

Dear Ms. ----,

Per your request on Pitch Madness I am submitting my Young Adult Contemporary novel, *The Cold Place*, for your consideration. It is complete at 65,000 words.

Fifteen-year-old Sam Guerrero has a secret—a hollow spot inside himself he calls the cold place. He'll do anything to himself to get there. Break his bones. Cut his flesh. Anything.

He's safe in the cold place. Safe from his abusive family. Safe from the memories of a deadly fire that sent him to a mental hospital. Safe from life.

Then he meets Roberta "Doc" Holliday, a seasoned therapist who challenges his idea of safety and shows him a path to healing.

Now Sam must choose: hide in icy numbness and remain institutionalized forever or allow himself to thaw and invest in his life. But that means facing the fire and the accusation of arson that sent him to a secured facility in the first place.

The Cold Place follows in the tradition of *Girl in Pieces* by Kathleen Glasgow and *Impulse* by Ellen Hopkins.

I am a member of SCBWI and American Night Writers Association.

Thank you. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
P.J. Switzer

Middle Grade Author PJ Gardner and the Idea Machine

Middle Grade Author PJ Gardner joins *Queries, Qualms, & Quirks* this week to discuss coming to writing late in life, how querying is like boxing, writing as a calling, how promoting for MG is different from promoting for YA, querying with old data, taking big risks but expecting safe results, and how the success goalposts always move.

PJ Gardner has never met a talking animal, but that hasn't stopped her from writing about them. She's the author of the middle grade *Horace & Bunwinkle* series and her next book, *The Great Zoodini* comes out in early 2024. She lives in Southern California with her husband and sons, and their Boston Terriers, Rosie and Rocky. She also writes under the name PJ Switzer.

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