

PRESS KIT

Title: The Sound of You

Author: Simon Doyle

Release Date: July 22, 2025

Publisher: SD Press (an imprint of Nightsgale Books)

Genre: LGBTQ+ Young Adult Fiction

Formats: Hardcover, Paperback, eBook

Pre-order: <https://simondoylebooks.com/product/the-sound-of-you/>

Contact: simon@simondoylebooks.com | hello@sdpress.eu.com

BOOK OVERVIEW

Sometimes silence is louder.

Sixteen-year-old Owen Kelly lives in the quiet of loss. Still reeling after his grandfather's death, he finds comfort in sketchbooks and solitude.

But an accidental meeting with a boy who doesn't talk will change everything.

Jun-ho Lee is Deaf, half-Korean, and newly settled in Dublin. He doesn't speak with his voice, but everything he says has meaning. When he asks Owen to draw him, a spark ignites: a friendship shaped by silence, eye contact, and everything that isn't said.

As they navigate school, family, and their own tangled lives, what starts as a cautious connection runs deeper. But when the outside world presses into their world, Owen and Jun must fight not just to stay together—but to be heard in a world that never listens.

The Sound of You is a gorgeous YA romance about grief, found family, and learning to speak with more than words. Perfect for fans of *Heartstopper* and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*.

Because, in the end, maybe silence is all that matters.

Themes & Tropes

- Found family
- Deaf rep
- Queer love story
- Slow-burn romance
- Artistic expression & identity
- Grief and healing
- Cross-cultural connection

CW/Content Notes

- Grief (death of a grandparent)
- Subtle parental estrangement
- Internalised shame/self-doubt

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Doyle is an Irish author of heartfelt LGBTQ+ fiction. His previous novels include the *Snow Boys* and 2025's *This Is Not a Vampire Story*. Known for quiet prose and emotionally rich storytelling, Simon explores identity, connection, and the quiet in-between spaces of life and love.

He lives with his husband Lucas and their neurotic rescue dog, Hollie, on the west coast of Ireland.

Website: <https://simondoylebooks.com>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/simondoylebooks>

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/simondoylebooks.com>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@simondoylebooks>

DOWNLOADABLE ASSETS

High-res files enclosed in this ZIP file:

- Cover (300 CMYK TIFF and low-res web-ready JPG)
- Author photo (credit: Lucas Clover)
- Publisher logo

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What inspired you to write *The Sound of You*?

“I’ve always been drawn to stories that linger in quiet spaces where emotion builds slowly, where grief and love intertwine in complicated ways. *The Sound of You* began as a short story about a boy who had recently lost his grandfather and couldn’t find the words to express how he felt. Then Jun-ho Lee walked into the story, this confident, Deaf boy who doesn’t speak much but says a lot, and suddenly it became a novel about how silence can be a bridge rather than a barrier. It’s a book about listening differently, healing gently, and falling in love without needing to fill the silence. And it draws inspiration from western YA stories mixed with Korean BL.

How did you approach writing a Deaf character and incorporating Irish Sign Language?

With a lot of care and research. I wanted to be respectful, not just accurate. I consulted Deaf cultural resources and spent time learning about Irish Sign Language, not just the structure but the feel of it. Jun-ho is fluent in ISL, but he's also navigating life as a Korean-Irish teen in a hearing world, so his experience is layered. I didn’t want to make him a symbol or a plot device. He’s a full person, funny and flawed and kind. While I’m not Deaf myself, I worked hard to avoid stereotypes and, instead, highlight the richness of Deaf identity and communication.

How does your Irish background influence your novels?

Ireland has always been a part of my storytelling, even when it’s not the focus. There’s something inherently poetic and melancholic in the Irish landscape that pairs well with introspective characters. I also think we’re a nation of storytellers who understand silence and grief in deeply cultural ways. In *The Sound of You*, the setting is contemporary Ireland, but it’s layered with a sense of stillness and emotional restraint that feels very Irish to me. And, of course, the inclusion of ISL grounds it further in the reality of Deaf Irish communities, who deserve more visibility in fiction.

What do you hope young queer readers take from this book?

I hope they feel seen. I hope they realise that love doesn't have to be loud to be powerful. That healing doesn't happen on someone else's schedule. That they deserve tenderness, a real, quiet, transformative tenderness. So many queer stories still focus on coming out or trauma, and while those stories are important, I wanted to write a book where the love story is gentle, where the queerness isn't questioned but accepted, and where the boys get to just be. If even one reader finishes the book and feels a little more understood, then I've done my job.

Simon Doyle