly woman.

202

00:08:05,252--> 00:08:08,428

So that was... that was a
lovely reference that came

203

00:08:08,452--> 00:08:11,468

from being, yes, on Zoom calls

204

00:08:11,492--> 00:08:13,711

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during the pandemic.

205

00:08:13,711--> 00:08:15,788

But one of the
places that I write

206

00:08:15,812--> 00:08:18,963

most often is... is at home.

207

00:08:19,930--> 00:08:22,468

-Do you have a favourite
room then to write in?

208

00:08:22,492--> 00:08:24,188

Do they just have
a different feel?

209

00:08:24,212--> 00:08:26,711

Does it help you
create different...?

210

00:08:26,711--> 00:08:28,428

-Yeah, it's...

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211

00:08:28,452--> 00:08:30,228

I don't... They do
have different feels

212

00:08:30,252--> 00:08:32,708

and they're different sizes,

213

00:08:32,732--> 00:08:35,348

but I don't necessarily
write in different places

214

00:08:35,372--> 00:08:36,788

depending on

215

00:08:36,812--> 00:08:38,518

the mood of what I'm writing.

216

00:08:38,542--> 00:08:41,711

It's more what else is
going on in the house.

217

00:08:41,711--> 00:08:43,734

And, um...

218

00:08:43,758--> 00:08:46,748

If my laptop is upstairs, I'll...

219

00:08:46,772--> 00:08:50,188

and I want to get stuff

done early, I'll work in my...

220

00:08:50,212--> 00:08:51,708

in my bedroom.

221

00:08:51,732--> 00:08:55,711

I've got, like, a desk, so I've got quite a

long bedroom, I've got a desk set up there

222

00:08:55,711--> 00:08:57,628

that looks out over the garden.

223

00:08:57,652--> 00:08:58,708

Um...

224

00:08:58,732--> 00:09:01,318

And then we have, obviously,

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neighbours on either side,

225

00:09:01,342--> 00:09:04,978

but, other neighbours, but
they're right way far in the distance

226

00:09:05,002--> 00:09:06,711

so they can't really see in.

227

00:09:06,711--> 00:09:07,998

-Hmm.

228

00:09:08,023--> 00:09:10,611

-And then sometimes
I'll work downstairs.

229

00:09:10,635--> 00:09:12,565

But there are two
very lively cats

230

00:09:12,589--> 00:09:14,788

who come and climb
on and stuff. So...

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231

00:09:14,812--> 00:09:16,711

they might make an
appearance today.

232

00:09:16,735--> 00:09:19,468

I don't know. Their names
are Maleficent and Lyra,

233

00:09:19,492--> 00:09:21,905

so they have quite
literary names.

234

00:09:21,930--> 00:09:23,265

-Oh, amazing.

235

00:09:23,290--> 00:09:25,711

-Um, and...

236

00:09:25,711--> 00:09:27,748

Yeah, it... I think it's

237

00:09:27,772--> 00:09:30,651

different seasons, perhaps,

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or different times of day.

238

00:09:30,675--> 00:09:33,348

I like to be in sunnier,
brighter rooms,

239

00:09:33,372--> 00:09:35,711

just because it
helps me feel like

240

00:09:35,711--> 00:09:37,108

I'm alive.

241

00:09:37,132--> 00:09:39,988

But, you know,
throughout my career...

242

00:09:40,012--> 00:09:41,988

I mean, I've been in
this house six years now,

243

00:09:42,012--> 00:09:43,548

and throughout my career,

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244

00:09:43,572--> 00:09:46,468

I think I've lived in...
my career as a writer,

245

00:09:46,492--> 00:09:48,628

which has been for 15 years.

246

00:09:48,652--> 00:09:50,271

I think I've lived in about

247

00:09:50,295--> 00:09:52,310

5 or 6 different houses.

248

00:09:52,335--> 00:09:53,588

So...

249

00:09:53,612--> 00:09:55,791

I've always written
in different spaces.

250

00:09:55,815--> 00:09:57,908

Often we were in flats where...

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251

00:09:57,932--> 00:09:59,828

It would be a two bedroom flat,

252

00:09:59,852--> 00:10:03,108

but the main room would
sort of have everything in.

253

00:10:03,132--> 00:10:04,490

Um...

254

00:10:04,515--> 00:10:05,868

And then I would...

255

00:10:05,892--> 00:10:08,148

I spent a lot of
time writing at night

256

00:10:08,172--> 00:10:09,868

when my daughter was younger,

257

00:10:09,892--> 00:10:12,268

because that was
the most efficient way

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258

00:10:12,292--> 00:10:13,468

to do it.

259

00:10:13,492--> 00:10:16,828

So often, yeah, I

like writing at night.

260

00:10:16,852--> 00:10:18,588

I don't do it as much

261

00:10:18,612--> 00:10:21,108

because I've sort

of flipped it to try and

262

00:10:21,132--> 00:10:23,178

write earlier and get up early.

263

00:10:23,202--> 00:10:24,988

You know, rise

early, do the yoga,

264

00:10:25,012--> 00:10:27,148

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do all of that, and
then get the writing in.

265

00:10:27,172--> 00:10:28,468

Um...

266

00:10:28,492--> 00:10:31,308

-How many... how many
hours a day would you say

267

00:10:31,332--> 00:10:33,468

you write, or does it
change? Are you one of those

268

00:10:33,492--> 00:10:36,708

people who say, you know, write
every day a certain amount of time,

269

00:10:36,732--> 00:10:38,965

or is it as the muse strikes?

270

00:10:38,990--> 00:10:41,828

-It's just as we
get through life.

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271

00:10:41,852--> 00:10:43,228

Just...

272

00:10:43,252--> 00:10:45,068

There's no...

273

00:10:45,092--> 00:10:46,348

Um...

274

00:10:46,372--> 00:10:50,548

So I think I'm quite intuitive
in the way that I do it and also...

275

00:10:50,572--> 00:10:52,628

I mean, dyslexia,

276

00:10:52,652--> 00:10:55,188

you know, manifests in
different people very differently,

277

00:10:55,212--> 00:10:57,270

but I find any kind of...

278

00:10:57,295--> 00:11:01,988

Anything that's too
structured or too...

279

00:11:02,012--> 00:11:04,308

feels too much like obedience,

280

00:11:04,332--> 00:11:06,388

that then it puts me
off doing it. [laughs]

281

00:11:06,412--> 00:11:08,548

-Ah, interesting.

-So... but...

282

00:11:08,572--> 00:11:10,468

-But I do love to get up early

283

00:11:10,492--> 00:11:12,385

and get stuff done
in the morning,

284

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00:11:12,409--> 00:11:13,628

and then I...

285

00:11:13,652--> 00:11:15,908

I feel like, oh yeah,

you know, I've achieved.

286

00:11:15,932--> 00:11:18,931

But then also,

sometimes I really enjoy

287

00:11:18,956--> 00:11:21,668

writing, you know,

sort of after 7pm,

288

00:11:21,692--> 00:11:24,508

when the emails

stop, and there's no...

289

00:11:24,532--> 00:11:27,711

there's nothing

urgent for you to get to.

290

00:11:27,711--> 00:11:28,748

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Um...

291

00:11:28,772--> 00:11:31,708

So I... I enjoy
morning and evening.

292

00:11:31,732--> 00:11:33,588

And then in the day, it...

293

00:11:33,612--> 00:11:35,948

God, it depends if I'm
on a deadline or not,

294

00:11:35,972--> 00:11:39,711

it depends if I'm pitching,
it depends what else is

295

00:11:39,711--> 00:11:41,908

urgently needs my attention.

296

00:11:41,932--> 00:11:44,016

Um, there's...

297

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00:11:44,041--> 00:11:47,188

Yeah, and I also write
a lot in coffee shops.

298

00:11:47,212--> 00:11:49,176

That's the other place that I

299

00:11:49,201--> 00:11:50,828

love to work in.

300

00:11:50,852--> 00:11:52,828

I find libraries...

301

00:11:52,852--> 00:11:54,388

not all libraries, but...

302

00:11:54,412--> 00:11:56,188

obviously libraries
are fabulous,

303

00:11:56,212--> 00:11:59,548

but to work in them
as a writer, I find...

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304

00:11:59,572--> 00:12:03,388

There's something about the
atmosphere that doesn't feel...

305

00:12:03,412--> 00:12:04,908

um...

306

00:12:04,932--> 00:12:06,228

creative to me.

307

00:12:06,252--> 00:12:08,708

It feels like it's
more a place to study

308

00:12:08,732--> 00:12:11,948

or to absorb from
what, you know,

309

00:12:11,972--> 00:12:14,865

or to find your
next great read or to...

310

00:12:14,890--> 00:12:17,148

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You know, be
reading to your child.

311

00:12:17,172--> 00:12:18,468

Um...

312

00:12:18,492--> 00:12:20,908

But something about
being in a cafe where there's

313

00:12:20,932--> 00:12:23,028

obviously snacks,
which are great.

314

00:12:23,052--> 00:12:24,228

[laughter]

315

00:12:24,252--> 00:12:25,348

Don't tell my dentist!

316

00:12:25,372--> 00:12:27,108

And then...

317

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00:12:27,132--> 00:12:30,388

There's, like, there's
kind of life is happening,

318

00:12:30,412--> 00:12:32,428

commotion is happening.

319

00:12:32,452--> 00:12:35,588

You get snippets of
conversation that you...

320

00:12:35,612--> 00:12:39,548

you could lean into or you don't have
to lean into or you might join in as well.

321

00:12:39,572--> 00:12:41,748

I mean, I've made
friends with every

322

00:12:41,772--> 00:12:43,068

cafe owner

323

00:12:43,092--> 00:12:44,711

who lives within a probably

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324

00:12:44,711--> 00:12:46,605

20 mile radius

325

00:12:46,629--> 00:12:49,988

of where I live, and I, you know,
know people in the cafes as well.

326

00:12:50,012--> 00:12:51,711

Um...

327

00:12:51,711--> 00:12:55,711

But I... yeah, I just find
there's a freedom to working...

328

00:12:55,711--> 00:13:00,038

-I wonder if the cafe...
because I like writing in a cafe,

329

00:13:00,063--> 00:13:02,108

I like writing in public places,

330

00:13:02,132--> 00:13:03,948

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and I wonder if...

331

00:13:03,972--> 00:13:07,411

Being a writer is ultimately
very solitary, right?

332

00:13:07,435--> 00:13:10,508

So if you had a
"proper day job",

333

00:13:10,532--> 00:13:11,591

right?

-Mmhmm.

334

00:13:11,616--> 00:13:13,228

-And you're going
into the office,

335

00:13:13,252--> 00:13:16,508

and you're speaking to people, you
have those moments of connection,

336

00:13:16,532--> 00:13:18,428

but as a writer,

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you could go all day

337

00:13:18,452--> 00:13:20,711

not speaking to anyone

other than your character.

338

00:13:20,711--> 00:13:21,711

-Yeah.

339

00:13:21,711--> 00:13:24,108

-So I think there's something
about writing in public spaces

340

00:13:24,132--> 00:13:25,788

that still makes you feel

341

00:13:25,812--> 00:13:29,118

connected to the world
outside of your imagination,

342

00:13:29,142--> 00:13:30,428

which is quite grounding.

343

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00:13:30,452--> 00:13:32,211

So even though it can be noisy

344

00:13:32,235--> 00:13:34,468

and even though you drink
far too much coffee, right,

345

00:13:34,492--> 00:13:36,948

because you have to buy a
certain amount of beverages...

346

00:13:36,972--> 00:13:39,508

-You have to. It's expected.

347

00:13:39,532--> 00:13:43,028

-Because they're small businesses
as well, and you need a slice of cake.

348

00:13:43,052--> 00:13:45,028

You know, it's only right.

349

00:13:45,052--> 00:13:46,268

Um...

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350

00:13:46,292--> 00:13:48,185

I wonder if that's what it is,

351

00:13:48,210--> 00:13:50,607

that connection to ourselves.

352

00:13:50,631--> 00:13:52,651

-I do... I do really hear

what you're saying

353

00:13:52,675--> 00:13:54,348

and I do think

sometimes it's that,

354

00:13:54,372--> 00:13:56,788

but also sometimes

I think it's escaping

355

00:13:56,812--> 00:14:00,108

the mundanity of life at home.

356

00:14:00,132--> 00:14:03,308

You know, there's there's

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no washing to do in a cafe

357

00:14:03,332--> 00:14:05,428

and there's no...

358

00:14:05,452--> 00:14:09,228

You know, you might know that you've
got to do food shopping, but you're not...

359

00:14:09,252--> 00:14:12,068

it's not sort of
high up on the list

360

00:14:12,092--> 00:14:13,988

and you're able to

361

00:14:14,012--> 00:14:16,028

just exist in that moment and...

362

00:14:16,052--> 00:14:19,868

and kind of be with your
thoughts and with the story.

363

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00:14:19,892--> 00:14:21,308

Um...

364

00:14:21,332--> 00:14:22,548

But when you say...

365

00:14:22,572--> 00:14:24,468

Just flipping it back

to you, Jasmine,

366

00:14:24,492--> 00:14:26,228

when you say that

you're, you know...

367

00:14:26,252--> 00:14:29,028

Obviously, writing

can be quite isolating.

368

00:14:29,052--> 00:14:31,911

But you spend a lot of

your time with Storymix

369

00:14:31,935--> 00:14:33,268

and you're also a screenwriter,

370

00:14:33,292--> 00:14:35,748

so that must be far
more collaborative

371

00:14:35,772--> 00:14:37,711

than just working on novels.

372

00:14:37,711--> 00:14:39,148

-Yeah, um...

373

00:14:39,172--> 00:14:41,468

Yeah, it is. And so I think...

374

00:14:41,492--> 00:14:44,711

I kind of think I
built a business that

375

00:14:44,711--> 00:14:46,203

sort of suited me.

-Allowed community.

376

00:14:46,228--> 00:14:49,188

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-Allowed... allowed... Like,
so it's literally I'm allowed to sit

377

00:14:49,212--> 00:14:52,108

in a room with other
really clever people

378

00:14:52,132--> 00:14:56,108

and brainstorm
ideas, right? Like, in...

379

00:14:56,867--> 00:14:58,638

Like that's... that is my job.

380

00:14:58,662--> 00:15:00,318

That's how I get
to spend my time.

381

00:15:00,342--> 00:15:02,348

I find that ridiculously...

382

00:15:02,372--> 00:15:04,828

I feel so very lucky to do that.

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383

00:15:04,852--> 00:15:07,148

But then also then you go away.

384

00:15:07,172--> 00:15:10,385

So you go broad and all of those
ideas, but then you sort of go away

385

00:15:10,409--> 00:15:13,276

and narrow it down to
be writing and it's just you

386

00:15:13,301--> 00:15:15,588

and that piece of paper.

387

00:15:15,612--> 00:15:18,028

I had a question
because I was interested

388

00:15:18,052--> 00:15:21,068

what you said about
being obedient, actually,

389

00:15:21,092--> 00:15:24,478

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and whether or not that
might be a feature of dyslexia.

390

00:15:24,502--> 00:15:25,988

So it made me...

391

00:15:26,012--> 00:15:28,910

The question of,
do you ever outline...

392

00:15:28,935--> 00:15:30,895

Well, there's going to
be two questions, actually.

393

00:15:30,919--> 00:15:32,711

So there's going to
be one, I think, around

394

00:15:32,711--> 00:15:34,108

inspiration

395

00:15:34,132--> 00:15:35,548

and what you draw on.

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396

00:15:35,572--> 00:15:37,748

But actually, even

before we get onto that bit,

397

00:15:37,772--> 00:15:39,265

do you tend to

plan your stories?

398

00:15:39,289--> 00:15:40,969

Do you know how your

story is going to end?

399

00:15:40,993--> 00:15:42,948

Do you do yourself a synopsis?

400

00:15:42,972--> 00:15:46,188

Like, you know, are

you a plotter or pantsers?

401

00:15:46,213--> 00:15:47,588

-Um...

402

00:15:47,612--> 00:15:50,548

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Well, so I don't like
the term pantsier,

403

00:15:50,572--> 00:15:54,711

just because I
feel like that's too...

404

00:15:54,711--> 00:15:56,410

that's too chaotic.

405

00:15:56,435--> 00:15:59,218

And that might be the way
some people write and that's fine.

406

00:15:59,242--> 00:16:01,668

I'd say I'm in the
middle of both of those.

407

00:16:01,692--> 00:16:03,068

Um...

408

00:16:03,092--> 00:16:05,508

There's something about [sighs]

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409

00:16:05,532--> 00:16:09,348

the act of writing a synopsis
that makes me feel like...

410

00:16:09,372--> 00:16:11,645

I don't know, have you
seen the Barbie movie

411

00:16:11,669--> 00:16:15,668

where Margot Robbie, like,
lays on the floor completely

412

00:16:15,692--> 00:16:17,468

and she like rolls,

413

00:16:17,492--> 00:16:20,708

you know, onto her side
and she's like, I can't go on.

414

00:16:20,732--> 00:16:22,851

And that's how I
feel about writing

415

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00:16:22,876--> 00:16:26,991

synopses, like a Barbie that's
been dropped in a puddle on its face

416

00:16:27,015--> 00:16:29,108

and it can't save itself.

417

00:16:29,132--> 00:16:31,068

So I... but what...

418

00:16:31,092--> 00:16:34,390

what I would say does
happen is that I have

419

00:16:34,415--> 00:16:36,908

like a sort of map of the story

420

00:16:36,932--> 00:16:38,478

in my head.

421

00:16:38,502--> 00:16:40,908

And it's not set in
stone, you know, it's like

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422

00:16:40,932--> 00:16:43,148

planning a route, you know, you...

423

00:16:43,172--> 00:16:44,628

Yes, you could follow the map

424

00:16:44,652--> 00:16:47,711

or you might go in a different
direction at some point.

425

00:16:47,711--> 00:16:48,948

Um...

426

00:16:48,972--> 00:16:52,038

So I like to kind of
know where I'm going,

427

00:16:52,062--> 00:16:55,268

and I often have the end point
that, you know, very clearly.

428

00:16:55,292--> 00:16:56,668

Um...

429

00:16:56,692--> 00:17:00,068

And I do really understand
the importance of a synopsis.

430

00:17:00,092--> 00:17:02,148

It's not that I'm
saying that there's,

431

00:17:02,172--> 00:17:04,468

you know, I don't
see the value in them.

432

00:17:04,492--> 00:17:06,108

I really, really do.

433

00:17:06,132--> 00:17:08,108

But for me, I think,

434

00:17:08,132--> 00:17:10,788

there needs to be a...

435

00:17:10,812--> 00:17:14,591

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a bit of a sense of
intrigue and kind of,

436

00:17:14,615--> 00:17:17,388

you know, where's it
going? What might happen?

437

00:17:17,412--> 00:17:20,108

So I think it's really good
to have the ending locked in.

438

00:17:20,132--> 00:17:22,036

And actually, after I

439

00:17:22,061--> 00:17:25,548

started writing... So I wrote
picture books then chapter books,

440

00:17:25,572--> 00:17:28,628

and then when we
met, I was working on,

441

00:17:28,652--> 00:17:29,788

um...

442

00:17:29,812--> 00:17:32,788

kind of middle grade, and
it was, it's this lovely book,

443

00:17:32,812--> 00:17:34,548

the Ice Bear Miracle, that was...

444

00:17:34,572--> 00:17:39,428

was getting into difficulty, and Jasmine
came and completely saved me and... a

445

00:17:39,452--> 00:17:40,868

and you were like a...

446

00:17:40,892--> 00:17:42,148

a sort of...

447

00:17:42,760--> 00:17:46,948

An inclusivity reader
stroke copy editor, I suppose,

448

00:17:46,972--> 00:17:50,268

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who came in at, you

know, in the 11th hour to...

449

00:17:50,292--> 00:17:51,588

to help me

450

00:17:51,612--> 00:17:53,628

not just map the story better,

451

00:17:53,652--> 00:17:57,183

but to make sure that

the characters were truly

452

00:17:57,208--> 00:18:00,988

being reflected in a, you

know, very authentic way,

453

00:18:01,012--> 00:18:03,678

and that the

peak of the story...

454

00:18:03,702--> 00:18:05,348

-I think what happened is...

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455

00:18:05,372--> 00:18:07,143

So I'd gone off

456

00:18:07,168--> 00:18:10,725

and had some kids
and was freelancing,

457

00:18:10,749--> 00:18:13,508

and they brought me in
as an inclusivity reader.

458

00:18:13,532--> 00:18:14,788

Um...

459

00:18:15,452--> 00:18:18,828

But, obviously, I'd had like
this 15 years of being an editor

460

00:18:18,852--> 00:18:21,628

and I felt like there's other...
Like, I could see this story

461

00:18:21,652--> 00:18:25,788

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you wanted to tell
and I just... I kind of

462

00:18:25,812--> 00:18:27,748

felt compelled

463

00:18:27,772--> 00:18:30,068

to have those
broader conversations.

464

00:18:30,092--> 00:18:33,908

Not even help like it was all there,
Cerrie, and it, you know it was all there,

465

00:18:33,932--> 00:18:37,428

but I just felt like
that editorial instinct...

466

00:18:37,452--> 00:18:38,452

-Came through.

467

00:18:38,476--> 00:18:39,711

-...collaborate. Yes.

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468

00:18:39,711--> 00:18:40,711

[laughter]

469

00:18:40,711--> 00:18:43,711

-Yeah, no, and it was
amazing, and it really...

470

00:18:43,711--> 00:18:47,708

We'd kind of got stuck
where I think my editor didn't

471

00:18:47,732--> 00:18:51,228

feel confident in the
story that I was telling

472

00:18:51,252--> 00:18:53,828

and I was just like,
yes, let's do it, let's do it.

473

00:18:53,852--> 00:18:56,708

But, you know,
from that experience,

474

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00:18:56,732--> 00:18:59,668

and the previous
book that I'd written,

475

00:18:59,692--> 00:19:01,708

which was another
middle grade novel,

476

00:19:01,732--> 00:19:03,298

The Girl With The Sharks Teeth,

477

00:19:03,323--> 00:19:08,988

I got to learn just how important
it is to have your ending locked in.

478

00:19:09,012--> 00:19:11,298

And so sometimes
I'll write the ending.

479

00:19:11,322--> 00:19:12,908

It might not be the true ending,

480

00:19:12,932--> 00:19:15,851

but I'll write the end

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chapter or even like,

481

00:19:15,875--> 00:19:17,091

um...

482

00:19:17,116--> 00:19:19,388

You know, the
very last page of it.

483

00:19:19,412--> 00:19:21,711

Do you know what I
mean? Just so that I...

484

00:19:21,711--> 00:19:23,068

I... there's a full stop

485

00:19:23,092--> 00:19:24,216

that I know that, you know,

486

00:19:24,240--> 00:19:26,711

we're going to do this, but
then we're all going to end up,

487

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00:19:26,711--> 00:19:28,185

you know, kind of there.

488

00:19:28,209--> 00:19:29,748

Um...

489

00:19:29,772--> 00:19:31,948

So, I...

490

00:19:31,972--> 00:19:34,628

Yeah, to go back

to your question, I...

491

00:19:34,652--> 00:19:37,108

I'm somewhere in between that,

492

00:19:37,132--> 00:19:40,708

you know, I'm definitely not

someone who's very, very structured.

493

00:19:40,732--> 00:19:43,628

It's not how my brain works.

494

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00:19:43,652--> 00:19:46,068

It's not how I do
anything in my life.

495

00:19:46,092--> 00:19:47,588

And there's this...

496

00:19:47,612--> 00:19:50,748

There's, you know, there's that

497

00:19:50,772--> 00:19:53,788

saying like the way you do one
thing is the way you do everything.

498

00:19:53,812--> 00:19:57,428

And I think that it's maybe
not true for everyone,

499

00:19:57,452--> 00:20:00,028

but I think that is
quite true for me.

500

00:20:00,052--> 00:20:02,711

I'm someone who wants to

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go on with it and get it done.

501

00:20:02,711--> 00:20:05,283

And I think...

502

00:20:05,308--> 00:20:06,991

So I'm probably...

503

00:20:07,015--> 00:20:10,785

I'm probably a crossover
between dyslexia and ADHD.

504

00:20:10,809--> 00:20:12,268

And so I find,

505

00:20:12,292--> 00:20:14,711

like, planning or plotting

506

00:20:14,711--> 00:20:16,188

quite boring

507

00:20:16,212--> 00:20:17,868

to be honest.

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508

00:20:17,892--> 00:20:20,148

And... Or not boring, but

509

00:20:20,172--> 00:20:22,365

as if it's taking away
from the momentum.

510

00:20:22,389--> 00:20:23,693

-Stifling, maybe?

511

00:20:23,717--> 00:20:26,805

-Yeah, just kind of like, oh
gosh, we've got to do this.

512

00:20:26,829--> 00:20:28,388

And so then I
think, no, we don't.

513

00:20:28,412--> 00:20:30,668

And then I just go
racing on and and...

514

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00:20:30,692--> 00:20:34,687

And it's not, you know, sometimes
that can be a very long-winded

515

00:20:34,711--> 00:20:36,668

way of doing it, but it's...

516

00:20:36,692--> 00:20:39,502

it's the process that I find

517

00:20:39,527--> 00:20:40,605

[clears throat]

518

00:20:40,629--> 00:20:42,711

leads to...

519

00:20:42,711--> 00:20:45,908

In a roundabout way
leads to the best story.

520

00:20:45,932--> 00:20:49,548

I always have the characters
and I always have the world

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521

00:20:49,572--> 00:20:50,748

and I think

522

00:20:50,772--> 00:20:52,868

I'm very, very clear on

523

00:20:52,892--> 00:20:55,711

the kind of language

I want to use.

524

00:20:55,711--> 00:20:56,711

-Yes.

525

00:20:56,735--> 00:20:59,268

-And different books

are tonally different,

526

00:20:59,292--> 00:21:01,711

you know, in the

527

00:21:01,711--> 00:21:04,148

way that I use

language, and it's all...

528

00:21:04,172--> 00:21:07,068

I'd say everything is fairly,
sort of, fairy tale coded.

529

00:21:07,092--> 00:21:10,308

There's always an element
of fairy tale that comes in.

530

00:21:10,332--> 00:21:11,748

Um...

531

00:21:12,397--> 00:21:14,028

But yes, synopsis,

532

00:21:14,052--> 00:21:16,212

oh God, I mean...

533

00:21:16,236--> 00:21:18,711

It doesn't always happen.

534

00:21:18,711--> 00:21:20,628

-So another question then,

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535

00:21:20,652--> 00:21:22,508

like, in terms of your evolution

536

00:21:22,532--> 00:21:25,588

as a writer, because you have
written for so many age ranges

537

00:21:25,612--> 00:21:28,788

and most recently
you've sort of moved into...

538

00:21:28,812--> 00:21:29,868

into teen.

539

00:21:29,892--> 00:21:33,348

How much do you think
about brand, Cerrie?

540

00:21:33,372--> 00:21:37,268

And like what stratas of kids'
books you're going to write over?

541

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00:21:37,292--> 00:21:39,588

Is that all instinctive

542

00:21:39,612--> 00:21:41,308

and just where...

543

00:21:41,332--> 00:21:43,708

where your creative interest is?

544

00:21:43,732--> 00:21:47,108

Or do you think about

it ever more strategically

545

00:21:47,132--> 00:21:50,096

as, you know, an author brand?

546

00:21:50,121--> 00:21:52,588

-Yeah, I would say...

547

00:21:52,612--> 00:21:54,388

Yes and no.

548

00:21:54,412--> 00:21:57,628

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So when I began writing,

549

00:21:57,652--> 00:21:59,585

I was on CBeebies.

550

00:21:59,609--> 00:22:02,188

I'd been a CBeebies

presenter for about two years,

551

00:22:02,212--> 00:22:04,108

and I had already written...

552

00:22:04,132--> 00:22:06,188

It was too long, but it

553

00:22:06,212--> 00:22:08,228

then became my

first picture book,

554

00:22:08,252--> 00:22:10,068

which was... is Snowflakes,

555

00:22:10,092--> 00:22:11,828

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which has now just
been re-released,

556

00:22:11,852--> 00:22:13,948

called Mia's Brave Move.

557

00:22:13,972--> 00:22:15,428

I don't like the title,

558

00:22:15,452--> 00:22:16,538

but don't tell anyone that.

559

00:22:16,562--> 00:22:17,788

I prefer snowflakes.

560

00:22:17,812--> 00:22:18,908

Um...

561

00:22:18,932--> 00:22:20,508

But when...

562

00:22:20,532--> 00:22:23,828

I think, you know, that

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story essentially is about

563

00:22:23,852--> 00:22:25,468

a little girl

564

00:22:25,492--> 00:22:28,428

who can't live

with her birth family

565

00:22:28,452--> 00:22:30,348

and goes to live

with her grandma.

566

00:22:30,372--> 00:22:34,388

So it's a very, very

gentle and subtle

567

00:22:34,412--> 00:22:36,468

adoption story, really.

568

00:22:36,492--> 00:22:38,108

And I don't think

569

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00:22:38,132--> 00:22:41,028

that was the story that
anyone was really expecting,

570

00:22:41,052--> 00:22:43,363

you know, sparkly bedtime Cerrie

571

00:22:43,388--> 00:22:46,108

to write, but that was
a story that I'd written.

572

00:22:46,132--> 00:22:48,108

And then I got an agent

573

00:22:48,132--> 00:22:51,388

through another
piece of writing I did,

574

00:22:51,412--> 00:22:55,148

I think for The Guardian
or The Observer, and

575

00:22:55,172--> 00:22:57,478

she happened to see it and

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she contacted me and said,

576

00:22:57,502--> 00:22:59,711

oh, you know, have you
ever thought about writing

577

00:22:59,711--> 00:23:01,788

for children? And Claire Wilson.

578

00:23:01,812--> 00:23:02,828

Um...

579

00:23:02,852--> 00:23:04,748

And I said, yes, here you are.

580

00:23:04,772--> 00:23:09,028

And that eventually evolved
into being Snowflakes,

581

00:23:09,052--> 00:23:11,308

which, you know, later
I adapted for the stage.

582

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00:23:11,332--> 00:23:13,148

But, um...

583

00:23:13,172--> 00:23:15,711

That was very off-brand

584

00:23:15,735--> 00:23:18,188

because it was a
book that... that...

585

00:23:18,212--> 00:23:20,868

not from the child's
perspective, but it

586

00:23:20,892--> 00:23:23,548

held quite a lot of sorrow

587

00:23:23,572--> 00:23:26,428

and... and... or, you
know, it was quite moving,

588

00:23:26,452--> 00:23:28,268

she says, the author.

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589

00:23:28,292--> 00:23:30,108

-Yes! [laughter]

590

00:23:30,132--> 00:23:31,708

-But it...

591

00:23:31,732--> 00:23:34,576

And also I think it raised
a lot of questions as well.

592

00:23:34,601--> 00:23:37,508

You know, some... sometimes...
this was back in the days of Twitter,

593

00:23:37,532--> 00:23:38,788

people would say,

594

00:23:38,812--> 00:23:41,268

well, you know, don't read
this to your kids at bedtime,

595

00:23:41,292--> 00:23:43,388

because then they'll

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be asking you questions.

596

00:23:43,412--> 00:23:45,228

And it's like, well,

597

00:23:45,252--> 00:23:48,508

I do... I do really understand
how annoying that is as a parent,

598

00:23:48,532--> 00:23:51,268

but also, like, a book
isn't meant to always be

599

00:23:51,292--> 00:23:52,548

a spoonful of Piriton.

600

00:23:52,572--> 00:23:54,948

You know, we're
not putting children...

601

00:23:54,972--> 00:23:58,588

You know, it... we're
supposed to be inspiring

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602

00:23:58,612--> 00:24:00,068

imagination and...

603

00:24:00,092--> 00:24:04,388

But, yeah, maybe it's not the
last one you read of bedtime.

604

00:24:04,412--> 00:24:07,548

So I think because
that's the way I started off,

605

00:24:07,572--> 00:24:09,711

I didn't ever

606

00:24:09,711--> 00:24:13,068

really want to

607

00:24:13,092--> 00:24:16,028

do anything that was too
heavily branded and I...

608

00:24:16,052--> 00:24:18,508

I sort of pushed

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against that in a way

609

00:24:18,532--> 00:24:22,711

because it's very

easy to get swept up in.

610

00:24:22,711--> 00:24:24,308

This is the brand

611

00:24:24,332--> 00:24:28,148

and it's a slightly different

version of you to the person.

612

00:24:28,172--> 00:24:29,788

And actually in my writing

613

00:24:29,812--> 00:24:32,668

and in, you know, in the

stage play that I'd written,

614

00:24:32,692--> 00:24:34,711

or the one woman show,

615

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00:24:34,711--> 00:24:38,628

it was very much about stories
that were meaningful to me.

616

00:24:38,652--> 00:24:40,268

Um... And...

617

00:24:40,292--> 00:24:43,548

Yes, of course,
CBeebies, you know,

618

00:24:43,572--> 00:24:45,788

was massively a
door opener and...

619

00:24:45,812--> 00:24:51,711

and gave me a level of audience and
privilege that I wouldn't have had.

620

00:24:51,711--> 00:24:54,588

But I then wanted to use that to

621

00:24:54,612--> 00:24:57,708

tell stories that I felt

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were really important.

622

00:24:57,732--> 00:25:00,308

So, for instance, like

with my one woman show,

623

00:25:00,332--> 00:25:01,708

The Magical Playroom,

624

00:25:01,732--> 00:25:04,711

it was about a little

girl called Liberty who

625

00:25:04,711--> 00:25:07,348

really struggles to

wear her prosthetic arm.

626

00:25:07,372--> 00:25:09,388

And her family

627

00:25:09,412--> 00:25:11,548

are sort of enforcing her,

628

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00:25:11,572--> 00:25:14,708

or, you know, very strongly
encouraging her to wear it.

629

00:25:14,732--> 00:25:18,388

And she is rebelling and
saying, you know, I don't want to.

630

00:25:18,412--> 00:25:21,748

And, you know, lots of
different toys come to life,

631

00:25:21,772--> 00:25:23,868

you know, lots of
different things happen.

632

00:25:23,892--> 00:25:27,908

And the driving focus is
that she's very good at ballet

633

00:25:27,932--> 00:25:29,868

and her mum is a ballerina,

634

00:25:29,892--> 00:25:31,711

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and she thinks,
well, if Libby wears

635

00:25:31,711--> 00:25:34,708

the prosthetic, this is her
chance to be a ballerina.

636

00:25:34,732--> 00:25:38,388

And in the end they realize that
it's going to be more damaging

637

00:25:38,412--> 00:25:41,268

and it's going to stifle her
dancing and her dream,

638

00:25:41,292--> 00:25:43,788

and then she... she doesn't,
you know, spoiler alert,

639

00:25:43,812--> 00:25:45,308

she doesn't wear it

640

00:25:45,332--> 00:25:46,948

by the end of the show.

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641

00:25:46,972--> 00:25:49,388

But that's a very different show

642

00:25:49,412--> 00:25:51,988

to something where we
could have done, you know,

643

00:25:52,012--> 00:25:55,711

"Bedtime Stories with Cerrie",
and I could have just read.

644

00:25:55,711--> 00:25:58,548

Or, you know, we could have
had, you know, lovely puppets

645

00:25:58,572--> 00:26:01,788

and I could have read The Snowman
or... Do you know what I mean?

646

00:26:01,812--> 00:26:03,708

And I...

647

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00:26:03,732--> 00:26:05,988

You know, that was
also an option and

648

00:26:06,012--> 00:26:07,718

that would have been
a lovely thing to do,

649

00:26:07,742--> 00:26:09,711

but that is very contained

650

00:26:09,711--> 00:26:11,548

in that moment in time.

651

00:26:11,572--> 00:26:15,711

And it doesn't necessarily
then go on to have,

652

00:26:15,711--> 00:26:18,205

you know, a life of its
own and it's fine, you know.

653

00:26:18,229--> 00:26:20,068

But both of them have a place

654

00:26:20,092--> 00:26:22,028

and both of them are

655

00:26:22,052--> 00:26:25,348

encouraging kids to read,

656

00:26:25,372--> 00:26:27,311

which is is always valid.

657

00:26:27,336--> 00:26:30,228

-But I suppose there is,
you know, there's a fine...

658

00:26:30,252--> 00:26:34,068

There's a finite amount of
time and energy and creative,

659

00:26:34,092--> 00:26:35,948

you know, propulsion.

660

00:26:35,972--> 00:26:40,691

So making the choices about how you

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use those moments and those platforms,

661

00:26:40,715--> 00:26:42,111

I suppose

662

00:26:42,136--> 00:26:47,148

that's part of the art of being an
author that has longevity as well.

663

00:26:47,172--> 00:26:50,038

Like, you're not... you didn't
just necessarily go after

664

00:26:50,062--> 00:26:52,228

what would be the easy win.

665

00:26:52,252--> 00:26:53,548

Like, you wanted to...

666

00:26:53,572--> 00:26:55,668

-No, that's a theme
in everything I do.

667

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00:26:55,692--> 00:26:59,028

I seem to find the
most complicated path.

668

00:26:59,052--> 00:27:01,548

I know... What
it... You know, I...

669

00:27:01,572--> 00:27:03,105

I can't remember
what the saying is.

670

00:27:03,129--> 00:27:06,548

-Oh, so tell me very...
Just tell me quickly, like,

671

00:27:06,572--> 00:27:08,268

how you decided

672

00:27:08,292--> 00:27:09,548

to start

673

00:27:09,572--> 00:27:12,388

a book festival on top of

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trying to do all the other things?

674

00:27:12,412--> 00:27:14,574

Because that doesn't

feel like an easy path.

675

00:27:14,598--> 00:27:16,268

-Not at all.

676

00:27:16,292--> 00:27:19,188

I... Well, I live

in South London.

677

00:27:19,212--> 00:27:21,788

So I live in a gorgeous

area where there are

678

00:27:21,812--> 00:27:24,348

lots of lovely art spaces and

679

00:27:24,372--> 00:27:27,708

I was writing in this lovely

cafe called Brown and Green

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680

00:27:27,732--> 00:27:30,436

one afternoon and

681

00:27:30,461--> 00:27:32,508

I made friends with the owners.

682

00:27:32,532--> 00:27:34,308

There were two
owners, they're twins,

683

00:27:34,332--> 00:27:36,268

and at first...
They're not identical,

684

00:27:36,292--> 00:27:39,028

but they do look very similar,
and they've also got, like, just

685

00:27:39,052--> 00:27:42,548

amazingly cool, like,
Brighton sort of style.

686

00:27:42,572--> 00:27:44,708

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And I thought it was
one person at first,

687

00:27:44,732--> 00:27:46,348

and I'd be like, "hello, hi",

688

00:27:46,372--> 00:27:49,188

and then I saw them together
one day, and I was like, oh...

689

00:27:49,212--> 00:27:52,228

There's two of them, and I
just had to go over and say, like,

690

00:27:52,252--> 00:27:55,108

"gosh, I'm so sorry. I've
spoken to both of you

691

00:27:55,132--> 00:27:57,268

as if you were one person."

692

00:27:57,292--> 00:27:58,588

And they were like, "it's fine.

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693

00:27:58,612--> 00:28:00,348

It happens all the
time, babe, don't worry."

694

00:28:00,372--> 00:28:02,828

And then we made friends and

695

00:28:02,852--> 00:28:07,711

they have this lovely, gorgeous,
creative art space, wedding venue,

696

00:28:07,711--> 00:28:09,868

whatever you want it
to be, above the cafe.

697

00:28:09,892--> 00:28:13,351

And they very generously
said, you know, you can...

698

00:28:13,375--> 00:28:14,708

you can run

699

00:28:14,732--> 00:28:16,708

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a literary festival from here.

700

00:28:16,732--> 00:28:19,788

I mean, I went to them, this
was a couple of years later,

701

00:28:19,812--> 00:28:21,711

I went to them with the idea.

702

00:28:21,711--> 00:28:24,148

And then it... it just sort of

703

00:28:24,172--> 00:28:25,588

happened

704

00:28:25,612--> 00:28:29,388

from there. And so this was this
was the flyer for this year's one.

705

00:28:29,412--> 00:28:31,988

So we have... This
isn't quite all the authors,

706

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00:28:32,012--> 00:28:33,012

but there were...

707

00:28:33,036--> 00:28:35,211

-Oh, Andy's on there.

708

00:28:35,235--> 00:28:36,548

-Andy's on there.

709

00:28:36,572--> 00:28:38,711

He drove down from Bristol.

-It's like a CBeebies...

710

00:28:38,711--> 00:28:41,046

CBeebies reunion.

711

00:28:41,071--> 00:28:43,948

-Chanté and also Mamma G,

712

00:28:43,972--> 00:28:48,028

who are just absolutely lighting up
the children's literary scene. They're just

713

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00:28:48,052--> 00:28:50,711

phenomenal authors and...

714

00:28:50,711--> 00:28:53,548

I just, yeah, I was

flummoxed as to why

715

00:28:53,572--> 00:28:56,376

Crystal Palace didn't have

a literary festival already.

716

00:28:56,401--> 00:28:59,668

And now I've become

the person to do it.

717

00:28:59,692--> 00:29:02,228

I don't know how

long for, because it is...

718

00:29:02,252--> 00:29:04,588

As I'm sure anyone

who works in events,

719

00:29:04,612--> 00:29:07,188

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including the Society
of Authors, knows

720

00:29:07,212--> 00:29:09,708

it is a lot all of the time.

721

00:29:09,732--> 00:29:10,785

Um...

722

00:29:10,810--> 00:29:13,388

-On top of all the other
things that you're doing, right?

723

00:29:13,412--> 00:29:16,108

I think that's
the thing about...

724

00:29:16,997--> 00:29:18,997

busy people.

725

00:29:19,022--> 00:29:22,548

And, like, you just see, you see
the thing that needs to be built

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726

00:29:22,572--> 00:29:24,028

and then you're
just going to fix it.

727

00:29:24,052--> 00:29:26,108

But when you're trying
to do that across all...

728

00:29:26,132--> 00:29:27,788

I mean, it is a lot.

729

00:29:27,812--> 00:29:32,588

-It is, yeah, but you know it's a
really joyful thing to do as well.

730

00:29:32,612--> 00:29:34,508

So like my daughter
and some of her friends

731

00:29:34,532--> 00:29:36,348

have been the
literary ambassadors

732

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00:29:36,372--> 00:29:38,068

who volunteer on the day

733

00:29:38,092--> 00:29:41,548

and they're so great. They're
so lovely. You know, they get...

734

00:29:41,572--> 00:29:43,732

You know, and some
of them are, you know,

735

00:29:43,756--> 00:29:46,148

sort of haven't done voluntary
work before or they're...

736

00:29:46,172--> 00:29:49,548

I mean, you know, one
lovely boy we had this year

737

00:29:49,572--> 00:29:52,148

had grown up in a house
where they don't have any books.

738

00:29:52,172--> 00:29:53,711

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You know, that's just

739

00:29:53,711--> 00:29:55,468

the home that he
grew up in, so he...

740

00:29:55,492--> 00:29:57,711

he wasn't used to

741

00:29:57,711--> 00:30:00,668

seeing literary events,
and then he was

742

00:30:00,692--> 00:30:03,268

kind of going and talking
and giving people leaflets.

743

00:30:03,292--> 00:30:06,668

You know, it's just... it's a
lovely, lovely thing to do.

744

00:30:06,692--> 00:30:08,108

Um...

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745

00:30:08,132--> 00:30:11,308

Yeah, we... But like all
of these things, we see.

746

00:30:11,332--> 00:30:14,028

We see how the journey goes.

747

00:30:14,052--> 00:30:15,748

But yes, if you're
watching the call

748

00:30:15,772--> 00:30:18,988

and you're going to be in
South London in May next year,

749

00:30:19,012--> 00:30:21,268

please do come along
to Stories by the Lake

750

00:30:21,292--> 00:30:23,628

and do follow us on Instagram.

751

00:30:23,652--> 00:30:25,628

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It's just @StoriesByTheLake.

752

00:30:25,652--> 00:30:27,711

Um...

753

00:30:27,711--> 00:30:31,868

-So, when you're not
running your book festival,

754

00:30:31,892--> 00:30:36,711

you are writing and
your new title is called...?

755

00:30:36,711--> 00:30:38,668

-The Princess and The Thief.

756

00:30:38,692--> 00:30:40,828

-And when is that out?

757

00:30:40,852--> 00:30:43,668

-So that is not out
until September.

758

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00:30:43,692--> 00:30:47,428

So I don't have an actual
"book" book to show you.

759

00:30:47,452--> 00:30:48,628

Um...

760

00:30:48,652--> 00:30:51,445

But I'm really, really
delighted with the front cover.

761

00:30:51,469--> 00:30:53,388

I'll audio describe
the front cover.

762

00:30:53,412--> 00:30:56,711

So the whole concept of
The Princess and The Thief is...

763

00:30:56,711--> 00:30:58,745

It's sort of like the
Prince and the Pauper,

764

00:30:58,769--> 00:31:01,228

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is two girls who
look very similar.

765

00:31:01,252--> 00:31:03,383

-Oh, a bit like the cafe?

766

00:31:03,408--> 00:31:04,443

A bit like the...

767

00:31:04,467--> 00:31:07,228

-Yes. Yes! Well, but
they are twins in real life.

768

00:31:07,252--> 00:31:09,468

These two girls aren't related.

769

00:31:09,492--> 00:31:11,588

One is a princess,
one is a thief.

770

00:31:11,612--> 00:31:12,708

Um...

771

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00:31:12,732--> 00:31:14,828

And the thief

772

00:31:14,852--> 00:31:17,708

gets into trouble
with a criminal gang.

773

00:31:17,732--> 00:31:21,188

And they realized that she
looks very similar to the princess.

774

00:31:21,212--> 00:31:24,308

And they're like, the way that
you can earn back favour with us

775

00:31:24,332--> 00:31:27,423

is to go and rob the Sea Palace.

776

00:31:27,448--> 00:31:30,348

We'll do it, you know, do it on a
night where everyone's busy preparing

777

00:31:30,372--> 00:31:32,188

for this big fete.

778

00:31:32,212--> 00:31:34,148

And go in as the princess

779

00:31:34,172--> 00:31:38,028

and no one or, you know, people just think,
oh, it's the princess walking around.

780

00:31:38,052--> 00:31:41,816

So she does that. She
gets caught by the princess.

781

00:31:41,841--> 00:31:44,748

But when the
princess realizes how

782

00:31:44,772--> 00:31:48,148

similar they are, she
doesn't hand her in.

783

00:31:48,172--> 00:31:49,828

She doesn't call the guards.

784

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00:31:49,852--> 00:31:53,183

And then this friendship
and this very different life

785

00:31:53,208--> 00:31:55,388

for both of them begins

786

00:31:55,412--> 00:31:58,668

full of magic and
adventure, and it's also... it's...

787

00:31:58,692--> 00:32:03,028

set in sort of
18th century Italy,

788

00:32:03,052--> 00:32:04,068

um...

789

00:32:04,092--> 00:32:06,788

in a magical society where,

790

00:32:06,812--> 00:32:10,868

depending on the hierarchy
of the family you're born into,

791

00:32:10,892--> 00:32:12,788

that sort of,

792

00:32:12,812--> 00:32:13,988

um...

793

00:32:14,012--> 00:32:16,788

depicts the level

of magic that you...

794

00:32:16,812--> 00:32:17,812

have available.

795

00:32:17,836--> 00:32:19,711

-Oh, I like that

magic system. Okay.

796

00:32:19,711--> 00:32:22,188

-Yes, only our princess...

797

00:32:22,212--> 00:32:24,812

Well, I don't want to give it away,

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but she doesn't have the magic

798

00:32:24,836--> 00:32:26,348

that she's meant

to have. Anyway.

799

00:32:26,372--> 00:32:27,372

Um...

800

00:32:27,396--> 00:32:29,788

-Read us...

Read us a little bit,

801

00:32:29,812--> 00:32:31,772

and then we're gonna

take some questions, I think.

802

00:32:31,796--> 00:32:34,908

-One more thing to say. So

the thing that makes them

803

00:32:34,932--> 00:32:37,708

kind of inseparable is that they

both have the same disability.

804

00:32:37,732--> 00:32:39,443

So they both have one hand.

805

00:32:39,468--> 00:32:43,788

So that's why and no
one else in that city does.

806

00:32:43,812--> 00:32:45,148

So at a distance,

807

00:32:45,172--> 00:32:48,828

that's why they can be
mistaken for each other

808

00:32:48,852--> 00:32:51,148

and because it's
Venice, or it's Venetia,

809

00:32:51,172--> 00:32:53,988

they are masked,
so you can't see

810

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00:32:54,012--> 00:32:55,711

the face completely.

811

00:32:55,711--> 00:32:58,068

-And is that what the
cover... does the cover...?

812

00:32:58,092--> 00:33:00,428

-The cover has both
of them on it, so it

813

00:33:00,452--> 00:33:04,308

had two really beautiful,
I think, illustrations of

814

00:33:04,332--> 00:33:06,868

two, you know,
almost identical girls

815

00:33:06,892--> 00:33:09,268

with sort of, you know,
very Italian looking.

816

00:33:09,292--> 00:33:11,711

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And then they both have an
upper limb difference as well.

817

00:33:11,711--> 00:33:13,250

-Oh, that's wonderful.

818

00:33:13,275--> 00:33:14,275

-So, yes.

819

00:33:14,300--> 00:33:16,668

Okay, so this is Chapter One

820

00:33:16,692--> 00:33:18,668

of The Princess and The Thief.

821

00:33:19,711--> 00:33:23,268

The summer moon hung
as bright as a pearl in the sky,

822

00:33:23,292--> 00:33:26,788

illuminating a path
across the deep, inky sea.

823

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00:33:26,812--> 00:33:30,468

A tiny boat floated
into its glittering light.

824

00:33:30,492--> 00:33:32,828

Its black sails lowered,

825

00:33:32,852--> 00:33:35,468

its crew just a young seafarer

826

00:33:35,492--> 00:33:39,308

and a sharp-eyed
girl in a sky blue cape.

827

00:33:39,332--> 00:33:42,628

The sky was empty of stars.

828

00:33:42,652--> 00:33:45,468

The breeze full of the
scent of night flowers,

829

00:33:45,492--> 00:33:49,108

but the girl paid no heed
to the sky nor the breeze.

830

00:33:49,132--> 00:33:51,748

She stared straight ahead,

831

00:33:51,772--> 00:33:53,868

towards the island before her,

832

00:33:53,892--> 00:33:56,828

taking in its sweepy,

sandy beaches,

833

00:33:56,852--> 00:33:59,588

scattered with

wind-blown beach grass

834

00:33:59,612--> 00:34:03,711

and the looming walls of

the huge ethereal palace.

835

00:34:03,711--> 00:34:05,178

The Sea Palace,

836

00:34:05,202--> 00:34:09,228

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the home of Venetia's
last remaining princess,

837

00:34:09,252--> 00:34:12,188

the beloved Princess Aria.

838

00:34:12,212--> 00:34:16,708

The seafarer pointed silently to an
abandoned pier the colour of bone

839

00:34:16,732--> 00:34:20,148

that jutted away from the
land and far into the sea.

840

00:34:20,172--> 00:34:22,068

The girl nodded,

841

00:34:22,092--> 00:34:25,428

took a breath, drew her
cape closely about her,

842

00:34:25,452--> 00:34:27,388

and stepped off the boat,

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843

00:34:27,412--> 00:34:30,776

clutching a beautifully
embroidered velvet bag.

844

00:34:30,800--> 00:34:34,428

Her long, dark hair
caught in the wind,

845

00:34:34,452--> 00:34:37,508

billowing around her as
she smiled her thanks.

846

00:34:37,532--> 00:34:39,988

And then she was gone,

847

00:34:40,012--> 00:34:43,468

dashing over the
salt-licked rocks of the pier

848

00:34:43,492--> 00:34:45,468

and onto the beach
as fast as a thief,

849

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00:34:45,492--> 00:34:47,596

for a thief she was.

850

00:34:47,621--> 00:34:50,348

The last three years of
her life had been spent

851

00:34:50,372--> 00:34:53,428

perfecting the
lightning-fast art of thieving.

852

00:34:53,452--> 00:34:55,468

Every spare evening,

853

00:34:55,492--> 00:34:59,388

she'd been slipping on and off of
balconies in wealthy neighbourhoods,

854

00:34:59,412--> 00:35:02,711

pinching little items that
would hardly be missed.

855

00:35:02,711--> 00:35:06,148

A porcelain teapot,

an ornate golden vase,

856

00:35:06,172--> 00:35:08,268

a misplaced diamond earring.

857

00:35:08,292--> 00:35:10,988

Things that were easy

to sell at midnight markets

858

00:35:11,012--> 00:35:13,188

without raising too

many eyebrows.

859

00:35:13,212--> 00:35:15,508

And every penny she made,

860

00:35:15,532--> 00:35:17,348

she carefully saved,

861

00:35:17,372--> 00:35:18,711

gathering the means

862

00:35:18,711--> 00:35:20,748

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to fund her dream.

863

00:35:21,595--> 00:35:22,976

Okay.

864

00:35:23,001--> 00:35:24,556

-Oh, wonderful.

-And I will stop there.

865

00:35:24,580--> 00:35:27,388

-I just suddenly realized
the time and I thought, okay.

866

00:35:27,412--> 00:35:28,711

[laughter]

867

00:35:28,711--> 00:35:31,230

I won't do the whole
chapter, but yes.

868

00:35:31,255--> 00:35:33,268

-And just remind us of the title

869

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00:35:33,292--> 00:35:36,123

so people can go and pre-orders
because obviously we know as authors,

870

00:35:36,148--> 00:35:38,228

pre-orders are
super helpful things.

871

00:35:38,252--> 00:35:39,748

So tell us the title again.

872

00:35:39,772--> 00:35:41,988

-Yes, it's The
Princess and The Thief.

873

00:35:42,012--> 00:35:45,508

And it is a duology
at the moment,

874

00:35:45,532--> 00:35:49,908

and the sort of the overarching
title is Dark Enchantments,

875

00:35:49,932--> 00:35:53,508

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but this particular book is called
The Princess and The Thief.

876

00:35:53,532--> 00:35:54,628

-Wonderful.

877

00:35:54,652--> 00:35:59,148

Okay, so yes, we have
run a little bit over time.

878

00:35:59,172--> 00:36:02,945

We have got one question
that got sent in advance,

879

00:36:02,969--> 00:36:05,228

and I hope that we can
get to some other questions

880

00:36:05,252--> 00:36:06,711

in the chat.

881

00:36:06,711--> 00:36:08,711

And it's a meaty question.

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882

00:36:08,711--> 00:36:09,711

-Okay.

883

00:36:09,711--> 00:36:11,788

-Um...

884

00:36:11,812--> 00:36:16,388

So, how have you found
navigating the publishing industry

885

00:36:16,412--> 00:36:18,711

as a disabled author?

886

00:36:18,711--> 00:36:20,988

And what more do
you think can be done

887

00:36:21,012--> 00:36:24,228

to make the industry more
accessible and inclusive?

888

00:36:24,252--> 00:36:26,711

So just a little

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question, you know.

889

00:36:26,711--> 00:36:28,438

-Just a little throwaway.

What do you think?

890

00:36:28,462--> 00:36:29,653

-A little throwaway.

891

00:36:29,677--> 00:36:34,348

-So I think I've been
extraordinarily lucky

892

00:36:34,372--> 00:36:37,468

as a disabled author,

893

00:36:37,492--> 00:36:41,028

because I came to it
already with a profile.

894

00:36:41,052--> 00:36:44,868

So I already had a profile
as a children's presenter.

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895

00:36:44,892--> 00:36:47,711

Yes, a disabled

children's presenter, but...

896

00:36:47,711--> 00:36:48,868

Um...

897

00:36:48,892--> 00:36:52,108

by the time I started writing,

which was 2 or 3 years in,

898

00:36:52,132--> 00:36:54,788

I was just Cerrie from CBeebies.

899

00:36:54,812--> 00:36:57,708

And yes, everyone knows

I've got one hand, but that...

900

00:36:57,732--> 00:36:59,628

They were more

interested in, like,

901

00:36:59,652--> 00:37:00,788

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do you know Igglepiggle?

902

00:37:00,812--> 00:37:04,328

Do you know what I mean?

That had just become part of...

903

00:37:04,353--> 00:37:06,600

You know, it was like having
blonde hair or something.

904

00:37:06,625--> 00:37:09,628

It just, it just became thrown
in with the mix of who I am.

905

00:37:09,652--> 00:37:10,711

Um...

906

00:37:10,711--> 00:37:12,668

And also because...

907

00:37:12,692--> 00:37:14,988

Well, apart from being dyslexic,

908

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00:37:15,012--> 00:37:18,108

I don't really have
any access needs.

909

00:37:18,132--> 00:37:20,268

So I wasn't having to

910

00:37:20,292--> 00:37:22,428

ask for things up front

911

00:37:22,452--> 00:37:24,748

that were out of the
ordinary, which I know

912

00:37:24,772--> 00:37:26,308

other authors,

913

00:37:26,332--> 00:37:30,108

you know, have to do, not just
in publishing, but in their lives.

914

00:37:30,132--> 00:37:31,308

Um...

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915

00:37:31,332--> 00:37:34,108

So I think I had
quite an easy way in,

916

00:37:34,132--> 00:37:35,628

if I'm being honest with you.

917

00:37:35,652--> 00:37:36,652

Um...

918

00:37:36,676--> 00:37:38,748

The stats of

919

00:37:38,772--> 00:37:42,268

disabled authors, I
think only 4% of authors

920

00:37:42,292--> 00:37:43,668

have a disability.

921

00:37:43,692--> 00:37:45,988

It is possibly more because,

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922

00:37:46,012--> 00:37:48,388

especially with you
know neurodiversity,

923

00:37:48,412--> 00:37:50,668

people are being
diagnosed later on in life.

924

00:37:50,692--> 00:37:52,588

So I would imagine,

925

00:37:52,612--> 00:37:56,628

being that it's a creative sector, that
it is probably higher than that. But...

926

00:37:56,652--> 00:37:58,711

in terms of, you know, known

927

00:37:58,711--> 00:38:01,788

authors with disabilities

928

00:38:01,812--> 00:38:04,228

that they are proud to share,

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929

00:38:04,252--> 00:38:06,356

it's only at 4%.

930

00:38:06,381--> 00:38:07,628

Um...

931

00:38:07,652--> 00:38:12,188

I think the industry
has changed so vastly

932

00:38:12,212--> 00:38:14,428

from when I first
became an author. So,

933

00:38:14,452--> 00:38:17,508

you know, in that time we've
had night self-publishing,

934

00:38:17,532--> 00:38:19,324

we've had Storymix,

935

00:38:19,349--> 00:38:20,349

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um...

936

00:38:20,373--> 00:38:23,686

who, you know,
are really putting...

937

00:38:24,866--> 00:38:29,711

authors from different
backgrounds on the map really in...

938

00:38:29,711--> 00:38:31,068

Right across the board.

939

00:38:31,092--> 00:38:35,308

So, you know, whether you're
talking about heritage or...

940

00:38:35,332--> 00:38:37,708

race, culture, faith,

941

00:38:37,732--> 00:38:41,348

sexuality, gender, class.

942

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00:38:41,372--> 00:38:46,028

You know, all of it has expanded.

Disability, you know, so...

943

00:38:46,052--> 00:38:48,788

wildly since I started.

944

00:38:48,812--> 00:38:50,748

And I was part of that movement,

945

00:38:50,772--> 00:38:53,868

but I very specifically,

with my first book,

946

00:38:53,892--> 00:38:57,668

didn't want to have a

disabled protagonist.

947

00:38:57,692--> 00:39:01,089

Not because I didn't

want to tell that story, but

948

00:39:01,113--> 00:39:05,428

because I just felt like

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I had to bide my time.

949

00:39:05,452--> 00:39:09,068

And I didn't want to then
get put into the box of

950

00:39:09,092--> 00:39:11,708

"she writes books
about disabled people".

951

00:39:11,732--> 00:39:16,228

You know, because storytelling
is so much vaster than that and I...

952

00:39:16,252--> 00:39:17,828

You... [sighs]

953

00:39:17,852--> 00:39:20,828

You don't want to get, um...

954

00:39:20,852--> 00:39:23,508

typecast, I suppose, for being

955

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00:39:23,532--> 00:39:25,308

an author who
only does one thing

956

00:39:25,332--> 00:39:27,388

or a performer who
only does one thing.

957

00:39:27,412--> 00:39:30,228

So I wanted to include everyone.

958

00:39:30,252--> 00:39:31,748

I write inclusively.

959

00:39:31,772--> 00:39:34,038

You know, I'm a solo parent.

960

00:39:34,062--> 00:39:36,188

Well, I'm a solo parent family.

961

00:39:36,212--> 00:39:38,228

I have a now teenage daughter

962

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00:39:38,252--> 00:39:39,588

who is dual heritage,

963

00:39:39,612--> 00:39:41,868

so I wanted to

include all of that in...

964

00:39:41,892--> 00:39:44,548

in everything

that I write, really.

965

00:39:44,572--> 00:39:47,388

We live in London, you know,

it's an incredibly diverse city.

966

00:39:47,412--> 00:39:49,438

We have lived in

other places that,

967

00:39:49,462--> 00:39:53,038

you know, were also... You know,

Manchester, Brighton, also very diverse.

968

00:39:53,063--> 00:39:55,148

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Not so much Brighton, but...

969

00:39:55,172--> 00:39:58,428

You know, I just wanted to

970

00:39:58,452--> 00:40:00,711

recreate

971

00:40:00,711--> 00:40:03,828

the world that I'm inhabiting
on the page, which...

972

00:40:03,852--> 00:40:06,668

which just wasn't happening
when I first started writing.

973

00:40:06,692--> 00:40:09,832

So, it was very
important to me to have,

974

00:40:09,857--> 00:40:14,668

you know mixed race or brown
characters in... in my picture books.

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975

00:40:14,692--> 00:40:16,508

To have grandparents there,

976

00:40:16,532--> 00:40:18,108

because my parents have been so

977

00:40:18,132--> 00:40:20,708

helpful in raising my child.

978

00:40:20,732--> 00:40:21,732

Um...

979

00:40:21,756--> 00:40:24,341

You know, one of

my books talks about

980

00:40:24,366--> 00:40:28,508

the difficulty of, you know, not

being able to afford the school uniform,

981

00:40:28,532--> 00:40:31,228

do you know what I mean?

Just very subtly leaning into

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982

00:40:31,252--> 00:40:33,828

some of those very
real and present issues.

983

00:40:33,852--> 00:40:36,148

And I think now,

984

00:40:36,172--> 00:40:40,711

you know, we have
authors like Elle McNicoll.

985

00:40:40,711--> 00:40:42,868

I mean, there's
too many to go into.

986

00:40:42,892--> 00:40:45,908

But, you know, there are so
many authors who have come

987

00:40:45,932--> 00:40:48,228

through and changed

988

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00:40:48,252--> 00:40:50,468

the trajectory of what...

989

00:40:50,492--> 00:40:52,188

of who an author is

990

00:40:52,212--> 00:40:54,548

and who they're writing
for and what the market is.

991

00:40:54,572--> 00:40:56,228

And that is...

992

00:40:56,252--> 00:41:00,948

is... is so entirely
different to when I started.

993

00:41:00,972--> 00:41:02,588

But, of course, you
can still do more.

994

00:41:02,612--> 00:41:05,188

And there's, you know
there is... there are always,

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995

00:41:05,212--> 00:41:06,428

um...

996

00:41:06,452--> 00:41:08,188

better and more

997

00:41:08,212--> 00:41:12,163

inclusive and more

authentic stories to tell. I think...

998

00:41:12,188--> 00:41:14,686

sometimes I get

999

00:41:14,711--> 00:41:18,028

sort of irked when I feel like

1000

00:41:18,052--> 00:41:20,948

a publisher is looking

for a very specific pitch

1001

00:41:20,972--> 00:41:23,388

and they want a disabled author

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1002

00:41:23,412--> 00:41:24,948

writing a character

1003

00:41:24,972--> 00:41:28,058

who's lived experience

completely mirrors their own.

1004

00:41:28,082--> 00:41:30,138

And I understand why

1005

00:41:30,162--> 00:41:33,148

and I know that that's valid and I

know that there is a space for that.

1006

00:41:33,172--> 00:41:36,351

But that can be quite

limiting for the author.

1007

00:41:36,375--> 00:41:37,711

-100%, yeah.

1008

00:41:37,711--> 00:41:40,308

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-If it's not the story that
they organically want to tell.

1009

00:41:40,332--> 00:41:41,711

Um...

1010

00:41:41,711--> 00:41:44,668

-And sometimes I
wonder if writers

1011

00:41:44,692--> 00:41:46,148

from

1012

00:41:46,172--> 00:41:48,498

a marginalized or
minoritized backgrounds

1013

00:41:48,522--> 00:41:50,463

might almost have
to play the game...

1014

00:41:50,488--> 00:41:51,711

-To get through the door.

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1015

00:41:51,711--> 00:41:53,028

-To get through the door

1016

00:41:53,052--> 00:41:55,828

and then hopefully you can
write what the hell you want.

1017

00:41:55,852--> 00:41:57,588

But I do...

1018

00:41:57,612--> 00:42:01,788

As much as it saddens me to
say, the reality does feel like...

1019

00:42:01,812--> 00:42:03,788

So it's actually quite unusual

1020

00:42:03,812--> 00:42:05,868

that that isn't what
happened to you

1021

00:42:05,892--> 00:42:07,588

with your first book,

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but like you said,

1022

00:42:07,612--> 00:42:09,708

it might be that

CBeebies platform

1023

00:42:09,732--> 00:42:11,236

meant that

1024

00:42:11,261--> 00:42:15,711

it didn't happen for you in that
way, but I think it does for most

1025

00:42:15,711--> 00:42:17,668

writers in a way.

1026

00:42:17,692--> 00:42:20,188

-Yeah, and I...

I think it's great,

1027

00:42:20,212--> 00:42:21,548

you know, the flip side of that.

1028

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00:42:21,572--> 00:42:24,068

I think it's amazing that
publishers are seeking out

1029

00:42:24,092--> 00:42:25,948

stories with
disabled protagonists.

1030

00:42:25,972--> 00:42:28,308

You know, that was unheard
of when I was growing up.

1031

00:42:28,332--> 00:42:29,332

So...

1032

00:42:29,356--> 00:42:32,268

You know, that's
really heartening.

1033

00:42:32,292--> 00:42:33,348

But...

1034

00:42:33,372--> 00:42:35,911

-We're not just one thing, though,

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are we? We're just not one...

1035

00:42:35,936--> 00:42:39,068

-No, and there's a

crudeness to it sometimes,

1036

00:42:39,092--> 00:42:42,264

which, you know,

it's like when I see...

1037

00:42:42,289--> 00:42:44,988

I mean, this nearly happened

to one of my books, actually.

1038

00:42:45,012--> 00:42:48,148

I'd written a story where

there were four kids

1039

00:42:48,172--> 00:42:50,748

and I had really specifically

1040

00:42:50,772--> 00:42:53,868

described two of them as being,

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1041

00:42:53,892--> 00:42:55,348

you know, brown and black,

1042

00:42:55,372--> 00:42:57,711

and two of them as being white.

1043

00:42:57,711--> 00:43:00,711

And the illustrator,

1044

00:43:00,711--> 00:43:03,711

at the publisher's suggestion,

1045

00:43:03,711--> 00:43:06,465

drew them, A, kind

of all looking the same

1046

00:43:06,489--> 00:43:09,068

and all of them black, and

I was kind of like, oh, that...

1047

00:43:09,092--> 00:43:10,838

That's fine.

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1048

00:43:10,862--> 00:43:12,628

Like, I'm not
saying I don't want

1049

00:43:12,652--> 00:43:16,391

there to be stories about a
group of black children, but I...

1050

00:43:16,416--> 00:43:20,428

didn't write that and I'm not
the best person to write that

1051

00:43:20,452--> 00:43:22,711

because I'm not going
to get the nuances right.

1052

00:43:22,711--> 00:43:23,711

-Yeah, yeah.

1053

00:43:23,711--> 00:43:25,711

-And I think there is...

1054

00:43:25,711--> 00:43:30,268

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Subtlety and nuance
are so important

1055

00:43:30,292--> 00:43:34,228

and so, you know, they make
a story so vivid and so enriching

1056

00:43:34,252--> 00:43:35,548

when a child

1057

00:43:35,572--> 00:43:38,508

recognizes a tiny
detail that is so specific

1058

00:43:38,532--> 00:43:39,938

and relevant to their life.

1059

00:43:39,963--> 00:43:41,711

-Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

1060

00:43:41,711--> 00:43:42,711

-And...

1061

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00:43:42,711--> 00:43:45,711

So yeah, I...

1062

00:43:45,711--> 00:43:48,708

That there is so much
more that can still be done.

1063

00:43:48,732--> 00:43:51,268

You know, we can have...

1064

00:43:52,132--> 00:43:53,390

[sighs]

1065

00:43:53,415--> 00:43:55,868

A more inclusive outlook

1066

00:43:55,892--> 00:44:00,428

and... and give authors more freedom
to tell the stories that they want to tell.

1067

00:44:00,452--> 00:44:02,651

And then, I think, you know,

1068

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00:44:02,675--> 00:44:03,675

the publi-- industry...

1069

00:44:03,699--> 00:44:06,403

publishing industry has to be

1070

00:44:06,428--> 00:44:09,068

sort of ready for things to go
wrong as well, because things...

1071

00:44:09,092--> 00:44:11,068

when you are working
with a new group of people,

1072

00:44:11,092--> 00:44:12,852

you know, the expectations
might be different

1073

00:44:12,876--> 00:44:17,028

or the the level of understanding
of what's required might be different.

1074

00:44:17,052--> 00:44:18,348

And so there has to be a...

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1075

00:44:18,372--> 00:44:19,908

a learning period

1076

00:44:19,932--> 00:44:21,548

for everyone, I think.

1077

00:44:21,572--> 00:44:22,711

-Mmm...

1078

00:44:22,711--> 00:44:25,350

-Did...? I hope I've

answered that question.

1079

00:44:25,375--> 00:44:28,388

-You've answered

that question brilliantly.

1080

00:44:28,412--> 00:44:30,468

I mean, the

reality is it's not...

1081

00:44:30,492--> 00:44:32,548

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There's no simple answers here.

1082

00:44:32,572--> 00:44:35,108

So, even in the answer
that you just gave,

1083

00:44:35,132--> 00:44:38,188

we kind of want people
from backgrounds

1084

00:44:38,212--> 00:44:39,348

who...

1085

00:44:39,372--> 00:44:42,748

they might not share the same backgrounds
as the characters that we're writing.

1086

00:44:42,772--> 00:44:44,468

You kind of do
want them to do that.

1087

00:44:44,492--> 00:44:47,733

But it's also, if you are going to do
that, please do it well, for God's sake.

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1088

00:44:47,758--> 00:44:49,999

[cross-chat]

1089

00:44:50,023--> 00:44:53,313

So it's... because I often get
people in my inbox saying,

1090

00:44:53,337--> 00:44:55,748

I really want to write a
black or brown character.

1091

00:44:55,772--> 00:44:57,371

Is that allowed, right?

1092

00:44:57,395--> 00:44:59,308

And I'm kind of like,
you know, I've never...

1093

00:44:59,332--> 00:45:01,508

I've never met a
dragon in real life.

1094

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00:45:01,532--> 00:45:03,708

I've written characters
from a dragon's point of view.

1095

00:45:03,732--> 00:45:06,588

Like, of course it is, of course
it's okay, you're a creative.

1096

00:45:07,445--> 00:45:08,508

But,

1097

00:45:08,532--> 00:45:12,388

you know, interrogate and think
about why you're making those choices.

1098

00:45:12,412--> 00:45:15,628

Do your research
and talk to real people

1099

00:45:15,652--> 00:45:17,308

with those lived experiences,

1100

00:45:17,332--> 00:45:19,548

like just actually listening

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to a couple of podcasts

1101

00:45:19,572--> 00:45:21,748

and a YouTube

video isn't enough.

1102

00:45:21,772--> 00:45:23,511

So, it's like, if

you're going to do it,

1103

00:45:23,535--> 00:45:25,263

it is extra work.

1104

00:45:25,288--> 00:45:27,388

And it needs to be,

1105

00:45:27,412--> 00:45:28,711

you know?

1106

00:45:28,711--> 00:45:30,711

-Yeah, and also sometimes...

1107

00:45:30,711--> 00:45:34,276

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you're not the person to do
it, and that's... that's also fine.

1108

00:45:34,300--> 00:45:37,711

Like, I... yes, I often
get asked to read...

1109

00:45:37,711--> 00:45:40,525

People are like, can
you read a page of a book

1110

00:45:40,549--> 00:45:42,858

because we've got we've
got a character with one hand.

1111

00:45:42,882--> 00:45:45,188

Like we're so excited
and I'm like, aha,

1112

00:45:45,212--> 00:45:47,148

okay, I'm not going to read...

1113

00:45:47,172--> 00:45:49,148

I would never

just read the page.

1114

00:45:49,172--> 00:45:50,885

I'd need the whole
book because...

1115

00:45:50,910--> 00:45:52,708

-Pay me to read the
whole thing, love.

1116

00:45:52,732--> 00:45:55,788

-Yeah, there'll be things
you've missed, like...

1117

00:45:55,812--> 00:45:57,868

all the kids are
putting their shoes on

1118

00:45:57,892--> 00:45:59,188

and, you know, or...

1119

00:45:59,212--> 00:46:02,228

you know the shoelaces
are more tricky to tie or

1120

00:46:02,252--> 00:46:04,908

the climbing, do you know
what I mean? There'll be

1121

00:46:04,932--> 00:46:06,711

things that you

1122

00:46:06,711--> 00:46:11,068

don't even realize. It's not
just a one page description.

1123

00:46:11,092--> 00:46:12,228

Um...

1124

00:46:12,252--> 00:46:13,252

-Hmm.

1125

00:46:13,276--> 00:46:14,668

-So, but then, you know,

1126

00:46:14,692--> 00:46:16,748

I don't want to be too

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pedantic about it either.

1127

00:46:16,772--> 00:46:20,708

You know, we want representation
and we want storytelling and we want

1128

00:46:20,732--> 00:46:25,711

children to find themselves
represented by the power and beauty of...

1129

00:46:25,711--> 00:46:27,668

of great stories, so that's...

1130

00:46:28,349--> 00:46:32,028

-Because I think it's interesting,
that sort of conversation around

1131

00:46:32,052--> 00:46:34,988

writing black and
brown characters.

1132

00:46:35,012--> 00:46:37,868

I think part of the reason
that number went down,

1133

00:46:37,892--> 00:46:39,948

and it went down
quite significantly

1134

00:46:39,972--> 00:46:41,388

a couple of years ago,

1135

00:46:41,412--> 00:46:43,348

wasn't just

1136

00:46:43,372--> 00:46:46,148

that maybe black and brown
authors weren't getting the same

1137

00:46:46,172--> 00:46:48,468

number of commissions,

1138

00:46:48,492--> 00:46:51,108

but I think actually
a lot of white authors

1139

00:46:51,132--> 00:46:53,562

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were worried about writing
black and brown characters

1140

00:46:53,587--> 00:46:55,730

because there'd kind of
been a backlash around that.

1141

00:46:55,755--> 00:46:57,388

So it was like a double whammy.

1142

00:46:57,412--> 00:47:00,268

And so all of a sudden the
numbers of main characters

1143

00:47:00,292--> 00:47:02,711

from these different
backgrounds just reduced

1144

00:47:02,711--> 00:47:03,788

radically. So,

1145

00:47:03,812--> 00:47:06,330

you know, we've
got to allow space

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1146

00:47:06,354--> 00:47:09,388

for writer to be a
writer, but just do it...

1147

00:47:09,412--> 00:47:10,548

properly.

1148

00:47:10,572--> 00:47:11,828

Um...

1149

00:47:12,711--> 00:47:13,711

We've gone over

1150

00:47:13,711--> 00:47:14,711

-I know.

1151

00:47:14,711--> 00:47:16,711

-So we, literally...

1152

00:47:16,711--> 00:47:19,068

I'm really sorry if you
put a question in the chat.

1153

00:47:19,092--> 00:47:21,068

I hope that in the
conversation, we did

1154

00:47:21,092--> 00:47:23,548

manage to touch on
some of the things.

1155

00:47:23,572--> 00:47:24,902

-Well, I think we
can do one more.

1156

00:47:24,926--> 00:47:25,948

I think there was a...

1157

00:47:25,972--> 00:47:27,711

Should we just
quickly do one more?

1158

00:47:27,711--> 00:47:29,428

-Okay, okay.

1159

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00:47:30,941--> 00:47:33,828

-So I can see one here from

1160

00:47:33,852--> 00:47:35,711

Dave Sinclair.

1161

00:47:35,711--> 00:47:38,246

"Adult books deal
with adult themes.

1162

00:47:38,270--> 00:47:40,828

Naturally, much of which
reflects the unpleasantness

1163

00:47:40,852--> 00:47:43,068

of the real world.

Trainspotting.

1164

00:47:43,092--> 00:47:46,170

Themes, genres which are not appropriate
for children, but good fiction."

1165

00:47:46,195--> 00:47:47,468

Why am I reading out loud?

1166

00:47:47,492--> 00:47:50,052

Like, I'm about to feel like I
should be reading it for everyone.

1167

00:47:50,076--> 00:47:51,228

Um...

1168

00:47:51,252--> 00:47:52,812

"Do we owe...

1169

00:47:52,837--> 00:47:54,861

it to children
readers to represent

1170

00:47:54,885--> 00:47:57,628

in some ways the full range of
goodness and badness in the world?"

1171

00:47:58,314--> 00:47:59,908

I feel like that's yes,

1172

00:47:59,932--> 00:48:01,711

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but go on, what do
you think, Cerrie?

1173

00:48:01,711--> 00:48:04,068

-So let me... let me
understand the question.

1174

00:48:04,092--> 00:48:06,188

So do we owe it to children to

1175

00:48:06,212--> 00:48:09,628

represent the full scale of
bad things and good things?

1176

00:48:09,652--> 00:48:11,108

Um...

1177

00:48:11,132--> 00:48:14,028

I think probably there
are books that do

1178

00:48:14,052--> 00:48:17,711

is the answer to
that, but I also think

1179

00:48:17,711--> 00:48:21,711

you need to have
a spoonful of hope.

1180

00:48:21,711--> 00:48:22,711

-Mmm...

1181

00:48:22,711--> 00:48:25,711

-In a children's book. So...

1182

00:48:25,711--> 00:48:28,748

You know, if you if
you've got a story where,

1183

00:48:28,772--> 00:48:32,451

for instance, a child, you know,
one of the child protagonists dies

1184

00:48:32,475--> 00:48:34,711

or they don't

1185

00:48:34,711--> 00:48:38,338

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find the parent

dog, whatever the...

1186

00:48:38,362--> 00:48:40,990

the thing they're looking

for that that doesn't happen

1187

00:48:41,015--> 00:48:44,990

then I think you need to...

there needs to be enough,

1188

00:48:45,015--> 00:48:46,588

um...

1189

00:48:46,612--> 00:48:50,711

buffering around

that to not make it feel

1190

00:48:50,711--> 00:48:52,548

deeply traumatic.

1191

00:48:52,572--> 00:48:55,665

So, you know, like, I don't know,

How to Train Your Dragon or something.

1192

00:48:55,689--> 00:48:58,196

There's deaths
in that, you know.

1193

00:48:58,221--> 00:49:00,548

One of the children
ends up losing a leg.

1194

00:49:00,572--> 00:49:03,388

You know, a lot goes
on in those books.

1195

00:49:03,412--> 00:49:05,711

But there's...

1196

00:49:05,711--> 00:49:09,870

There's a hopefulness
that comes through which

1197

00:49:09,895--> 00:49:15,308

is very human and is very
reassuring, and I think that is the magic

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1198

00:49:15,332--> 00:49:17,188

of what children's books are.

1199

00:49:17,212--> 00:49:19,108

They can reflect things
that are very dark,

1200

00:49:19,132--> 00:49:20,711

but they can also

1201

00:49:20,711--> 00:49:22,988

show you that you're
not alone in those...

1202

00:49:23,012--> 00:49:24,988

in those difficult moments.

1203

00:49:25,012--> 00:49:27,118

-Now, saying that
we need to wrap up.

1204

00:49:27,142--> 00:49:29,188

I just want to ask you

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a really quick question,

1205

00:49:29,212--> 00:49:30,748

which is when...

1206

00:49:30,772--> 00:49:34,711

do you ever feel this pressure
when you're writing characters who...

1207

00:49:34,711--> 00:49:37,628

Your book might be
the only book out there

1208

00:49:37,652--> 00:49:40,468

that has a character with
a limb difference, right?

1209

00:49:40,492--> 00:49:42,788

Or I might be writing a book

1210

00:49:42,812--> 00:49:44,711

and it's the only
character where it might be

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1211

00:49:44,735--> 00:49:46,548

a black character
in a certain situation.

1212

00:49:46,572--> 00:49:49,645

Do you ever feel like
this weight or pressure...

1213

00:49:49,669--> 00:49:51,385

where, actually,

1214

00:49:51,410--> 00:49:53,268

they can't be flawed?

1215

00:49:53,292--> 00:49:55,188

Like, they need to be,

1216

00:49:55,212--> 00:49:57,788

because there's so
little representation,

1217

00:49:57,812--> 00:50:00,711

are you going to write

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them as a complete...

1218

00:50:00,711--> 00:50:02,828

you know, snot bag?

1219

00:50:02,852--> 00:50:04,148

-Um...

1220

00:50:04,172--> 00:50:06,308

-Technical term,

snot bag, by the way.

1221

00:50:06,332--> 00:50:07,908

Yeah, yeah...

1222

00:50:09,214--> 00:50:11,268

-I don't think so.

1223

00:50:11,292--> 00:50:13,268

I don't think I

feel that pressure.

1224

00:50:13,292--> 00:50:15,711

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No, I think...

1225

00:50:15,711--> 00:50:18,091

And in fact, in The
Princess and The Thief,

1226

00:50:18,115--> 00:50:20,711

because there are
two protagonists,

1227

00:50:20,711--> 00:50:22,551

they both make mistakes.

1228

00:50:22,575--> 00:50:27,711

But one of them makes, you
know, more mistakes and they both

1229

00:50:27,711--> 00:50:29,308

take risks.

1230

00:50:29,332--> 00:50:30,668

Um...

1231

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00:50:30,692--> 00:50:33,828

But yeah, I'm very... Because

I love fairy tales so much,

1232

00:50:33,852--> 00:50:35,205

I think within fairy tales

1233

00:50:35,229--> 00:50:37,428

people make horrendous

mistakes that you...

1234

00:50:37,452--> 00:50:39,508

or decisions, not even mistakes,

1235

00:50:39,532--> 00:50:41,068

they make really dark

1236

00:50:41,092--> 00:50:42,388

decisions.

1237

00:50:42,412--> 00:50:43,412

Um...

1238

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00:50:43,436--> 00:50:46,108

-And that is also the engine
of story, to be honest.

1239

00:50:46,132--> 00:50:48,188

There are characters
making mistakes, but

1240

00:50:48,212--> 00:50:49,943

it's something I tussle with.

1241

00:50:49,968--> 00:50:51,578

You know, even when
it comes to parents.

1242

00:50:51,602--> 00:50:54,548

Like, if you're going to have
parents in the story, or carers,

1243

00:50:54,572--> 00:50:56,372

and they're not very
nice, and I'm like, well,

1244

00:50:56,396--> 00:50:58,316

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this might be the one of
only two representations

1245

00:50:58,340--> 00:51:00,348

of a Black father in
children's books, you know?

1246

00:51:00,372--> 00:51:02,428

Like, I definitely do feel

1247

00:51:02,453--> 00:51:04,388

that pressure
and responsibility.

1248

00:51:04,412--> 00:51:06,948

-And it's good. I think it's
really important to be aware.

1249

00:51:06,972--> 00:51:09,711

It's definitely important
to be aware and...

1250

00:51:09,711--> 00:51:13,711

Yeah, maybe that

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changes with time or...

1251

00:51:13,711--> 00:51:15,188

Or perhaps

1252

00:51:15,212--> 00:51:17,628

we need to still

build up and have a

1253

00:51:17,652--> 00:51:21,971

library of stories, whether it...

whether it's positive representation

1254

00:51:21,996--> 00:51:24,711

before we can bring in...

-Have that breadth, yeah.

1255

00:51:24,735--> 00:51:26,306

-Okay, thank you so much.

1256

00:51:26,331--> 00:51:28,818

-I'm glad we took that question,

I'm glad we did that question.

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1257

00:51:28,842--> 00:51:29,842

Thank you.

1258

00:51:29,866--> 00:51:31,711

Um...

1259

00:51:31,711--> 00:51:34,711

I just need to do my outro.

1260

00:51:34,711--> 00:51:35,711

-Okay, take it away.

1261

00:51:35,711--> 00:51:38,065

-Thank you, Cerrie.

1262

00:51:38,089--> 00:51:39,148

That's my outro.

1263

00:51:39,172--> 00:51:42,443

And thank you,

Rose, for moderating.

1264

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00:51:42,468--> 00:51:43,468

-Thank you, Rose.

1265

00:51:43,492--> 00:51:45,278

-If you've enjoyed
this event, brilliant.

1266

00:51:45,302--> 00:51:46,750

If you haven't,
don't tell anyone.

1267

00:51:46,775--> 00:51:47,778

Okay?

1268

00:51:47,803--> 00:51:50,211

No, if you've enjoyed this
event and aren't yet a member,

1269

00:51:50,235--> 00:51:51,548

please consider joining

1270

00:51:51,572--> 00:51:55,711

with our special Society of Authors
at Home offer (SOAATHOME20)

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1271

00:51:55,711--> 00:51:58,268

and get 20% off the
first year of membership.

1272

00:51:58,292--> 00:52:01,228

So the code has been
dropped in the chat for you.

1273

00:52:01,252--> 00:52:02,428

And the link.

1274

00:52:02,452--> 00:52:04,948

20% off not to be sniffed at.

1275

00:52:04,972--> 00:52:07,228

The next Society of
Authors at Home event

1276

00:52:07,252--> 00:52:08,925

takes place tomorrow with a

1277

00:52:08,949--> 00:52:13,308

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Feel Good Friday- Mindfulness for
those with busy minds or busy lives.

1278

00:52:13,332--> 00:52:14,468

I think that's us, Cerrie.

1279

00:52:14,492--> 00:52:16,293

-That sounds amazing!

-Maybe we need to...

1280

00:52:16,318--> 00:52:18,628

We might need to...

We might need to

1281

00:52:18,652--> 00:52:21,388

visit that link, is

also in the chat.

1282

00:52:21,412--> 00:52:22,708

Um...

1283

00:52:22,732--> 00:52:25,948

All of these Society of Author

at Home events are free,

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1284

00:52:25,972--> 00:52:27,308

but if you can afford it,

1285

00:52:27,332--> 00:52:29,428

please do think about donating

1286

00:52:29,452--> 00:52:31,711

for the Society of

Authors Access Fund.

1287

00:52:31,711--> 00:52:34,308

The link again will be shared.

1288

00:52:34,332--> 00:52:38,348

Another big thank

you to you, Cerrie,

1289

00:52:38,372--> 00:52:40,711

and for everyone who joined us

1290

00:52:40,711--> 00:52:41,958

for today's event.

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1291

00:52:41,982--> 00:52:44,388

I hope you've enjoyed
it, I've really enjoyed...

1292

00:52:44,412--> 00:52:47,711

Well, I knew you already, but
getting to know you a bit more.

1293

00:52:47,711--> 00:52:49,948

-Thank you so much.

-Yeah, no, thank you so much.

1294

00:52:49,972--> 00:52:51,348

And, um...

1295

00:52:51,372--> 00:52:53,788

Yes, if anyone's going
to be at the summer party,

1296

00:52:53,812--> 00:52:55,711

then I should see you there.

1297

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00:52:55,711--> 00:52:57,711

-I look forward to your keynote.

1298

00:52:57,711--> 00:52:59,268

-Yes, oh gosh, yes.

1299

00:52:59,292--> 00:53:01,190

Speaking of pressure, yes.

1300

00:53:01,214--> 00:53:02,308

[laughter]

1301

00:53:02,332--> 00:53:04,711

-It'll be fabulous. Fabulous.

1302

00:53:04,711--> 00:53:06,711

-Oh, okay, thank you

so much, everyone.

1303

00:53:06,711--> 00:53:09,314

-Bye, everyone, take care.