

Top 20 Letters
Chosen by Administrators of the Social Media Fan Site
"The Isle of Fincayra"
2017

Dravia,

Dravia Fincayra

Dear Mr. Barron,

I'm sure you've received hundreds of these kinds of letters before but I'm taking a chance in case you just so happen to read mine. I would like to start by saying that I've always been a huge fan of legends King Arthur and Merlin in particular and you have no idea how happy I am to have discovered that there's a book series on Merlin. Recently I discovered the BBC show Merlin and while watching I could only ponder on whether or not I could find a book or a series to read as well and after looking it up I stumbled upon your books. I've barely just started the first one but I'm already a huge fan and absolutely adoring this series. I look forward to reading them all and going on another adventure. That being said thank you for writing these books so that others like me can live yet another life.

-Priyanka

Dear Mr. T.A. Barron,

I have always loved books for as long as I can remember. When my sister gave me the first book in the Lost years series it was a particularly hard time in my life when my parents were getting divorced and I was very young. The island was a place where I could escape to and be a part of the magic is that Merlin was learning. I felt like in a way I grew up with him and I felt his struggle against the man who in the end turned out to be his childhood bully. I read those books so long ago but still I remember the stories. I learned cried and laughed from the bottom of my heart and when he finally sprouted wings I too felt that freedom. It was after reading your books that I learned writing was such a huge part of what makes me, me. I once asked you at UCSB if there was a certain part of you that felt like it magically flowed out from you when wrote you told me if I ever did that I should be a writer. So I started & I've never stopped. I constantly jot down parts to different stories and sometimes it pours out like a waterfall and sometimes there are months when I can't eek out a word but one day when I can finally piece it together I want to dedicate it to you because without even knowing me you saw something in me that was screaming to be seen. Seeing without Seeing and it encourages me to try. I want to give that to others and encourage them to read grow and be present and joyful in their simplest actions. I hope I can help even a few people like you helped me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

-Sarah

Mr. T.A. Barron,

You not only bring nature to your stories but also life lessons to learn. Each of your stories are so magical I get carried off to that world and learn about the people and places there, as well as their struggles and victories.

-Casey

Dear Mr. Barron,

My friends and I grew up reading your books. We would spend hours visiting the worlds of Avalon and Fincayra. I also love the books with Kate; she's just so brave, adventurous and so true to herself. She is the definition of courage!

I always get this wondrous feeling whenever I'm reading your stories. I was talking to my friend about this one day, and I'll never forget what she said: "Reading Mr. Barron's books stir our heartlight."

So thank you so, so much Mr. Barron. To me, and I'm sure to a lot of other people, you're a true hero and the greatest wizard of our time.

Thank you,
Quetzalli



Dear T.A. Barron,

What an honor it is to write to one of my most favorite fantasy authors of all time. The first book I read from you was *The Merlin Affair*, it was a higher scale book for me at the time but I wanted to give it a shot, and I fell right into the story. Then after I got done reading I then found more Merlin books, the *Lost Years of Merlin*. At first, I was thinking about the Disney version of Merlin from *Sword and the Stone*, and thought this was when he was younger, but as soon as I started reading, it wasn't, but way deeper and better. Just as the Harry Potter books were getting popular, I stuck with your books. I slowly became addicted to the story, I'd read them in a week tops, (even got in trouble in English class for reading lol, even though she encourages us to read more). But when your last one (at the time) "*The Wings of Merlin*" came out, I cried when Merlin had to leave his beloved, and oh, oh I cried. Then you came back and started the *Merlin's Dragon*, and I got half way in it and, life got the better of me and I stopped reading; but I will never forget the series that sparked my passion to read books, for that I thank you, God Bless you for your work! Also, I am excited to hear a movie that involves the Merlin series; I remember long time ago you said you'd do one after the Harry Potter ones but it never happened, but it's well worth the wait! I always wanted to have my books signed, or at least shake your hand and tell you thank you for making my childhood adventurous! God Bless you Barron, I am now in my 27th year of age, and I'm still a fan, thank you again,

-Joshua

Dear Tom,

Remember me? Meg! And my daughter Tilia of course. It's been a couple years since we've made it out to one of your book signings. I actually looked earlier this year for one at Powells in Portland or Beaverton but I couldn't find it announced anywhere so I thought you weren't visiting. Then I found out you did visit and I was so sad to have missed you! I must not miss it next year! Tilia was so pleased when you sent her a copy of *Tree Girl*. She is 10 now and also wants to meet you again. I'm not sure how I missed this fan page dedicated to your books! I'm glad I found it now! I wish I had a fan site like this when I first read them all those years ago! I saw this fun thing the group is putting together to send you a bunch of letters so I thought I'd jump in too. I hope life is treating you and your family well! Thank you for participating in this group and for being such an inspiration to all of us! Your books meant so much to me over the years and really developed my love for fantasy novels. I enjoy telling kids now to go read your books, especially if they love wizards! Thank you again for all you do and all the love you show your fans! You are a blessing to this world. Take care! Your friends, -Meg and Tilia

Hello Mr. Barron!

I first want to say how much your books mean to me, and how I'll be forever thankful to you for writing them. When I was in middle school, I was bullied since I was your typical "book nerd" and was quiet. I found a book in the library called Fires of Merlin, and instantly forgot my worries and was transported to the wonderful world of Fincayra. Afterwards, I started reading them in the correct order and would constantly be wrapped up in this amazing lore you had helped create. I even entered the contests on your site and have the maps I received hanging on my wall! Some of my fondest memories were reading them outside under a tree near my house. I even named my pet squirrel Trouble after my favorite hawk. It was the perfect escape for me during troubling times and made me have a new appreciation for nature and life. I cannot thank you enough for these wonderful tales and I look forward to reading them to my future children (and watching the movie!). A thousand times thank you!

-Jeana

Mr. Barron,

I have loved your books for a long time. I recently stumbled up the first book of the Merlin series at a flea market and promptly purchased it as it reminded me of how much I enjoyed the series as a kid. One summer i spent a month carving a cedar sapling down into a staff like Merlins, I even carved all the symbols down the side. That seems very long ago, I wish I knew what happened to it. I'm very happy to say that my oldest is now just as hooked on the story as I was. Not only the Lost years series, but some of your standalone stories as well. We are currently The Ancient One before bed and she's it. (she's 10). Thank you for continuing to inspire and transport a whole new generation in this wonderful world. I am forever grateful to have found your books.

- Shaylan

Mr. Barron,

Thank you so much for writing the Merlin saga. They meant so much and taught me a great deal about what it means to live and grow into an adult, of the yearning for something more, and the sacrifices we must often make for the greatest things in life. They have been an encouragement and a blessing. Thanks,

-Kaleb

Thank you so much Mr. Barron for all the wonderful stories and adventures you brought into my life. I loved your stories while I was in middle school over a decade ago and I still love them even now! I am in fact rereading them again and am on the third book of the Lost Years saga. I

messed you a few months ago about meeting in D.C. last year and about how I am trying to find beautiful leather-bound editions of your work. I am still on that search and a few more now as I apparently forgot about reference copy versions of your works! But the thrill of the hunt is half the fun after all! My goal is to have a wonderful collection of many different editions of your works. I would say I am doing decently well. I am glad that you keep updating us on Facebook and as well as your website. It is nice to see such an active author. Also, congratulations on your daughter's wedding! What a wonderful few weeks it must be. Like I said, I hope to see you on the east coast again! Don't be a stranger.

-Tyler

Dear Master Barron,

You have inspired many, entertained more, and given new life to tales nearly forgotten by the youth of today. I can honestly say that, because I'm a big sister and now work at a library! As a child, I encountered *The Seven Songs of Merlin* in a retail store while the family was on vacation. Once I finished the book, I bugged my parents for a trip to the closest bookstore to pick up the rest. I also have read everything else of yours I could get my paws on. I passed these tales to my brothers, but only one got his own set of books. Yes, I read them to them. It was a great way to get them to wind down, and you have a cadence in your writing that gives it a bardic lilt when spoken. The middle child had asked why you didn't do audiobooks for the reason of his dyslexia, but I told him I would read these until I was old and gray...even if it meant her just wanted me to record it. Fast forward ten years, I'm in a part of my life sans children of my own. I work with children, though, and a young woman recently came to me begging for a fantasy series. I handed her *Atlantis Rising*, seeing as it is the only start of a series we have, and told her to ask for me if she finished this series. Five days later, I get called to the front desk: she finished all three of the *Atlantis* series, sounding like Belle going on, "I couldn't put it down! What's next!?" I told her about the *Merlin* series, and we found it for her in another parish. She was so giddy, I was all too happy to go find your heroes story in adult nonfiction for her to tide her over. She has since asked me to discuss with her while I shelve, and of course I'm happy to. One of her questions was if I'd tried going blind for a week at night like she did. I'm really proud to hear stories like this, because it makes one sympathetic to those with disabilities and allows one to learn a new skill set. When I told her that I did and am forced to now and again, she was elated and we talked about possibly learning Braille to help those who can't read it to learn it! We're still working on getting the library to find a book for us somewhere, but most blind texts are held at city services for those who are going blind. In the meantime, we have talked about how Hellen Keller read hands with her hand! And she is nearly fluent in ASL! We have several children like her, and I'm happy to say that none of the books of yours have missed being checked out in over ten years! Not one month goes by that they aren't read, so we have hope for a loving, understanding, and beautifully open future. Thank you for all you do and for the support you show for the everyday heroes. May the universe shower you with all of the good karma and health you have so greatly earned! Sincerely, -Elizabeth

Mr. Barron,

The love you have for your creations can be felt in every paragraph, sentence, and word. As I read Merlin's adventures I pretend as if I am experiencing it as him and seeing it through his eyes. Each new situation is just as new to me and I think about how I might react. When I see how Emrys reacts I find out so much about myself that I didn't know. Sometimes what he does is right and sometimes it is wrong but knowing what is in heart is what truly makes every action he takes so magical. Merlin's mystical essence isn't something he holds or creates. It is something he is. His heart, soul, body, and mind are all part of what grants him immense magical and courageous strength. Merlin has been a hero of mine for a very long time and your books have grown my affinity for him 10 fold. I pray that you never lose the magic within and that it will flow from you like a river to every person you meet. Your passion has fueled a world of readers both young and old and sparked a fire that will never fade. Thank you,

-Justin

Hello, Mr. Barron!

It's Anna Wilson again, and I have some jubilant news!

Today, while practicing therapy on my grandmother to help her with physical pains, I played her the audiobook of The Lost Years of Merlin and she fell in love with it! She and I now have an agreement to read your books (twice for me) together and see your Merlin film when it releases to theaters!

Thank you for these wonderful books, they helped me connect more with my grandmother. And now, you have a new fan to join to your following.

Thank you so much, and as thanks here's a little song I thought you'd might like

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4o4G5Pfjei0>

Thank you again for the sages in those pages.

Best

-Anna

Hello!

Really like this page and I wanted to share this for the letter to Mr. Barron: I was first introduced to the series by my daughter, who loves to read as much as breathing. One day I notice that she'd been reading and re-reading a particular series for some time. I asked her about it and she told me a quick summary of the Merlin Saga. When she talked about it with such enthusiasm, I knew

I had to read it. When I was just halfway through the book I had to put it down. The reason being that this was such a wonderful book that I didn't want to end! Absolutely loved the magic held between the pages and how alive nature was through Arbassa and the land of Fincayra. I felt like I was another character who traveled alongside Emrys, Rhia, Trouble, and Shim. While there was sadness at Trouble's death, you also experienced happiness and hope when Emrys took on a new name that would eventually become renown as the greatest wizard of all time. So thank you Mr. Barron for giving us a book to bond over and for creating the wondrous worlds of Fincayra, Avalon, and filling our world with true magic. - Skyla

The Merlin Saga entered my life when I was in fifth grade, and hasn't left. To feel the comfort of familiar characters and escape with them to a land I feel I know is an amazing experience again and again. I will always love the story of Merlin, it has truly become a part of me. If I could say anything to Mr. Barron, it would simply be to say "thank you". Thank you for filling my adolescence with magic and wonder, and thank you for really opening up the world of reading to me. I think the Merlin series was one of the first series that I passionately read from beginning to end. I remember sitting in high school trigonometry class reading the great tree of Avalon, because I had finished my work. It was perfect.

-Katy

There is a land bearing the ancient name Fincayra that calls to us all. It is a "place of many wonders" full of rich tales you'll soon discover. Along the journey you'll meet a young boy with the makings of a wizard, learn the power of the Seven Songs, soar on forgotten wings, and be transported into a time both far and near.

A blank page at the end of the Merlin Saga marks the return to this world. But the world is not quite the same as when you left; upon your return from Fincayra, things have started to take on new forms and meaning. The spirit of vast wonder bound in the Merlin Saga reminds you "all it takes to see a new world is to look more closely at the old one." With that in mind, you: start to envision the wind sisters are carrying a gale from Fincayra through your backyard, hear the roar of a mighty water dragon in a waterfall, and realize you've become a part of a greater community who has also experienced the magic of Merlin.

Merlin's magic is not something bound by language or region nor is it something necessarily tangible. It starts off as a seed that grows and grows from within that urges us to continue striving towards positive actions and dignifying emotions. To that end, the Merlin Saga has an innumerable amount of magical qualities. However, one of the most astounding for me is how it has brought so many worlds together. The realms of Avalon and Fincayra merge into everyday

realities and there is such a great amount of joy in finding fellow readers who have traversed along the journey with you.

While no amount of words could every truly express all the deserving phrases to this magical series, I will always be chanting: "Long live, live long Fincayra."

-Alexandra

Greetings! Megan of Druma Woods here! I'm excited to be able to send in a few words along with the people who follow our page. Your Merlin Saga has been so special in my life. I have always been interested in anything to do with Merlin and being an avid reader, I have read many books about Merlin. I have to say your books are my favorite and always have been. The characters, along with journeys they take, are inspiring to me as I make my way through life. You paint such a vivid world. Additionally, my mom loves the books as well and sends her thanks! It is such a pleasure to be able to work as an admin on The Isle of Fincayra Facebook page, so thank you for supporting us. I cannot wait to see more updates on the movie version of the Merlin Saga – it's something I have been eagerly anticipating. I'm a theatre major, so that sort of thing is always exciting to me! Anyways, thank you for your awesome work – this world is more magical with it! – Megan of Druma Woods

Dear Mr. Barron,

There are no words to express how thankful I am that my mother gifted me a set of your works as a child. That was close to fifteen years ago now, and I can still vividly remember that day. The feeling I felt upon opening that box, to find a multi-volume set of books about my favorite mythical being, was (and still is) indescribable; it's something I hope my own daughter will experience someday. The stories held within those pages was the beginning of my own adventure.

Your words sparked the fire within me; I couldn't pass up a book after that. I read anything and everything available to me. I was the nerdy kid at school, who always had a book in her purse instead of makeup. And that was okay; the characters within those bound tales were my friends and companions, their adventures were my path to finding my own purpose in life.

I grew older yet I remained the girl with a book in hand and story in her heart. All the while, you kept writing about this world I had fallen in love with, so I followed; my mother followed too. Both, child and mother, entranced by the story you had woven over time. As a child, young adult, and now a mother myself I [was] am able to wander Fincayra and Avalon with the woman that had introduced me to them, all those years ago.

Your works are timeless, ageless; they have no bounds.

I hope someday to explore your worlds again, but this time with my own daughter; the way I was able to with my mother, and my mother with me. Perhaps it will be the beginning of a great tradition.

So, I thank you, Sir. Not only for your works, but for the bond you forged between a mother and daughter through those works. I will never be able to repay you for what you've done for my life. You shaped and molded me at an early age. You set me on the path that allowed me to find myself. Because of you I learned how to weave my own tales and now I happily share my works with a few peers. And for that I am truly thankful. There is nothing in this world that can compare to feeling of receiving a response/review from a fan/peer.

So, I thank you again, Sir; for taking the time to listen to a fan.

Yours faithfully,

Michaela

August 7, 2017

Dear Mr. Barron:

A few years ago, my aunt took me to a used bookstore and told me that she'd buy any and all the books that I wanted. As a writer and book lover, I couldn't be happier and more grateful, but soon found myself quickly overwhelmed in the fantasy section of the store. There were so many interesting-looking books to choose from! Yet rather than greedily grab an armful, I decided to take a look at a light blue, mass market paperback from Ace Fantasy with a boy holding a staff, gazing out over a hilltop with distant brown eyes and with a merlin perched on his shoulder.

I read the back cover, peeked at the prologue, and read a few sentences. The narrator's voice was calm, lyrical, and absolutely spellbinding. And the premise of exploring the earlier years of a by-now famous wizard intrigued me even more.

This one, I thought, closing the book. *This is the one I want.*

When I told my aunt that I made my choice, we both went up to the cashier, a young Asian woman whose name I don't remember. As my aunt paid the 50 cents for the secondhand book, I remember the cashier smiling, pointing to the book, and saying, "That's a good one. I really liked it."

And she was right. When I read *The Lost Years of Merlin* — or *Merlin: The Lost Years*, as it's called now — sometime later, I was not disappointed. More so, I'm glad that I read it a few weeks ago in July of this year particularly because I was going through a bit of a literary slump.

You see, I'd been reading quite a few books on my Kindle, and many of them didn't quite hit the mark, for me. To top it off, I was having trouble writing my own fantasy work and figuring out which narrative person I should use: a more intimate first, or a more objective third. After a while, I decided that it was time to lay down the science fiction and writing craft books and go back to my roots: pure fantasy. And *The Lost Years of Merlin* was just the book I needed.

Although I'm still a relatively young 23-year-old fresh out of college, *The Lost Years of Merlin* made me feel like I was 12 again. It rekindled the child-like wonder in me that made me want to become a writer in the first place. Its lush descriptions, unique characters, and carefully-crafted plot helped me assess my own work-in-progress much better. I'm still a long way from finishing it, but I'm much more confident in how I'm working with it now.

So, thank you, Mr. Barron. Thank you for writing that book. Thank you for inspiring young readers to treasure nature and discover their own life stories. And thank you for just being who you are.

I look forward to reading the next 11 books in the Merlin Saga!

Sincerely,

Karen