# Writer emerges out of the mist with debut novel

## New Lodge author sees work pay off with novel's publication

BY KIERAN HUGHES
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GETTING A novel published is harder now than it has ever been with only a fraction of authors ever experiencing the joy of seeing their book on the shelves.

But for one North Belfast author the illusive dream will soon become a reality when his debut novel hits the shops next month.

New Lodge native Martin Treanor has been slogging away as a writer for over 10 years, but this March his first published novel, The Silver Mist will be available online and in the shops in May.

The book tells the story of a young Belfast woman with Down's syndrome and how she handles a series of catastrophic events, including her father's death and Bloody Friday, when nine people were killed in a series of IRA bomb attacks in 1972.

"I originally came up with the idea lying in bed one night," Martin told the North Belfast News this week.

"I always like my characters to be on the fringes of society. It is about how this woman perceives the world around her and how she might react to catastrophic events. The premise is that people who we see as being disabled are perhaps closer to enlightenment."



New Lodge writer Martin Treanor whose novel The Silver Mist is on sale now

To try and get inside the mind of someone with Down's syndrome Martin was able to draw on personal experience

"My cousin, Eugene, has Down's syndrome. He is from County Tyrone and we would spend a lot of time with him in the summer and other holidays. He is an influential story in my life."

Despite the The Silver Mist's emotive subject matter, not every publisher was convinced of its worth.

But despite the years of being turned down, Martin takes a positive attitude to rejection.

"The thing about being a writer is that you have to take rejection in the neck," he explained.

"But when that letter comes it's like all your Christmases have come at once. It's a great feeling – it's been a long time coming."

Born and raised in Upper Meadow Street, Martin and his family moved to Hopefield Avenue when he was 15-years-old.

With such a strong connection to childhood in his stories was his schooling at Holy Family Primary and St Malachy's College a big influence on his writing?

"School was school, I wasn't really a school person," he says. "For me looking back on it I got what I got from school in terms of qualifications but that was it. I don't really look back on my schooldays a lot."

Martin, who now lives in London, started writing seriously in 1998 and managed to get his first short story published in writer's magazine Spinetingler.

'Who's Charlie' again called on childhood experiences and is an exploration of the child's imaginary friend.

"It's a long process and most writers get frustrated," says Martin of his 13 year apprenticeship. "There are years and years of having tp have a thick skin, we have to live with rejection."

But he adds it is important to realise that it only takes one publisher to see something in your work and everything can change.

"It is a very subjective business. With The Silver Mist one publisher wrote back and said they like the story but the language didn't appeal to them. The publisher that eventually took it simply wrote they like it a lot. It's about taking that rejection and using it in a positive way. I must have re-written this one about 20 times!"

Now 48-years-old, Martin's perseverance seems to have finally paid off.

*The Silver Mist, published by Better Karma Publishing, will be available on Amazon.com and other online retailers from March 24 and will be available in shops from May.*

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## Teen bound over after incident at the Mater

**A 19-YEAR-OLD who became abusive to police while waiting to be assessed at the Mater Hospital in the city, was made the subject of a binding over order last Tuesday.**

**Darren Kelly of Churchill House, Belfast was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of the hospital, where he became verbally abusive to officers who were in attendance.**

**Police warned him about his behaviour, but after he refused to co-operate and persisted in hurling abuse, he was arrested and later charged with a public order offence.**

**The prosecutor at last Tuesday's Court said the Department was prepared to drop the charge on the understanding that the accused agree to be bound over to be of good behaviour.**

**Kelly agreed to the recommendation, and District Judge Fiona Bagnall imposed the Order to run for 12 months, on the defendant's own recognisance of £400.**

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