

About Tom Barry

When the pen is your sword

A published writer at University, Tom Barry spent 20 years in management consultancy with Accenture, Deloitte, and PwC, advising the Boards of leading global brands such as Apple, Disney, Toyota and Vodafone. His career prompted a specific interest in the art of persuasive communication. He is passionate about nurturing young talent and has supported a number of UK and overseas schools, including the Nordoff Robbins Centre for Music Therapy. He lives near London and is currently working with the Brit Writers' Awards, a charitable initiative to promote creative writing in our schools. His debut novel, **When the Siren Calls**, is set in Tuscany and is both a sensual emotional drama and a page turning thriller.

Five things about me...

- - one of eight kids, lifestory is the classic immigrant tale of seeking to live up to parental expectations, while working to mark out your own trail.
- - I have aspects of an obsessive personality, establishing a work-life balance was a major challenge.
- - I gave up on my business career in my mid-forties, I just didn't tell my boss! Find something you enjoy doing, and you'll never work another day.
- - I tell my kids education is the best gift I can give them, it's no weight to carry and no-one can take it off you.
- - I believe almost everyone has an agenda; explore perspectives outside the mainstream, and beware suppliers bearing gifts.

From consultant to author

You become a writer because you think you've got something to say worth listening to. I chose to be a novelist because I want to entertain my readers, not preach to them. The challenge is to transport readers to times, places and events where they can lose themselves in stories about heroes they can identify with, who triumph against the odds and who change and grow in the process; but most of all readers want to enjoy the ride. Back in my consulting days, it was a great buzz to work for household name companies and to meet industry icons like Bill Gates. Not many careers offer that opportunity to you when you are in your twenties and thirties. But like your first born, few things beat the thrill of holding your debut novel in your hand.

When the Siren Calls

Tom's first novel, "**When the Siren Calls**," is Book One in the Siren Calls trilogy. It is the story of two driven characters - Isobel and Jay - and their passionate and cathartic affair. Isobel's struggle is to live a life true to herself, not the one others expect. It pits the naive against the machiavellian, and asks searching questions about what life and money can do to love.

"You don't start a novel with messages in mind, they just surface from the writing process. Established authors like Tom Fletcher, Alana Siegel and Matthew Branton, who read earlier drafts, tell me some of the talking points the story raised for them was :

- - when a woman with high ideals falls in love with a man with low morals, she better watch out
- - wealth and boredom can lead to a search for the exotic and a descent into decadence
- - can infidelity be justified? Is it better to leave a devoted husband or waste a life?
- - you reap what you sow. (Your sins will find you out.)
- - dreams of living and retiring overseas often turn into

nightmares, beware the siren call of the expat life and a home in the sun”

You can't write all the time

Tom is married with three children and currently divides his time between his main home outside London, and San Diego. He is also a lover of all things Italian, and counts Tuscany as amongst his favourite places. He has been an active supporter of a number of UK and overseas charities, and has visited Kenya many times in recent years where he has sponsored individual students and been involved in improving education in village schools. He is delighted to be now supporting the **Brit Writers' Awards** to promote creative Writing in our schools. His work with UK charities brought him to the attention of Michael Parkinson, and in recognition for Tom's support to the **Nordoff Robbins Centre for Music Therapy**, Michael invited him for interview on his show. “To sit in the same seat as some of my greatest idols and heroes, people like Muhammad Ali, John Lennon, and Shirley Maclaine, being interviewed by a legend, in front of your family, well it doesn't get much better than that.”