

Bonnie Kelso

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Bonnie Kelso is a former museum exhibit designer turned children's book author and illustrator. She is drawn to funny stories that entertain and educate. Her debut picture book, *NUDI GILL* (2022, Gnome Road Publishing), features a curious snorkeler who almost steps on a nudibranch, sparking a lively conversation about the fascinating life of these colorful but fierce sea creatures. The story tackles the theme of ocean conservation and stewardship in a humorous and non-preachy way.

Bonnie holds a bachelor's of fine art from the Rhode Island School of Design. She often conducts live and online art workshops in the Las Vegas area and beyond. She is the proud recipient of many Nevada Arts Council grants and is on their roster of teaching artists for schools and communities.

She was selected as the 2021 winner for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) Karen Cushman Late Bloomers Award for her historical chapter book, *JOHNNY BELL BAKER AND THE COAL MINE*. She volunteers for her regional SCBWI chapter as the Nevada Picture Book Group Coordinator.

Bonnie has traveled around the world twice! She is an avid outdoors enthusiast and can often be found wandering about the desert with her family in Las Vegas, NV.

Picture Books:

Quinn's Closet Monsters, contributor and cover illustration. An anthology published by Make-A-Wish Foundation, ©2021.

Nudi Gill, author and illustrator. Little Gnome Press, Gnome Road Publishing, September 2022.

In A Cave, illustrator. Written by Heather Kinser. Little Gnome Press, Gnome Road Publishing, August 2023.

Sea Smiles, author and illustrator. Little Gnome Press, Gnome Road Publishing, January 2024.

Awards and Honors:

- 2021 Winner of the SCBWI NV Fall Illustration Contest juried by Peter Brown.
- 2021 Winner of the SCBWI Karen Cushman Late Bloomer Award for “Johnny Bell Baker and the Coal Mine,” a historical fiction chapter book.
- 2020 PBParty Finalist
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- 2020 Fall Writing Frenzy Finalist
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- 2021 Halloweensie Writing Contest Honorable Mention

Interviews:

Heather Cash Morris, “First Stories” series, January 10, 2022. *First Stories Returns in 2022...Featuring Bonnie Kelso*

Sandra Sutter, Gnome Road Publishing, October 19, 2021. *The Art of NUDI GILL ~ A Short Q&A with Bonnie Kelso*

Sandra Sutter, Gnome Road Publishing, May 17, 2021. *A Welcome to Author-Illustrator Bonnie Kelso!*

Amanda Davis, “Rising Stars” series, February 22, 2021. *Meet Rising Star, Author-Illustrator Bonnie Kelso!*