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Comfort and Joy, by Megan Robinson

Librarian Megan Robinson shares the comfort book series have brought her during difficult times. This post is part of 805's "My Home Library" blog that features essays by writers who are sheltering in place during the Covid-19 pandemic. 805 is proudly published by the Manatee County Public Library System. We hope this blog will help Manatee County residents show off their home libraries, find comfort in books, and feel a connection to the library during this difficult time.



My home library...where to begin? I love my bookshelf, yes I only have 1, and as a librarian that is probably sacrilegious. Also, I have to *share* with my boyfriend (also a librarian!). Needless to say, we need more room because we both share a love for the printed word. I try really hard to not fill it to capacity and donate the ones that I am longer not passionate about. You may also notice that it is filled with things other than books. Indeed, I embrace my nerd/geek status. You will see a Tardis, Yoda, and my original World of Warcraft video game box from 2007.

But let me tell you about some of my favorite books! These books have gotten me through some tough times, and I could never bear to part with them, if only as reminders when looking at their covers as to how they have made me more resilient. If you looks toward the middle shelf with the dragon stuffed animal, these are not only epic fantasies, but my ultimate winners. I thoroughly enjoy fantasy as a genre. I can escape reality, believe in magic, quest, or that I am blessed with magic. Reality is overrated anyways.

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Let's go back to my teenage years. My father became an alcoholic when I was about 13. I had read *The Hobbit* probably the year before, and *loved* it. This was also around the time *The Lord of the Rings* movies were coming out, so reading the trilogy was a priority of mine. I read *The Lord of the Rings* during high school and these books made me so happy in a time that I needed it most. If you could have seen the door to my bedroom, I had painted both sides so it was covered in Elvish. [#nerdalert](#)

My father had gone to rehab and was doing great...when suddenly he had a heart attack. He never fully recovered and passed away a few years later. When he was

in hospice, my friend gave me *His Dark Materials* to read. I devoured these books, and they grounded me. I will treasure those books forever.

I read *Harry Potter* a bit late in life. My mother had read the first four books in the series to my sister and me when we were kids, but then my sister got her own room and we stopped. I went back to them in my late 20s, reading them when my cousin passed away from cervical cancer. They gave me the solace that I needed. Other than those, *The Clan of the Cave Bear* is my mother's copy, it is falling apart, but it reminds me of my childhood home and her own library. I am planning to reread the first 5 of the *Game of Thrones* series whenever George wants to finish them (I'm waiting...).

During COVID-19, I have not picked out a particular series to uplift me, but I have read a few

recently I can recommend: Katherine Arden's *Winternight* trilogy about a girl in medieval Russia who finds she has witch-like powers and must save her country from an evil demon. Sarah J. Maas' *Throne of Glass* series about an assassin who finds that her heritage will shape her destiny and the fate of the world. And John Delaney's *The Last Apprentice* series even though it is for middle school aged kids, it deals with the questions of good vs. evil and goes into some moral quandaries. The main character, a young boy apprenticing with his master, learns about his personal growth while battling the forces of darkness.



Reading brings me joy and happiness. It gives me comfort through bad times. I have many other books that I love, but just can't fit on this small bookshelf. I hope everyone has support during this uncertain time in something they enjoy, be it reading, gaming

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exercise, or another hobby. We need things to ground us to the present and appreciate the now. One day at a time is all we can do and I wish you safety, happiness, and comfort.

Megan Robinson is the supervisor of the Palmetto Branch of the Manatee County Public Library System. She enjoys traveling, reading, writing, knitting, video games, and the outdoors.



My Home Library

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2

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1

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