

I Love Words. They're Pure Alchemy.

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Once upon a time there were no written words. Imagine that. Imagine how scary that would be? No words, none at all, on anything. No books, no song lyrics, no signs, no instructions, no letters, no emails, no Christmas cards. Think of your life and take out all the written words in it, what a different place it would be.

Our ability to communicate with one another fascinates me. We do it in so many different ways, through spoken words, music, a look, a touch, body language, some subtle, some not so subtle, but all so important to us as people. Even when we had no written language, we carved pictures on walls, we drew pictograms and we passed down our stories by word of mouth, from generation to generation, ensuring that these things survived and were not forgotten. Our need to communicate accelerated and we found new and better ways to preserve everything that is important to us. We captured things on film, took photographs, made music, and wrote it all down, lest we forget.

My love of the written word started early. My mum taught me to read before I went to school and I can't remember a time when I didn't have a book to hand. In fact, I usually have several or I get palpitations thinking I have nothing to read. The passage of my life has been punctuated by the books I've read, they are my entertainment, my freedom, my comfort, my inspiration, my guide, and I could never be without them.

Eighteen or so years ago I started to learn Braille so that I could transcribe books for the RNIB. It was just like learning a foreign language and I loved it, and the day I started work on my first book was one I'll never forget. It wasn't my cup of tea at all, a very dry history of aeronautics but to the blind person who had requested it, it meant the world.

As a writer too, words hold the most incredible magic for me. They have such power – on their own each is innocuous, but put them together and what thoughts you can conjure, what feelings, what emotions. I feel like a magician when I write, choosing which words and in which order, like a kid in a sweet shop let loose with the most amazing array of flavours.

Working as a finance manager I deal in numbers a large percentage of the time. I joke in my author bio that at night I like to practise putting words into sentences and playing with them, but in truth the essence of this only begins to describe the fun, the energy, and the all-encompassing need to get the right fit, to place the words down just as you wanted to and to see the thing you have created come to life. For me there is no other feeling like it.

The power of words can bring so much to so many; love, hope, inspiration, and comfort to name but a few, so read whatever it takes to find the thing that touches you. Don't worry about the genre, the style, the 'right' type of book; if it moves something within you then the writer can be proud of a job well done. I love words, they're pure alchemy.