

Author Interview With R.M. Gilmore by

Itsy Bitsy Book Bits

How Did You Get Into Writing?

- In 2006, while going through a divorce, and with the only entertainment all 7 seasons of Buffy on DVD and a borrowed set of the first 3 Anita Blake books, I got supremely drunk and started talking shit about Twilight. A friend challenged me to write something better and a bet was formed. I started writing the first Dylan Hart book that night. It was totally different then, of course, but I spent 5 years working through the kinks, and in 2011 she was finally published. And now it's a completed 6-book series that's been featured on Bustle's top 10 badass female characters, bestselling in multiple genres.
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- I've always been an art kid. Drawing, painting, sculpting. Theater and performing arts were huge for me. Acting, makeup, directing, set design. In fact, initially I was going to go to the Tom Savini school for makeup effects in New York, but I was a jerk teenager and screwed my life up for a while. A chronic film buff, I still dream of seeing my name in opening credits.

What's Your Favorite Genre to Write?

- There's always a horror element to my writing, regardless of the overall theme. But I rarely stick with one genre. One book will have horror, comedy, mystery, and romance. Why limit?

Is there a genre you've always wanted to write in that you haven't yet?

- Maybe epic fantasy. I like world building, but in the same breath, I like my worlds based mostly in reality. A world askew. A Tim Burton world is where I like to live.

Who are some of your inspirations?

- George Lucas, Stephen King, John Hughes, John Landis, Penny Marshal. I could go on forever. They rotate and change through out the years.

Do any of your stories have personal experiences in them?

- Yes. All of them.

Who are some of your favorite authors to read?

- I don't know that I have one. I read for the story more than the who wrote it. I love King novels, but I prefer to listen to those on audio.

What's your writing process look like? (Outline or go with the flow of your character)

- I head plot, then pants. Because I'm a series writer I do keep a character bible. And of course lots of research and timeline stuff so there is that element of plotting, but the story itself is mostly in my head. I'm just as surprised as the reader when we find out how we're getting there.

What are some of your hobbies?

- Drinkin'.
- Most of my hobbies are also my job so my life is pretty fun. I'm a serious movie buff, so my week always ends with the Movie Trivia Schmoedown (find it on YouTube).

Have you attended any signings? If so, what was your favorite thing about it?

- Yes. I once met Amber Benson at a signing which was ridiculous because we were signing at the same event. I felt way cool.

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

- I stayed up all night reading, then I was too scared to sleep.

If you could spend the day with one of your characters, who would it be and what would you do?

- It would be Nana from the Linnie Russell stories. She's based on my Nana who's been gone since 2/2005. I'd give anything to spend a day on her porch.

What are you currently working on?

- I've just finished the second on the Prudence Penderhaus series and now I'm working on reviving an old set of novellas I put out in 2013. They've been off the market for a while and I'm excited to bring it back. The end result will be a one epic novel based on the original Linnie Russell trilogy of novellas.

What's your writing routine?

- I don't have one. I sit down with my laptop or at my desk with the big computer, and start writing. Sometimes I'll have jotted down opening lines or scenes and I just take it from there. I like for my stories to be as organic as I can manage. If I'm shocked at a twist, the reader will be stunned.

Do you have any superstitions when it comes to writing? If so, what?

- Not really. I chew a lot of gum.

What is the best writing advice you've ever received?

- Keep coming back. It works.

Where do you find the names for your characters?

- I actually have a notebook in my purse, at the end is a list of names I've heard or read in my daily life. If they're interesting, or just catch my ear, it goes in the book. Prudence was named after the Beatles song. Dylan Hart was the first name that came to mind on the drunken night of creation. I like old names. I have a middle grade series with a main character named Wilhelmina and her sister Clementine. Some characters, like Michael Petersen from the Dylan Hart series, are named after people I've lost. He was my grandpa. Lost him the year before I started to write Dylan. It's a fun process. And yes, I do have a baby name book in my library.

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

- Misery.

Anything else you want your readers to know about you?

- I'm a giant nerd.

If you won the lottery what would you do with the money?

- Finish my attic and turn it into my she-cave. Drink lots of wine. Buy every building on Main st. downtown and put in shops that people actually want.

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

- Well placed cynicism and sarcastic banter.

If you could give your younger self one piece of writing advice, what would it be?

- You're good enough, you're smart enough, and doggone it, people like you.