

GOODBYE JULY!

Hello everyone!

You know what I said last month about being sad that June was coming to an end? Yeah, the same thing is happening right now about July coming to an end. I love July. You get hot weather (which I love, although the 40-degree heat less so...), the days are still long, and you also get my birthday. (July birthdays are the best - anyone else?)

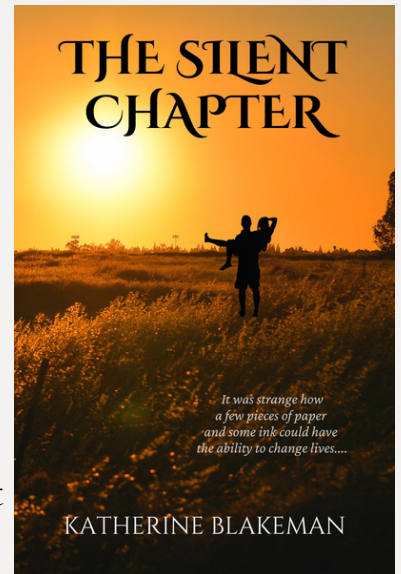
I've been busy this month. Or at least I've *felt* busy - when I look back now, trying to figure out what the hell I'm going to write in my 'WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO' section, I realise I don't have a lot to show for it. The identity of my next WIP is still under wraps, although I hope to do an exclusive cover reveal for you guys next month, so information I can give about that is still limited. But I have been a busy bee in one way or another!

You'll be happy to know that I've faced my fears and gone back through the Poppy photos. It's been three months since I lost my beautiful little feline (I know, I know, I can't believe it either) and I think it's high time she reappeared on my newsletter. So scroll down for a couple of grumpy kitty photos! The obligatory jokes are in here too, along with a recipe for the best chocolate cake you will ever eat, and a review of one of Max Ellendale's heart-warming Four Point Universe books. I'm reading this one for the second time right now, and I feel like I need to buy the rest of the series because her writing is ADDICTIVE! Much like the aforementioned chocolate cake recipe.

Oh, and a quick warning. That chocolate cake? Contains mayo. Don't blame me, blame [Buzzfeed Tasty](#). It works though.

Love, Kathy!

*P.S. My lovely writer friend
Chloe Keto has just set up a
mailing list too! Sign up today [on
her website!](#)*



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WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO IN JULY

You may remember that I ended last month's 'WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO' (or 'WIBUT', as I'm now calling it) with the news that for some reason, [The Silent Chapter](#) was discounted on Amazon's UK site, and you could save nearly 20%. That lasted just under a month. I just checked it now, and it's gone back to normal price. Amazon's way of promoting it perhaps...?

Also at the start of July, I posted a blog post about my life as someone with a chronic illness, but no diagnosis. It was a tough one to write, I don't mind admitting that. I appealed to the masses for someone to tell me I wasn't alone, but nobody did. Probably because the post only has 23 views, and about 20 of them are me. I now have an update to that blog post - an actual diagnosis!! - which I *really* need to get around to writing at some point. July is also disability awareness month which I found really rather fitting!

I also went on holiday! The beach is one of my favourite places, so you can imagine I was very happy. I even managed to get a couple of majestic 'looking-off-into-the-distance' photos (albeit with my wonky back). You know the sort of photos I mean? Ones like this, which was actually back in May.

(Do you wonder why my back is like this? I posted [an explanation](#) of exactly why I'm lopsided - and have a big rib hump - on my blog back in June. Go check it out!)

While we're on the subject of my blog, I also released another one, tackling the meaty topic of [WHY I WRITE](#). The cover photograph is a vivid depiction of me writing that post. And pretty much anything else. Including this newsletter! (Just kidding! Totally not having to go back through my Twitter posts to remember what I did this month...)



I went to see ABBA Voyage in London. Totally irrelevant to my writing but it was AMAZING.

And then after that it was a matter of editing my next book. I rewrote it in light of the feedback from my lovely beta readers, deleting 18,000 words, a character and a subplot in the process.... then, also in light of their feedback, added about 7,000 different words. I feel like it's much better and much more substantial now - thank God. Without my beta readers, I'd be lost!!

That took up most of the rest of the month. I did make a fancy new graphic for The Silent Chapter though. It's in my pinned tweet if you want to check it out!

*NEXT MONTH: A sneak peek of my next book!
My first foray into lesbian fiction...*

Quick Review: *Hart and Stocker* by Max Ellendale

I think I fell in love with Willa and Dax right from the start. There's something about a small-town ice-queen recluse main character that draws me right in. Behind her grumpy, defensive exterior, Dax Stocker is a sweet soul, and the other protagonist Willa is all Hart. Literally. The way Dax's past was revealed was very well-written and sensitively handled.

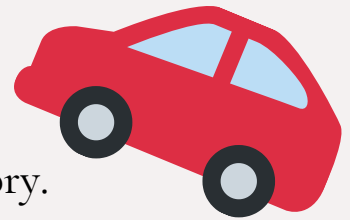
Despite being part of a series, *Hart and Stocker* stands very well on its own. Yes, there are a few minor characters of whom I didn't really understand the significance, but from doing my research I can see that they get their own books in the series too.

All I can say is... sign me up!

Buy [Hart and Stocker](#) on Amazon today!



Car/Automobile Jokes



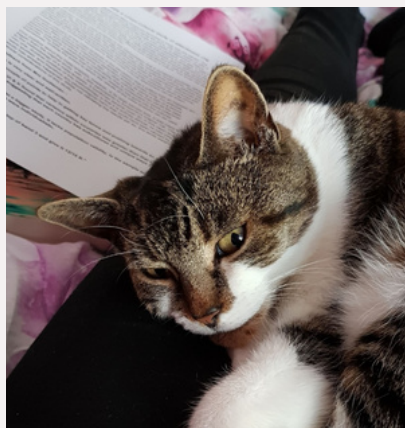
I just applied for a job in the Citroen factory.
I had to send in 2CVs.

I went to the best ever burger van yesterday.
It was so good, it had 4 Michelin tyres.

What do you call a Spanish man whose car has
been stolen?
Carlos.

GRUMPY CAT

No, not the real one. But Poppy
did a pretty good impression!



The Best Chocolate Cake(s) Ever

My schoolfriends recently came back from uni for a party. They love my baking, so I wanted to pull out some stops and make a gorgeous, decadent chocolate cake for them. However, transport issues meant I decided cupcakes would be easier. They went down a storm, so here's the recipe I followed (originally courtesy of BuzzFeed Tasty)!



INGREDIENTS:

185g plain flour
120g Dutch cocoa powder
1.5tsp bicarbonate of soda
0.5tsp baking powder
360ml stout
1tbsp vanilla extract
1tbsp coffee powder
235g soft butter
300g caster sugar
3 eggs
120g mayonnaise

300g white chocolate
300ml double cream

Sift into a bowl flour, cocoa, bicarb and baking powder. In a jug, mix stout, coffee powder and vanilla. Cream together the butter and sugar. Add the eggs one at a time, then the mayonnaise. Beat until fully incorporated. Add a third of the dry mixture, then a third of the wet, and alternate until it's all in one bowl. Spoon into muffin cases (or three 8-inch cake tins). Bake at 160C/325F/Gas Mark 3 for 20 minutes (or 35 minutes, respectively). Once fully cooked, take out and leave to fully cool. For the ganache, heat the cream until almost boiling, then take off the heat and stir in the chocolate. Once cooled and hard, whip with an electric mixer. Spoon onto the cakes and decorate as you please.

*It was strange how a few pieces of paper
and some ink could have the ability to change lives...*

THE SILENT CHAPTER
BY KATHERINE BLAKEMAN

Now available on Amazon and Kindle Unlimited!

Get yours today!