

## A Conversation with Kieran Larwood

### **The world of Lanica is so well crafted—how did you go about creating it?**

Once I'd decided on a world of rabbits, the ideas seemed to flow very quickly. The first thing I did was to draw a map of the rabbit world and then started penciling in warrens, forests, and rivers. I also jotted down ideas for the rabbits' religions, customs, recipes, and anything else I could think of. When I had a rough outline of what Lanica might be like, I started writing the story, which led me to add more and more detail as it was needed. I now keep several notebooks on the world that I'm constantly adding to. The place seems to have taken on a life of its own!

### **The sibling relationship rings very true. Is it based on any real-life brothers and sisters?**

I have two younger brothers, and I also have three children of my own, so I have lots of experience of siblings and their clashes. I particularly wanted to focus on the age gap between Podkin and Paz, as I think many young readers will identify with how hard it can seem when your older brother or sister seems so much better than you at everything. Pook is largely based on my youngest daughter, who is constantly coming out with very cute phrases.

### **Do you have a favorite character?**

I get asked this lots of times; it's a bit like asking which is your favorite child. I couldn't possibly choose between them! I love Podkin, Pook, and Paz, and I also have a soft spot for Crom.

### **What did you read when you were a child?**

After reading *The Hobbit*, I became an avid fantasy reader. My favorite books as a child (and still now) were *The Hounds of the Morrigan* by Pat O'Shea and *The Borribles* by Michael De Larrabeiti.

### **How does your work as a teacher affect your writing?**

On the positive side, I think it keeps me connected to what children want to read and hear in a story. Unfortunately it is also a very demanding job, so it means I have to squeeze my writing into late nights, weekends, and holidays.

### **What kind of books do you read with your students?**

I teach four- and five-year-olds, so we mostly read picture books. I do love to read them Roald Dahl books, too, and their favorites are always *The Twits* and *Fantastic Mr. Fox*.

### **We can't wait for the next installments—any teasers?**

I don't want to give too much away, but expect lots more clashes with the Gorm, some interesting magical items, and more unusual characters.