

The Norris Girls

Synopsis

Dad goes to a dangerous foreign country, leaving the family at home to fend for themselves, but life must go on for the Norris sisters...

Beth dreams of being in the school musical, especially when super cool Josh gets the lead part.

Georgy trains every day, trying to win a place in the Inter-Counties Athletics Championships, but first she has to beat her arch-rival, Layla.

And Katie wants an animal to look after – a dog or a cat or a rabbit would do, but if she could choose one thing in the whole world it would be a pony.

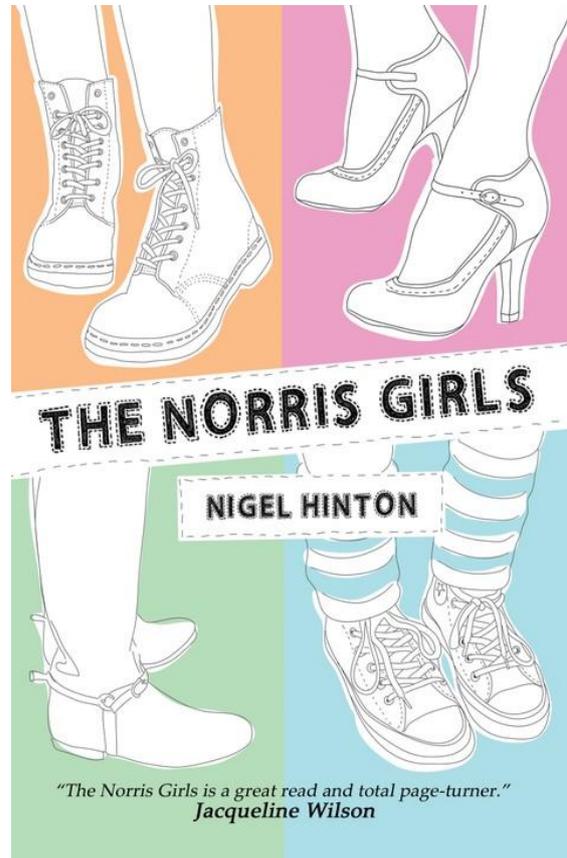
But, when the girls discover that their dad has been taken as a hostage by terrorists their lives are turned upside down!

Filled with tears and laughter, heartache and longing, this is *Little Women* for the twenty-first century.

About The Book

In response to the uncertain world we live in, teenage author, Nigel Hinton, has written *The Norris Girls*, inspired by a classic nineteenth century novel.

Nigel Hinton says: "The idea for *The Norris Girls* began when pupils asked me two questions during a school visit. The first was, 'Why do you always write about boys?' and the second was, 'Why do writers always write about unhappy families?' Shortly after that I read *Little Women* and adored the story of the March sisters. Here were loving, supportive girls carrying on with their lives against the background of the threat and danger of the American Civil War.



Remembering this, Nigel decided to try to write a twenty-first century equivalent of the book. Described as 'a total page turner' by Jacqueline Wilson, *The Norris Girls*, tells the story of three sisters; Beth, Georgy and Katie.

Beth, Georgy and Katie Norris are part of a close and loving family. They squabble and fall out and compete with each other like girls do but their relationships are underpinned by love. They adore their dad who goes to a dangerous country to help in a humanitarian project to build a dam. While he's away they each carry on with ordinary life, pursuing their passions – pony riding, athletics and acting. Then their lives are shaken up by their dad being taken hostage by terrorists, in the same way that the girls in *Little Women* have to face the wounding of their father in the war.

Nigel continues: "I was conscious that kids and teens nowadays live with terrorism and hostage taking as an ever-present background to their daily lives. They are daily being told about the hostile world out there and I wanted the book to be upbeat, optimistic and positive despite the difficult times we live in. So I tried to make these girls, led by their mother, an example and comfort to the readers. In the face of the threat to their dad, they close ranks, strengthen their loving bonds, and find the will to carry on living, dedicating their achievements and little triumphs to him. The terrifying situation brings out the very best in each of them and consequently brings out the best in the people round them so that love and friendship defeats the cruelty and danger of the world. I deliberately left the identity of the terrorists vague because I didn't want to make the book a political statement but rather concentrate on the life-affirming strength to be found in a loving family and network of friends even at the worst of times."

The sisters throw themselves into their hobbies and passions – music, acting, horse-riding and charities – and focus their energy on their own goals and ambitions. Cathy Cassidy, author of *The Chocolate Box Girls* series of books, is also a fan of *The Norris Girls*. She says: "A warm, wise and all-round wonderful read about the bond between three very different but equally awesome sisters... I loved this book!"

Nigel has a fantastic reputation for children's writing, as the author behind the magical *Beaver Towers* series and the Federation of Children's Book Groups Award winning *Finders*. *The Norris Girls* will be the author's twenty-seventh book, following a hugely successful writing career spanning over two decades. His previous titles have won countless awards, including the Children's Book of the Year Award, the Federation of Children's Book Groups Award and the Federation of Children's Book Group Pick of the Year.

Nigel has also written for television, film and theatre. Nigel's best-known teen book *Buddy* was adapted for a five-part BBC television series, and then later its sequel *Buddy's Song* was adapted for a film. The emblematic series starter is one title in Penguin Books' collection *The Originals*, in the company of Dodie Smith, Berlie Doherty, Robert Swindells and John Steinbeck.

About The Author

Nigel Hinton was born in London in 1941. After leaving school, he worked in an advertising agency for two years, before deciding to study English at university. He then trained as a teacher and taught for ten years at a school in Tonbridge. It was then that he wrote his first book and has been writing ever since.

Nigel has written over twenty books including the best selling Buddy novel trilogy (adapted into a television series Buddy and movie Buddy's Song). He also wrote the popular Beaver Towers book series, which has been adapted for TV.

What People Are Saying About *The Norris Girls*

"The Norris Girls is a great read and a total page-turner."

Jacqueline Wilson, author

"A warm, wise and all-round wonderful read about the bond between three very different but equally awesome sisters... I loved this book!"

Cathy Cassidy, author

"The Norris Girls is such a delight. It is refreshing to read a young adult book that is unashamed to depict tenderness, hope, and deep family ties, all sustaining three girls of very different temperaments and ambitions. Their lives are not without personal conflict, fear and the pains of self-discovery, which give each girl's story very satisfying twists and turns. At the heart of the book is the beautiful depiction of the love and respect that draw the Norris family together during a crisis that threatens their very future."

L M Romano, Amazon Customer

"I love Nigel Hinton's books, both those for younger children and those for young adults, but I was surprised when I came across *The Norris Girls* to see this was about the lives of three girls and wondered whether he would

be up to the challenge of capturing the way girls becoming adults think and feel. But Nigel has nailed it. So many of the concerns and ambitions, the occasional flashes of utter misery alternating with joy are familiar and he writes so well about the relationship between these three very different sisters and the way they tackle the very adult problems confronting them. I can certainly recommend this book. There is a great story full of suspense and sympathetic characters about whom I find I want to hear more."

Katharine Gordon, Amazon Customer

"In these dark days, many dreadful stories reach the eyes and ears of young people, so it's a joy to find a book which, as well as being a page-turner, is basically uplifting as well. With simplicity, sensitivity and pace, Nigel Hinton tells the story of three sisters and their mother, doing their best to get on with their lives while their father is seriously at risk in a third world country. On the surface it's an account of the everyday dramas, conflicts, challenges, aspirations and achievements of these very different girls, and also of the relationships within the family. But essentially it's a story of love, courage and generosity – and on several occasions it moved me to tears."

P.W, Amazon Customer

"What a warm, lovely story. I'm old but I could have been ten and I don't mind crying. Yep, a warm and refreshing story about what's really important."

Rose B, Amazon Customer

"I love the deep loyalty that exists in the Norris family despite the day to day conflicts that afflict all families. The writer manages to convey the importance of family devotion without sounding in any way smug. There's quite a bit of humour along the way too. Highly recommended for readers of all ages who enjoy a good story."

Lynda Pritchard Newcombe, Amazon Customer

This is book if officially one of my favourites. It made me cry in places which few books have done (I read *Fault in our Stars* and didn't cry, shocking I know). It made me laugh and it made me smile. Mr Hinton was very brave to write a YA book about the topics of war and war prisoners. I feel like this book could become a new classic."

Jasmine Victoria, Amazon Customer

Key Selling Points

- A realistic, uplifting coming of age story.
- Real life themes including: growing up, young love, loss and being brave.
- *The Norris Girls* is a modern retelling of the classic book *Little Women*.
- Scripts have been written.
- Strong female leads.

Comparable Works

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

The Dumping Ground

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls by Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo

PR, Media and Marketing Opportunities

- *The Norris Girls* is a modern novel inspired by the classic book *Little Women*. It is a work of positive and life affirming fiction, which is 'the new big thing in publishing' as reported by The Guardian at the 2017 London Book Fair.
- Jacqueline Wilson and Cathy Cassidy thoroughly enjoyed the book and provided quotes.
- Reviews in The School Librarian, Primary Times, Carousel, Love Reading for Kids, Books for Keeps, The Independent, The Guardian, Metro, Minerva Reads, Reading Zone, Young Writers, Awfully Big Reviews, Diary of an Evans Crittens and Love Reading 4 Kids.

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