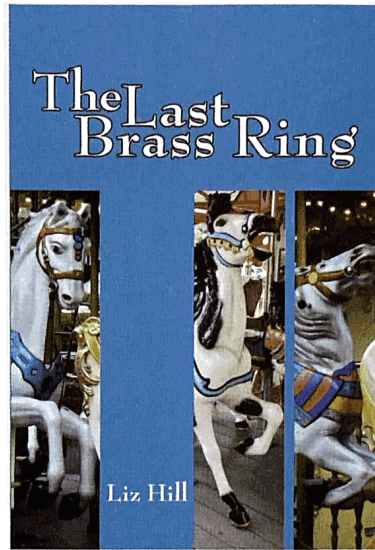


## *The Last Brass Ring*

Liz Hill, Author

When author Liz Hill wanted a young protagonist to deal with strangeness, isolation, racism and family secrets, she dropped her into Staten Island in 1989. Lilli Whitaker goes to stay with her aunt the summer before her senior year of high school and takes a job at a run-down amusement park. “She feels isolated, and that feeling pushes her to make new friends by talking and learning to understand their lives,” Hill says. “Also, a key part of Lilli’s journey involves exploring old letters and photos to discover missing pieces of her family history.



There are no shortcuts, no Googling for answers.”

Hill herself grew up in Staten Island. She chose to set the book in 1989 because that was the year that the Central Park Five were wrongfully arrested for assault. “The book explores not only how racism affects us but also just how wrong we can be when we make assumptions about people without understanding their real story,” she says.

Although the book is recommended for teen readers, Hill thinks that adults will find it enjoyable as well. “I hope readers will empathize with Lilli’s frustration at being forced into an uncomfortable situation,” she says. “Readers might also see that Lilli has more in common with her difficult aunt—and vice versa—than either of them care to admit. There is always more to a person than their obvious personality characteristics, if we care to look deeper.”

*The Last Brass Ring*, December 2023, young adult fiction, paperback, \$12, by Liz Hill, and published by Hovey Publishing, Hendersonville, NC. A book launch will be held Saturday, March 9, at 2 p.m. at The Buzz Sober Bar and Café, Hendersonville. Learn more at [LizHill.net](http://LizHill.net).