



## Losing Agir

By Liz Fisher Frank

For Immediate Release

### **Human rights in teen fiction: A children's rights lawyers' debut teen thriller to be launched on Human Rights Day**

Inspired by the facts of an international human rights case, and encompassing child smuggling and the complicated lives of children in care, a debut teen novel is being launched on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012 in support of International Human Rights Day.

Written by children's rights lawyer, Liz Fisher Frank, this moving tale of hope and bravery will be published by Live It Publishing.

Liz Fisher Frank has crafted a gripping story of friendship and courage, spanning borders and cultures. Alice, a 15 year old in care meets fellow teen, Agir at her new foster home. As Alice and Agir's relationship grows, Alice learns of Agir's terrible story and the events around the loss of his home and family in Turkey. Alice then faces a tough challenge. Can she shake off the problems caused by her own traumatic background and help Agir escape from the clutches of a child smuggling operation?

*Losing Agir* begins with the violent destruction of a mountain village in Turkey. This part of the story is based on fact. The story then moves to the UK and drawing on Fisher Frank's own experience of representing young people in care, deals with some of the difficult issues which can arise. Fisher Frank explains;

*Many years ago my husband, a human rights lawyer, represented a group of villagers from South-East Turkey following the destruction of their homes by Turkish troops. The villagers, against the odds, took their case to Strasbourg and won. Inspired by this tale of courage, and constantly moved by the complicated stories of many of the young people I have represented over the years, the idea of a story combining the two was born.*

## **In 2012, the number of applications to take children into care hit a record high...**

Official figures (\*acc. To Cafcass; Children and Family Court Advisory Service) show that there has been a steady rise in children being taken into care since 2008, from 59,380 to 67,050 in 2012. And children aged between 10 and 15 represent the majority of the looked after population. In October 2012, it was announced that 8 charities had formed an inquiry investigating the conditions for children in care. This inquiry is the first time that charities from across the care system spectrum have come together with a view to make recommendations to improve stability for children in care.

Fisher Frank explains; *It is well documented and known that children in care face obstacles which impact on their ability to reach their full potential. They are over-represented in our prisons and under-represented in further and higher education. Young women from the care system are considerably more likely to be teenage mothers. Despite efforts being made to improve outcomes, against a backdrop of public spending cuts, it is difficult to see how some of the initiatives proposed can be effective. Support services for children in care need to be consistent and robust to effect real change.*

Having campaigned as a lawyer to improve awareness of law and rights amongst young people, Fisher-Frank hopes to continue to work towards this goal through using her experience to write fiction with legal and human rights themes. Fisher Frank contends; *My view is that there is a place for writing teen fiction with legal themes. The law affects young people in many ways and fiction is a brilliant way to raise awareness of this.*

In an effort to promote this further, Fisher-Frank is donating a percentage of her royalties to young people's charity, Youth Access.

### **Notes to Editors**

**About Liz Fisher Frank;** Liz Fisher Frank is a children's rights lawyer who has worked for over 15 years representing teenagers in care. As well as campaigning to improve access to law for vulnerable young people, Fisher Frank has set up and run specialist legal projects with this aim.

**The Ormanici Case; the facts;** In the 1990's Ormanici, along with other Kurdish villages, was destroyed by Turkish troops. The tragedy involved human rights violations against the Kurds. The villagers of Ormanici eventually took their case against Turkey to the European Court of Human Rights. Despite facing huge obstacles the villagers gave evidence to the court of what happened in the early hours on the 20th February 1993 when Turkish soldiers attacked their homes. In 2004, the villagers won their case and were awarded compensation. It is the only successful Human Rights case where a whole village has been represented.

**Youth Access;** Youth Access is the largest provider of young people's advice and counselling services in the UK.

### **Links and Further Information**

[www.lizfisherfrank.com](http://www.lizfisherfrank.com)

<http://vimeo.com/50702848> & <http://vimeo.com/50704670>

**For more information about Losing Agir or to set up an interview with Liz Fisher Frank, please contact Nic Wilkinson at [nic.wilkinson@gmail.com](mailto:nic.wilkinson@gmail.com) or on 07983 635 010.**