

AUTHOR FEATURE

Elizabeth Helen

Sunday Times Bestselling sister
writing duo of why-choose fantasy
romance books



Author feature with our favourite why choose romantasy writers Elizabeth Helen.

Beasts of the Briar reimagines fairy tales with a fresh twist—what inspired you to write this series?

We have always loved fairytales and Beauty and the Beast has been our favourite since we were little. We related so much to Belle! We had been writing Young Adult books together for years, and were looking for a change. We thought a why-choose twist on our favorite fairytale would be a fun way to switch it up!

What's your creative process like as a writing duo? How do you balance your individual ideas?

We do all of our brainstorming together and really feed off each other's ideas! In the beginning, we like to go for long walks where we throw everything at the wall and see what sticks. From there, we create a very detailed outline and then choose which chapters each of us wants to write the first draft of. We're able to let our individual ideas shine during this part! Then, we edit each other's work. It's great having such a close writing partner!

What was it like to have your books picked up by a traditional publisher? Were there many changes between the versions of the books?

We were so thrilled when Beasts of the Briar was picked up by a traditional publisher as it means our books have a chance to reach a wider audience. It also allowed us to go on book tour in the UK, which was the most magical experience. We met so many readers in Scotland and England and had the best time. There weren't too many changes, but we were grateful for the opportunity to go back and edit our work so we could make it the best story it could be!

Do you outline everything in advance, or do you allow the story to unfold organically?

We are big on outlining! Not only because we write together, so it's essential we're both taking the story in the right direction, but because we love adding foreshadowing and Easter eggs throughout.

How do you keep track of all the intricate world-building details across multiple books?

At the beginning of any series, we create something called our 'Player's Handbook' (which is a Dungeons & Dragons reference). It's essentially a history book of our lore, magic system, and character details. Though admittedly, we do have to search the previous books for certain details!

Do you ever disagree on plot points or character arcs? How do you resolve creative differences?

Short answer: We share a single brain cell, so no, haha. Longer answer: We're super in-sync, so we often have a similar view for how the plot or character arcs need to go. If one of us feels strongly about something, the other is always willing to listen and can be convinced!



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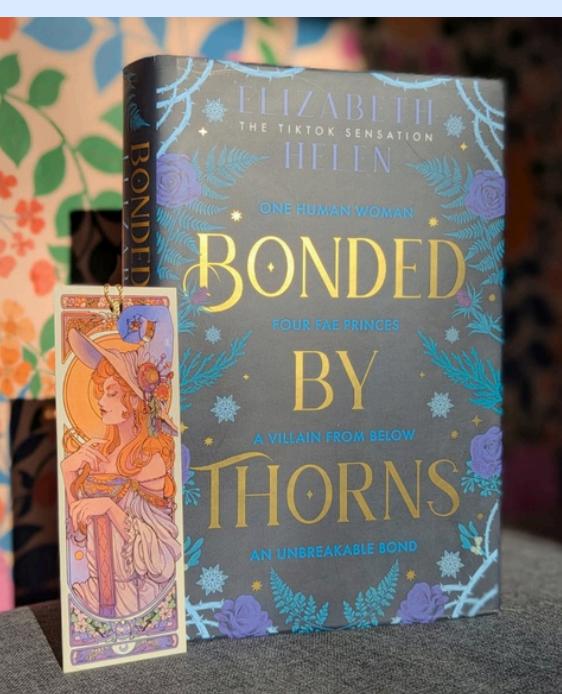


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Your books feature multiple love interests—how do you develop such distinct personalities while keeping the chemistry alive?

The greatest joy about writing why-choose is getting to play with so many different personalities! When we were first creating the characters, we kept joking that we were making a Boy Band: we wanted each prince to have their own distinct aesthetic and way of speaking/thinking so the reader would never get confused between them. We really like to 'know' our characters before writing, so we do a lot of storyboarding, mood board creating, and listening to music to help flesh them out in our heads before we put pen to paper.

Rosalina's journey is full of adventure and romance—what do you think makes her a compelling heroine?

We love reading about bad-ass assassin heroines, but neither of us relate much to those types of characters. Our goal with Rosalina was to create someone who felt very real, as if you could run into her on the street. She's not overly athletic and she certainly doesn't know how to swing a sword or lead an army. She has so much growing to do. But at the same time, she's quirky, and kind, and brave. Hopefully this makes the reader want to cheer for her and watch her succeed and discover all the things she can do :)

Each of the fae princes represents a different season. How did you decide which traits fit each one?

We wanted the seasons to play a role in their personalities. For example, we knew Kel was going to have an icy exterior like Winter, Ezryn would represent the rebirth of Spring through his character growth, Dayton would be wild as a Summer storm, and Farron as warm as an Autumn bonfire.

Which side character in the series deserves their own spin-off?

Definitely George and Anya, Rosalina's parents! They've got quite the history.

What's a small detail or Easter egg in Beasts of the Briar that most readers might not notice?

Keep an eye out for a sapphire crown... it pops up a couple times :)

If you could cast actors to play your main characters in a movie adaptation, who would they be?

We do have a couple favourite fan-casts for the Princes!

Keldarion: Henry Cavill

Ezryn: Pedro Pascal

Dayton: Sam Claflin

Farron: Andrew Garfield

Caspian: Ben Barnes



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What's one scene in the series that was particularly fun (or difficult) to write?

Oooh, well, we JUST finished writing Book 5 and there is a particular scene in there that's 6,000 words!! It was very fun but difficult because there was a lot of, uh, limbs to keep track of.... ;)

If you could visit one of the realms from your books, which would it be and why?

We both choose Autumn, because Autumn takes some inspiration from Scotland, and we love Scotland so much! It's our favourite place to travel!

Can you tell us about the process of having your books featured in Book Boxes? Do you have much control over design elements?

Getting to have our books in book boxes is so much fun! Each book box is different, but we generally get to approve everything that goes in one. With some of the boxes, we got to suggest or choose the artists that we work with. It's amazing to see all the different ways our characters come to life!!

You both enjoy Dungeons & Dragons—have your campaigns ever inspired story ideas?

Oh my goodness, yes, haha. Perth Quellos is directly inspired by a baddie from our DnD campaign. The Baron of the Green Flame is also a Big Bad in one of our campaigns - we loved him so much we needed to put him in Rosie's world! We would absolutely love to write a romantasy based on our campaign at some point!

What's your favourite literary love story of all time, and did it influence your own writing?

One of our favourite story's is His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman. Even though it's a children's book, it has one of the most heartwrenching love stories we've ever read. I think that definitely inspired our love of bittersweet, star-crossed lovers.

Have any fan theories about your books surprised you?

Yes, there's definitely been some 'out-there' ones! (And some that are spot-on!)

Can you give us a tiny teaser or hint about what's next for Beasts of the Briar?

We're off to Winter in Book 5! And don't worry, Caspian's going to have a great time :) Hehe...



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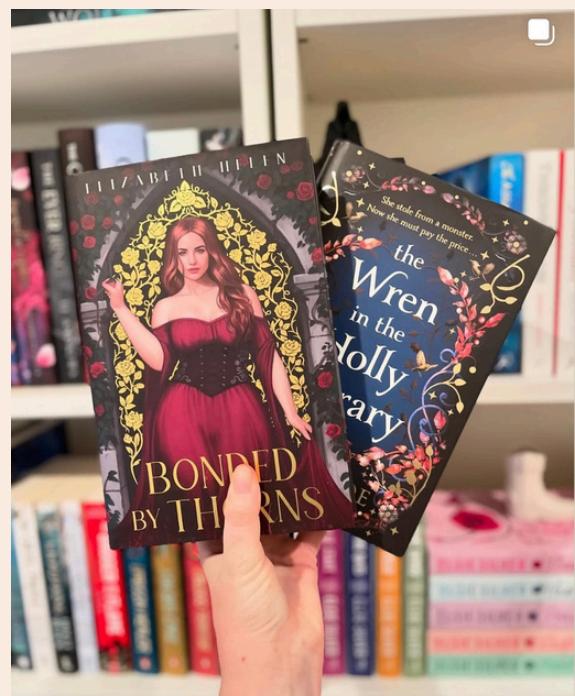


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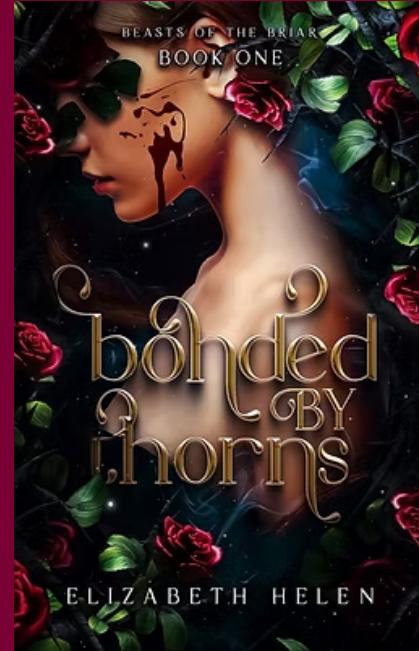
Beasts of the Briar

**A quiet bookworm. Four cursed fae princes.
One enchanted realm.**

When Rosalina O'Connell's father disappears, she follows his trail to the Enchanted Vale—where she's forced to take his place as a prisoner of the Winter Prince.

Living among the four fae rulers of Castletree, she learns of their deadly curse: each night, they turn into demonic wolves, and their magic is slowly fading. The only way to break the curse is for each prince to find his mate.

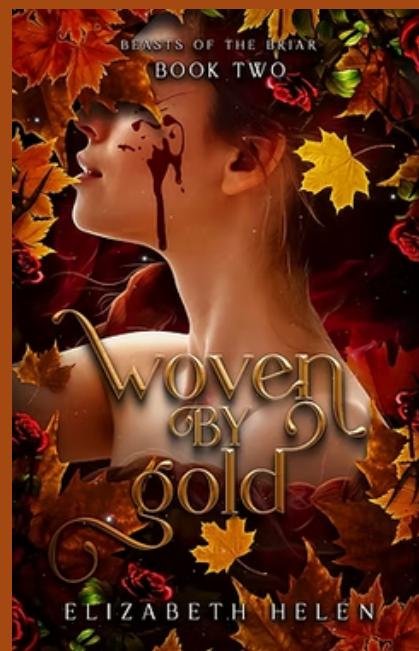
Determined to help them and return home, Rosie sets out to find their destined mates—only to realise she may be the one they've been waiting for.



**A curse to break. A realm in danger.
Four fae princes and one determined human.**

Exiled from the fae realm and betrayed by her mate, Rosalina O'Connell is desperate to return to the Enchanted Vale. Tapping into Castletree's magic, she reaches out to Prince Ezryn of the Spring Realm for help.

But as Rosie reunites with the princes, a deadly frost threatens the Autumn Realm, pushing the Vale toward war. To save her home and those she loves, Rosie must unlock the magic within herself—before it's too late.



Beasts of the Briar

**A woman reborn. A kingdom in peril.
A fate intertwined with four fae princes.**

Rosalina O'Connell has embraced her fae heritage—and her mate bonds with Princes Keldarion and Farron. But when goblins wielding Spring Realm steel attack Castletree, she and the princes journey to uncover the truth.

In Spring, Prince Ezryn's traitorous brother threatens to bring the realm to ruin. To stop him, Ezryn must reclaim his birthright and break his curse. And Rosie may be the key to saving him—and all of Spring.



**A stolen princess. A brewing war.
A realm on the brink of ruin.**

The forces of the Below have begun their attack, corrupting the Spring and Summer Realms. To save Summer, Rosalina O'Connell and Prince Dayton enter a deadly tournament to reclaim the Bow of Radiance—while struggling to deny their growing bond.

As chaos spreads, Rosie must embrace her role as the Princess of the Enchanted Vale and the fated mate of three High Princes. But with war just beginning, the hardest battles are yet to come.



This or that

WITH ELIZABETH

Writing during the day or late at night?

Standalone books or series?

Enemies to lovers or friends to lovers?

Magic powers or magical creatures?

Villain with a tragic past or villain who loves being evil?

Library full of books or enchanted forest?

Romantic tension or slow-burn romance?

Heroine with a sword or heroine with magic?

Writing the first chapter or writing the final scene?

Handwritten notes or digital writing tools?

Spicy romance scenes or heartwarming romantic moments?

Villain redemption arc or ultimate downfall?

Writing in silence or with background music?

Fae court intrigue or epic battlefield fights?

Writing marathon or writing in short bursts?

Royal ball or dangerous masquerade?

Cliffhangers or neatly wrapped endings?

Secret identity or forbidden love?

Hidden prophecies or surprise plot twists?

If Beasts of the Briar were adapted:

TV series or blockbuster movie?

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WITH HELEN

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