

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Science fiction author pioneers pay-it-forward Gift-A-Book scheme in Durham

Miles Nelson, author-in-residence at the BookWyrn indie bookshop, advocates for LGBTQ+ and mental health resources and believes everyone should have access to the books that bring them joy.

DARTFORD, KENT – 28 April 2023 – Elsewhen Press is a publishing house specialising in high quality, entertaining and thoughtful speculative fiction. One of our best-loved authors, **Miles Nelson**, spends time when he's not writing, working in the Durham indie bookshop, BookWyrn, that he co-owns with his husband Chris. As author-in-residence at the bookshop he enjoys meeting new and existing readers of his books. The shop specialises in LGBTQ+ books as well as books by independent authors and small presses, and is very popular with students from Durham University. Miles and Chris are very active in promoting LGBTQ+ and mental health resources and recently announced their innovative pay-it-forward Gift-a-Book scheme, which allows a customer in the shop to purchase a featured book at a reduced price, to be set aside for someone who needs it, with an optional note to "spread little messages of queer joy!" Each month, they will spotlight a new title as their featured book. Their first such featured book was the *Trans Guide to Mental Health and Well-Being* by Katy Lees, chosen to celebrate Trans Day of Visibility. Readers in need of a book but with limited funds can ask at the counter in the shop to see which books are available. As Miles and Chris said in their announcement of the scheme, "Whether it's guides to mental health, identity and neurodiversity or highly anticipated new releases, we believe that everyone should have access to the books that bring them joy, and we hope that Gift-a-Book opens that door to more of Durham's LGBTQ+ community than ever before."

Miles' own books address issues relating to gender, identity and mental health in a science fiction or fantasy setting. His debut book, *Riftmaster*, a science fiction adventure published in 2021 by Elsewhen Press, was concerned with loss and letting go, while still holding onto your humanity and identity, even when life seems hopeless. *Renegade*, the sequel to *Riftmaster*, which is published by Elsewhen Press today, explores loneliness, trust and responsibility. Miles says it has "been one of the most teeth-clenchingly frustrating and rewarding books I've ever worked on." Miles is also a gifted artist – as well as designing the covers to his books, each chapter starts with a small illustration relating to the story. He even makes small hand-sculptured figures to accompany the books, which are sold in the shop and at various other events that Miles and Chris attend. It's no surprise that Miles is often asked to lead writing workshops, especially for younger would-be authors.

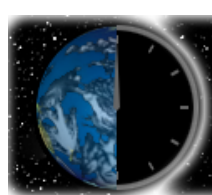
Peter Buck, editorial director of Elsewhen Press says, "When we first met Miles we were amazed at how much energy he has, almost literally bouncing into the room. We launched *Riftmaster* at a science fiction convention and Miles endeared himself to everybody there with his infectious bubbly personality. He and Chris are impressive advocates of the LGBTQ+ community, and great supporters of various projects to help people, especially those who are neurodiverse or suffering from mental health issues. It has been a pleasure to see how quickly they have made a success of their indie bookshop, and what an impact it has already made in Durham. Miles' personality and his concern for the welfare of others comes through very strongly in his writing, adding great depth to his characters, yet not detracting from the action and adventure. We are very proud that Miles chose Elsewhen Press to publish his books."

Andrew Joseph White, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Hell Followed with Us*, said of *Renegade*: "Beautiful sci-fi landscapes and action-packed adventure collides with a heart-wrenching look at loss and grief; what does it mean to love when you will always have to leave someone behind?"

Miles Nelson says "It's so exciting to finally release *Renegade* to the world, but so nerve-racking too! I've never written a sequel before, and even more than that, this is the first time I've had people eagerly awaiting my next release! *Renegade* is very different from its predecessor – I'm so excited to see what everyone thinks!"

Chris and Miles' bookshop, BookWyrn, is in Unit 12 in Durham's Indoor Market Hall, and can be found online at <https://bookwyrn.co.uk/>

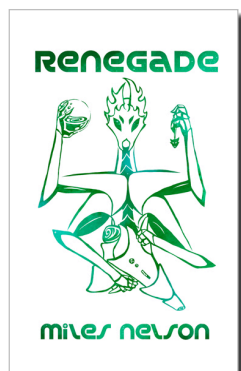
Renegade, the sequel to Miles' bestselling *Riftmaster*, is published in eBook today and in paperback on 29th May.



Notes for Editors

About Renegade

The Riftmaster Ari is on their own, with nothing but their wit, their satchel, and a vow to make it back to Earth.



To do that they must stay alive, no matter the cost... but it seems that the inhabitants of this vast universe have other plans.

With Bailey gone, Ari's life should shift back to normalcy. But after discovering all that remains of their family and taking the life of their love, Ari feels more alone than ever. Their only company is the strange sickness that fights against their every move, and the starships that seem to creep across the skies of every planet they visit. Starships belonging to the Renohaiin Empire.

In their time as Riftmaster, Ari has made allies and enemies alike. Even still, the Empire's motives are hazy at the best of times, and insidious at the worst. As Ari's condition deteriorates, the Renohaiin alone might have a cure.

For now, the Riftmaster is alive. But just how far will they go to keep it that way?

Renegade is the much anticipated sequel to *Riftmaster*, the 2021 bestseller from Miles Nelson.

Cover art: Miles Nelson
Visit bit.ly/Renegade-Nelson

About Miles Nelson



Miles Nelson was born and raised in the distant north, in a quaint little city called 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* was 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 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.

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