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“A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows.”—*Francis of Assisi*



Dear Friends,

Well, we've made it this far: September is nearly over, and we're coasting into the last quarter of this full-of-surprises pandemic year. I suspect there are still bumps ahead, but aren't there always?

What's helping me through is a simple decision to let go of my expectations -- and also to stop comparing *then* to now, in-person conferences to virtual ones, take-out to sit-down. Each experience has something valuable to offer us, and I find it much easier to see what that thing is once I stop tallying my complaints and disappointments.

Today I choose sunbeam over shadows. And I wish the same for you.

With that in mind, I am delighted to share with you my newest collection of poems: *THIS POEM IS A NEST*, illustrations by [Johanna Wright](#), brought to us by the Wordsong imprint of [Boyd's Mills & Kane](#).

Here's the publisher's description:

This beautiful poetry collection introduces readers to the art of found poetry as the poet writes a 37-line poem, "Nest," then finds 160 smaller poems within it.

What can you find in a poem about a robin's nest? Irene Latham masterfully discovers "nestlings" or smaller poems about an astonishing variety of subjects--emotions, wild animals, natural landmarks on all seven continents, even planets and constellations. Each poem is a glorious spark of wonder that will prompt readers to look at the world afresh. The book includes an introduction detailing the principles of found poetry and blackout poetry, and a section of tips at the end. The joyous creativity in this volume is certain to inspire budding poets.

Of all the books I've worked on, this one is the most unabashedly ME. And that's because editor Rebecca Davis took a chance on a unique concept, fought for it in-house, and then gave me the freedom to let it grow and grow from 30 poems to 60

poems to 100 to 120 to 160 and finally 161 poems! Writers dream of having this kind of nurturing and trust in an editorial relationship, and the resulting book is magical and whimsical and meaningful, and I just want to hug it all the time! A big part of that magic is thanks to Johanna Wright -- be sure to check out [this video about her process illustrating NEST](#). I'm so, so grateful.

Many books' pub dates were delayed this year due to the pandemic, so this fall it's positively raining books! Trade reviews can't possibly keep up, so I don't have the usual line-up of reviews to share with you. But I do have one... a ★ STARRED REVIEW from [Kirkus](#):

"A gifted poet demonstrates the remarkable versatility of words through one kind of found poetry.... Delightful."

Can you see me blushing over here?! Yep. Such kind words.

Many thanks to some wonderful bloggers who've already shared about NEST. I'm talking about you, Linda @ [TeacherDance](#), [Buffy Silverman](#), Linda @ [A Word Edgewise](#), [Rebecca G. Aguilar](#), Mary Lee @ [A Year of Reading](#), Margaret @ [Reflections on the Teche](#), Mary Lee @ [A Year of Reading](#), and Tabatha @ [The Opposite of Indifference](#) (which includes a free printable NEST-inspired zine!).

If you'd like to help me get the news out about the book, you can post reviews on Amazon or Goodreads, share on social media, or simply tell someone about the book! THANK YOU!

Yes! I want to climb into THIS POEM IS A NEST!

Giveaway!

As you may have seen on Twitter (Welcome new subscribers!), to celebrate the release of my 12th book for children, I'm giving away a nest of 12 poetry books + THIS POEM IS A NEST. Check out these beautiful titles:

A Hatful of Dragons by Vikram Madan

Dictionary for a Better World by Irene Latham and Charles Waters, illus. by Mehrdokht Amini

Finding Treasure by Michelle Schaub, illus. by Carmen Saldana

Follow the Recipe by Marilyn Singer, illus. by Marjorie Priceman

Night Wishes: poems selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illus. by Jen Corace

Nine: A Book of Nonet Poems by Irene Latham, illus. by Amy Huntington

On Wings of Words by Jennifer Berne, illus. by Becca Stadtlander

The Day the Universe Exploded My Head by Allan Wolf, illus. by Anna Raff

Whoo-Ku Haiku by Maria Gianferrari, illus. by Jonathan Voss

Wild in the Streets by Marilyn Singer, illus. by Gordy Wright

Woke by Mahogany L. Browne et al, illus by Theodore Taylor III

Write! Write! Write! by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater, illus. by Ryan O'Rourke

All subscribers (**you!**) were automatically entered in the giveaway, and I used a random number generator to select the winner just before I pressed "send" on this newsletter. And the winner is...

Katie DiCesare

CONGRATULATIONS, KATIE! And because that didn't feel like quite enough of a celebration, I also used the random number generator to select 5 runner-ups will receive **one copy of your choice** of my 2020 releases:

Dictionary for a Better World (with Charles Waters) -or- Nine: A Book a Nonet Poems
-or- The Cat Man of Aleppo (with Karim Shamsi-Basha) -or- This Poem is a Nest.

And the one-book winners are...

1. N. Caffee
2. D. White
3. J. Gothard
4. M. Dutton
5. J. Davis

Congratulations to all! Simply reply to this email OR irene@irenelatham.com with your mailing address and book choice, and I'll get these shipped right out to you.

New for YOU

Check out my new [VIRTUAL VISITS menu](#) of more than 20 possible virtual offerings for school groups, book clubs, writing workshops, and more! *As always, I offer 15 minutes FREE Q&A for groups who have read one or more of my books.* **Let's get something scheduled!

Also, be sure to check out all the [FREEBIES](#) available on my website, from [CAT MAN coloring pages](#) created by Yuko Shimizu to [How To Write a Nonet](#) handout to [behind-the book videos](#) and [ArtSpeak! poem videos](#).

And here are some other links to:

[JOY](#) --- [WONDER](#) --- [HOPE](#) --- [BEAUTY](#)

The best gift we can give one another is our time and attention... so THANK YOU so

much for joining me here today!

Love,

Irene

P.S. You're invited to join Karim and me and [Snail on the Wall Books](https://www.snailonthewall.com) for this inspiring virtual event! Here is the link: <https://www.snailonthewall.com/event/learn-about-real-life-hero-irene-latham-and-karim-shamsi-basha>

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