

FAQs

1. What made you want to become a writer?

I have a sneaking suspicion that it is at least partially genetic. I never remember wanting to do anything else. The one subject I excelled at in school was English. I read voraciously and longed for the day I could point proudly to a book and say, "I wrote that".

2. Which authors inspire you?

Far too many to list. I started, as many of my contemporaries did, reading authors such as Enid Blyton (Famous Five), Lucy Maud Montgomery (Ann of Green Gables), Louisa May Alcott (Little Women), progressing to Victoria Holt, Jane Austen and, my all time heroines, The Bronte Sisters. I also loved Hardy and Dickens, Wodehouse, Edna O'Brien, Walter Macken and the inimitable Maeve Binchy. Latterly, with my own foray into crime writing, I am very much enjoying the works of Dean Koontz, Linwood Barclay, Harlen Coben, Stephen King and several wonderful British and Irish writers.



1 Me as a young woman, probably dreaming of becoming an author.

3. Which book do you wish you had written?

That's got to be Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. I am hugely in awe of her talent and every time I read that book (which is, on average, once a year), my admiration (and envy) grows.

4. Have you a writing routine; do you work for a set period of time every day?

No, I pretty much write when the mood is on me, which fortunately is most days. I tend to start early during the summer months – I am one of those people who has to be up at the crack of dawn. I am sometimes at my computer at 5.30 or 6.00 a.m. If the muse is in a generous mood, I can work straight through until 8.00 or 9.00 p.m. Not all of that time is spent writing, though. I generally edit whatever I wrote the day before, do a bit of net surfing and research, and then crack on with things. I don't aim for any specific word count. 500 or 5000, it's all progress.

5. Where do you write?

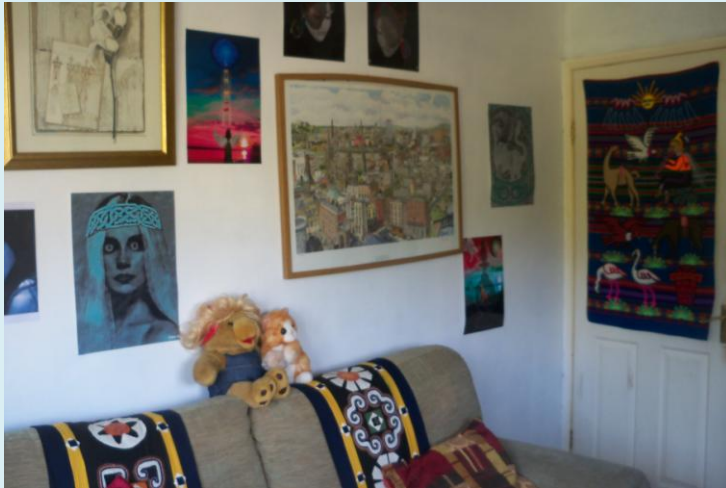
I am fortunate enough to have a dedicated writing room, where I can lock myself away from the world. I make sure my desk is facing the wall, so I don't become distracted by the garden outside. However, when it's nice and sunny, I open the French doors to let the air and the scents of the flowers in.



2 My Writing Sanctuary



3 Surrounded by some of my favourite things.



4 It's nice to close the door on the world, sometimes.

6. Why do you write under different names?

I used to write under the names of Tara Moore, Tara Manning and Emily Sage to differentiate between genres. Hence forward, however, all my books both new and reprinted will be published under Tara Moore.

The Tara Moore books ([RSVP](#) and [Blue-Eyed Girl](#)) are contemporary, multi-character, multi-stranded novels, dealing with complex issues and dysfunctional personalities. They are glamorous and sexy with a high quotient of drama and have been favourably compared to the works of Jilly Cooper and Penny Vincenzi.

The Tara Manning books (*Seducing Adam* and *Poodles At Dawn*) are light-hearted romantic comedies. *Seducing Adam* will be reprinted in 2016 by Urbane and *Poodles At Dawn* the following year.

The Emily Sage books are those I term my 'Irish Books'. Look out for [Once Upon A Time in Galway](#) (a saga set in 1950s Ireland) which has just been released on Kindle (under Tara Moore).

7. Where do you get your ideas from?

Ideas are everywhere. The words of a song might trigger an idea, a phrase overheard on a train or bus, an article in a newspaper, anything really. Occasionally, some plot or character might spring into my mind fully formed. Once or twice I woke up with

an entire 'book' in my head. There is no shortage of ideas. Sadly, I would need several lifetimes in which to use them all up.

8. What are you working on at present?

I have taken to a 'life of crime' and have just completed the first thriller in what I intend to be a series. The title is Fade To Dead. A serial killer is on the loose in South London (where I lived for many years). He's got a type. She's blonde, beautiful and very young. It's ballsy, no-nonsense Jessica Wideacre's first case since her promotion to Detective Inspector and a chance to prove to her boss that she isn't just the token woman shoved in by the PC brigade, but the right woman for the job.

Fade To Dead will be published later this year and I am in the early stages of planning book No. 2 in the series, The Baby Shoe Killer.

You can read the first three chapters of Fade To Dead [here](#).

9. What do you think of self/indy publishing?

I think it's wonderful that writers have so many platforms through which they can publish their work these days. I would, however, urge anyone thinking of going down that route to make sure their work is as polished as possible. Have it edited by a professional (shop around and check qualifications). Ensure the cover is designed to a high standard – contrary to the old adage, people do judge books by their covers. Visuals are of paramount importance. It goes without saying that the story should be interesting and well-written. Learn as much as you possibly can about marketing and promotion. Network. Network. Network. There are so many books out there, you need to do everything you can to bring yours to the attention of your targeted readers. Blog about it. Try and get it reviewed by your local press. Reviews are vitally important. Think about donating some free books to local book groups or internet reader groups in exchange for reviews. Above all, enjoy the process and be realistic. Your first book might not reach the dizzy heights you would like (it happens, but very rarely); you might not be able to give up the day job just yet, but who knows, maybe one day . . .

10. What was it like seeing your first book in the shops?

Amazing! Incredible! Wonderful! Seducing Adam was one of those rare books that did reach the dizzy heights. It was prominently displayed in all the major bookshops, had front of window space, POS bins and because the cover featured an apple with a bite taken out of it, some shops (the Easons chain) even had apples suspended from

the ceiling. The marketing push was tremendous. There were dinners with bookshop owner and publishers, TV/press and radio interviews, pretty, apple-shaped promotional flyers, a car raffle tie-in. Best of all, at one point it was outselling the latest Patricia Cornwell book by three to one! It was a dream come true and that dream is as strong as it ever was and that's what keeps me writing.

11. What advice would you give to any aspiring authors?

Sit down and do it! You can have the most brilliant characters and plot in your head, but no one is going to see it there. Make no mistake, writing is hard work. It calls for bucket loads of stamina, but it is so worth it. Many people like to 'talk' book; it makes them feel good, but talking isn't writing and too much talking can actually make your book feel stale to yourself and dampen your enthusiasm for actually writing it.

The second bit of advice I'd give is don't labour over the same paragraph time and time again. Always push forward. Get the skeleton of the book written first, then go back to the start and add the muscle and flesh. You will be encouraged by how much progress you make and want to continue. Remember, it's easier to perfect and polish something that actually exists, something that's there in black and white, rather than something that's still stuck in your head.

Finally, people often approach me with lines such as, "I'd write a novel too, if only I had the time". The simple truth is that if you want to write badly enough, you will make the time, no matter how busy or complicated your life. See my blog on that very subject [here!](#)