

Staff Suggestions Shelf

It probably won't surprise you to learn that many of your library staff members are avid readers! We will, of course, always keep you updated with the latest film and book suggestions on our various themed displays throughout the year, but have you ever wondered what we read ourselves when we want to escape reality? Each month over the next few months, a few of us will be writing brief reviews about our favourite 'Go-to' books in the hopes to inspire you to try something new!

Next up is by our mum of four Karen Owen, who not surprisingly, doesn't usually get a lot of time to sit and read between the multiple school runs, production of our amazing displays, reading and watch lists and being dragged out for ever longer walks by her little dog Ezra. The following is one of her all time favourites however and a real hidden gem of a book!



Book Title: Labyrinth A Novel Based on the Jim Henson Film

Author: A.C.H. Smith

Genre: Fantasy

What rating would you give it?



What's it about? (no Spoilers!)

What happens when you wish for something terrible ... and your wish comes true? Young Sarah is about to find out. Left at home to mind her baby brother, Toby, she finds herself trying to comfort a screaming infant as a wild storm rages about the house. In a fit of temper, she wishes that the goblins would come and take the child away. Unfortunately, they do.

Sarah then plunges into a whirlwind adventure.

If she cannot reach the centre of the mysterious Labyrinth within thirteen hours, Jareth -- King of the Goblins -- will keep Toby forever. In the twists and turns of her dangerous journey to Jareth's castle, she meets an extraordinary variety of strange characters, some more friendly than others. But none of them will be able to help her unless she musters the courage to challenge Jareth -- no matter what the odds.

A.C.H. Smith, who is also author of *The Dark Crystal* and *Lady Jane*, has captured all the excitement and poetry of a brilliant film in this riveting novel.

Why are you recommending it?

This is my 'go to' book because it reminds me of my childhood, it's based on the Jim Henson film of the same name, which was released in 1986 and is one of my favourite fantasy films. *Labyrinth* has become a cult film for fans over the years, but it's still not as well-known as it should be, when I saw the book I just had to read it -as I'm such an ardent fan of the film.

Both the film and book are a wonderful magical fantasy tale. Sarah is a strong character, she has so much self-development within the pages of the book; she is a typical teenager and truly loves to complain about how the world is against her. But her adventure through the Labyrinth helps her to see that life simply isn't always fair and she just has to get on with it. She has compassion for others and can be very brave at times, as the story progresses she grows from a stropky teenage girl into a strong young woman. Jareth, the Goblin King is a complex character who makes you feel empathy for him. He is certainly not your classic villain, he has fears and longings and is willing to do whatever it takes to conquer them. There are of course some other wonderful characters in the book, who Sarah meets as she tries to solve the Labyrinth - I can't give too much away or you won't want to read it!

This is the first film inspired book I have read. I was cautious at first, as the film is one of my favourites and I was unsure how the book could match up to the film. What I loved about the film, and what cannot be seen in the book, is that the whole *Labyrinth* is based on Sarah's life. The creature characters are based on her childhood toys that she keeps in her bedroom. The book does offer some extra scenes and gives you some insight into the backgrounds of the two main characters. We get to understand Jareth's motives so much better as well as why Sarah's mother is no longer in her life. If you have seen the movie and loved it, I highly recommend you read this, as it will only enrich your enjoyment of the film. It really adds more depth to the characters and to the story itself. If you haven't seen the film, read the book! What are you waiting for?

Where can I get a copy?

The book is now out of print but you can buy a used copy from eBay or Amazon.

Did you know...?

Jareth's face (played by the great late David Bowie) can be spotted hiding in seven scenes throughout the film, watching Sarah trying to solve the labyrinth.

