

## **Niel Bushnell – Writing Projects – July 2022**

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### **Animation Projects**

#### ***Badly Researched Police***

Badly Researched Police is an oddball detective show that follows the unlikely adventures of Detective Alita Luck of the Badly Researched Police Division and her newly assigned partner from the Meticulously Researched Police Division, Detective Ted Happenstance.

Opposites who have very different views on how to solve crime, the duo use their unique skills to foil the plans of a series of criminal masterminds bent on world domination.

Overseen by their permanently outraged boss, Chief Karen Karen, Luck and Happenstance take on the might of the criminal underworld, managing to save the day with an unstable mix of pedantic policing and giddy guesswork.

In a world of anthropomorphic animal characters, dry humour and high stakes slapstick, almost anything can – and does – happen on an alarmingly frequent basis.

- Series Outline [available here](#)
- Pilot script, METABOT, [available here](#)

#### ***Robot and Rex***

A tiny piece of animated calm, Robot and Rex is a series of 5-minute stories that explore two unlikely siblings, Robot (a robot) and Rex (a Tyrannosaurus Rex) as they learn about life through their little adventures. Each episode is narrated by a calming female voice who interacts with Robot and Rex as they play, learn and explore.

This is a soothing show, a place to slow down for five minutes and enjoy the warmth of the character's interactions. The background is minimal, reducing stimulation of the viewer, enticing you in with the clear space to let you unwind. The playspace is a white environment with minimal decoration to suggest any required locations (think Pocoyo or Raa Raa the Noisy Lion).

The camera moves gently, forming a continuous scene, as if we're looking through the eyes of the narrator. Her voice is soothing and warm, a calming influence over the entire show, and the only voice we can fully understand. The voices of Robot and Rex are tonally interesting and can convey emotion and intent, but not decipherable words.

- Series Outline [available here](#)
- Pilot script, SHARING, [available here](#)

## **Deadgehogs**

Dead Hedgehogs = DEADGEHOGS. They're spiky undead creatures trying to discover what it really means to be alive. What a fluffy lark! DEADGEHOGS explores life, death, and the squidgy, smelly, fluffy, spikey bits in between. Its humour is dark and mature.

The DEADGEHOGS find themselves somewhere between life and death, a limbo existence, a sort of purgatory that they know as the Layby of Life and Death. The DEADGEHOGS are very dead, but still exist in our world and can interact with it. They're all trying to work out what the fluff is going on, but they don't have a clue.

- Series Outline [available here](#)
- Pilot script, THE SWORD OF POO-MAH-PARNTS, [available here](#)

## **Liveaction Television projects**

### ***Altitude***

A coming-of-age drama about a trio of 16-year-old girls who, while dealing with exams, leaving school and life-changing issues at home, find their friendships tested when one of them discovers an amazing secret in the nearby wood: she can fly. (Based on the novel of the same name)

- Pitch document [available here](#).

## **Picturebooks (0 - 5)**



### ***Tonight: the Bed-Bugs bite!***

It's time for bed in Annie's house, She's tucked in for the night. Her dad says with a loving kiss, "*Don't let the Bed-Bugs bite!*" Her dad may just be having fun, She might be safe and snug. But Annie thinks there something huge, Down there beside the rug!

A fun rhyming picturebook about not being afraid of the dark. [Read the text here.](#)

### ***Leonard's Long Lie In***

Leonard is a young lion who loves his bed. One day he has the longest lie in ever! When he finally gets up, he realises he has missed out on a day of fun with friends and family, and he vows to change his ways.



### ***I don't want to be a Dinosaur!***

Marvin isn't like the other dinosaurs. He doesn't like hunting, or roaring or anything else that dinosaurs are supposed to do. In fact, Marvin doesn't want to be a dinosaur at all and he sets out to discover what sort of creature he would like to be instead.

I DON'T WANT TO BE A DINOSAUR is a charming adventure of discovery that addresses issues around identity and acceptance.

## Chapter Books (6 - 9)

### *Eric's Ears – Shakespeare's Secret*

Eric Merrick loved History, in fact it was his most favourite lesson. Really! He loved it so much that he wanted to know everything about it. Every tiny detail. The sort of things that the history books usually didn't tell you: *What did the Great Fire of London smell like? Can Popes swim? Who would win in a fight: John F Kennedy or Queen Elizabeth the first?* Luckily for him, Eric's oversized ears gave him the ability to travel in time! All he had to do was give a friendly tug on his left ear and he would end up somewhere in the past. Then, when he was ready for home, he would pull on his right ear and find himself back where he started.

The first story in a series of time-travelling misadventures with Eric and his larger-than-life pencil case Earnest as they answer the really big questions of history, like "Why is Shakespeare bald?"

- Read Eric's Ears: Shakespeare's Sandwich [here](#)

### *The Tunnel to (Almost) Anywhere*

Isla and her best friend, Sam, find a strange tunnel in the woods at the back of her new home. It's a tunnel that can take you anywhere, if you can really picture it. Atlas-loving Sam has plenty of places he'd like to see, but Isla's imagination keeps getting distracted, and they never seem to end up where they want to go.

### *The Hamsters of Herne Forest*

A series of books about a secretive ancient tribe of giant hamsters that live in the forest of Herne. When one of the strange creatures is injured, he is found by Ollie, a young boy who is determined to help him. A modern British fairy tale in the spirit of Miyazaki's *My Neighbour Totoro*.



## Middle Grade (9 – 12)



### *The Timesmith Chronicles*

There's a great secret that all but a few have forgotten. For within each gravestone rests a Sorrowline, a tunnel that leads back in time to the date of a person's death. Twelve-year-old Jack Morrow is about to discover a hidden world of adventure in the past...

Blending fantasy with folklore and Arthurian legend SORROWLINE is the first of the TIMESMITH CHRONICLES, a series of books charting the life and adventures of Jack Morrow. It is aimed at the children's market and would appeal to both girls and boys due to its mix of adventure, mythology and strong female characters.

SORROWLINE and TIMESMITH were published by Andersen Press in 2013 and 2014. A third book, GRIMNIRE, is planned.

- The first three chapters of SORROWLINE are [available here](#).
- The TIMESMITH CHRONICLES pitch document [available here](#).

### *The Seven Swords of Wayland*

After the death of his mother, twelve-year-old Tom moves to the village of Edgil to live with his grandparents. But his tranquil new life in the countryside is shattered when Tom discovers an ancient sword, one of seven that were crafted by Wayland the Smith long ago, and he finds himself caught up in a desperate chase to find the other missing swords and stop them falling into the wrong hands. For whomever brings the seven swords of Wayland together is destined to rule the world.

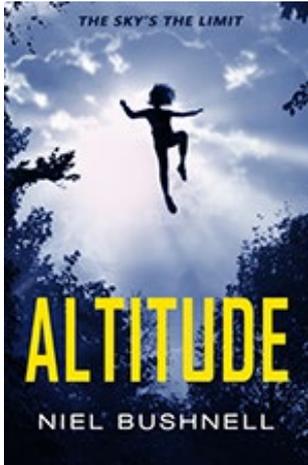
THE SEVEN SWORDS OF WAYLAND is a series of seven books mixing fast-paced adventure with folklore and legend.

### *The Nineteens*

In a near-future world where an incurable virus has killed millions of teenagers, a radical solution has been developed: When children turn 13 they enter a Callow chamber, a device which accelerates them to the age of 19. They skip over the teen years and exit as mature adults – a Nineteen. But there may be more to the technology than meets the eye, and there are rumours that its also used to control a bloated population. When Florian approaches his thirteenth birthday, having already seen his best friend changed by the process, he runs away, determined to live a natural life. Hunted by Nimrods – hunters of rogue teenagers – Florian embarks on a dangerous adventure into the underworld of a dystopian future.

THE NINETEENS is a futurist adventure that taps into the fear of growing up and the imminent changes of adulthood.

## YA Stories (14+)



### ***Altitude***

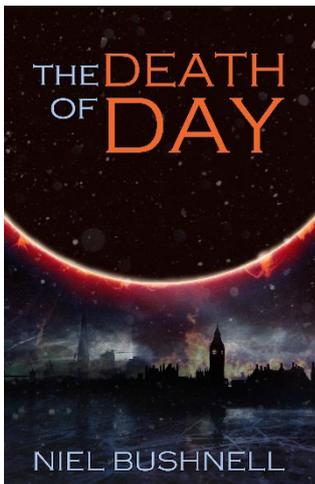
'I'm flying!' Tam shouted. 'I'm really flying!'

While coming to terms with her father's illness, Tamsin discovers an amazing secret in the nearby wood: she can fly. It's a secret too big to keep to herself, but the only person she can turn to is Abigail - a girl from school who hates her.

As Tamsin learns how to control her newfound ability the bonds of friendship begin to unravel, starting a chain of events that could lead to tragedy.

ALTITUDE explores the perennial problems of identity, family and faith while also touching on issues including bullying, divorce, domestic abuse and death. But this is no gritty, downbeat drama; this is a story full of aspiration, hope and laughter as our main characters grow to deal with and overcome the challenges they face. It's about growing up and dealing with the strange transition from childhood to adulthood told over an endless magical summer.

- Sample [available here](#).



### ***The Death of Day***

An unnatural solar eclipse plunges the Earth into darkness as a solar flare wipes out all communications. Anarchy rules as the police and army fail to control the terrified population.

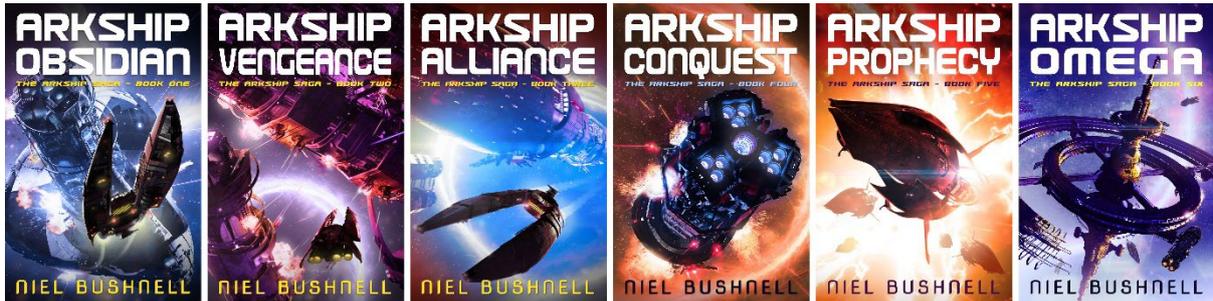
Kyle Chung wakes to news of a prolonged eclipse of the Sun. With the world plunged into darkness, and a solar flare wiping out all communications, Kyle, along with his 8-year-old daughter Anna, try to find his missing wife in the hostile frozen streets of London. Kyle and Anna find themselves drawn deeper and deeper into world-changing events as they witness the last days of our civilisation, while uncovering the ancient truth behind this unnatural event.

THE DEATH OF DAY is an apocalyptic vision of a world thrust into darkness and chaos told through the experiences of a teenage boy and his young sister.

- [Read a sample here](#).

## Novels for Adults

### *The Arkship Saga*



**The sun is just a memory... the planets are all gone... mankind is on the brink of extinction.**

Earth has been destroyed, the entire solar system turned to dust by a cataclysmic event known as the Fracture. Now, the last survivors of humanity live on vast arkships drifting through the Cluster, fighting for survival in this hostile, ever-changing environment.

When the arkship *Obsidian* is attacked, Wynn awakes in an escape pod fleeing from a huge space battle, unable to remember who he is. Aided by Bara, an engineer who survived the attack, Wynn finds himself hunted by a killer robot, the forces of a rival arkship, and the mysterious Church of the Infinite. Wynn finally discovers he is in fact Prince Halstead, the heir to the House of Kenric, and the only one who can stop the leader of the House of Draig, the unhinged Orcades Draig, from seizing control of the ravaged Kenric fleet.

THE ARKSHIP SAGA follows Prince Halstead, Bara and a robot called Gofal over a period of twenty years as they build an alliance against the rise of the House of Draig and the increasing dominance of the Church of the Infinite. Personal conflicts unfold alongside epic battles for survival, in an expanding story that explores concepts of free will, democracy and religion against a backdrop of rival arkships fighting over dwindling resources.

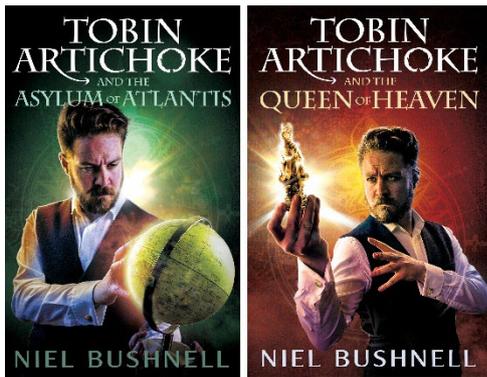
The Arkship Saga series:

- ARKSHIP OBSIDIAN
- ARKSHIP VENGEANCE
- ARKSHIP ALLIANCE
- ARKSHIP CONQUEST
- ARKSHIP PROPHECY
- ARKSHIP OMEGA

Five novels plus three short stories published so far. A prequel trilogy is also planned.

Book one, **ARKSHIP OBSIDIAN**, [sample available here](#).

## ***Tobin Artichoke and the Queen of Heaven***



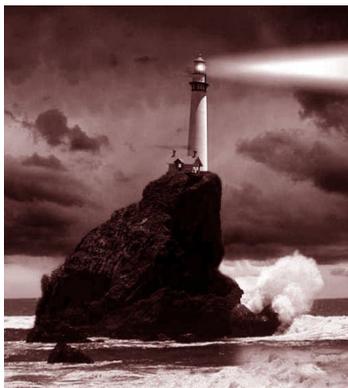
When an ancient artefact – *The Queen of Heaven* – is discovered in amongst the junk at a flea market, Tobin Artichoke and his decapitated brother Drake find themselves on a quest that takes them from London to a secret cave under a nuclear power station, to Hell, the Afterlife and beyond, as they try to find the artefact before it falls into the wrong hands. For the mythical Queen of Heaven is the key to possessing all of creation, including every soul on Earth.

In a race against time, Tobin becomes the reluctant representative of a distracted deity, and the fate of all humanity rests in his hands. But Tobin couldn't care less about other people, and saving every living soul might just be the death of him!

TOBIN ARTICHOKE AND THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN is the first book in a series of humorous paranormal fantasy stories about crypto-cartographer Tobin Artichoke, a cursed immortal map-maker of places that aren't supposed to exist.

- Pitch document [available here.](#)
- Sample [available here.](#)

## **Radio projects**



### ***Ragnor Rock***

Sitcom commissioned by BBC Radio 4. 15 years ago all British Lighthouses were automated, their crews reassigned. All except one: Ragnor Rock, ignored and forgotten

- Pitch document [available here.](#)
- Pilot script [available here.](#)
- Development recording [available here.](#)

### ***Floater***

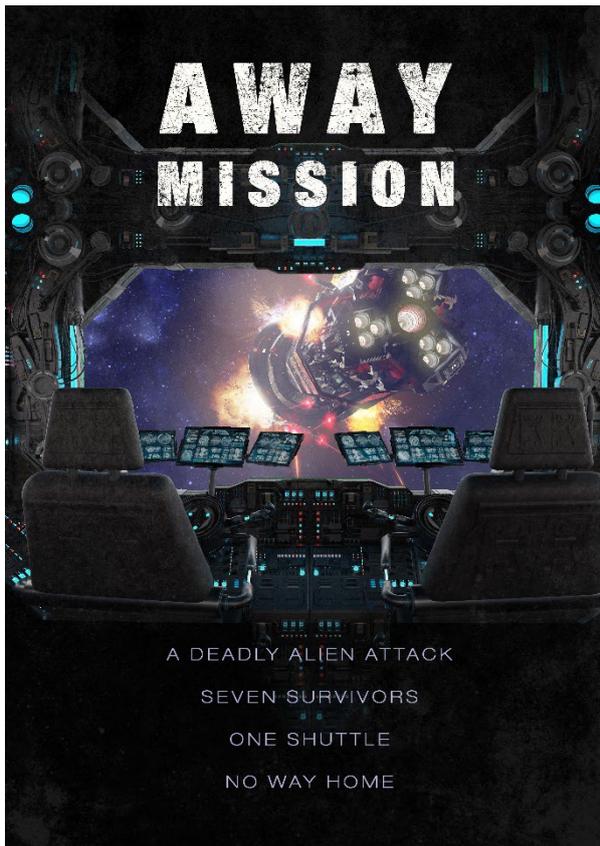
School friends Jeff and Keith don't have much in common outside of their Saturday ritual get-together in the council-run swimming pool. It's a chance for them to wallow in the shallow end as they share in the tides and ripples of each other's lives, two hopeful losers who daren't dive into the deep end, in spite of their friend Andy's encouragement.

## Feature projects

### *The Waiting Room*

Nathan and Sasha, two young London professionals, juggle busy careers with the desire to spend more time together. But when Nathan inherits his eccentric father's nuclear fallout shelter - just before the bombs start to drop – buried secrets have nowhere to hide, and they discover if their relationship can really survive the pressure of intimacy. The Waiting Room is a modern-day quirky love story set in London, utilising a limited number of sets and locations.

- Finalist – Other Worlds Film Festival / Under Worlds Film Festival 2020
- Quarter Finalist - the Page International Screenwriting Awards 2019.
- Quarter Finalist - The Script Lab Screenplay Contest 2019.
- Screenplay [available here.](#)



### *Away Mission*

When an unknown enemy destroys the UEC Sharman, a lone shuttle with the last seven members of its crew must find a way to get a message back to Earth, before it's too late. A tense, contained, science fiction action movie: 'Crimson Tide' meets 'Star Trek'.

### *J.L.B.*

Biopic based on the life of John Logie Baird.

## Miscellaneous

### *DCSS*

A comedy short funded by Tees Valley Screen. [Watch on Vimeo](#)

### *Kielder Brag*

A multimedia project including writing, directing and illustration. Short story [available here](#)

[Portfolio](#) – PDF