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Irene Latham's

# ADVENTURES IN INK

Books for Dreamers, Seekers, & Thinkers

Hello, Friends!



## 12 DAYS OF KINDNESS is here!

Happy June, and happy SUMMER! It's a time for travel and #lakelife and watering the hydrangeas. And it's also a month to celebrate kindness! My new picture book (Penguin Random House) features illustrations by Junghwa Park and is a new take on the classic "Twelve Days of Christmas" song.

Instead of: "On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me..."

On the first day of KINDNESS, I WILL GIVE TO YOU...

It was a lot of fun coming up with simple ways kids (of all ages) can be kind...and the audio version features not just a read-aloud, but a SING-A LONG. Fun fun fun!

In other backstory news, I sold this book 6 and half years ago. I know! Some of these picture books take a LONG time! I also had help from my local SCBWI critique group. Read more about that [here](#).

It's dedicated to my (very kind) editor Stacey Barney, who welcomed me to the industry with my first novel for kids [LEAVING GEE'S BEND](#). We've worked on a lot of projects together since then, and she has continued to offer me much kindness. I'm so grateful!

And...the main character in the book has a broken arm.

Have YOU ever broken a bone? *If YES, please tell me your story! Simply reply to this email.*

I myself have broken my right arm twice—once while having a "who can jump the farthest off the swingset" contest with my brother Ken; the other when my sister Lynn and I were riding together bareback through the woods and asking our pony Rusty to jump over fallen logs.

Rusty jumped! And I landed on the ground, snapping my wrist. (Lynn miraculously stayed aboard!)

My favorite memory of each experience is the kindness shown me by others...and how that inspired kindness in ME. And now, all these years later, there's a picture book about that very thing.

Be kind.

## Other Kindnesses

You can [click to read the entire collection of Kindness quotes](#) from the original 2015 blog post series at Live Your Poem that inspired the book.

Take a moment to practice kindness, starting with YOURSELF... listen to your inner voice! Sometimes that means saying "No." In my experience, if you can't verbalize or write "no," your body will say No for you.

And sometimes the practice of kindness means going out of your way to let others know you love and appreciate them. My father taught me to write love letters, postcards, and notes, as a way to recognize people's impact on my life. It's a gift not just for the recipient, but for the sender, too. Try it!

Finally...I'm honored to be a recipient of a [2022 Alabama State Council on the Arts Literary Fellowship!](#) So many thanks to all the ASCA folks, especially Anne Kimzey, who encouraged me time and again. (This was my 9th year to apply!) Kindness, indeed.



## Looking Ahead

**August 1** I'll be attending ALLA in Montgomery, AL to accept the Juvenile Alabama Author Award with Karim Shamsi-Basha for [THE CAT MAN OF ALEPPO](#) and also joining Charles Waters to share about [AFRICAN TOWN](#). YAY!

**August 2** [BE A BRIDGE](#), co-written with Charles Waters, illus. by Nabila Adani (Carolrhoda/Lerner) releases! Early reviews have been so warm and enthusiastic—we can't wait to share it with you!

**October 8-11, 2022** Charles & I will be teaching a Highlights Foundation in-person workshop [POETRY FOR KIDS: A WORLD OF PUBLISHING POSSIBILITIES](#). We'll be talking about how to find your voice and place in the wide ocean of poetic formats, how to revise, and how to perform poems. Hope you'll join us!

Thank you for the many kindnesses you've shown me—including reading this newsletter! Wishing you love, adventure, and peace this summer, and always.

Love,  
Irene

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