

Interview with T.A. Barron

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I am totally thrilled by the Japanese editions of my books. I am honored by the excellent translation, and I love the handsome art on the book covers. And I am truly delighted to have so many readers in Japan!

1. You have so many experiences and did a lot of things. Is your life work writing? If so, which aspect of that do you focus on? Just writing?

I have done many things—built a mountain cabin, studied at Oxford, run a growing business, started a family—but I have always written.

When I was in fifth grade, I liked to tell stories so much that I started my own little magazine, called *The Idiot's Odyssey*. As an Eagle Scout, I won a scouting speech and essay competition that sent me to Washington to meet the President. Even when I was president of a business, I often found myself getting up at 4 a.m. to write, composing during meetings, or scribbling in the back of a taxi.

Finally I had to make a choice, to do what I love best, because life is too short not to follow your passions. So here I am, still telling stories.

2. Why start it?

It is the hardest work I know, but also the most joyous. It is not only a marvelous craft (which feels as magical as any work of Merlin the wizard), but it is also a great way to live. To write well you must observe the world fully and closely, absorbing all its sensuous details and hidden meanings.

3 What did you do to become a writer?

While I was at Oxford, I wallpapered my bathroom with rejection letters from my first novel—all 42 of them! At that point, my confidence as a writer was shattered. Time had to pass—seven years. I wrote a few opinion pieces for the *New York Times* and continued writing in my journal. But nothing that was creative. At the same time, I still had a vivid memory of how writing helped me process life—how the act of transferring thoughts and experiences to words gave me greater understanding.

4. What are you doing now?

Now that *The Great Tree of Avalon* trilogy is finally completed, I am working several new book ideas. Also, I'm working hard to help the movie of *The Lost Years of Merlin*. So these are busy times! Please visit my website (www.tabarron.com) for the latest news about my new books.

5. Dream, The reason to continue it.

The best thing about following my dream to write is making a word, a place, a character, a dilemma or an idea come alive. Truly alive. For both writer and reader. Then I have a chance to touch other people in a deep and lasting way. And I am more alive than ever before.

6. Message to the readers willing to have some lifework to make their life beautiful.

The first book I wrote never got published, but the process taught me a great deal about the craft of writing a novel—as well as my own passion for writing. So the point is: Don't ever give up. If you have the passion to create, you must follow it!

7. You are already introduced everywhere often, but we just would like to show your unknown faces. Please just enjoy answering, and the readers would find something new and important for them.

I grew up in places where Nature was always nearby, so I could explore a creek, climb a tree, pick an apple, or just cover myself with mud. The nearness of Nature shaped me profoundly. Not just in the challenging, adventurous ways you might expect—in deeper, spiritual ways, as well.

Unspoiled Nature is the last, best place on Earth for people to stand upright and tall, dwarfed by the sweep of the stars or the sweep of time, and yet still part of it all—connected to the changing seasons, the fox tracks, or the flight of geese. In Nature, we can feel both very small, and very large, at once—part of the universe, the pattern, the mystery.