

Wayside
Twyford
Shaftesbury
Dorset
SP7 0JG

11th April 2019

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for your letter - and for the two interesting questions you asked me. One of them is quite easy to answer and the other one is VERY hard.

I'll answer the easy one first. You asked what inspired me to write the story. It happened because my daughter Liz asked me for a book about a wicked headmaster. I said I would write one, but, when I tried, I couldn't see how to do it. How can a Head get away with being wicked? Wouldn't all the children go home and tell their parents?

I nearly told Liz I couldn't write her story. But suddenly I thought "Suppose the Headmaster *hypnotizes* the children..." That was when I began to get excited about writing the book. "I can have a lot of fun with this!" I thought. And I did.

Your other question is much harder. You asked why the Demon Headmaster is evil. I'm not sure I know the answer to that. It's partly because he thinks people are like machines that have to be organized. And partly because he thinks he's *always* right and everyone else is wrong. But maybe there are other reasons too...

I hope you go on finding lots of books that you enjoy - and that make you ask interesting questions

Happy reading!



Gillian Cross

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Dear Charlotte,

Thank you very much for your letter and all the questions. I'm glad you enjoyed drawing the SPLAT shed. I thought it was important for them to have a secret place where they could meet.

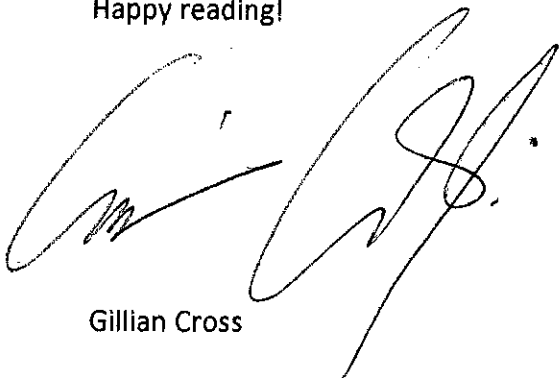
I wrote the book because my daughter Liz asked me for a book about a wicked headmaster. I said I would write one - but then I couldn't see how to do it. How could a Head get away with being wicked? Wouldn't all the children go home and tell their parents? I nearly gave up the idea of the book - until I thought "Suppose the Headmaster *hypnotizes* the children..." And that started my imagination working...

It took me about five months to write the first book. I always have to rewrite my books several times to get them right, because I can't plan the whole story before I start. I had a real struggle with **The Demon Headmaster** before I finally worked out how it had to go.

I did enjoy writing it though. I think it's my favourite book in the whole series about SPLAT. But I've written two new books, where a new group of children face the Headmaster and I very much enjoyed writing those too. (The BBC are just about to film the first one - **The Demon Headmaster: Total Control** - so the Headmaster will be back on TV soon...)

Thank you again for writing. I hope you go on finding lots of books to enjoy.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gillian Cross', written in a cursive style.

Gillian Cross

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Dear Reece,

Thank you very much for your nice letter about The Demon Headmaster. I'm glad you like it. I had a lot of fun making up the story - especially the Eddy Hair Show!

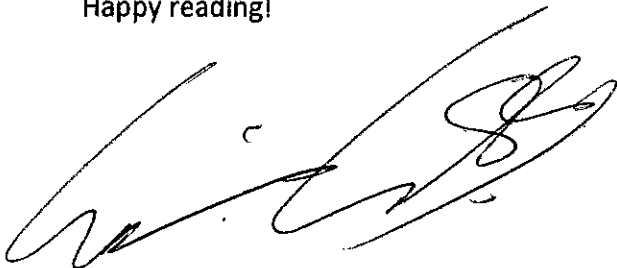
Dinah is *my* favourite character too. That's partly for the same reason you like her - because she's clever - but also because she has to be brave and daring, even though she's a quiet person.

You asked about how I came to write the book. It was because my daughter, when she was about nine, asked me for a book about a wicked headmaster. I wanted to write it for her, but I thought it was impossible. Surely the children would tell their parents what was going on? I nearly gave up on the book. But then I thought of hypnotism...

You also asked me whether the Demon Headmaster will take over the world. I've spent a long time trying to work that out. I've written eight books about him now, but I still don't know the answer. If you'd like to know what the other books are, you can find out about them on my website, which is www.gillian-cross.co.uk

Thank you again for writing. I hope you go on discovering lots of books, of all kinds, to enjoy.

Happy reading!

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Dear Kacie,

Thank you very much for your letter about The Demon Headmaster. I'm glad you have enjoyed reading it. I liked writing it too.

You wanted to know about it, so maybe you would like to hear how I came to write the book. It happened because my daughter asked me to write a story about a wicked headmaster. I said I would, but when I sat down to write the story, it seemed impossible.

"How can a headmaster get away with being wicked?" I asked myself. "Why wouldn't the children all go home and tell their parents?"

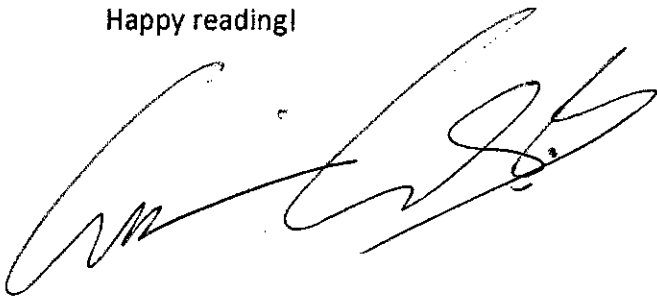
I thought I would have to tell my daughter she couldn't have her story. But then I thought of...HYNOTISM! That was when I started to get excited about the story. "I can have a lot of fun writing this!" I thought.

And I did.

I hope you had a lot of fun reading it too. And I hope you keep discovering stories you enjoy. There are lots of great books out there!

Thank you again for writing.

Happy reading!

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Dear Brianna,

Thank you for writing to me about **The Demon Headmaster**. I'm glad you like it. It was interesting to read about your favourite part of the book and the character you like best. I had a lot of fun making up the things Lloyd says - and I was very pleased when I thought of the pepper!

You asked me how long I took to write it. I think it was about five months. But I didn't just write it once. I had to write it at least three times before I got it right.

The worst mistake I made was to do with Harvey. I thought it would be a good idea to give him the special power of being able to turn into ordinary objects - like teapots. I thought that would help SPLAT in their fight against the Headmaster. But I was wrong. It was a DISASTER!

I couldn't make the story work until I realised that the Headmaster was the only one who should have special powers. That meant I had to rewrite the whole book! But it was worth it, because it finally turned out right.

Thank you again for writing. I hope you have lots of fun discovering other stories you like - and writing them too!

Happy reading!

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