Interview with Judi Curtin

1. Where did you get the idea for this new book?

It started when I thought about the regret a young girl would feel at never having the chance to know her mum. Then I had to find a way for them to be together, even though the mum had died many years earlier.

2. Time travel is such a cool concept, what was your inspiration for this?

Time travel has always fascinated me. Who wouldn't want the chance to revisit the past? Who wouldn't want to experience historical events? Who wouldn't want to see their parents as teenagers?

3. If you could travel through a porthole to any decade/period in history, when would it be?

I think I'd go back to the 1920's, when my grandparents were young. It's an interesting era, and I'd love to see the lives my grandparents had, many years before I came along.

4. Is Molly based on someone in particular?

No. Except for Domino the cat, all of my characters are completely fictional. (But that doesn't stop people saying they recognize themselves in my books!)

5. Did you have fun writing about the 80s?

I loved it. I know it's ancient history to my readers, but for me I'm writing about my youth.

6. What is your favourite thing about the 80s?

The fashions might seem gross now, but they were wonderful too. Everything was big and loud and colourful.

7. When you were writing Time After Time did you miss your other characters from the Alice series or the Eva series?

I always miss my old characters, and more than once I've sneaked a few from one series into another.

8. What was your favourite part of writing Time after Time?

I loved writing the part where Beth meets her mother – the first time I've made myself cry. Sad, but very rewarding.

9. Do you read children's books yourself?

Only rarely, (which might be controversial.) I read voraciously when I was a child, and as a teacher and parent, I continued that for many years. Now though, I mostly read book written for people like me.

10. When you write, how much do you think about the reader?

In the first draft I'm very much writing what I want to write. In later drafts, with the help of my wonderful editor, Helen, I do try to consider how the reader is going to engage with my characters and story.

11. How does your interaction with real children affect the way you write and what you write about?

I do very many events with young people, who can be quite transparent. They seem to like my stories about families and friendship, and as I like writing these, it's easy to continue.

12. What advice do you have for aspiring writers?

Read everything you can get your hands on. Keep a diary. Enter competitions – not necessarily to win, but so you get practice at polishing your work.

13. Time for the mean question: What is your favourite book in the entire world?

Today I'm going to say 'The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,' by C.S. Lewis. It's the only Narnia book I read as a child, and I've always loved it. (But if you ask me again next week, it could be Heidi, First term at Malory Towers, The Great Gatsby, or even whatever book I read tonight!)