



English Lesson Leads To Science Fiction Book Deal

When Tanya Bourton's pupils at Kingsdown School asked what happened next to the protagonist she created for an exercise, she gave a longer answer than they ever expected.

The Plight Of Nimara is the novel Tanya wrote after pupils in her English class begged to know what happened to 15-year-old Bruno, created by the teacher to aid their learning. The book, 120 pages of it, was self-published by the 41-year-old Swindonian through the AuthorHouse publisher in August, and it is now being sold through Amazon and online bookshops. The idea struck Tanya in April, when she began adding to Bruno's tale in her spare time, glued to her laptop. It has been a fast turnaround for the Butterworth Street resident, who had never planned to bring the book to the public until her mother read it and pushed her to pitch it to publishers. From April, it was July when I was finished and I began thinking, 'maybe this could be more', so I let my mother read it," said Tanya. She said 'this is really good, you've got to get it published'.

AuthorHouse came back straight away with interest because it's science fiction and that's what kids are interested in at the moment. It happened really quickly from there. I finished the book, submitted it, and then they passed it onto the editor. Just before I came back to work, at the end of August, the first copy came through my door. I was very excited. It doesn't seem real until you hold the book in your hands. Of course, I gave my first copy to my parents and showed it round the family. In self-publishing with AuthorHouse, Tanya had to put up £3,500 of her own money to get it off the ground, but given its confidence in the title, the publisher has already agreed to a no-fee trilogy of novels. She said it is early days in the process too, but hopes in the longer term she will be able to get the book into High Street bookstores, as well as the online marketplace.

The school has been supportive of Tanya and her new-found passion. Kingsdown headteacher Wendy Conaghan made an announcement to staff and two copies have already been loaned by pupils from the library. 'They're amazing. Some are buying the book, asking how I got my ideas. Work is still work though, I'm not a celebrity,' Tanya said. 'The kids who first asked about Bruno have been amazed at what's come of it. I have told them it's because of them this has happened.'

The Plight Of Nimara can best be described as a science fiction mystery story. It's about a 15-year-old called Bruno who has a happy childhood and wants nothing more than to be popular in school and win the affections of Summer, a new girl at his school. Publisher AuthorHouse says: "One day, Summer mysteriously disappears and only Bruno is asking questions about it. He does not have to ask for very long as he too is abducted and thrown into the trials and tribulations of another world. The story has romance, humour and action, with the promise that the reader will be thrust "on a rollercoaster ride of emotions".

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