



THE MIDNIGHT HOUR: A Q&A INTERVIEW

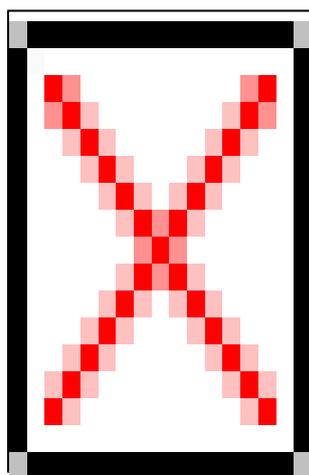
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Laura Trinder answers our questions on **The Midnight Hour**.



[The Midnight Hour](#) [3] is a brilliantly inventive and quirky fantasy adventure story with an outspoken, determined, brave and funny heroine who is full of attitude and self-confidence. Humour and magic combine throughout, with plenty of scares too, the pace never lets up and the dialogue is sparkling and witty.

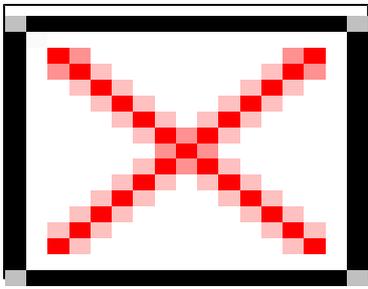
We put questions to **Laura Trinder**, one of its two authors, about the book and working on it with co-author **Benjamin Read**.

Magic, magical creatures, plentiful snacks and a hedgehog ? *The Midnight Hour* has them all. Where did the idea start?

Well, if we go way back, the idea started when Ben awoke in the dead of night, to the sound of some very peculiar post being delivered. Its spooky delightfulness lead to a sleepless night spent frantically scribbling ideas, which soon became the foundation of our first book collaboration. This was **Night Post**, a wordless comic about a postman who starts his shift at midnight, and delivers weird post to even weirder recipients. Ben wrote, I illustrated, and our ideas met in the middle to create a book which was an organic mix of us both. During its development, we could sense a wider world there, something beyond what we were choosing to show. **The Midnight Hour** is that world.

You and Ben created the book together ? how does that work? Can you describe the creative process?

Our process for this project is like nothing we've ever done before and it evolved over the course of the book. Our process for book two is different still. Usually Ben gets the ball rolling and sends that ball to me, I add my thoughts into the mix and bounce it back. To and fro we go, from plot to grammar and everything between. Eventually, we end up with something resembling a book. Looking back, it's hard to explain how it happened. We bopped our heads together and now there's a book where there wasn't one before.



What is the particular talent or gift that you most admire in your creative partner?

Ben is excellent at writing dialogue (and many other things, of course) but this particular talent shines through in all his work. I think this probably comes from his background in writing comics, where the dialogue so often forms the backbone of what the reader encounters from the written element of the page. Also, while never intentionally setting out to write a 'funny book?', his writing never fails to make me snort with laughter just at the right moments.

Your backgrounds are comics, films and illustration. What do you particularly enjoy about creating a novel for young readers?

Creating a children's novel, like creating anything at all, is a mixture of enjoyment and absolute torture. I'd say the most enjoyable part of all these things, is seeing your creation being enjoyed by others. This is what makes the torture worthwhile.

How did your work outside children's books affect *The Midnight Hour*?

The Midnight Hour feels like a natural result of all our outside work, especially as our combined backgrounds also include publishing and bookselling. I don't think we've knowingly drawn upon it, but everything rubs shoulders together quite nicely. Although we're very new to the world of children's novels, our other work doesn't truly feel 'outside?'. **The Midnight Hour** is more like an exciting new ingredient, thrown into our swirling, creative soup.

The Midnight Hour

is being developed as a film. Are you involved in that process? Can you tell us anything about it?

I can tell you about as much as a little hedgehog with a mouth full of stolen biscuits. Which, if you've ever met a biscuit-scoffing hog, is nothing at all.

If you had to choose a favourite scene in the book, which would it be and why?

I've never been able to pick a favourite anything. Music, films, food; there are too many wonderful things! Or possibly I'm just indecisive. Even so, if I HAVE to pick a scene, today I'll choose when Emily first leaves home on her adventure. It has a bit of everything. The excitement of setting off (using some secret agent moves, just like a character in one of her books) quickly followed by a terrifying encounter, then finished off with a cosy Hog moment. I love that hedgepig.

What are you working on at present?

Right now we're busy working away on Emily's next adventure in the *Midnight Hour*! We also write and illustrate bookish bits and bobs to amuse one another while on big projects, which we share weekly at trindlesandread.com [4] / @trindlesandread

[The Midnight Hour](#) [3] by Benjamin Read and Laura Trinder is published by Chicken House, 978-1911490906, £6.99 pbk.

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