

# Lesley Parr



## Where did you grow up?

Cwmafan, Port Talbot.

## Where did you go to school?

Cwmafan and Margam.

## What did you want to be when you grew up?

That changed a lot but, for a long time, I wanted to be a naturalist.

## What are your hobbies?

Cooking, walking, reading, seeing friends.

## What was your favourite book when you were young?

I had two: *The Little White Horse* by Elizabeth Goudge and *Watership Down* by Richard Adams, but what I read most was the *Beano*.

## When did you consider being an author?

All my life, really, but I decided the time was right in 2011. It took ten years of hard work, learning and becoming a better writer till my first book, *The Valley of Lost Secrets*, was published.

## Are there any themes that appeal to you in particular?

I definitely seem to veer towards accepting change as a theme. And my books are always about relationships above all else – both friendships and familial. And always working-class!

## What advice can you give to budding authors?

The best advice I can give is to know when to walk away from your desk and take a break if the words aren't flowing. It's amazing how much more productive you can be if you give yourself a break – both physically and metaphorically.

## Do you have any rituals when you write?

Not really but I like to put on music to suit the mood. I listen to a lot of albums by tenor Joseph Calleja; so much so he gets a mention in the acknowledgments of my first book, which he has read and enjoyed, by the way – the whole book! He sent me a voicenote to tell me – that was a moment!

## Quick Questions

### What's your favourite childhood book?

*The Little White Horse* by Elizabeth Goudge, and *Watership Down* by Richard Adams.

### Who's your favourite character from a children's book?

I have a huge soft spot for Todd Hewitt in Patrick Ness's YA *Chaos Walking* trilogy. I also love Gina Kaminski from *Gina Kaminski Saves the Wolf* by Craig Barr-Green and Francis Martin. A picture book, so the other end of the young reader spectrum!

### Where is your favourite place to write?

At my desk at home, with all my familiar and encouraging things around me.

### What's your favourite food?

Pizza or curry. I can't choose, sorry!

### What's your favourite film or show?

I love TV and film! Favourites are *Neighbours*, *Life on Mars* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Film-wise, it's between *Pride* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

### What would be your superpower of choice?

To fly.

### Favourite social media network?

Instagram.

### What makes you smile?

My husband and my friends. And thinking of my mother.

### If not an author what would you be?

A detective!

### What's your advice for budding writers?

The best advice I can give is to know when to walk away from your desk and take a break if the words aren't flowing. It's amazing how much more productive you can be if you give yourself a break – both physically and metaphorically!