

Author Interview With Randi Perrin by Itsy Bitsy Book Bits

How Did You Get Into Writing?

- I can't remember *not* writing. Writing is how I deal with just about any emotion I've ever experienced. After I nearly died in 2012 and my whole life was flipped upside down, I realized that life was too short to just dream about something. I'd always wanted to publish a book, but I'd never actually done anything to achieve that goal, so I changed that. I started writing with intensity and desire, a clear goal in my mind. My first book was released just shy of four years later.

What's Your Favorite Genre to Write?

- Romance

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

- I'm jealous of suspense/thriller writers. I wish my mind worked that way. I'll read them all day long, but I cannot get my head to come up with all the red herrings and twists and turns necessary.

Who are some of your inspirations?

- My daughter--I want her to realize she can achieve dreams if she works for them. Nothing is impossible.

Do any of your stories have personal experiences in them?

- Every single character has a little bit of me or someone I know in them, some more than others. There is a scene in Virtue and Honor (the third book in my Earthbound Angels trilogy) that happened to me, and the other person told me it needed to be in a book. I laughed and said, "Challenge accepted." The morale to this story is to be careful what you say and do around me, because you may (read: most likely will) wind up in a novel. (I do change names and circumstances to protect the not-so-innocent.)

Who are some of your favorite authors to read?

- Nora Roberts has always been a favorite romance author of mine, along with the early works of Jennifer Weiner. Helen Hoang is amazing, as is Jen DeLuca. Most of who I read these days are indie authors (because I believe in supporting the community I'm a part of) and I will absolutely one-click anything by Sara Dobie Bauer, Em Shotwell, Gen Ryan, Megan Lowe, Marie Piper... and several others who have escaped my mind at the moment.

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

- My writing process is hardly a process and every other writer I know judges me because it makes no sense to them. To each their own, right? I don't outline--because I'll never stick to it, so why waste my time? I believe in letting the characters tell me the story they want to tell. I'm usually just as surprised as readers when it's all said and done. My characters have thrown me for a loop more than once.

What are some of your hobbies?

- Wait, I'm allowed to do something other than write? I love to bake, but I don't get to do it as often as I used to. I'm also a music lover, so I'm always up for a concert. (Seriously, if you need a concert buddy, hit me up!)

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

- I've attended several (and have even more on the schedule for this year). I think what's the most amazing is that writing is a very solitary activity. So it's always nice to go to these things and talk to other authors and find out that they struggle with some of the same things I do. I've also loved getting to learn tips and tricks from other authors, advice, and most of all, walking away with new (signed!) books. At the end of the day, I'm a total book nerd, so I get to do my own fangirling at these things too.

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

- I want to evoke emotion. When you finish my book, I want you to either mourn the fact the story is over or I want you to throw it against the wall because it was that bad. Either scenario, I achieved my goal, because I made you feel something. If I see that someone's "meh" on it, then I didn't do my job.

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

- I can't pick just one and you can't make me. You're really going to make me do this, aren't you? Fine. Destin, from Virtue of Death. What would we do? Make beautiful snarky conversation together.

What are you currently working on?

- I've written a lot of contemporary romance lately, so I'm going to go back to paranormal romance, which is where I got my start. I miss writing magic.

What's your writing routine?

- I have no specific routine. What I do have is a spot. No one else is allowed to sit in my spot. That's my spot. (I'm like Sheldon from Big Bang Theory sometimes. I do not apologize for this.)

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

- Yeah, never ever, ever, ever, ever (did I say ever?) release a book that has not been through several rounds of beta readers. My betas are my secret weapon. I have several, many of whom have been with me since my first book. They know my weaknesses and aren't afraid to tell me when I'm not doing my best.

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

- Nora Roberts told me to "Just keep writing." Three simple words that feel somewhat dismissive if taken at face value, especially when you realize they were in response to my telling her I always wanted to write a novel. I know, right Randi? Couldn't you have come up with something more original when meeting the legend? No, I was young, dumb, and starstruck. But those three words have followed me my entire life. When my world falls apart, I write. When things are going great, I write. When I'm meh, I write. When I'm bored, I write just to give my hands something to do. Not everything I write is worthwhile (I'm pretty sure some of what I've published may fall into that category--and to that I just have to say, "I'm sorry"). But as long as I keep writing, eventually something will come out that snowballs into something bigger and more beautiful. All because I just kept writing.

Where do you find the names for your characters?

- No joke, my husband has caught me on the Name Your Baby websites and asked me to explain myself. lol I take naming my characters seriously. A lot of times, there's a whole lot of thought that went into those names--an alternate meaning, another language, or even just a subtle joke. Because I believe in letting the characters tell me their story, I build my characters first, and it all starts with a name. A few examples: Sera from Virtue of Death was because it was a shortened version of seraphim and she was an angel. Her best friend Cheryl... rooted in cherabim. Marielle Dufour was the baker Sera emulated, and du four literally means "from the oven" in French.

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

- The book is always better! A few of the movies that actually did justice to the book were "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "In Her Shoes."

Anything else you want your readers to know about you?

- Have I ever told you how non-romantic I am? Yeah, I hate sappy romantic stuff. But yet I write romance. Like Stonehenge, I'm just one of life's great mysteries.

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

- Sadly, I'm an adult so I'd have to do those adult things and pay off the house, my bills, and set aside money for my kid's college education. After that was taken care of, I'd start a charity in honor of my brother who we lost to suicide.

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

- My husband and I make regular contributions to different charities. We also try our best to raise our daughter to understand that she has the power to enact change and to give to those who are less fortunate. I also believe in karma--so in publishing, I do my very best to lift other up as opposed to tearing them down. We need to support each other. There are jerks out there who will be dead set on tearing you down, insult your hard work, and make you question every decision you've ever made. I don't want to be that person. There are more than enough of them out there already.

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

- The emo poetry you wrote in high school was not good. No, really. It wasn't. Enough. Try a novel instead.