

Lesley Downie Unearths a New Middle-Grade Adventure Inspired by Her Hometown

Curiosity turns into a high-stakes adventure beneath a quiet town.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, May 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Lesley Downie has turned her childhood stomping grounds into the backdrop for a middle-grade adventure with her new novel, *Kat and the Totally Twisty Tunnels Time Forgot*.

“

I think readers will see a little bit of themselves in Kat — especially when she’s facing something unexpected and needs to find her courage. I wish I’d been more like her when I was a kid.”

Lesley Downie

Set in the fictional town of Redridge, the story follows Kat — a bold, opinionated twelve-year-old determined to become the youngest archaeologist ever. When she suspects that intriguing secrets are locked away in a long-forgotten tunnel network beneath her hometown, she drags along Mateo, her loyal but easily terrified BFF, to follow a trail of creepy underground clues before they realize they may not be alone down there. Between a mysterious tunnel-dwelling stranger, boy troubles, and an archenemy threatening to unleash a totally social-life-

destroying secret, Kat’s life is about to explode.

Perfect for readers age 9–13 who love Nancy Drew, Harriet the Spy, and The Devlin Quick Mysteries, the book blends mystery, adventure, and comedy while exploring themes of courage, curiosity, and staying true to yourself — even when the ultimate revenge is within reach.

Twelve fun-filled illustrations by Joanna Laubach Robinson bring Kat’s humorous voice vividly to life, including six fan favorites featuring Kat’s Top 10 ways to deal with life’s curveballs.

A special nod to local readers: while the story’s setting is fictional, those familiar with [Redlands](#) may recognize a few heartfelt inspirations — including a mention of the beloved Olive Avenue Market.

“Kat has an opinion on just about everything,” says Downie. “I think readers will see a little bit of themselves in Kat — especially when she’s facing something unexpected and needs to find her courage. I wish I’d been more like her when I was a kid.”

Kat and the Totally Twisty Tunnels Time Forgot is available now in eBook and print through major retailers worldwide, including [Amazon](#) and Barnes & Noble, or by order at your favorite bookstore. To learn more about her stories, visit Lesley's [website](#).

About the Author

Lesley Downie is a Southern California-based author who writes adventurous, humor-filled stories for young readers and for women who enjoy that same spirit of adventure in adult fiction. She spent much of her childhood in Redlands, California, exploring, imagining, and occasionally getting into just enough trouble to inspire her stories. A short list of her favorite things includes family, friends, popcorn, streaming British espionage thrillers and historical dramas, and synchronicity. Her search for the ultimate low-carb donut continues.

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Review copies available upon request

Lesley Downie

Lesley Downie, Author

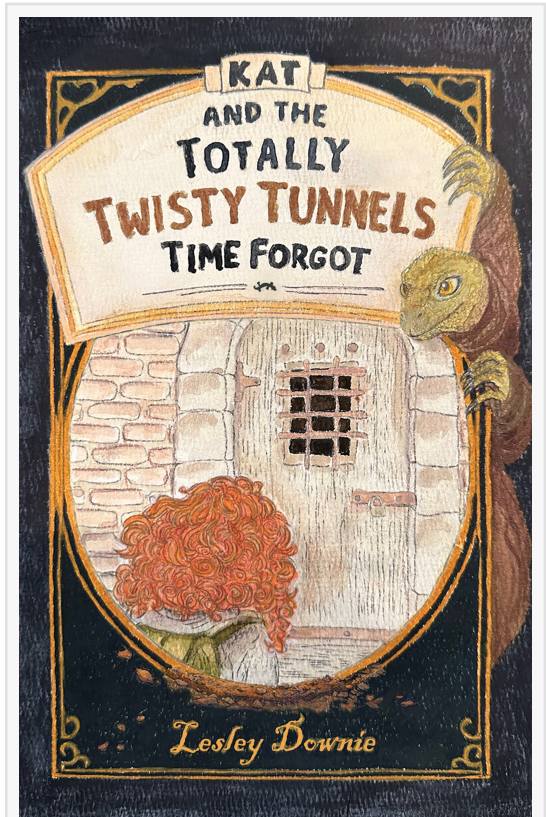
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Cover of Kat and the Totally Twisty Tunnels Time Forgot by Lesley Downie

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