

Author Interview With A L Morrow by Itsy Bitsy Book Bits

For those new to your work, please tell us a bit about yourself, your books and your genre/s

- I'm a softie at heart—I love love! What's better than finding that special someone who always brings a smile to your face? I got into writing MM romances through fanfiction many years ago, and as my writing career evolved, I decided to branch into original fiction with this pairing. I write across contemporary, fantasy, and paranormal subgenres, and I especially adore stories where there's a lot of innate tension—opposites attracting, forbidden love, and enemies to lovers are some of my fave tropes!

What lessons have you learned as a writer?

- I think the biggest thing I've learned is to trust my instincts. Years ago, I was taught in a creative writing class to trust my instincts as a writer: if a scene or character doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. I take that seriously, and I've started to trust my instincts more off the page as well!

In your everyday life how do you give back to the world?

- I'm a big believer in the importance of kindness, accepting people as they are, and paying good deeds forward. It's funny: one of my friends was telling me how her kids are being taught to be kind in school. I feel like my age group wasn't given these sorts of lessons, and I'm so hopeful for what a better place the world can be in the future as these lessons take route in today's kids.

If your life was a song what song would it be and why?

- At the moment, I'd say "Pocketful of Sunshine" by Natasha Bedingfield. It just puts a smile on my face—while reminding me to be upbeat. I think a positive attitude can take a person a long way in life!

Name two authors you wish more people knew about

- I read mostly indie authors at this point, so the list could go much longer than two! Some of my favorite authors in the MM genre are CP Harris, who writes these gorgeous, emotional, thoughtful books. I also adore Ella Frank, who can steam up the screen of my ebook reader every time! Both are already popular, of course, but to those new to reading this pairing, I always say to start there.

What are some of your hobbies?

- Other than reading and writing, of course! ;) I'm a big fan of the water, so any time I can swim or go boating, I'm all in. Also, I love crafting, especially making wreaths. There's something so soothing about creating, whether that's with words or with art.

When reading reviews, what is something you love to see written?

- I love to see that someone has related to a character of mine! I try to create vivid, realistic characters, and I think characters can make or break a story, so that's a huge compliment.

What are you currently working on?

- My next full-length MM novel will be a contemporary brother's-best-friend story that also deals with loss. It'll be emotional—but have spots of cuteness and humor. I'm especially fond of the first main character so far. He's complex—I call him my onion!

What books are currently in your to-read list?

- Like most avid readers, I have a mile-long TBR pile! At the moment, I have a lot of MM romances on my list (of course!). I'm currently sticking to contemporary to stay in the mood for my work-in-progress and am reading Nyla K's latest, *For the Fans*. (I'm a sucker for stepbrother romances!)

What is your favorite book made into a movie/tv show?

- Probably the version of *Pride and Prejudice* with Keira Knightley. I love Jane Austen, and this is such a beautiful, emotional, and funny take on this amazing book!

What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

- I have always wanted to learn how to play the ukulele ... Maybe someday I'll actually give it a try. It just has such an upbeat, positive sound, and far as musical instruments go, it's pretty darn adorable!

Its Release Day! How do you celebrate?

- I usually take the day off of work (ironically, I work in publishing by day, too!) and treat myself to take-out for dinner. I'm usually a nervous wreck, continually hitting the refresh button on my browser to check for any reviews. LOL I have two pen names and have published several books over the past few years, but release days never get any less exciting/stressful! :)

What gives you inspiration for the stories you write?

- Honestly, everything! I've been inspired by art, songs, a story on the news ... and my dog! To me, that's one of the most exciting things about inspiration: you never know when or where it's going to strike.

What is your writing routine with a new book? Do you outline your stories or do you do what the characters tell you to do as you go along? Mix of both?

- I'm what they call a "plotster"--I'm neither a "pantster" (someone who writes by the seat of their pants, with no planning) and a "plotter" (someone who details as much as possible before diving in). I'm somewhere in between. I usually start with characters and a trope, then build a rough outline from there. My characters have been known to throw me for a loop before, though, so I keep my outlines flexible in order to adapt as they evolve in my mind.

What has been your most rewarding experience since publishing your work?

- Hands down, it was the first time I saw a reader (someone I didn't know, didn't give an ARC to, never had any contact with before) randomly recommending one of my books in a Facebook book rec group, completely unsolicited. I happened to see it because I was also a member of the same reader group, and my jaw literally dropped. It absolutely made my day (and it still does, when I think about it!).

If you could sit down with any character in your book, what would you ask them and why?

- I'd interview the villain in my book Emissary (I won't say his name because it would be a bit of a spoiler). He's such a jerk, and I must admit I don't have a super-clear backstory for him and his longer-term motivations, so I'd love to pick his brain, if he was real/if it was possible!

If you were offered a movie deal for just one of your books, which would you choose and why?

- I'd pick my work-in-progress contemporary story (sorry, I can't say more!). It's got some achingly sweet/romantic scenes that I'd love to see acted out, not just in my head!

Have you ever met a celebrity? Which celebrity would you like to meet if given the chance?

- I've met a few celebrities, mostly after seeing plays on Broadway and usually after camping out for autographs and chit-chat (though I do have a funny hotel elevator story with a celebrity chef!). It's fun, but I haven't done it a long time—definitely something I did more of in my younger years. Nowadays, I'd probably pick a world leader or scholar for more serious conversation.

Other than necessities, what is one thing you cannot go a day without?

- Books, of course! I have my Kindle by nightstand and read every chance I get. It's important to make time for the things that bring us joy! Stories are that for me.

You are filling out this interview as part of a tour with Itsy Bitsy Book Bits. What made you choose Itsy Bitsy Book Bits?

- I love how I literally have nothing to worry about with IBBB—I can trust that the team is organized and will follow through without having to be chased. They are also so kind and supportive! The reviews they leave always encourage me to keep trying, even on tough releases. Thank you for all that you do!