

Interview with Madlen Krushev, author of “Nicky the Flying Fish”

Today, Tyler R. Tichelaar is pleased to interview Madlen Krushev, who is here to talk about her new book “Nicky the Flying Fish.”

Madlen Krushev says that writing runs in her family. Both her parents have had a flair for writing all their lives and published poem collection books in their youth. Madlen had a passion for writing from an early age that she carried into adulthood. Her inspiration has largely come from the children she has taught; the things they say and do, their facial and verbal expressions, thoughts and actions, and their “real life problems and experiences” have been a treasure chest of ideas. Her nine year old son has also been a fountain of ideas in this aspect. Her children's stories are both “educational” in terms of learning experiences for the younger reader as well as colorfully illustrated and entertaining.

Tyler: Welcome, Madlen. To begin will you tell us about “Nicky the Flying Fish.” Why do you think the book will appeal to readers?

Madlen: Mostly because it's simple, realistic, motivating and colorful.

Tyler: Despite “flying fish” in the title, isn't Nicky really a rainbow fish?

Madlen: I guess a child's imagination can really make it both, but it seems like the mammy was a rainbow fish and the daddy a flying one...just kidding. As a matter of fact, Nicky the flying fish was a rainbow fish family member but after trying to reach the sun for so long her flippers elongated and started resembling wings. Hence...flying fish. There are “flying fish” you know.

Tyler: So does the title refer to Nicky wanting to learn to fly?

Madlen: The title reflects the fact that if you believe it you can do anything, for a fish Nicky was flying...he believed it and never gave up.

Tyler: Will you tell us also about Nicky's mom?

Madlen: Nicky's mom was a rainbow fish, who had magical scales, shining with all the colors of the rainbow. By the way, the story of the rainbow fish came out after I had actually written the draft for my book...so it's a coincidence not a follow up of that story.

Tyler: Will you explain further what story about a rainbow fish you are referring to?

Madlen: There's a children's story in the market about a rainbow fish that was very selfish and didn't want to share any of her magic rainbow scales, hence had no friends. Later however, she did and everyone was her friend.

Tyler: Madlen, will you tell us about the illustrations for the book?

Madlen: I did the illustrations myself. I believe that children need and relate better to bright colorful meaningful pictures in the first ten years of their lives.

Tyler: Will you tell us how you did the illustrations—what techniques you used and what your goal was—what sense did you want them to convey about the story?

Madlen: The illustrations are done in watercolor pencils. My goal was to make them colorful, attractive to the young reader, detailed and also very explanatory of the text content for the younger readers.

Tyler: What age group do you believe your readers will be?

Madlen: Anywhere from three to nine I guess. That's the age group I was targeting and so far it has fit perfectly.

Tyler: How do you hope children will react to the story?

Madlen: They'll see themselves in Nicky and some of the harder seemingly impossible tasks in their own lives and learn never to give up.

Tyler: Have you had any responses from children so far, and what have they been?

Madlen: Lots. Kids love the book without fail.

Tyler: Will you also tell us about your teaching experience and how that inspires your writing?

Madlen: Teaching for over nineteen years, all age groups, from nursery school to adults, and also normal and special needs learners, I have learned to listen and observe and learn what appeals to everyone. Children and adults all need hope faith and motivation. They all love beautiful things that make you believe in the best in the world. Teaching has taught me a lot.

Tyler: What does your son think of his mother writing children's books?

Madlen: Well my son, whose name is coincidentally, Nicolas (Nike) loves the idea. It's "cool" to have a mom who's so smart according to him. IT also inspired him to write and illustrate and love all things beautiful.

Tyler: Madlen, I know you have written several other children's books as well. Will you tell us a little about them?

Madlen: Yes, there are eleven other books that I've started illustrating. They are all about young animals or children in first experiences, some funny, some educational, some just very useful. All of them are meant to be a motivation, and each one has a specific lesson embedded. So...be ready...they'll be out soon.

Tyler: What came first for you—the desire to write, or the desire to illustrate books?

Madlen: Both. I have been an avid reader since the age of three (yep, not joking) and still am. Books and art in any shape or form have always held a special fascination for me.

Tyler: Many authors work with a separate illustrator. Do you think it makes a difference to have someone else illustrate your book, or is the author the best choice if he or she is capable of doing illustrations?

Madlen: I guess if the author is not artistic, then your best bet would be to get an illustrator, but the advantage of illustrating your own is that the author can best express in illustration what he or she means in words. It was all born in the authors head, so he/she'll see and convey it best I guess.

Tyler: Our seven-year old reviewer Madeline said she hopes there will be more books about Nicky. Do you plan to write any more?

Madlen: For SURE, as a matter of fact I'm working on the sequel for Nicky right now....

Tyler: Any hint you can give us of what it will be about?

Madlen: Oh, Nicky's great-grand fish children will witness the evolution of the Earth and seas...hehe

Tyler: Thank you for joining me today, Madlen. Before we go, will you tell our readers about your website and what additional information may be found there about "Nicky the Flying Fish"?

Madlen: MY website www.magicalrealmofbooks.com is all about the love for books. I also use my books for charitable organizations, such as Orphan Sponsorship International, etc to make a difference. Thank you.

Tyler: Thank you, Madlen, for the interview. I hope you keep bringing colorful stories out for children.

Madlen: Pleasure is all mine. There's nothing like making a child smile.

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