



I Wish I'd Written? Eloise

Article Author:

[Cressida Cowell](#) [1]

[178](#) [2]

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I Wish I'd Written

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Cressida Cowell chooses Kay Thompson and Hilary Knight's **Eloise**.

Cressida Cowell on a book with a wonderfully anarchic feel?

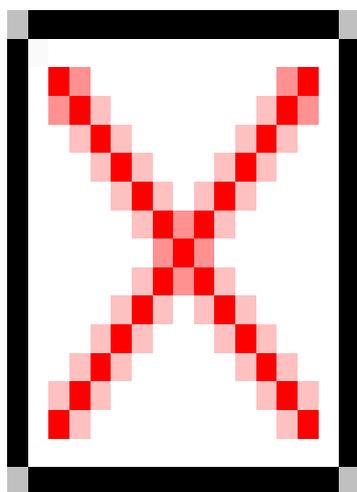
I really really wish I had written the 'Eloise' books. When I was a child, there did not seem to be any other books quite like them.

They are narrated by Eloise herself, in the stream-of-consciousness voice of a six-year-old. There is a wonderfully anarchic feel to the lack of punctuation, and the narrative structure, which skips about, seemingly according to what Eloise feels like telling you. This is a book where it seems as if the child is in charge.

And my goodness, Eloise is in charge, whether she is cutting her doll in half and then tenderly putting it together again with sticking-plasters in an imaginary life-saving operation, or combing her hair with a fork, or pouring a jug of water down the mail chute just to see what will happen.

The pictures of Eloise are glorious, with her terrible haircut and her little pot-belly. I have always loved indomitable heroines like Clever Polly and Pippi Longstocking, and Eloise is the most indomitable of them all.

Eloise was written nearly sixty-five years ago but she has not dated in the slightest. My children love the books just as much as I did.



Eloise by Kay Thompson, illustrated by Hilary Knight, is published by Simon & Schuster, 978 0 689 82795 2, at £12.99.

Cressida Cowell's latest book, **How to Break a Dragon's Heart**, the eighth book in the 'Hiccup' series, is published by Hodder Children's Books at £5.99 (978 0 340 99665 2).



[Cressida Cowell reviews Eloise.jpg](#) [3]



[Eloise.jpg](#) [4]

Cressida Cowell

Page Number:

14

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[4] http://w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/sites/default/files/Eloise_0.jpg