

ON TO AUTUMN

Hello everyone!

Autumn, I have to say, is my second-to-least favourite season. Next to winter. I try my best to love it. I read about all these people for whom autumn (or 'fall') is their favourite season. Pumpkin spice season. Hot chocolate with cream season. Cosy movie night with lots of blankets season.

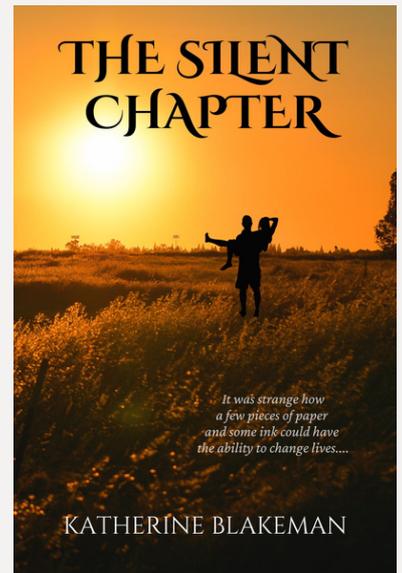
Unfortunately, I don't seem to be able to identify with it. For me, it's getting-colder season. Dark mornings season. Rain and storm season. Perhaps it's some sort of seasonal affective disorder - not to diagnose myself - but this year I can feel my mood dipping already. Not that it was ever particularly high to begin with. Perhaps I should be worried about that one...

That's a me problem, anyway. This year, I plan to use as many dark evenings as possible to squirrel away at my new book. *The Summer We've Had*, whose cover you saw for the first time last week, is currently under examination by my two lovely sensitivity readers, Dr. Anna Perrin and Dr. Lisa Nolan, both from Cheshire Psychology. I am very lucky to have found them, and I'm eager to see what they think, because the last thing I want to do is represent Dissociative Identity Disorder incorrectly.

I'm also hard at work on another lesfic book. Well, I say hard at work, but life has kind of gotten in the way the last week or so. You know how they say the plot thickens? Well, mine has definitely thinned (to quote a popular Twitter post from earlier this year). But I'll get there. It's all part of the creative process, right? Writer's block? I hope...?

So basically, I just need to crack on with this newsletter so I can get back to it! You know by now what's ahead... but if you don't, it's news, cat pictures, jokes and a recipe for what-I-call 'Mastercheffy' tomato soup. (Oh, and please buy *The Silent Chapter* if you haven't already. To keep you company on these dark autumn evenings!)

Love, Kathy!



Connect with me!

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Twitter: [@kblakemanwriter](https://twitter.com/kblakemanwriter)

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WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO IN SEPTEMBER

Before I start with my news, I just want to drop the link to Sabrina Kane's new Cornwall-based lesfic romance, [What Comes After One](#). I had the pleasure of beta-reading Tamsin and Robyn's love story (well, enemies-to-neighbours-to-lovers story) and it was another five stars from me - and this time, Sabrina did NOT personify a shopping trolley! (That was a LONG battle which I and the other betas lost... to find out what I'm on about, buy her latest Carlsbad book, [Never Has She Ever...](#))

Anyway, What Comes After One is out TODAY, October 1st! If you haven't got it on your TBR yet... well, put simply, you're missing out on laughs, a hot-headed redhead and a whole lot of *other* heat...

That was how my August ended - with reading that! But if you thought that would stop me from buying more books - it didn't! I told myself (very firmly, on Twitter) that I did not need any more books. My posse of followers (very firmly, in the comments) told me I was wrong. And I was!

I also discovered an amazing five-star review of [The Silent Chapter](#) on [Goodreads](#), from the lovely [Elara Northwind](#). She's been trying to branch out into new genres recently (an admirable feat - I'm not always that brave!) and is trying some indie authors (also admirable, and something I wish more people did). The Silent Chapter was first on her TBR, and she called it a '*really great and memorable read*'. I was so happy to read that. Thank you, Elara!

Remember last month, I reviewed [Oh My Stars](#) by S'Jay Hart? Well, we collaborated on an Instagram post! I posted last month about song lyrics that sound like poetry (from the likes of Sting, Faith Hill and Libera) and... well, S'Jay and I got talking about it! The result was a collaboration between S'Jay and I, on a Part Two of that post. Her contributions came from Paramore and HAIM, while I contributed... something controversial. It's right at the end of the post. If you go check it out (our accounts are [@katherineblakemanwriter](#) and [@sjayhartauthor](#))... I'm sorry in advance.

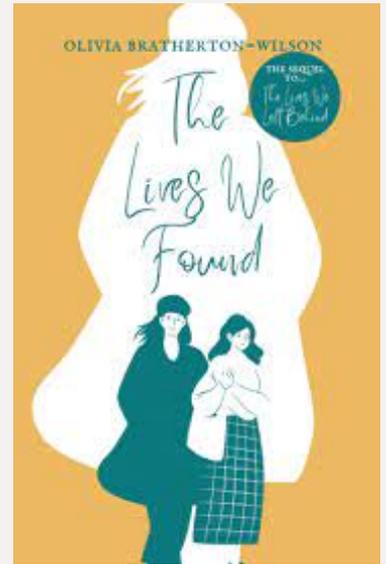
Other than that, not a lot has happened! I sent out a few copies of The Silent Chapter to magazines and other publications, but haven't heard anything back so far. Well, unless you count the return of one of them because apparently the PO Box doesn't exist any more. Oh well, onwards and upwards!

(Oh, and I shared my first Instagram reel. It was about ice cream. That's not relevant to anything bookish, but it's fun. And in times like this, we all need a little harmless fun!)

Quick Review: *The Lives We Found* by Olivia Bratherton-Wilson

Olivia's debut novel, *The Lives We Left Behind*, was one of the first lesfic books I read and I adored it, so I knew I was going to adore the sequel! This one focuses much more on the reality of post-war Britain, and I was simply aching for Dorothea and Angeline to meet again. When they did, sparks flew, but the whole time I was chomping at the bit for them to make up. It's so hard to write a happily-ever-after when it comes to lesbian historical fiction - I know because I've tried it myself - but Olivia did so masterfully.

Perhaps I connect so much to Olivia's work because we're in similar boats. We're both teenage authors, although I am unashamed to admit that she is much more successful than I am! With good reason - *The Lives We Left Behind* and *The Lives We Found* are INCREDIBLE.



Buy [TLWF](#) on Amazon today!

Animal Jokes

(Because I'm an animal... not really.)

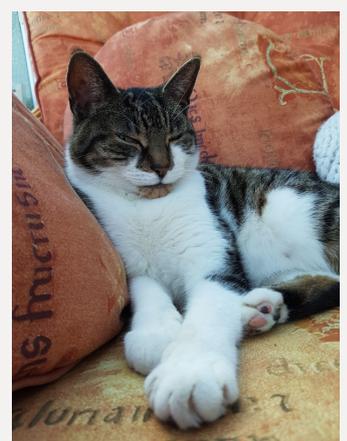
What kind of amphibian is best suited to being a teacher?
A calmer chameleon.

How many tickles does it take to make an octopus laugh?
Ten tickles.

What do you get when you cross a kangaroo with a sheep?
A woolly jumper.

How do ants avoid illness?
Ant-ibodies.

**HAPPY
LITTLE
CLAWS**



'Mastercheffy' Tomato Soup

Forget pumpkin spice and hot chocolate season... it's also soup season! Now that is something I do enjoy about autumn... my homemade tomato soup! It's a labour of love, just like last month's risotto... but it's worth it. It's amazing - and several of your five-a-day! The cream on the top is optional.



INGREDIENTS:

1kg large tomatoes
1 x bulb of garlic
1tsp basil
1tsp oregano
salt and pepper
1 tbsp olive oil
1 x chopped onion
3 x sticks of celery
3 x peeled carrots
600ml vegetable stock
cream, to finish

METHOD:

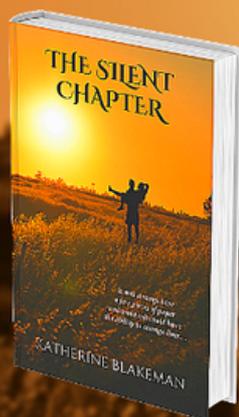
Cut each tomato in half and lay cut-side up in a roasting tray. Tuck peeled cloves of garlic between them. Sprinkle with herbs, salt, pepper and oil. Roast at 200C/Gas 6 for 35 minutes.

Roughly chop the onion, celery and carrots and fry in a pan until the onions have softened slightly. Pour the vegetable stock into the pan and simmer for 10-15 minutes.

Once the tomatoes are roasted, leave to cool slightly then remove the flesh of each tomato from its skin and put the skins in a separate bowl. Pour the flesh into a big bowl or blender alongside the vegetables and blend until smooth.

This soup freezes very well, and serves six comfortably.

*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!