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***Astra in Hollywood* Motivates Readers to Soar as an Airplane Discovers Helping Others Is All It Takes to Be a Superstar**

written by Julie Whitney

illustrated by Michelle Simpson

on sale March 4, 2024

"You are cleared for takeoff! . . . A delightful sequel that all future pilots will love!"

- Captain Sheila Morrison, ATP-rated corporate jet pilot (retired)

[Belle Isle Books](#) of Richmond, Virginia, is pleased to announce the upcoming release of a new children's picture book, [Astra in Hollywood](#).

Promoting authors is nothing new to Cincinnati native and local PR professional Julie Whitney—but she never dreamt she would one day publish her own book.

"Publishing a book was never on my bucket list," says Whitney. "Although I have helped dozens of authors with book launches, publicity and signings throughout my career, I never actually intended to become one myself. But when my husband unexpectedly lost his job as a chief corporate pilot on May 5, 2020 due to the COVID pandemic, I felt compelled to turn lemons into lemonade and write a book about it. And that book has now turned into a series!"

Now, the series that began with *Astra the Lonely Airplane* (released March 2, 2022) continues with *Astra in Hollywood*, which sees the titular airplane fly into glitzy, glamorous Hollywood in a continuation of the storyline that saw her bought by a businessman at the end of the series' first book. The assorted aircraft Astra meets in her new home have fantastic capabilities beyond anything Astra has ever experienced, and although she's no longer lonely, she soon finds herself feeling less than special when compared to her new hangarmates. It will take a series of crises only she can resolve for Astra to realize she doesn't need to be flashy to be an important part of her new home—or to deserve others' friendship.

For any child who has ever felt nervous and outshined in a new environment, *Astra in Hollywood* will uplift and motivate, helping all readers to remember that no matter what their stories, they all have their own ways of offering friendship and contributing to their communities. Told in charming rhyming couplets and accompanied by vivid illustrations from returning illustrator Michelle Simpson, *Astra in Hollywood* is scheduled for release on March 4, 2024, during Read Across America Week.



Astra the lonely airplane never has to be lonely again! Her new hangar in sunny LA is home to three amazing new friends: Lana, a sleek, beautiful Learjet; a giant cargo plane named Hank; and Helen the crime-fighting helicopter. In fact, they're all so cool that Astra soon starts to wonder if she's cut out for life in Hollywood! But when Lana, Hank, and Helen are each faced with unexpected problems, Astra discovers that you don't need to be the fastest, the strongest, or the bravest to be important. It's being a good friend that makes you a star!

About the Author

[Julie Whitney](#) is a public relations professional with forty years of experience in public relations and marketing, having worked on both the agency and client side as well as in the television industry. Her company, Phillippi-Whitney Communications, LLC, founded in 2000, represents both large and small clients in a wide variety of industries. She has promoted dozens of authors throughout her career, often supplementing the efforts of the internal PR teams of their publishers. She also works as on-camera talent, appearing in both television commercials and video podcasts. She even appeared as an extra in the movie *Grease*, which was shot on location in the summer of 1977 in Los Angeles.

Julie lives in Cincinnati with her husband Dan—a corporate pilot, on whom Captain Dan in the book was based—and who, as a naval aviator and USNA grad, flew the P-3 Orion, and then later, a Gulfstream G100 (Astra) for thirteen years. With four grown children, they are now empty-nesters and love spending time with their black lab, Brody, and also enjoy traveling, boating, golfing, and all types of physical fitness. *Astra in Hollywood* is her second children's book, and the second book in the *Astra the Lonely Airplane* series.

For more information, to contact the author about an appearance or request a review copy, or to download free coloring and activity sheets, visit www.astrathelonelyairplane.com. Readers can also follow Julie on Instagram @juliewhitneyauthor.

About the Illustrator

[Michelle Simpson](#) is a full-time illustrator based out of the Niagara Region of Canada. She graduated with a BAA in illustration from Sheridan College. Michelle's main focus is on children's book illustrations and educational material for kids. She has worked with many large

publishing houses and has also created concept artwork and final backgrounds for season two of the children's TV show *Ollie: The Boy Who Became What He Ate* and season one of *Tee and Mo*.

Interviews available upon request.

[Belle Isle Books](#), an imprint of [BrandyLane Publishers, Inc.](#), is an independent press located in Richmond, Virginia that has published books since 1985.

Astra in Hollywood (hardcover, 36 pages, \$26.95 / paperback, 36 pages, \$15.95) is available for pre-order from [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), and other fine booksellers coast-to coast as well as internationally. Kindle e-book (retail \$7.99) forthcoming.