



Catherine Wilkins

When did you decide that you wanted to become an author?

I've wanted to be an author since I was ten. Before that I wanted to be a mermaid, and before that I wanted to be a cat. When I was four I crawled around and told my family to address me as 'fluffy'. But my Dad put a stop to it. He said, 'if you want to be a cat you will have to eat cat food.' So I stopped being a cat round about dinner time.



Did you read lots as a child - if you did, where did you mainly read? If you didn't, what was the reason?

I did read quite a lot as a child, but I was also easily bored. So when I was younger I would only read the most exciting books - which to me at the time was Roald Dahl. By the time I was twelve though, books had become a fantastic transportation to so many different lands, and I used my library card all through my teens, checking out several books at a time.

What was your favourite book as a child and why?

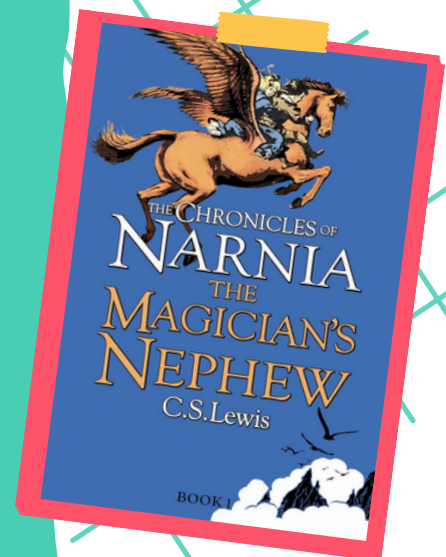
As a tiny child it was either The Twits or Catwitch, but as I got older, I got much more into mysteries and then horror. I remember loving The Magician's Nephew by CS Lewis, and thinking it was better than The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe.

How does it feel to see your books in shops and being sold?

I love seeing my books in shops and libraries. It makes me feel like I'm part of something special.

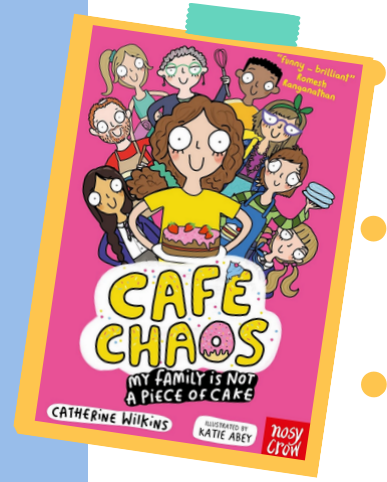
What is the best part about being an author?

I love jokes and stories. I love coming up with something new and having that feeling that it's going to be good. I like the beginning bits where everything is sparky and anything could happen. Also finishing.



What are the 'not so fun bits' in being an author?

The less fun bits are if you get stuck, or just can't figure out how to get from one bit to the next bit, and you start worrying that it's not working. Because writing books are long term projects, it's a bit like you've always got homework to finish.

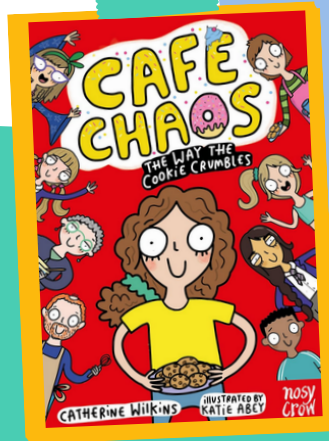


Why do you think it is important for children to read?

There are lots of reasons why children should read but only one of them matters - it has to be fun! Sure, children learn empathy, imagination, what it's like to be other people with different experiences, and even brilliant facts - but it has to be fun. Find the books that match what you like and you won't be able to put them down.

What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

The inspirations for my books comes from lots of different areas. I especially like writing about zany families that are dysfunctional but love each other. There's lots of ways to be funny when people are arguing and accusing each other of crazy things. So I guess a bit my family.



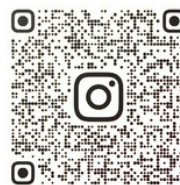
Who gives you feedback on your drafts and how do you act on the feedback?

Most recently it's just been editors that have been giving me feedback. This is great when you are lucky enough to have a great editor who has good suggestions that make your work better. It can fall apart if you have lots of different editors who all tell you different things. That can get very tricky.

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Finally, if you could read for an hour, on your own, anywhere in the world - where would it be?

Anywhere as long as it's comfy. I guess it would be nice to read outside under a tree, or inside but near a window, with a breeze.