Title: *Of Inklings and Willowpillars*
Series: *The Chronicles of Ber'Ebrin — Book One*
Total Books in Series: 21
Author: Brent K. Newcomb
Genre: Darkly whimsical, Young Adult/crossover historical portal fantasy; historical fantasy; dark fantasy
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Social media:

Instagram: @chroniclesofberebrin
Website: https://www.berebrin.com
Amazon: https://a.co/d/0b1fp1JB
X: @PolycosmosNomad

Amazon author page: https://www.amazon.com/stores/Brent-Newcomb/author/B0HJLDSDQ7
Goodreads: https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/72328189.Brent_Newcomb
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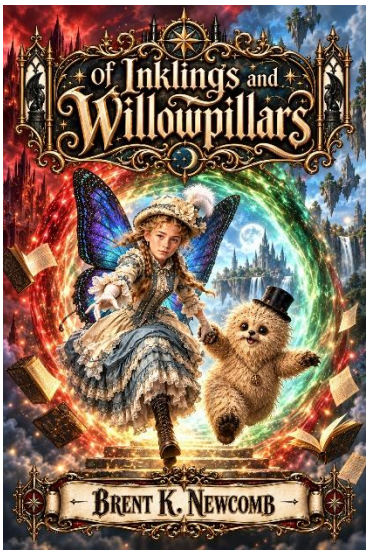

Production transparency: No story prose was generated by AI. The novel's prose is entirely author-written. Generative AI was used in creating visual elements for the cover and certain branding artwork, with manual compositing and editing; AI tools were also used for proofreading, period accuracy, and continuity review.

Content notes: fantasy violence and death, child peril, child abduction/enslavement, alcohol and gambling, supernatural corruption, and non-explicit older-teen romantic/sexual themes involving magical coercion.

Editorial Reviews:
Praise for Of Inklings and Willowpillars:

"A dark and whimsical fantasy adventure blending humor, quests, and imagination in an unforgettable read… reminiscent of classic literary adventures to places like Wonderland and Neverland." — **Liz Konkel, Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)**

"An incredible fantasy… the scope is as ambitious as it is imaginative. Beautifully written and bold, readers who enjoy whimsical fantasy adventures will adore this." — **Jamie Michele, Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)**

"Falls into the realm of portal fantasy and hurls the reader directly into a spinning vortex of narrative momentum. The pacing is relentless… a fast-moving YA fantasy-adventure with a clever historical wrapper." — **Robert Collier III, Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)**

"Delivers a high-energy Victorian fantasy… Newcomb's prose favors immediate action and fascinating imagery over slow-moving, dense passages. If you want a fantasy that pulls you right into the action, I highly recommend reading this exciting YA tale." — **David Jaggart, Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)**

"What I liked best about the book was the author's imagination and the variety of different fantasy worlds… I highly recommend Brent Newcomb's Of Inklings and Willowpillars to young adult readers who like imaginative fantasy, memorable characters, and an adventure of friendship and bravery." — **Danica Naude, Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)**

"A wonderfully eccentric fantasy adventure that combines Victorian charm, fairy-tale magic, and a mischievous sense of humor… adding a storytelling quality reminiscent of an eccentric grandfather sharing a fantastic tale beside the fireplace." — **Literary Titan**

"An inventive Victorian portal fantasy… The contrast between a recognisable nineteenth-century setting and extraordinary realms creates opportunities for surprise… giving the adventure a moral dimension beyond the simple pursuit of a destination." — **The Chrysalis BREW Project**

Blurb:
Mind the first step. The realms beyond have been waiting.
A door opens. A brother vanishes. And the first journey begins.

It is 1877 in Vanover, New England. Five young adventurers—the Inklings—gather around the eccentric Professor Augustus Peabody, who possesses a map of impossible

worlds, six mysterious key-coins, and a mystery of his own: his father disappeared years ago searching for a place that may not exist.

The friends expect adventure.

They do not expect the door to open.

Beyond it lie the Colorless Kingdoms: black sands beneath a merciless sky, pirate skiffs sailing desert seas, ancient temples, enchanted objects, strange creatures, and rulers whose hospitality is not always what it appears to be. When one of the Inklings is seized by slavers and carried toward the dreaded Black Citadel, the others must follow.

Their rescue leads through realms of drakes, toad-goblins, fae intrigue, hidden magic, dangerous bargains, and perils stranger than anything they imagined at home.

But something has followed them through the portal.

A force of darkness has chosen one of the Inklings for a purpose more terrible than death: not merely to destroy her, but to persuade her to choose corruption for herself.

Meanwhile, Edgar has become a willowpillar. Charlotte has changed as well. Professor Peabody is keeping secrets. And somewhere beyond the known worlds lies Ber'Ebrin—the Beautiful Place, said to be found only by the worthy, and only by those who do not seek it.

Of Inklings and Willowpillars is the first book in ***The Chronicles of Ber'Ebrin***, a darkly whimsical Victorian portal-fantasy series for teen and adult crossover readers. Blending classic storybook wonder with quirky humor, danger, moral choices, strange worlds, and long-hidden mysteries, the series begins with young adventurers—and grows older and darker as they journey deeper into the Polycosmos.

Mind the first step. The realms beyond have been waiting.

Sample – From Chapter One:

The year was 1877. It was the middle of a cold, snowy November in the bustling metropolis of Vanover. "Grrrrr!" exclaimed eight-year-old Edgar, making claws like a bear and stomping toward his older sister, Charlotte. "I am mean and hungry, and I have decided to eat you up!"

Edgar Precious was playing his favorite game in his father's drawing-room, pretending to be a wild grizzly. He was a cute little boy with a mop of curly, dark brown hair and the most oddly bulging brown eyes one could ever see. He was ever curious and loved to read about cowboys, buccaneers, knights, and—most especially—wild bears. "Grrrrr!"

"Oh, Edgar. I wish you would stop all this make-believe. You can certainly give a girl a headache!" replied his ten-year-old sister, Charlotte, as she sat on the floor in her father's drawing-room, admiring an exotic butterfly collection he kept in a glass-paned box. "And be careful. Bears can be quite hazardous indoors."

Charlotte Precious looked only fleetingly like her brother. She had honey-blond, wavy hair, now kept in braids. Instead of Edgar's bulging eyes, her eyes were catlike and oval and of the brightest blue. Generally, one might say she was cute, but on the tomboyish side. She always seemed to get her dresses splattered in mud or caught in thickets from her exploits. She was, though, well-read for her age, voraciously attacking her father's collection of classics. She could read simple Latin and Greek and even a smattering of German. Like her brother, she was immensely inquisitive, a fact that had sometimes led them into trouble.

Edgar smiled. “But I’m a most polite bear. I always say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ and ‘My, are these cucumber sandwiches not delightful,’ even when I hate them.”

Charlotte shook her head. “Bears cannot afford to be polite. That is what makes them bears, Edgar.”

“Well, I shall be different when I become a bear.”

“You’re silly. When would you ever become a bear? You cannot very well crawl into a cocoon, as these butterflies do, and pop out in spring as a woolly grizzly.”

“Grrrrr!” Edgar growled again and jumped on his sister, tickling her.

“Oh, do stop!” Charlotte laughed, tickling Edgar back. “Mary! Make him stop!”

Mary, who had been quiet up until now, shook her head and rolled her eyes as she lay on an overstuffed chaise longue. In front of her was a small book, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, a bit of Gothic romance, a genre Mary had been quite keen on ever since she had turned fifteen three months before. “Edgar, Charlotte, don’t you think you’re getting a little old for rolling round on the rug?”

Mary Doyle was a mature girl for her age. She was as tall as a river reed and had a comely face and long, straight, raven-dark hair that she kept styled with pins. She loved to dress in the height of fashion, although, for practical reasons, this really meant dressing in her mother’s clothes. This sometimes had a comical result, as many of the fancy dresses and hats were ill-fitting for her body. Nonetheless, she carried herself with style and purpose well beyond her years.

“Mary! We aren’t children!” exclaimed Charlotte indignantly, sitting upright and fixing her hair.

Edgar added, “Charlotte may be a child, but I’m a bear! Grrrrr!” He growled and flashed his teeth and “claws” back at Mary.

Mary ignored the two, licked her index finger, and used it to flip to the next page of her book. “When should we be off to see the professor?” she asked without looking up.

“He said for us to be there promptly after supper,” Edgar answered, now crawling on all fours, bear-like. “He’s just returned from his trip and has something to show us.”

Charlotte got up from the floor and put the butterfly box gently back on the shelf. “We can go as soon as those two brothers of yours get here, Mary. They’re always mucking about somewhere.”

“They’re in-courage-able,” said Edgar, trying out a new, big word.

“That’s incorrigible,” corrected Charlotte.

Mary closed her book and sat up. “I think I hear the house rattle. That must be them.”

“May I still pretend to be a bear?” asked Edgar.

Mary only sighed and shook her head.