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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Author addresses the isolation and alienation felt by many in the trans community, with allegorical SF adventure

Riftmaster, a new novel from Miles Nelson tells a story about identity, empathy, and what it means to be human, which, though timeless, is especially significant here and now

DARTFORD, KENT – 24 February 2021 – Elsewhen Press, an independent UK publisher specialising in Speculative Fiction, is delighted to announce the publication of *Riftmaster* by **Miles Nelson**. On the face of it, *Riftmaster* is a science fiction adventure about a college student who is whisked away from Earth by a mysterious and unpredictable force known as the Rift and stranded on another world where he meets a mysterious traveller, the self-styled Riftmaster. But at its heart it is an allegory of the isolation and social alienation felt by many in the trans community here on our own planet.

Miles Nelson says, “*Riftmaster* was in part influenced by my own personal experiences. I wanted to write a story about identity, empathy, and what it means to be human. At the time of writing I was myself going through a difficult period of my life. I felt as though I had very few people to turn to. I was engaged, but felt like I wasn’t the person I wanted to be when I was married. Even my fiancé, now husband, who had stood by me from the very beginning, couldn’t quite understand how I felt. I’m trans and autistic. All in all, a great recipe for feelings of isolation and the need for a magical journey of self-discovery. If there’s anything I can take comfort in, it’s the enormous size of the universe we live in. *Riftmaster* gave me the chance to fly away from all of those everyday problems to wonderful and beautiful worlds where earthly problems meant nothing, where so far away from societal expectations, a person is free to be whoever they want.”

How do we deal with these problems if we don’t have the opportunity to leave Earth and travel the cosmos? Miles Nelson adds, “Earth is the only home I, and everyone like me, will ever know, and this planet still has a long way to go before we can feel truly safe and welcome. I could do without seeing the horror on people’s faces when they hear my voice having already called me ‘bro’. One of the things *Riftmaster* addresses is small things like that, and how they can make you feel.”

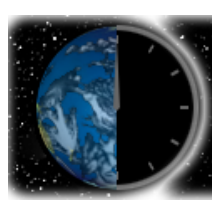
Peter Buck, Editorial Director of Elsewhen Press said, “*Riftmaster* will resonate with many readers who experience isolation and alienation, especially while most of us are still living through imposed social distancing and lockdown. But hopefully it will help people to understand and consider the impact of their words and actions on others.”

Miles Nelson again: “When it comes to the people you know and love, try your hardest to do what makes them happy and comfortable. But... if you slip up or fail, don’t worry; it’s the trying that counts. Every time one of my parents apologises for using the wrong name or pronouns, I always smile. So long as they’re trying their hardest, it’s enough to fill my heart with so much joy. Over the course of the story in *Riftmaster*, it is not overt attempts to hurt someone, but the adamant refusal to change, that causes the most harm. There are many people in my life who, because they knew me before, refuse to even try. But, if I got a promotion at work, they wouldn’t still call me a cashier. How is this really any different? I know it takes time. But it really is the effort to change that counts. There are a lot of little things people can do to help someone feel just a bit less alien. Treating others as equals, for example, rather than calling them ‘sweetheart’ and ‘sir’. You wouldn’t think it’s a big change, but it can mean a lot more than you know.”

Bailey, the main character of *Riftmaster*, is himself not trans. He is someone anybody can relate to: a kind-hearted young man on the cusp of his prime, who was cruelly swept away from everything he’s ever known by nothing more than bad luck. As the story unfolds, Bailey is forced to confront his own personal biases in order to change and grow. Miles Nelson hopes that, one day, *Riftmaster* can help at least one of its readers to do the same.

Riftmaster is available for pre-order in eBook format; it will be published on the 5th March as eBook, and in paperback on 3rd May.

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Notes for Editors

About Miles Nelson



Miles was born and raised in Durham. He studied video game design at Teesside University, graduating in 2018. Since then, he has taken a step back from coding to work on his writing career, and has since led several masterclasses with New Writing North. He has been writing all his life, and although *Riftmaster* is technically his fourth novel, he likes to pretend the first three don't exist. Whilst he is primarily a sci-fi writer who loves long journeys, strange worlds and all things space and stars, he has also had brief flings with the genres of fantasy and horror.

He often writes stories highlighting the struggles faced by the LGBTQ+ community, and tries to include themes of empathy and inclusivity in all he does. Even then, though, Miles stands firm in the belief that this is not the defining element of his stories. And although he tries to represent his community as best he can, these themes are never the main focus; because he believes that (in most cases) a person shouldn't be defined by their deviation from standard norms.

Outside of sci-fi and fantasy, he has a deep-rooted fascination with natural history, and collects books told from unique perspectives (be they animal, alien, or mammoths from Mars). The older, the better; his oldest book is just about to turn 100! He currently lives in Durham City with his husband, Chris, who so far seems unworried by Miles' rapidly growing collections.

About *Riftmaster*



How do you hold on to hope when you're being repeatedly wrenched between worlds?

College student Bailey Jones is plucked from his world by a mysterious and unpredictable force known as the Rift, which appears to move people at random from one world to another. Stranded on an alien planet, he is relieved when he meets a fellow human, the self-styled Riftmaster, who is prepared to assist him. Although curious about his new companion's real identity, Bailey hopes that, with years of experience of the Rift, this cosmic traveller can help him find a way to return to Earth. But first, as the two of them are ripped without warning from one hostile planet to another, Bailey must rely on the Riftmaster to show him how to survive.

Riftmaster, an adventure, an exploration, is concerned with loss, and letting go, while still holding onto your humanity and identity, even when life seems hopeless.

The cover artwork and illustrations in the book were also created by Miles Nelson.

Visit bit.ly/Riftmaster

About Elsewhen Press

Elsewhen Press is an independent publisher of Speculative Fiction. Based in the UK, in the South East of England, Elsewhen Press publishes titles in English, in digital and print editions, adopting a digital-first policy for most titles. Established in 2011, Elsewhen Press is an imprint of Alnpete Limited.

Contact details:

Elsewhen Press contact: Al Murray on +44 (0) 7956 233402 email: al@elsewhen.co.uk

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