

A BSB Interview With Carsen Taite

by Connie Ward, Bold Strokes Books Consulting Publicist

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What made you decide to become a fiction writer?

Successful fiction writers are like rock stars, and who doesn't want to be a rock star? Seriously, I've always wanted to write books like the ones I love to read. Now that I'm actually doing it, I can't believe I waited so long to get started!

What type of stories do you write? And why?

I write romance because I'm a sucker for a good love story. Right up there with romance is mystery/intrigue and *It Should be a Crime* has both. Because romance novels are my first love, I'll probably always incorporate the path to happily-ever-after in whatever genre I take on.

What do your family/friends think about your writing?

My friends and family have been tremendously supportive of my habit. Of course, they all want to know when I'm going to be on the *New York Times* best-seller list (aka rock star) and start writing full time. I decline to explain the complexities involved in both and politely tell them that I'm working on it.

Where do you get your ideas?

Everywhere! In my first two novels, *truelesbianlove.com* and *It Should be a Crime*, I used life experiences as catalysts for story ideas: online dating, restaurant management, law school, criminal defense, living in Dallas. For my next novel, *Do Not Disturb*, I'm very familiar with the setting since I used to live in Santa Fe, but I've decided to branch out and explore some things I don't know. For instance I've never been a top-ten recording artist or a hotelier.

I do plan to write more stories with courtroom drama in the future since I can efficiently use my day job as research and I happen to love the dynamic aspect of legal storylines (in both real life and fiction).

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How do you write; do you plan everything out or just write?

The ratio is still evolving, but at first it was 99% writing and 1% planning, which equated 150% editing. I'm more of an 80/20 gal now, which makes editing a lot less painful. Too much planning stifles my creativity, but no planning leaves a lot of room for error. I'm constantly striving to find a good balance for my writing process, and my editors have been an enormous help in this area.

What makes *truelesbianlove.com* special to you?

Lots of things. It's my first book and represents the achievement of my dream to become a novelist. I enjoyed writing about where I live, and I love when people comment that they recognize the Dallas scene when they read the book. Many of the places are extra-special venues for my wife and me, and the storyline itself was inspired in part by the fact that we met online. Oh, and did I mention that it was my first book?

How much of yourself and the people you know are in your characters?

I think every writer draws on familiar details to conjure up the people they put on the page. Whether you use aspects of your own personality or those of people you either know or have just observed, it's how you combine those characteristics to create characters that are both original and familiar at the same time that defines good character development. Whether readers like or hate my characters, I hope they find them to be genuine.

Which lesbian authors inspired you the most? Do you have a favorite of this author(s)?

Wow, that's a hard question because the list is so long. Lee Lynch and Ann Bannon for their courageous trailblazing. Katherine Forrest, Karin Kallmaker, Jennifer Knight, and Radclyffe for being beacons of grand success in this niche market. All of my fellow BSB authors for their willingness to unselfishly share their mastery of the craft with this new author. If I was forced at gunpoint to pick a favorite book from one of the authors in this group, it would have to be *shadowland* by Radclyffe.

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Do you have any suggestions for new writers?

Just do it. For years I said: one day I'm going to actually sit down and write a book. Years went by and I didn't accomplish my goal because I didn't even start. A couple of years ago I decide the convenient time to start would never come, so I just started putting words on paper and pushed myself to keep doing it even when I thought they didn't sound good and I was frustrated about my lack of knowledge about the writing and publishing process. I couldn't be happier that I started down this road.

When you're not writing what do you do for fun?

Read what other people write, bicycle, cook, try new restaurants.

What is the favorite among the books/stories you've written? Why?

It Should be a Crime is my favorite. It combines my two favorite genres, romance and intrigue, and it was a blast to write. I've grown very attached to the main characters and I think they may speak to me again in the future.



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