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DAVID FICKLING, EDITOR OF *THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME*, DISCOVERS A TALENTED NEW LITERARY VOICE

BEFORE I DIE TO BE PUBLISHED SEPT. 25TH

New York, NY (May 30, 2007)—David Fickling Books, the bi-continental imprint of Random House Children's Books, will publish a debut young adult novel in the U.S. this fall, a mere five months after its acquisition. Mr. Fickling, Random House's Oxford, England-based editor, is credited with discovering and editing Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, all unique literary achievements which became major bestsellers on both sides of the Atlantic. With his most recent acquisition, **BEFORE I DIE**, Fickling has identified yet another extraordinary voice in writer **Jenny Downham**. Acquired just prior to the London Book Fair in April, this brilliantly-crafted and moving first novel will be released in North America on September 25, 2007, with a 100,000 copy first printing. **BEFORE I DIE** will be supported by a major marketing and publicity campaign.

Although a typical book publishing cycle often carries over several years, in the case of **BEFORE I DIE**, Fickling simply can't wait. "Partly and very plainly I don't think the public should be kept waiting a single second longer than necessary to read this book", says Fickling. "The one thing an editor must always do is recognize the extraordinary, the special, the completely original when they see it. And then they must publish with great energy! When I read **BEFORE I DIE** I once again experienced that same hair-raising tingle of originality that I felt when I first read *His Dark Materials*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* and *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. There is only one word for Jenny Downham's amazing debut writing performance — dazzling!"

Chip Gibson, President and Publisher of Random House Children's Books added: "I urge everyone to read **BEFORE I DIE**. It is both searing, unsentimentally honest, and at the same time incredibly life-affirming. While it is being published as a young adult novel, the timeless message will resonate with readers of all ages."

BEFORE I DIE finds Tessa, a seventeen-year-old girl in the fight of her life against the ravages of cancer. She devotes her good days to completing a checklist comprised of all the things she'd like to experience (sex, drugs, and of course, love) before she loses her chance forever. The narrative is stark and poetic, and the novel ultimately serves as a reminder that life is a gift to be savored.

Since acquisition, rights for the novel have sold in twelve countries to date, including Germany and France, with auctions currently underway in Israel, Brazil and Japan. Excitement for the release is also building in the UK, where the book will go on sale this July.

David Fickling Books is an imprint of Random House Children's Books, the world's largest English-language children's trade book publisher. Creating books for toddlers through young adult readers, in all formats from board books to activity books to picture books to novels and narrative nonfiction, the imprints of Random House Children's Books offer publishing programs that bring together world-famous franchise characters, multimillion-copy series, and top-flight award-winning authors and illustrators. Random House Children's Books is a division of Random House, Inc., whose parent company is Bertelsmann AG, a leading international media company.