



Neil Gaiman

The Wolves in the Walls
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Both *Coraline* and *The Wolves in the Walls* have brave heroines. Are *Coraline* or *Lucy* inspired by anyone you know?

"*Coraline* was a little bit my daughter Holly when she was young, and *Lucy* is a little bit my daughter Maddy, when she was younger, but both of them are utterly their own selves. Maddy dreamed that there were wolves in the walls when she was little, and that they came out, which was where I got the idea for the story...

"I think both *Coraline* and *The Wolves in The Walls* are about bravery, in very different ways: about fighting back and dealing with the things that scare you."

2. How did you and Dave McKean create a book together? Do you write and then he illustrate, or do you get together and make it all happen?

"Mostly I start the book, with the idea and the words, and then Dave takes the words and does magic to them. He's my toughest critic, so if he likes something I know it will work.

"I like it when he goes off and does the pictures, because they are always a surprise to me.

3. What would you personally find the most frightening thing to discover in the walls of your house?

"What would be the most frightening thing to find living in the walls of my house?"

"A hard question. First I thought wolves, then I thought spiders or snakes — big ones — and then I thought monsters. But on reflection, I think the answer is probably lawyers."

4. Did you ever have a friend like pig-puppet?

"I didn't, but Liam McKean, Dave's son, certainly did. In fact, when he was about two, I got an urgent phone call from his mother asking me to go and buy another pig-puppet just like the first one (which was bought near my house, although Dave and Clare live thousands of miles from me) because Liam would not let go of the pig puppet long enough for Clare to wash it.

"So I sent the substitute pig-puppet, and Liam reluctantly let the first pig-puppet be washed.

"Liam has a life-sized plastic pig in his bedroom, too, big enough to ride."

5. And finally, what advice would you give to anyone who heard sneaking, creeping, crumpling noises coming from the walls inside their house?

"Hmm. Sounds like wolves to me. And if the wolves come out of the walls, it's all over..."