



I Wrote This For You

pleasefindthis; Jon Ellis

"I need you to understand something. I wrote this for you. I wrote this for you and only you. Everyone else who reads it, doesn't get it."

Started 2007, *I Wrote This For You* is an acclaimed exploration of hauntingly beautiful words, photography and emotion that's unique to each person that reads it. This book gathers together nearly 200 of the most beautiful entries into four distinct chapters; Sun, Moon, Stars, Rain. Together with several new and exclusive entries that don't appear anywhere else, each chapter of *I Wrote This For You* focuses on a different facet of life, love, loss, beginnings and endings.

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POETRY - PHOTOGRAPHY

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"One of the most beautiful things I have ever read. Ever." - BT, Grammy Nominated Composer and Technologist

"This is me. This is you. This is us. This is every human being, past and present, old and young, of every ethnicity, race and faith. Our every complex human emotion translated into words. Someone knows and someone understands. This is the essence of what it truly means to be human." - Ethar El-Katatney, CNN African Journalist Of The Year, award-winning journalist, blogger and author.

*"The magnificent beauty of *I Wrote This For You* is quite simply this: the book is elegantly incomplete without you. No one else in the world can read it the way you do. No one." - Matthew E. May, Author of *The Elegant Solution, In Pursuit Of Elegance, The Shibumi Strategy**

*"I bought the '*I Wrote This For You*' book in actual, real-life paperback, and it soothes my soul. Buy it if you can." - Laura Prudom, Associate Editor for AOL/HuffPo T*

Discussion Questions

1. Who is the "you" that the author is actually writing to?
2. Writing is often seen as a form of therapy. How do you think writing *I Wrote This For You* helped the author?
3. *I Wrote This For You* was written in collaboration with a photographer on the other side of the world from the author, and this was only possible because of the internet. What do you think this means for collaboration in the modern world?
4. The entries never mention age, gender or location. Why do you think the entries are so vague?
5. The entries in the book always start with the word "The" and always contain the word "you." How do you think rules and boundaries help or hinder the creative process?

Iain S. Thomas is a new media artist and author. As an author, his most famous work is *I Wrote This For You*, which he writes under the pseudonym 'pleasefindthis' - a blog then book that's been on both the Amazon and iTunes bestseller lists since its launch in December 2011. As a writer for the design and new media industry, he's won numerous local and international awards for his work.

Amongst other things, he created a never-ending sentence for a monument for South Africa's Jazz Artists and recently collaborated with musical phenomena BT on the packaging design for his last album. He wrote his first book, 'Ignite', at the age of 23 which won the Grand Prix at the First Paper House Art Of Design Awards and a gold individual craft award at the Loeries. He currently lives in Cape Town, South Africa.



Interview with Iain S. Thomas

Q: What is the first book you can remember reading?

A: The Classics Illustrated version of Macbeth. Classics Illustrated was a series of comic books in the 70's that my mom collected and gave to me when I was a child. Each one was a condensed version of a literary classic like *The Three Musketeers* or *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*. Macbeth was my favourite for some reason, even though I didn't understand most of it. Probably because of the artwork. I've still got the original, it has my name written backwards across it because I knew which letters were in my name, just not in which direction they were supposed to go. After that, I hit the harder stuff, like *Secret Seven* and *Famous Five*.

Q: What is the first book you ever wrote?

A: I wrote a book when I was 23 called *Ignite* as part of my then day job as a writer for a design studio, for a clothing company. It won the Grand Prix at the First Paper House Art Of Design Awards and a gold individual craft award for writing at the national advertising and design awards. I started writing prose when I was 13 or 14, I think.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you ever got?

A: I can't remember. But it's a tie between: "If you don't enjoy writing it, no one will enjoy reading it." and "Write hot, edit cold." My dad always says, "Do what you love." and that's been the overriding, guiding philosophy throughout my life.

Q: When did you first consider yourself a writer?

A: *I Wrote This For You* has spent a year on the Amazon and iTunes poetry bestseller lists and frequently finds itself at #1, and I still don't know if I'm actually a writer. I think when I'm writing, I'm a writer and when I stop, I become something else. I still have trouble introducing myself at a dinner table as a writer.

Q: Can you expand on the concept of I Wrote This For You?

A: I think the strangest thing I've ever done literary wise is the entire *I Wrote This For You* project. I wrote more than a thousand poems that all have titles that start with the word 'The' and every single one has the word 'You' in it. I think constructing your own rules around what you're writing gives you something to play with and can lead to really creative, interesting solutions.

Originality is important to me and I do my best to break literary conventions as much as possible to achieve that, with varying degrees of success. I'd rather fail while attempting to be original than succeed at obeying a convention.

I Wrote This for You was an incredibly bizarre literary debut. It was a real struggle to find a publisher who could see why it was as popular as it was and the potential behind it.

I wrote the blog under the pen name 'pleasefindthis' as I believed that every part of a story, including the name of the person writing the story, can be an entry point into that story. I chose the name because it invited people to find out more. A young girl discovered I Wrote This For You while she was undergoing treatment for a tumour in her brain and she wrote me a letter telling me how strong it made her feel. She wrote the words 'I Wrote This For You' on the paper bracelet the hospital put on her and sent a picture along with her mail. I don't even know how I managed to respond to that. Another person wrote me a message saying that my words had inspired her to get off the streets as a prostitute and go back to studying. I still speak to her about once a year. She's doing well.

Q: What advice would you give a new writer just starting out?"

A: Writers write. Every word you write makes you a better writer, and there are a lot of bad words that you need to get through before you can get to the good ones.