

By the author of the award-winning *The Deepest Breath*

MEG GREHAN

The Brightest Star



"Gorgeous, lyrical,
warm and comforting"
Courtney Smyth, *Inis Magazine*

PRAISE FOR MEG GREHAN'S *THE DEEPEST BREATH*

A *Bank Street* Best Children's Book of 2022
with Outstanding Merit

A *Booklist* 2021 Editor's Choice

Winner: Judges' Special Award,
KPMG Children's Books Ireland Awards 2021

Shortlisted: Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2020

"Heartwarming and tear-provoking"
Booklist, starred review

"Wholesome, powerful and essential"
Shelf Awareness, starred review

"I spent most of this beautifully written verse
novel blinking back tears ... I felt genuinely
distracted to have finished it."
Sarah Webb, *The Irish Independent*

PRAISE FOR MEG GREHAN'S *THE LONELY BOOK*

Nominated: Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing 2024

"This brave, kind novel in verse explores gender identity in an original way."

Sarah Webb, *The Irish Independent*

"What a tender jewel of a book ... *The Lonely Book* was a balm and a blessing."

Deirdre Sullivan, author of *Savage Her Reply*

PRAISE FOR MEG GREHAN'S *BABY TEETH*

A *Kirkus* YA Book of the Year 2022

Shortlisted: An Post Irish Book Awards 2021

Nominated: Carnegie Medal 2023

"Emotionally rich and gloriously queer"

Kirkus, starred review

"An excellent addition to LGBTQIA+ and verse novel collections."

School Library Journal

"Skillfully charts uncertainty, temptation and the course of a strange, desperate love."

Imogen Russell Williams, *The Guardian*

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THE BRIGHTEST STAR

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everyone at Treehouse Shakers.

Thank you for understanding, transforming and
sharing *The Deepest Breath* so beautifully.

This book wouldn't exist without you.



I know a lot of things
About a lot of things
But the thing I know the most about
Is me
Stevie

I know that I am exactly twelve years and 364
days old
I know it's my birthday tomorrow
And that my hair is still brown
My eyes are still green
And I'm still allergic to peanuts

I know I have a mum
Whose room is right next to mine
And sometimes
At night
We tap and scratch Morse code messages to each
other
Morse code is great for telling jokes
I know that

I know I have a dad
Who I haven't talked to in a while
And I know that that's OK
And definitely not my fault
I still hope he sends a birthday card
Though I know
He won't

I know I love space and stars and the possibility
of aliens

I know what I think happened to Anastasia

And I know I love tea with two sugars

I know that the ocean isn't really all that scary

And octopuses are still very cool

I know I get this feeling

When I look at my best friend

Chloe

I know it's fizzy and warm and lovely and

I know

Exactly

What it is

I know I want to hold her hand

And maybe kiss her some day

And I want us to grow up together

And I know

Exactly

What this feeling is

When I look at Chloe

I feel

Affection

I feel bravery

I feel

Pride



I know a lot about me
But I also know a lot about Chloe
I know she is kind and cool and funny
I know she is way better at maths than I am
And that she helps me when I get stuck
Because she is a very good best friend
I know that
I know she still paints her nails every week
Pink this week!
And she still loves magic
And is somehow
Still
Confusing me
With it
Which is sometimes frustrating
Because I like to know how things work
But it's also very
Very
Impressive

I think Chloe is the coolest
I love when we hang out
When we read together
When we go to the aquarium
Our favourite place
Together

We have a teddy we share
His name is Sydney
And he's an octopus
My very favourite octopus
We take turns minding him and sometimes
We bring him to the aquarium
With us
It's our own
Special thing

We have another best friend
His name is Andrew
And he has moved
From the very best cookies
To the very best, most delicious, most elaborate
Cakes
He's making my birthday cake
And that makes me feel
Special
And loved
And known
Because he said he's going to make it
Space themed!

I love space
I know it seems scary
I do
So big
So vast
So

So
Unknown
But I think that's what I like about it
I can't possibly know everything about space
Nobody does!
But I can learn
And explore
And wonder
And that feels
Freeing
And exciting

The sea used to scare me
So I wrote about it in my notebook
My notebook is giant
It has hundreds of pages
And I still
Still!
Haven't used them all
But I think that's a good thing
Because before
When I was scared
I would use my notebook to make me feel safe
I would collect information
Facts and figures and findings
And I would store them all
In this book
Just
In
Case

In case of what?
I'm not sure
You see
I thought
That if I knew everything there was to know
in the world
I would be ready for anything
I would be safe safe safe
But here's the thing!
I am safe
I might still feel scared
I might still feel anxious
But I don't feel
Unsafe
Any more
Because
Because!
I trust myself

And I know I have my mum
And she's the grown-up
(even if I'm about to be thirteen)
And I know I can go to her if anything
Scares me
Or worries me
I know now
That not all bad things
Are big bad things
I know that
And I trust myself to know the difference

I know I have Chloe and Andrew
And I can turn to them
Any time I have a problem
Or need some help or advice

And I know I have Dr Wells
My therapist
Who reminds me
Every week
That I am strong
That I am brave
That I am capable and worthy and wonderful
Though
Honestly
I don't think I need reminding
Any more
Because now
I think
That's something
I know
Too

ABOUT LITTLE ISLAND

Little Island is an award-winning independent Irish publisher of books for young readers, founded in 2010 by Ireland's first Laureate na nÓg (children's laureate), Siobhán Parkinson. Little Island books are found throughout Ireland, the UK, North America, and in translation around the world.

You can find out more at littleisland.ie

RECENT AWARDS FOR LITTLE ISLAND

Highly Commended: British Book Awards Small Press of the Year 2024; Youth Libraries Group (UK) Publisher of the Year 2023

IBBY Honour List 2024

The Táin by Alan Titley, illus. by Eoin Coveney
Things I Know by Helena Close

An Post Irish Book Awards: Teen and YA Book of the Year 2023; Shortlisted: British Book Awards 2024
Black and Irish: Legends, Trailblazers & Everyday Heroes by Leon Diop and Briana Fitzsimons,
illus. by Jessica Louis

**An Post Irish Book Awards:
Children's Book of the Year (Senior) 2023**
I Am the Wind: Irish Poems for Children Everywhere
ed. by Sarah Webb and Lucinda Jacob,
illus. by Ashwin Chacko

**White Raven Award 2023;
Shortlisted: Carnegie Medal for Writing 2023;
Shortlisted: YA Book Prize 2023;
Finalist: Kirkus Prize 2023**
The Eternal Return of Clara Hart by Louise Finch

