



An Interview with Yushra Fatima

Q1. What are your earliest memories of books and reading? For example, did you have a favourite or inspirational book?

When I was a baby, I had some of those fabric books as well as hard books with a few simple words on each side, such as apple, ball and cat. I am lucky enough to have parents who always took me and my brother to the library to get some books in the holidays. I also remember a teacher at school, Mrs Hodges who encouraged me to choose different kinds of books in nursery. One book I loved reading again and again was 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle. It very much set the tone of books and thus my love for literature was born. Fast forward almost 19 years on, I am looking for books that I used to read as a child.

Q2. What inspired you to become an author / illustrator?

I can't exactly recall what inspired me to start writing, but it definitely had something to do with my overactive imagination! When babysitting, I was told by parents that I had a knack for bringing things to life and making their children listen in awe. Although I am more of a writer, I have illustrated basic ideas for a children's picture-book that I have in mind.

Q3. For you, what makes a successful book or illustration?

The time, love and effort the author puts into their work. Also having the power to project the story into a reader's mind helps make a book successful. Take JK Rowling, for example; via her writing, she is able to take the reader and transport them into a whole new world, making them yearn for it when the book finishes.

Q4. Do you have a specific audience in mind when you write your books / plan your illustrations?

In all honesty, no, not really. Though I am currently working on a thriller aimed at young adults as well as older people, I have written a couple of short stories aimed at a wide range of audiences, specifically teenagers.

Q5. What future do you think the physical book has? For example, do you think the electronic book will replace the physical book?

For as long as I am around, electronics such as Kindle cannot replace books! On a serious note, the smell and the feel of a physical book is just indescribable, especially when you have just picked it up and bought it.

Q6. Are you a book collector? Is there a special book you'd love to own?

I am a huge book collector, owning a large bookcase with hundreds of books all ranging from paperbacks to the clothbound hardbacks from the Puffin Classics edition. I hope to add to my bookcase and perhaps have a home library when I finally move out from my parent's house. However, I seem to pick up my Harry Potter books more times than the other books. I guess that goes to show just how brilliant JK Rowling is. I would love to open a bookstore sometime in the future, filled with tea, scents of beautiful books and silence.