

Erin Farwell Bio

I can't remember a time without books. Not only did I learn to read at a young age but my mother read to me as much as time allowed. We enjoyed *the House At Pooh Corner* and related Pooh stories and read our way through *Rascal*, *the Box Car Children*, and *Search for Delicious*, to name a few. Writing soon followed and my stories were filled with ghosts and witches and mysteries. I had a small notebook where I wrote in crayon, using the colors to enhance the mood I was attempting to convey.

In elementary school I devoured the Nancy Drew and Dana Girls books. Later I moved on to Phyllis A. Whitney's young adult mysteries. In high school I was introduced to Stephen King, starting with *Salem's Lot*. I also read *Dandelion Wine*, a book still dear to my heart. Books were both a way for me to connect with others, especially my mother, but also a way to escape from the world. I could disappear into a book and be anyone, go anywhere, do anything, and it made the rough times of childhood more bearable.

Although I loved to write, the desire to create with words took a backseat to the more practical aspects of life. I earned degrees in business and law. For almost fifteen years I worked as a consultant, helping hospitals and nursing homes develop physical medicine and rehabilitation programs for people who had experienced strokes, spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, knee replacements and other conditions. This work fulfilled me on many levels. I traveled the country and helped build programs that would benefit people for years to come. As part of this process I worked with and interviewed hundreds of people and toured many worksites including factories that made plastic parts, washing machines and truck frames. I toured catsup and sugar beet factories and platinum mine. And through it all I collected stories, settings, names, and ideas.

And I continued to read. *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* by P.D. James is a wonderful book as are her Adam Dalgliesh novels. Figuratively speaking, I traveled to England with Elizabeth George, Martha Grimes, and Peter Robinson. Elliot Pattison helped me understand setting as a character with his beautiful novels about Tibet. Louise Penny, Craig Johnson, Laurie R. King, Charles Todd, and many more introduced me to characters and places that have become a part of me.

I've been fortunate to travel outside of the United States in the literal sense as well and have visited Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, and Slovenia. My husband and I, along with a group of friends, climbed Kilimanjaro and I'm thrilled to report that I made it to the top. We also went on safari on the Serengeti and saw an amazing variety of animals in their natural habitat, which was exciting until we camped the first night and I realized that there was only a thin layer of nylon between myself and the lions, leopards and cheetahs we'd seen earlier in the day.

By far our biggest adventure occurred when my husband and I traveled to China to bring home our then-one-year-old daughter, Willow. Although our trip ended, the ongoing journey of parenting keeps us on our toes.

When Willow came into our lives, mine changed drastically. I stopped working outside the home and began to take my writing seriously. My first novel was, in all honesty, quite awful but I learned a great deal from the process. As a result my second novel, *Shadowlands*, was published in 2012. In September of 2013, my short story *The Carver* was included in the All Hallows' Evil anthology.

I also teach art classes, which is funny to me as I can't draw a straight line. I can however play with clay and work in the medium of metal clay. This clay has silver, copper, bronze or steel in it and we use it to make jewelry. I love teaching classes and my students inspire and challenge me. I also volunteer at my daughter's school, knit, and ignore housework as much as possible.

I have a t-shirt that says "I live in my own little world but that's okay, they know me here." This is very true. People and places exist in my mind and I love the challenge of transferring them to paper. I hope you enjoy my worlds as much as I do.