

Rebekah Jackson

What inspired Summer in Snow Peak?

I wanted to write about how tightly many of us cling to a specific vision of our future and how hard that can be to reconcile with the way things actually unfold. Life is unpredictable, requiring us to be nimble and adapt, but sometimes that's really hard to do in practice! In my experience, grieving the loss of an envisioned future can be as necessary as grieving the loss of a person that we love.

What surprised me, emerging organically, was the exploration of the meaning of *home*. Is it a place, or is it people? What happens when the reality of living somewhere is messy and complicated? Noa really grapples with the question of where she belongs, and that feels incredibly resonant to me right now.

What did you enjoy most about Noa? Or find most challenging?

I loved writing Noa's character, but it was hard! While we share a few things in common, we have very different personalities. She's so much more forward and assertive than I am; she almost always says what she feels, consequences be damned.

Writing a character like that was fun and liberating but presented two big challenges. First, my own voice kept seeping in, making her quieter and more accommodating. I had to consistently critique what I wrote and ask myself, "What would Noa really say?" Second, it was easy to go too far. I want Noa to be brash and bold but not abrasive or difficult to root for. Feedback was necessary to strike the right balance, which I hope I've done.

Do you think Noa and Brandon will last?

I do! In full disclosure, I'm a die-hard romantic and a sucker for a happy ending, but what gives me the most hope for Noa and Brandon's relationship is how well they complement each other. Their strengths are so different. I believe they'll continue to grow together and challenge each other as they face the future.

What did you learn while writing this story?

Specifically, within the narrative, I learned something unexpected and, for me, pretty impactful: it's a lot easier to let go of one version of your future when there's something good or better (in some way) to take its place. If nothing feels exciting or compelling about the alternative, it's so much harder to let go and move forward.

More generally, finishing my second full-length manuscript taught me a lot about the craft and journey. It was rewarding to see my writing has improved. I plotted this book in a more intentional way; I challenged myself to try new and different things. Refining my editing approach proved effective and, at the same time, faster. Despite painful losses that interrupted—and informed—this book, the whole process ultimately reaffirmed my love of storytelling.