

An Interview with Mark Sperring

What are your 5 favourite books, and why?

[Moominland Midwinter](#) by Tove Jansson for combining two of my favourite things Moomins AND snow!

[Where the Wild Things Are](#) by Maurice Sendak for its perfection.

[The Little Prince](#) for the fox who wanted to be tamed.

[To Kill a Mocking Bird](#) by Harper Lee for much too many reasons to list.

[Revolutionary Road](#) by Richard Yates for inducing a tear.

Who are your 5 favourite authors/illustrators, and why?

Maurice Sendak for writing and illustrating the ultimate picture book

Tove Jansson not only for her amazing black and white line drawing but for her strange and beautiful stories.

Toon Telegen for creating a world populated by letter writing creatures.

Paul Auster for his ability to turn a story on its head in one breath taking sentence.

Richard Yates for creating characters that still linger in my mind.

What was your favourite book when you were a child?

Gobbilino the Witches Cat by Ursula Moray Williams.

Who is your favourite hero in a book?

Little My from the Moomins.

Who is your favourite villain in a book?

Little My from the Moomins!

If you could be a character from a book who would you be?

Mr Nilsson so I could hang out with Pippi Longstocking.

If you could recommend just one book for everyone to read what would it be?

To Kill a Mocking Bird.

What book do you wish you had written?

The Dictionary, if only to be better at spelling and a world champion scrabble player.

Who or what was your biggest influence in deciding to become a writer?

Words and how they fit together.

What inspired you to write your latest book?

The Shape of My Heart was inspired whilst drawing around my hand!

What's the best thing you've ever written?

I don't know about best, but the one I have a special connection to is a story about a girl and a mouse, there's a lot of 'Me' in it.

When did you start writing?

In earnest about 20 years ago.

If someone wanted to be a writer what would be your number one tip for them?

Don't give up!

Is there any particular routine involved in your writing process (favourite pen, lucky charm, special jumper)?

I'm an early bird writer-mornings are best!

Do you have any abandoned stories in your 'bottom drawer' that you would like to revisit?

None of them are abandoned, they're just biding their time and only appear to be collecting dust...