

The Archer

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The sequel that should never have been written

By John Lawrence

Adam Blain never expected to write a sequel to his first book. The father-of-three self-published *Pear Shaped* in 2015 to bring dark humour to his awful situation of being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour and being told he could reasonably expect to live 15 months at most.

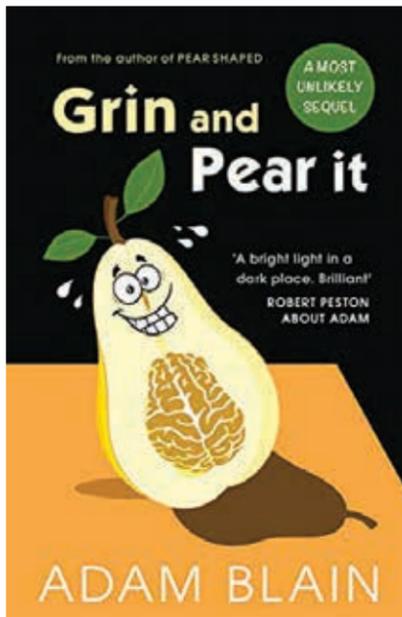
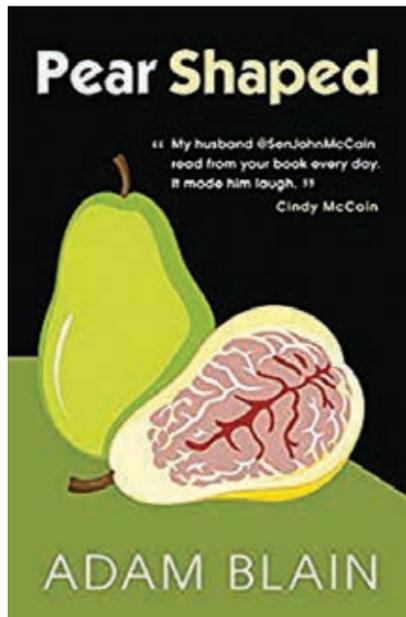
Now in 2019 Adam has written that sequel and called it *Grin and Pear It*, lifting the lid on a year in his drastically-altered

the widow of US senator John McCain, who died from brain cancer last summer, sent Adam a message saying her husband

they are going through. There's no other agenda, except hoping the books will make a little pot of money for my family when I'm gone."

New career

Adam, 49, lives in Bedford Road, N2, with his wife Lu and their three children Jonah, Sacha and Thea. Surgery and his short-term memory loss have forced him to give up his job as a lawyer, so becoming a published author has been a welcome new career. Lu described the new book as being very much about the survivor mentality. She said: "There are very few long-term survivors but Adam is



The story continues: Above, Author Adam Blain and his wife Lu; left, the covers of his two self-published books.

world as he goes through scan after treatment after scan, and musing on what life means for someone who didn't expect to be alive.

Still laughing

The first thing to say about the second book is that it is just as funny as the first. Cindy McCain,

had laughed his way through *Pear Shaped* in the final stages of his illness.

"Making people laugh means everything to me," says Adam. "I've written it for anyone with any kind of cancer or who's going through an operation. I hope they will laugh and get through what

one of them. He describes the uncertainty of it all, and at the same time having to cope with all the normal little things that go wrong in daily life."

Adam puts this down to acceptance. "The disease doesn't own you," he says. "You must adjust your approach to life and take each day one at a time. You move your horizon in and come up with your own

copied strategies. One of mine is acceptance, rather than trying to change everything all the time."

Publisher sought

One of Adam and Lu's big wishes is that a publisher takes his two books into print. Publishers can contact us here at *The Archer* and we will put them in touch. Currently, both titles are available as downloads on Amazon, where they are getting five-star reviews.

Soothing songs for busy commuters

By Marian Bunzl
For our last performances of 2018, North London Chorus sang carols at two London underground stations: East Finchley Station on behalf of Noah's Ark and St Pancras on behalf of The Parent House.

At East Finchley we were stationed in the elegant, tiled hall facing the homecoming passengers, who were greeted with traditional carols in unaccompanied four-part harmony (and descant).

St Pancras International, one of London's greatest Victorian buildings, is now, in part, a shopping mall as well as a station. We foregathered outside Starbucks, to be escorted to our designated spot. The station has a collection of pianos for public use, and we had the honour to be allocated the piano donated by Sir Elton John to accompany our performance.

As always, the much-loved tunes and words worked their magic. The stress of the rush hour and Christmas shopping calmed down, faces relaxed and smiled, people stopped to listen, (and photograph or record) and donated generously.

Carols are a wonderful institution. They carry a beautiful message, they give great pleasure to performers and listeners, and worthwhile charities are enabled to continue their work.

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