

## Tim Saunders Bio

I farm sheep and beef near Palmerston North. I usually write very early in the morning before going out on the farm to work. I have also worked as a tour guide around the country, and I lived for two years in Germany after meeting my partner – who is German - while she was visiting New Zealand.

I am incredibly honoured to win this year's Cambridge Autumn Festival Short Story Competition, and I was so sad to hear the festival had been called off. It must have been a great disappointment for the organisers and all of those people who had put so much hard work into the event. Cambridge is a beautiful place, one of my favourite places to visit. I'm looking forward to the event being back better than ever next year.

I was attracted to this competition by the challenge of being provided a first line. I have never entered a competition with a prompt before. As soon as I read the first line, "It was 3am", the words started to flow. I wrote the story over two days, it basically poured onto the page fully formed.

I write because I like to tell stories. It's as simple as that. I like to explore characters and how they react to situations around them. I think words are beautiful, they can put pictures in our minds and shine a light on our emotional responses.

I have never had any formal training in writing, but I read a lot. I study books and stories, take them apart to see how they tick. I write a lot of poetry, and have had poems published in *NZ Poetry Yearbook*, *Turbine*, *takahē* and a few other publications. I also won the 2018 Mindfood Magazine Short Story Competition, and came third in the 2019 National Flash Fiction Day Awards.

I hope this story, *Fish And Chips*, highlights the abhorrence of domestic violence. Family violence is never OK. Every night, over 160 women and children are too afraid to stay in their homes in New Zealand because of violence. It is time that, as a country, we said enough is enough. I strongly urge people to support organisations that work with victims of domestic violence.