

Author Interview With Julie Archer by Itsy Bitsy Book Bits

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

- Author of contemporary romance featuring rock stars, small towns, a healthy dose of angst, some steamy times and always a happy ever after! I write a mixture of standalones and interconnected standalone series. I've been publishing since 2016 although not all of those books are still available to the public! I'm based in the South West of the UK and live with my husband and two feline children. Outside of writing, I watch a lot of teen dramas as well as too much football (or soccer!) and motorbikes. I also work as a front of house supervisor in one of our town's best hotel and restaurants.

What lessons have you learned as a writer?

- That your support network is invaluable! I have people who are always at the end of a message if I need advice, support or just a general cheer up. Also, to never give up. 2022 wasn't a good year and I almost did. Thankfully, one of those angels in my network persuaded me otherwise and here I am with a new release which, in my opinion, is my best.

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

- In my day job, I serve you coffee! Additionally, I am part of a local Music Foundation charity which offers young people in the area the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments. A lot of schools in the UK no longer offer music as a subject choice, and it would be sad to see their enthusiasm lost as a result.

If your life had a theme song what would it be?

- Wessex Boy by Frank Turner (or should that be Wessex Girl?)
- The song "Wessex Boy" by Frank Turner is an ode to his hometown of Winchester, the capital city of Wessex in England. It follows the narrator's experiences of growing up and living in Winchester, recounting the sights and sounds, as well as the people he encountered and the friendships he built there. The chorus reflects on how a person's hometown can be a source of comfort and security, a place that can always feel like "home". Turner captures the nostalgia of returning home, and how despite how much a place may change, there will always be special memories attached to it.
- I grew up near Winchester and the place, and this song, has a very special place in my heart. Every time I hear it, I tear up.

Name two authors you wish more people knew about

- Joslyn Westbrook, a contemporary romance author best known for stories featuring sassy heroines and alpha heroes with a heart, Joslyn's characters are realistic and loveable, and her stories always end with a happily forever after.
- Kyra Lennon, a contemporary romance author who has released two successful series and a handful of novellas. She features relatable characters, emotional depth and compelling storylines. Her heartwarming and engaging books often explore themes of love, loss and self-discovery.

What are some of your hobbies?

- Outside of writing, I watch a lot of teen dramas as well as too much football (or soccer!) and motorbikes. I'm a huge Tottenham Hotspur fan and will watch them as often as I can from my armchair. My husband got me into MotoGP a few years ago and you can't beat the drama and tension of a good race - sometimes it's hard to watch!

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

- To paraphrase, that my characters are likeable and relatable and readers actually care what happens to them and their relationship. If a reader says they enjoyed my story, then that really means something to me too.

What are you currently working on?

- A small town, opposites (on the surface) attract romance.

What books are currently in your to-read list?

- Anything by Vi Keeland! I recently read Something Unexpected and absolutely loved it. Now I want to read everything she's written.

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

- I don't have one! A lot of the TV shows and movies I've watched I haven't read the book, because I don't like to ruin my version of the story, or if I have read the book I'm too scared to watch it in case it doesn't match up to what's in my head.

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

- That I am a rock chick! I actually met Duff from Guns 'n' Roses once at a meet and greet following an intimate gig. It was a brilliant experience and interesting to see how shy such a huge rock star was in real life.

Its Release Day! How do you celebrate?

- Usually with a nice large glass of rose and my favourite dinner.

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?

- It's usually a mix of both. I'll have a vague outline in mind and will let the characters lead me where they want to go (within reason, of course). If I have outlined properly, I can usually write a lot quicker, although there's less mystery as to where the story will end up.

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

- One of my proudest career moments is when Toby Tarrant (son of TV legend Chris Tarrant in the UK) read out an excerpt from one of my books on Radio X. I had dedicated Wish You Knew to him as his show had been my playlist for writing the book during 2020. Can't say that the Radio X audience were much into rock star romances, but it was a fantastic bit of publicity and also a fun story to tell!

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

- From my current book, I'd sit down with Alexis and ask her what really happened between her and Jordan the first time around that meant they didn't stay together. Although if they had, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to write their second chance love story!

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

- Cat snuggles with Corey and Elsa. It's the best feeling after a long shift at work or when you're having a bad day.

It's family game night and everyone gets to pick one game to play, what game are you choosing?

- Monopoly! It's always a fun one in our family because certain members are SO competitive!

Where would be your dream destination for a vacation?

- Puerto Pollenca in Mallorca. It's usually where we go on holiday anyway, but it's a place we love and feel comfortable in. Plus there's always somewhere new to explore each time we go there.

What got you into writing?

- My love of reading! I'm an only child and when I was younger, books were my escape and the characters were my pretend friends. I started out by writing what I guess was fan fiction (which never ever saw the light of day!), then started to develop those ideas into the book I wanted to read. My first novel probably took me around ten years, on and off, to write. These days, I'm a lot quicker!

When writing, what are your must haves in your space? Food, drinks, music, quiet etc?

- Radio X in the morning, Spotify playlists in the afternoon. A break for a drink mid-morning and I rarely write much beyond four in the afternoon. I find it a struggle to write if there's anyone else in the room/house - cats excepted of course!

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

- Itsy Bitsy Book Bits was recommended to me and looked more comprehensive than other services I have used in the past. I am open to looking at new things for a release, so this was something I wanted to try.

