

Hello, adventurers, investigators, time-travellers, fact-finders
and readers of all kinds!

I'm Amelia, an author of fantasy books for kids, including the Oceanforged series. I decided to be an author when I was three years old and started writing when I was eight. It's the only way I've ever wanted to spend my life – although I did have a couple of other jobs before I was published, including teacher, bookseller and vineyard worker. I grew up with my parents, three siblings and a flock of fancy chickens in the Australian bush in southern Victoria, near the city of Melbourne where I live now.

I love strange and surprising stories – both the ones that creative people make up, and true ones from history and science. Although fantasy is my favourite genre, I always look for interesting ideas in the real world that I can use in my stories. Lots of scenes, objects and creatures in the Oceanforged series started from my real experiences: family holidays, visits to museums, and writing a pirate musical for my students when I was teaching. Some real places that inspired Oceanforged were the Great Barrier Reef, the jungles of Borneo, the Noosa Everglades, the maze-like streets of Venice, the palaces and museums around London, a little racing yacht called Eureka II where I spent three days sailing, and the dramatic black cliffs and rockpools near where I grew up.

My characters aren't looking for ideas to write novels on their adventures, of course. They're on a quest to collect the lost pieces of an ancient suit of armour with magical powers, which once belonged to the heroic warriors who ruled the land of Aquinta. You'll meet the three heroes of this series in 'The Wicked Ship', the first of the five Oceanforged books. The character you'll spend the most time with is Cori, a reckless rascal who has run away from life as a palace servant only to end up as the lowly deckhand in a crew of vicious pirates. Flip to Chapter 5 of The Wicked Ship and check out Alessia Trunfio's epic illustration of her!

Lots of young readers ask me for writing tips, so here's one of my favourites: remember that ideas can come from anywhere. Some of my best writing ideas have come from ordinary things – conversations with friends, childhood memories, my housemate's giant vine that snaked around a whole room. Next time you find yourself stuck for ideas, jot down some random things you've been thinking about or doing lately. You might find your story in the sport you play, the last holiday you went on, or the musty old secondhand shop your parents want to browse every weekend. I hope you enjoy reading Oceanforged!

Make waves!

Amelia Mellor

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