Helping your children choose books they will love

I ♥ reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

# Love Hurts

Written by

**Malorie Blackman**

Published by

**Corgi Childrens an imprint of Random House Children's Publishing**

**All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator**

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

LOVE HURTS
A CORGI BOOK 978 0 552 57397 9

First published in Great Britain by Corgi,
an imprint of Random House Children's Publishers UK
A Penguin Random House Company




This edition published 2015

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Introduction and HUMMING THROUGH MY FINGERS
copyright © Malorie Blackman, 2015
Illustrations © Lisa Horton, 2015
Short stories and extracts © individual authors; see Permissions.

The right of Malorie Blackman to be identified as the editor of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Every effort has been made by the publishers to contact the copyright holders of the material published in this book; any omissions will be rectified at the earliest opportunity.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

The Random House Group Limited supports the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®), the leading international forest-certification organisation. Our books carrying the FSC label are printed on FSC®-certified paper. FSC is the only forest-certification scheme supported by the leading environmental organisations, including Greenpeace. Our paper procurement policy can be found at www.randomhouse.co.uk/environment.




Set in Bembo Reg 12.5pt

Corgi Books are published by Random House Children's Publishers UK,
61–63 Uxbridge Road, London W5 5SA

www.**randomhousechildrens**.co.uk
www.**totallyrandombooks**.co.uk
www.**randomhouse**.co.uk

Addresses for companies within The Random House Group Limited
can be found at: www.randomhouse.co.uk/offices.htm

THE RANDOM HOUSE GROUP Limited Reg. No. 954009

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

# INTRODUCTION

Love Hurts. Sometimes. If it didn't, a significant proportion of the stories throughout the world would disappear.

So what is love? Chemical reactions in our brains? Electrical impulses? A universal energy? The manifestation of our souls? An intertwining of our ephemeral existences? Yes, I know that last one is vomit-inducing! But seriously, what is it? Is love the one true unifying force that links all of us? Is it any, all or none of the above?

Maybe reading about love is our way of trying to figure it out. It's one of those intangibles that you can't hold in your hand and which words cannot, perhaps ever, adequately convey, but is shown in how we act towards and speak to and treat others. And while we may never find the words to effectively express just what love is, that certainly shouldn't stop us from trying.

Star-crossed lovers have always been at the heart of

our stories, from Orpheus and Eurydice, Kintu and Nambi, Paris and Helen, Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet, the butterfly lovers Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, Lancelot and Guinevere, Layla and Qays (Majnun), Heathcliff and Cathy, right up to Buffy and Angel, Spider-Man and Gwen Stacy, Katniss and Peeta.

I have never described my own book *Noughts & Crosses* as a love story, but the relationship between Callum and Sephy lies at the very core of it. It is the beating heart of my story. Without that, the rest of the plot just wouldn't work. Our relationships with others are an integral part of our lives. Surely love provides a point and purpose to life? Those who cannot find it or do not have it perhaps seek lesser and maybe more destructive alternatives, or are resigned to a life which doesn't reach its full potential.

Stories serve many purposes – to illuminate, educate, entertain. Love stories let us know that sometimes, in spite of many and varied obstacles thrown in our way, love can triumph. But sometimes it doesn't. That's love – and life. In love stories, it's the journey, not the destination, that is all important. The stories in this anthology aren't all hearts and flowers. God forbid! I like my love stories to have a bit of spice and bite! These stories contain love lost, love found, the start of love, the end of love, love bitter and love sweet.

The stories and extracts of stories contained within this anthology are old and new favourites of mine, as well as some wonderful new stories. They show that

'the course of true love never did run smooth' (thank you, Lysander from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). I hope the extracts and short stories will whet your appetite and encourage you to seek out more books by these authors.

I know these stories will amuse, entertain, surprise, and maybe provoke thought and discussion. I really do believe there's something in this anthology for everyone.

Enjoy!

**Malorie Blackman**