



classic status...but what elements need to be nailed to elevate a children's book to such heights? Stranaghan believes that, "First and foremost it has to be a real story. And by that I mean it has to have good, interesting well developed

characters, a plot where there is some sort of conflict and things happen, and the illustrations, if it's a picture book, should really bring something extra to the table and make the story exponentially richer than it is on its own."

"It should make you feel something," she continued. "You should feel sad, scared, happy, silly, hopeful... anything." Pressing her to name just one book ticking every box, she names Robert Munsch's multi-million selling "*Love You Forever*", a beautiful acknowledged masterpiece borne of the author's personal tragedy. "I still get misty-eyed when I read that," Stranaghan concludes.

So Bernard, Jerry, Charlie, Madonna et al, are you listening? You have much to learn, as writing a children's book is not kid's stuff, okay? ~

For a full transcription of the interview with Crystal Stranaghan, please visit the media page of www.gumbootbooks.ca. The Gumboot Books website also contains a full catalogue of their titles.

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