

TURNING SERPENTINE

Alan M. Kent

Set on The Lizard (*An Lysardh* in the Cornish language), the remote southernmost peninsula of the island of Britain – bound in Celtic myth and legend, and entwined with sacred geometry – Alan M. Kent's provocative new novel examines the ancient profession of craftsmen who work and turn the unique, patterned stone found there, known as serpentine. It begins with the war-time discovery of newly-born twins, who are found abandoned and afloat upon the ocean, and culminates in a beautiful but haunting love story of people placed on the very edge of life. Kent combines this narrative with a set of compellingly original characters, all the time reminding us that communication can transport us to new worlds and relationships, yet the lack of it (ironically on a Cape famed for Marconi and its telecommunications history) can also maim and destroy.

In this novel, Cornish people, their challenges, heritage and landscape are conjured up with uncanny poetry and perceptiveness. On this far tip of the known world, the Christian and Pagan fuse; the sea and land merge as one. The story offered is both tender and cruel, and Kent – Winner of the 2018 Holyer an Gof Prize for Fiction – writes with a passionate sincerity about his people. Seizing on folktale, fairy story and sometimes narrative that is magical and outlandish, he creates a new fable for Cornwall.

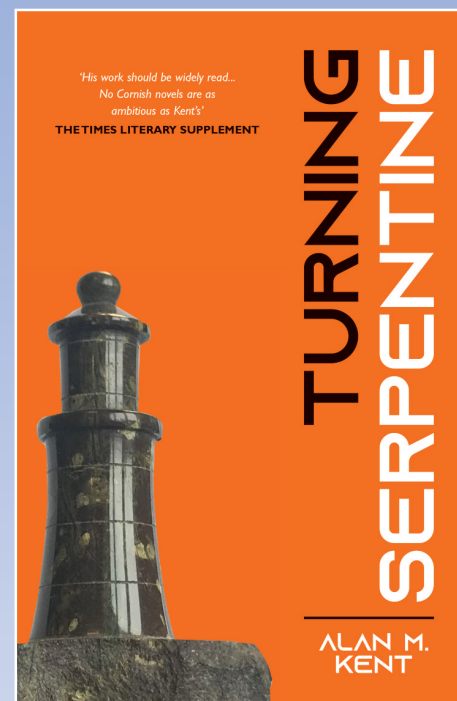
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alan M. Kent was born in the china clay mining region of Cornwall and graduated from the universities of Cardiff and Exeter, specialising in Celtic and Anglo-Celtic literatures. For several years he worked as a teacher, and is now a Senior Lecturer in Literature for the Open University in South-West Britain and a Visiting Fellow in Celtic Studies at the University of La Coruña, Galicia. His novel *Dan Daddow's Cornish Comicalities* won the Holyer an Gof Prize for Fiction in 2018. In addition to writing novels, he has published a number of prize-winning plays and acclaimed volumes of poetry. His adaptation of *The Mousehole Cat* toured internationally in 2019. As well as his non-fiction writing, he has also edited several collections of Cornish and Anglo-Cornish Literature. He is the series editor of *Lesser Used Languages of Europe*, and joint series editor of *Cornish and Celtic Alternatives*.

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