

THE REBEL READING SOCIETY

Author Spotlight



Tamsin Winter

When did you decide that you wanted to become an author?

I always wanted to be an author - I can't remember ever wanting to be anything else! I grew up in a tiny village way before technology became so central to our entertainment, so I used to write stories to entertain myself. Mainly because there was nothing else to do!



Did you read lots as a child - if you did, where did you mainly read? If you didn't, what was the reason?

Yes, I read everything and anything I could get my hands on when I was a child. We had a very small library at my primary school so a library minibus would visit every couple of weeks, which was the highlight of my school life! I read all kinds of books from mystery and adventure to joke books. Nothing was off-limits - just the way it should be!

What was your favourite book as a child and why?

I loved *The Magic Faraway Tree* and the Famous Five stories, but it always frustrated me that the boys were in charge and the girls had to spend hours doing household chores! It's probably why my female characters always drive the action in the stories I write today.

How does it feel to see your books in shops and being sold?

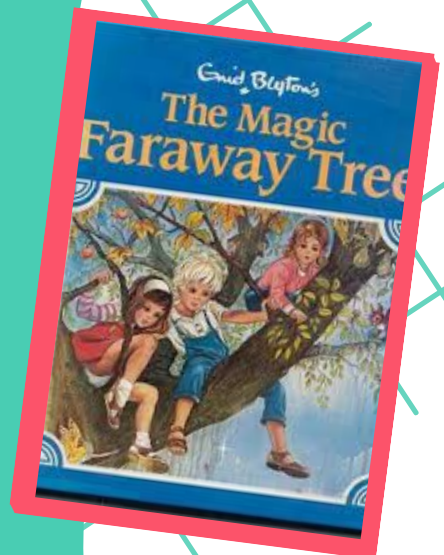
Even after ten years it is still very exciting to see my books in shops and libraries. I dreamed about seeing my own books on the shelves ever since I was a child, and there is no better feeling than making your own dream come true.

What is the best part about being an author?

Getting paid to make stuff up! I have always been a day-dreamer, and writing is very much like day-dreaming. I get to sit at my desk and imagine stuff happening all day long. It's quite a strange job really!

What are the 'not so fun bits' in being an author?

It can be a little scary when you have a brand new book out. Of course, you hope readers will love it, you never really know how it will be received, so that can be tough. However, the Winter family is probably the harshest family in the entire world, so I'm well used to criticism!



Why do you think it is important for children to read?

Reading is the best way to build a strong imagination, and in today's world of Artificial Intelligence and robotic interactions, human imagination is the greatest thing we possess. Books will also make you super smart and extremely funny, like me.

What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

I write realism, so I'm very much inspired by real-life events and issues, particularly stuff that happens online. I Dare You explores dangerous online challenges; Bad Influence is about intimate photo sharing; Girl in Real Life tells the story of a child influencer. I'm obsessed with any kind of online drama basically...



Who gives you feedback on your drafts and how do you act on the feedback?

I work with an editor from my publishing house who gives me notes on how to develop my story. I've worked with her on all of my books, so for almost ten years now - since Being Miss Nobody! She'll focus on things like characterisation and making sure the story is structured to be pacy and impactful, and then it's my job to get editing. I'll usually redraft the book about ten times before it's ready to print!

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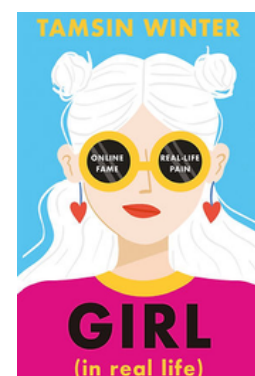
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Finally, if you could read for an hour, on your own, anywhere in the world - where would it be?

I would choose somewhere remote and warm - ideally the Maldives. I've travelled around South Asia - and even dived with sharks! - but never been there. I'd have to explore it by boat, since they haven't invented waterproof books yet. I'd read my book whilst drifting between islands and save enough time to have a quick snorkel.