

AUTHOR Q&A WITH KARA LINABURG

Author Kara Linburg specializes in young adult fiction, having already published two fantasy novels, *The Broken Prince* and *The Crownless King*. Her upcoming novel, *A Study In Terminal*, focuses on the real-world mental health struggles of today. In this interview, she conveys the ups and downs of her writing career, as well as some insight to *A Study In Terminal*, which will be released on June 7, 2022.

How long have you been writing?

Since I could spell! If I wasn't drawing picture books as young as seven or eight, I was creating worlds and characters in my head. I had imaginary friends way before I could get stories onto paper, and I don't remember a time I didn't want to create or didn't have a vivid imagination...

What inspired you to become an author?

Wanting to tell the stories that I wanted to read. In high school, I was genuinely unhappy with the young adult books I found in the library or that were being sold on the market. I didn't relate to the characters at all, and I wanted to create stories I could relate to. But as I become an adult, I realized I didn't just want to tell stories for me -- I wanted to tell the stories of those I met who might not feel like they had a voice themselves and to tell their stories so others could relate or understand or maybe so they see that they're not alone.

Do you have a typical writing schedule?

Yes! Anyone close to me knows I thrive with a solid schedule or otherwise I'd go insane haha. On work days, I typically write a couple hours after work and then for four to five hours a day on my days off. Since going back to school though, this has "upset" my writing schedule a bit, so I've learned to give myself grace and write whenever I have freetime.

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What inspired you to write *A Study In Terminal*?

Ohh so much! But one of the things being that nearly everyone I know (including myself) can name one person in their life who has attempted suicide or died by suicide. After reading a few YA books with that theme and not liking them, I think that began to plant the idea of me writing my own because I can not only name people, but I struggled myself. So in March of 2020, at the start of Covid and the whole world on pause (and having a crazy amount of time), I decided to try.

How was writing *A Study In Terminal* different from writing your other books?

For one, I've never tried contemporary, for another this was a deeply personal book for me and I knew the themes I was writing about needed to be handled with grace and respect. I wanted to respect those who were affected by the things I was touching upon, and I was terrified of not handling it correctly. As I said, I'd read some YA books with those same themes that are now being said to have glorified or flippantly talked about life vs. death and I really wanted to give people a perspective they might not have imagined before.

Were there any roadblocks you faced while writing this novel? How did you get past them?

YES! Me! Haha. I get so much anxiety EVERY time I open my laptop to write and I couldn't count how many times I closed it and announced, "whelp, this book isn't going anywhere. I quit." I don't know if I exactly got past the anxiety, more than I constantly leaned on the fact that I had people who believed in me and believed I could write and that I was even a little good. Plus, I kept reminding myself, "this isn't my story. If I can impact just one person, then I'm good. I'm writing this because I feel called."

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What was the most enjoyable part about writing this novel?

Gangs! Small town West Virginia! Sean being snarky and a bit of a brat and Rina being the amazing blue-haired human that she is! I love bringing my state to life, bringing the place I call home to life. It was all so much fun to create!

How did you get the idea for the title?

The song Terminal from Jon Foreman. Part of the lyrics go like this: "Whenever I start cursing the traffic or the phone, I remind myself that we all have cancer in our bones. Don't yell at the dead, show a little respect." It's a song about how no matter who you are, your condition is terminal. We are each dying a little more every day, some just faster than others. As I was writing ASIT, I realized that Sean is basically exploring the idea of life and death, that my book is basically a study in the terminal.

What message do you hope to convey to your audience with A Study In Terminal?

That there's hope. That it does get better. That I have no idea what you are going through but you are loved.

A Study in Terminal
by Kara Linaburg
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Interview conducted by Molly Roth

