

2023

# BRYN AND FRIENDS



Bryn Petersen

7<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023

# BRYN AND FRIENDS

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# FOREWORD

Bryn and Friends is a free to download magazine. The magazine is a forum to introduce readers to some very dear friends and fellow writers. Between us, we hope to delight, amuse and entertain with a selected poem, a piece of shorter fiction, our 'take' on stories making the news, forthcoming local events, imminent book launches or art exhibitions and a snapshot view of what is happening in 'our' world.

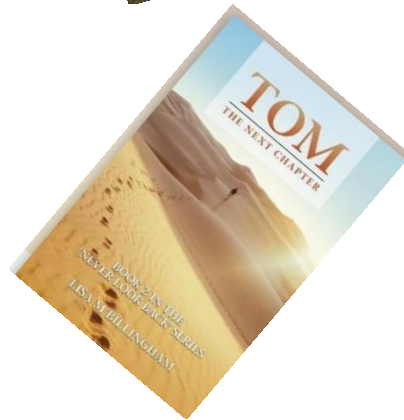
On page four, you will find our feature article for this edition by friend of Bryn, the wonderful Lisa M Billingham. I will let Lisa explain what she does so brilliantly. I am sure when you read what she has to say, her words will resonate and her story will connect with you as she relates her journey to authorship.

For the first edition, our featured poet is Lorraine Buxton. 'Tapestry' is one among many original poems, and further poems by Lorraine will be appearing in future editions.

I hope you enjoy reading this first edition.

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Thank you so much to Bryn for inviting me to share my story with you.

My name is Lisa M Billingham, I'm a Spiritual Naturist who Loves to Read, Write, Speak and Inspire. It hasn't always been this way though.

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For many years’ I worked in a corporate environment: a place where figures and targets mean more than people. It’s a world where the harder you work, the more you are pushed to do better. The world where I spent most of my life doing all the things I disliked. Is it any wonder then I suffered from mental health issues?

In 2011, I was diagnosed with stress, anxiety and depression, given a prescription for Sertraline (which I didn't take for long), a sick note and told, 'don't sit at home and brood, go and do stuff you enjoy,' (I had no idea what I enjoyed, so that was a non-starter.)

My appointment to see a counsellor came through, and eight weeks later, I saw her. I was lucky, by the way, I dread to think what the waiting time is now!

With my self-esteem at an all-time low and having no idea what to do (at this point, I just wanted to crawl into bed and stay there forever,) I wandered around my local town aimlessly, seeking inspiration, and I found it! There was a relaxation class and a Tai Chi class, both starting that week.

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Was it Divine intervention, chance, coincidence? Whichever way you look at it, I needed to find these classes.

I'd had my counselling, done these classes, and I was back to work, but I still wasn't right. I was still searching for the answer.

My counsellor suggested I keep a journal\* so I began writing down my feelings, mainly negative ones, but, gradually, I started to feel better. I carried out ritual burnings of my journals as they were too painful to read. I couldn't read most of it anyway, as it was just angry scribble.

I continued journaling, but still, I was searching for answers. My friend saw that I was a mess and dragged me to see a psychic medium. The reading I had, blew me away. She was communicating with my grandfather, giving me messages and memories only I understood. After seeing her plus others a few times and being told I could do this myself, I started to sit in a circle\*\*. I did it to help myself but with the thought that I could also use it to help others.

In 2014/2015, I trained as a crystal therapist and well-being coach. I met new people, made new friends, and found a new way of life.

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In 2016, I was dealt another curveball. I discovered I had stage 4 [endometriosis](#), I'd never heard of it, but I wanted the pain to stop, so I opted for a hysterectomy. I have no children, so it was a tough decision, but undoubtedly the right one for me. Another six months off work, then back to a job I still didn't enjoy and another bombshell. I was in line for redundancy. In truth, I nudged myself up to first in the queue, I couldn't wait to get out, this was the kick up the backside I needed, but I was scared. What the hell was I going to do now?

I set up a coaching and therapy business, and within a week of finishing my job, I enrolled on courses for self-employment. I networked, posted on social media, fought to get clients and said yes to any work which came my way. I was on autopilot, doing what I thought I should do and what was 'expected' of me.

Close to burnout, again, in 2019, I packed two suitcases and went to work abroad.

Finally, life was getting better. I was in a hot country, making new friends and leaving the past behind. Or was I? The job was just as stressful as my previous one, albeit hotter! Even so, I saw the season out, packed my entire house up and went to do a second season.

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It was another hot country, with less stress, woo hoo... this is it, I thought, I've nailed it... Err, no, not quite. In March 2020, I was flown home due to the onset of the pandemic.

Again, I asked myself, now what? It was constant change, never settling in anything work or relationship-wise. It was one curve ball after another. I'd had enough. I knew I had to make good use of whatever time I had in lockdown, and at this stage, no one knew how long that would be. I wrote a self-help novel based on my life experiences, telling my story through a young girl's eyes. Did I find it hard to write? Yes, absolutely, but only because while writing some of the chapters, I was reliving difficult times, mental health, abuse, and surgery. As I'd burnt all the writing I did as part of my journaling, I had to start from scratch, but I found it very cathartic.

Once I'd written it, I felt different. I could let go of some more of the past and move on. I'd also found a new passion.

Once I'd completed book one, I wanted to write more, I wanted now to tell the story through a different character's eyes to show how connected we all are and how everything we do impacts us and those around us.



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We never know what others are thinking unless they tell us, and, we all have something going on.

It didn't stop there though, I published book two, and I am currently working on book three, but once again exhausted and close to burnout, I had to stop and take stock of things.

I now recognise the signs within myself and listen to my intuition. I was repeating old patterns. Doing the same thing as I did with my previous business and not getting anywhere, but more importantly, I was blocking my creativity. I desperately wanted to get book three finished, but my brain switched off from it. I stopped meetings, networking, and events, and I rested.

This is where the magic happened. I had a flash of inspiration whilst out for lunch in one of my favourite tearooms, and that afternoon I wrote the first 1500 words of the first draft of a children's book, my excitement and enjoyment for writing are back, and I'm loving it! This is the joy of taking a step back and resetting.

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Whilst in that reset period, I also realised something quite profound. With all I had put myself through, the mental health issues, burnout, unfulfilling jobs and relationships and unhappiness, the one thing that was missing was me. I wasn't being me.

I asked myself, what was I doing that I enjoyed? The answer: nothing or next to nothing. I thought back to moments in time, and a couple of things came to mind: I acted as Compere of a show whilst working in a hotel in Menorca, writing, and speaking at an event just recently were the only things I could think of. I love helping people, my mission is to help 1 million people be themselves. So, more writing, speaking, reading and inspiring of others is on the cards for me in 2023, but what about you?

We all do things we need to do and don't like, but if the majority of our day is like that, are we ever going to be happy?

Ask yourself daily, is what I'm planning to do today making me happy? If not, change it. Reach out for help.

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If anything in this article has resonated with you and you're struggling with mental health issues or burnout, here are some [simple exercises](#) you can do to help. Or, you can try the automatic writing exercise or meditation available here: <https://linktr.ee/lisambillingham>

If you want to keep a journal grab a notebook and a pen or pencil (or a selection of coloured pencils) and write. Doodle, scribble, draw, write, anything you like, and as often as you like. Ten minutes a day is a good place to start and here are some [prompts](#) to help you on your way.

My books are available in paperback or eBook on the links below.

<https://books2read.com/u/47YJGq>  
<https://books2read.com/u/bw1VJv>

Or go to my website, <https://lisambillingham.com/> to order signed copies and save 10% when you buy both books.

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\*A [record](#) of what you have done, or of [descriptions](#) or [thoughts](#), written each [day](#) or [frequently](#) over a [long period](#); a [diary](#). (Cambridge English dictionary)  
\*\*A group of people working together honing their psychic/mediumship skills.

Thank you for reading. Lots of love & gratitude, Lisa xx

# TAPESTRY OF LIFE

We are tied to someone from the moment  
We take our first breath and we cry.  
An infinite cord that can bind us  
in a way that no other cord can tie.

It will be there to hold and protect you  
and where possible will keep you from harm  
Through your life it will weave hope and comfort  
and it's strength will keep you safe and warm.

As you live your life you will sense it  
It will always be a part of you.  
Wherever possible it will guide you  
and be with you in all that you do.

Like the voice that has been with you always.  
It has influenced most of your life.  
Subconsciously there in your choices  
Your inner voice has given you good advice.

Ties that bind you to others can nurture  
They encourage you to learn and to grow  
With compassion and kindness these ties  
weave around all that you'll ever know

You cannot deny what you feel deep inside,  
this bond is from high up above.  
It's the tapestry of life, and it's thread ties us all  
With the cord that is made of pure love.

**LORRAINE BUXTON**

## ALL IN THE PACKAGING

A chilly gust tugged one shoulder as Arthur Green wriggled to regain the warmth of his disturbed slumber. With her back decorously turned from him, Sandy Salmon snuggled closer, unconsciously nestling deeper to avoid the chill.

Across from both, Marina Marvel was about to cackle some snide critique when Harriet Hughes directed a piercing look her way. Clare Earl chuckled and clucked as Marina thought better of sniping. Instead, Clare quipped:

“How much longer did they say?”

Clare was reluctant to speak first, but the abject boredom was becoming insufferable.

Harriet contemplated her surroundings. Her thoughts ran something like: ‘absolutely filthy; there were no words to accurately describe the smell’! Her eyes lifted to see Clare studying her for a reaction.

“As long as it takes; I don’t suppose they want us here any longer than necessary.”

She turned her attention to the marvellous Marvel. She was twitching and squirming. Harriet raised a brow: she expected nothing less, and when Marina spat out her thoughts, she gave herself a restrained figurative hand clap.

“I’m going to give them ‘what for’ delaying us like this – it’s outrageous!”

The four remaining watched her flounce into the distance.

As she disappeared on her quest, a shadow fell over them, and all eyes turned to see Harriet Hughes, forcibly lifted and carried off.

Rough and ready though he may be, Arthur Green rushed after to save Harriet. Following a close second was Sandy.

Marina and Clare remained, temporarily frozen by the audacity of the abduction. As Arthur and Sandy struggled to catch up with Harriet and her abductor, Clare and Marina casually traded snipes at the departed three.

Fluttering wildly at the exertion, Arthur and Sandy caught up at last. In front of them, several large machines churned noisily.

“Hey there Jack – looks like you got three for the price of one there!”

He looked about him, suddenly spotting Arthur and Sandy:

“Well, I’ll be! You’re right! All different too!”

He held all three one-use bags aloft:

“They’re getting less and less, thanks to tightening up on plastics!”

His fellow refuse technicians nodded enthusiastically.

“It used to be there’d be loads of the damn things to sort through: now, the odd one here and there, so it’s easier to spot them and pick them out by hand!”

“I’ll go check the spot I found this one – see if there are any more for my collection!”

**Bryn Petersen**



# THE FINAL WORD

If you're reading this, Christmas is as far away as it ever is. It's cold outside and it's back to work and no sign of a reprieve until the first of the Bank Holidays (or some time off if you're lucky to have any leave days left to use).

What I'd like to leave you with as you trudge your way to wherever it is you call work, spare a thought for those who really have nothing. I used to hear 'there's always someone worse off than you' as a child.

It used to grate in the same way another oft quoted phrase did ('eat up your greens – someone starving in Africa would love what's on your plate').

Sadly, there are many people around the world, without the basics we take for granted. I know there's a cost of living crisis, money is tight and all of us are feeling the pinch.

Before you throw away the bun you thought you wanted, think if there is a way you could donate it to someone without the basics we take for granted. It doesn't have to be much – if we all gave a little, it could add up to a lot. Even a smile, or a kind word can mean the world to someone with nothing.

BP

**THE END**