

The Fae Are Watching: Randee Dawn Takes Us Inside the Tune-iverse

We chatted with the cozy fantasy author about her latest release, her love of fae, and, of course, Law in Order: SVU! You're not going to want to miss this.

Kristi Eskew - May 13th, 2026

Author Interviews Author's Corner



Randee Dawn is the undisputed queen of the “Backstage Comedy Fantasy” genre. An entertainment journalist by day, she spends her off hours bridging the gap between our world and the Veil, where mythical creatures are just as obsessed with reality TV and tropes as we are. Following the cult success of *Tune in Tomorrow*, her latest novel, *We Interrupt the Program*, invites us back to the *Tune-iverse* to explore Seaview Haven—a town where cozy mysteries aren't just a reading preference, they're a mandated lifestyle streamed for the Fae.

I had the chance to chat with Randee about creative block, Unseelie interns, and why the Fae just can't get enough of our drama.

About Randee Dawn

Randee Dawn is the bestselling author of the pop culture fantasy novel *Tune in Tomorrow* and its *Tune-iverse* follow-up, *We Interrupt This Program*. She's also the author of the dark Celtic musical fantasies *The Only Song Worth Singing* and *Leave No Trace*. Her short fiction has appeared in numerous anthologies, including most recently *Dark Spores: Stories We Tell After Midnight*. She is the co-author of *The Law & Order: SVU Unofficial Companion*.



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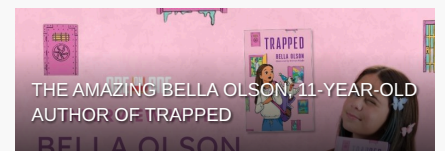
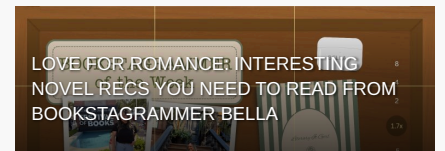
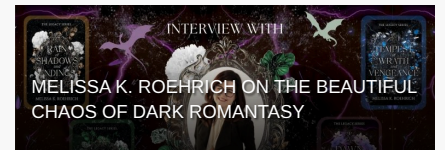
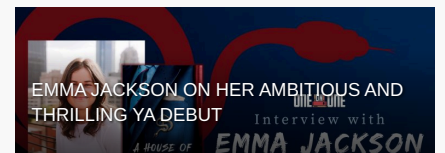




IMAGE VIA RANDEE DAWN

Learn more about Randee on her [website](#), and be sure to follow her on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [TikTok](#), [Twitter \(X\)](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Bluesky](#).

Thanks for joining us, Randee. Let's get started.

We Interrupt the Program is set in Seaview Haven, a town where cozy mysteries are actually scripted content for the Fae. How did you land on the idea of weaponizing the cozy mystery trope for a fantasy setting?

I've been amused and intrigued over the past several years by the ongoing meta discussion of storytelling – particularly storytelling told on screens, like TV and movies. We're more aware of the "tropey" aspects of our stories (John Scalzi did a whole book called *Red Shirts* calling out the high death toll of such clothing wearers on *Star Trek*) than ever, and I love the idea of magic-creature-run "Trope Towns" that use human residents' experiences (scripted and otherwise) to tell stories.


 *We Interrupt the Program* by Randee Dawn a cozy fantasy book cover depicting an illustration of a console television nestled in a tree with a typewriter and fae woman at the trees trunk

IMAGE VIA BOOKSHOP

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A friend posted on Facebook a picture of herself in a quaint New England town and said, "I'm ready for my Hallmark movie," which just got me thinking – what if there were whole towns where all the Hallmark movies were filmed? What if all the cozy mysteries were in the same seaside town? It's reductionist and funny and intriguing all at the same time, particularly in cozy situations, which surprise us amid the familiar. We can know all the "beats" that are coming ("Just one more question," a la *Columbo*, for example) and still continue to embrace the genre.

My first book in the *Tune-iverse*, *Tune in Tomorrow*, took place entirely at one show – a reality TV series run by magical creatures, starring humans – and then I started going bigger with the idea of an entire channel whose movies or series are shot in the same village. The idea of a Hallmark village is set for my next book in the universe (*Don't Touch That Dial*), but going to cozy mystery lent itself to a story I wanted to lean into first – I fell in love with these characters, then told the story that wrapped itself around them. High concept is one thing, but you have to have characters you want to spend time with first.

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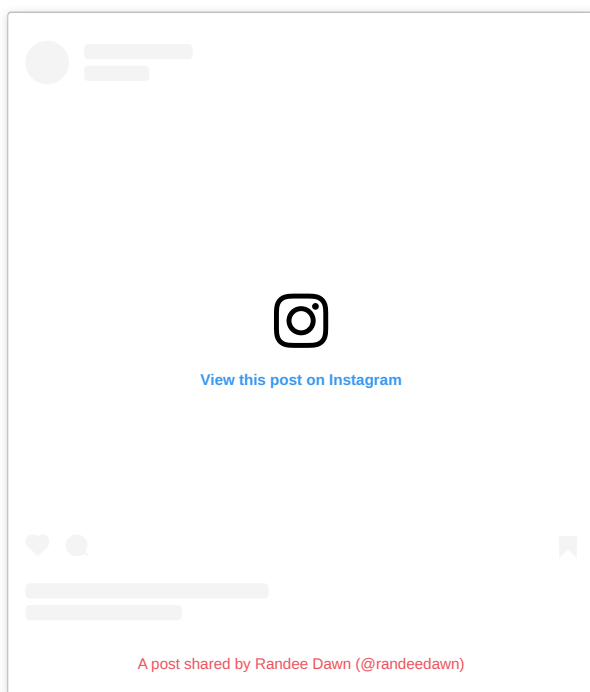
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Winnie Arrowmaker is a silver-haired sleuth with a massive case of writer's block that is literally causing her town to crumble. As a writer yourself, how much of your own darkest days at the keyboard did you pour into Winnie's struggle?

Oh, it's deeply familiar to me. I didn't actually write notes to myself saying THIS IS TERRIBLE or anything, and I don't use a typewriter like she does, but I have so many false starts, or "ideas" that didn't pan out. I'm not sure I believe in full writers' block – to me, not writing for a period is as important as writing, as the former allows you to take in the world, while the latter allows you to put your new ideas out into the world. But I do believe you have to feed the Muse in order for her (or them) to respond. The longer you ignore them, the harder it is to wake them back up again (because at some point you also introduce self-doubt). But Winnie's writing experience is most personal to me when we learn just how she betrayed her best friend with her edit of a thousand cuts. I did that at some point, and I'm not proud of it, even if the results for me were different than they were for Winnie.



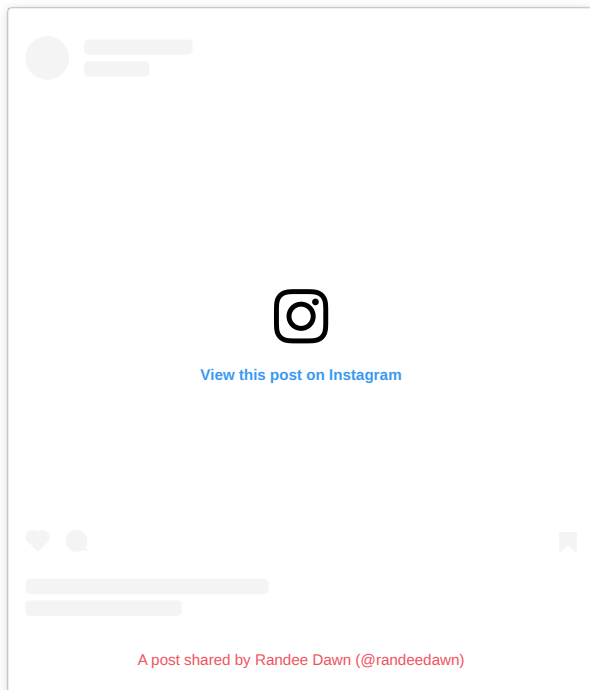
We meet Finch, an SCN intern who describes himself as "the worst Unseelie ever." What was it about the "intern trying to fail upward (or downward)" dynamic that made him the perfect foil for a professional sleuth like Winnie?

Their goals are completely opposite! She wants the town to come back from the coma it has fallen into, and he's the overly ambitious "I have BIG IDEAS" guy who thinks – mistakenly – that tearing the whole thing down and starting over is the way to go. Finch is all (or most) of us at the first job we really cared about: We want to make the big move, be noticed, be promoted, make a difference. But Finch doesn't really know himself, and his journey of self-discovery only really happens when he butts heads with Winnie, who is on her own journey of self-discovery.

The book explores the idea that "real power lies in the stories we tell ourselves." If you were trapped in Seaview Haven, which classic mystery trope do you think you'd be most likely to accidentally trigger?

Given my journalism background, I'd absolutely want to be the nosy reporter who gets critical information and passes it along – leading to solving the case (but getting no credit later on).

Anything that brings a bit of prestige back to the 4th Estate – we’ve been (rightly, sometimes) maligned for a very long time, but news reporters (including nosy ones) are very important to making society work.



Tune in Tomorrow focused on reality TV, while *We Interrupt the Program* leans into the cozy procedural. What is it about the Fae that makes them such a perfect—and demanding—audience for human pop culture?

Fae are basically aliens in another guise. They see our world from the outside looking in, and there are things about us that they do not understand, or find admirable, or find ridiculous. We’re mortal creatures with (relatively) short lifespans compared to them, and while we can speak and act rationally, in a way, we’re a lot like pets to them. They like to play with us, and we amuse them.

But there’s a second level to this: traditionally, Celtic fae are known for needing to be needed. The whole “clap your hands and Tinkerbell is alive again” concept. They live on belief – and as humans stop caring so much about magical creatures and turn to their tiny screens, fae are in trouble. But then they discover that the attention can come from anywhere – including “eyeballs” (an inside-TV bit of jargon for audience) watching shows they make starring humans. Because humans, those adorable, hairy, silly, occasionally wonderful pets of theirs, are constantly getting into situations they love to watch. So it’s both entertainment ... and survival. That said, in *We Interrupt* and, much more so, in the upcoming *Don’t Touch That Dial*, I start to reveal that there may be a darker side to this arrangement.


 *Tune in Tomorrow* by Randee Dawn a cozy fantasy book cover depicting a console tv on legs with a red dragon wearing a suit under it.

IMAGE VIA BOOKSHOP

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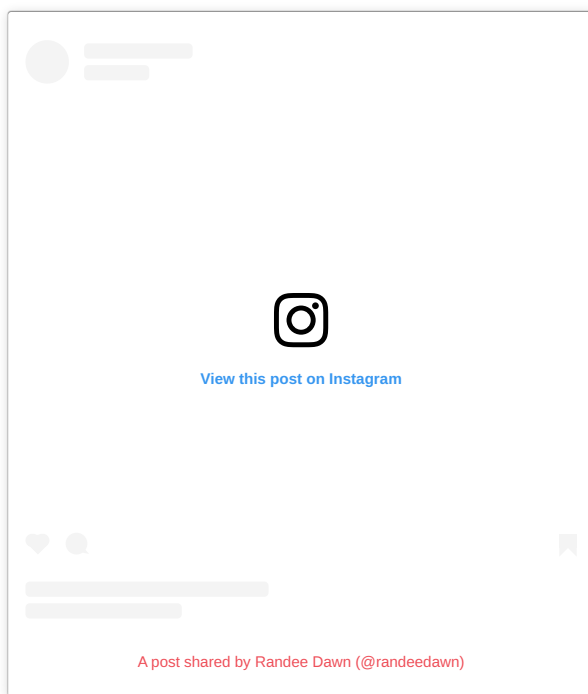
You’ve explored everything from the Seelie Court Network to alternate-universe Beatles. What draws you specifically to

the Fae as the primary mythic influence in your stories over, say, vampires or werewolves?

As it turns out, I've just written a short story for an upcoming anthology, WERE-2, which is all about werewolves/Shifter stories – and Emma, my werepanther wordcat from *Tune in Tomorrow*, is the star of the story. It was my first time diving into a world of hairy and furry beasts, and I had a great time!

As to why I chose the fae – I'd like to say that part of it is that the vampire/werewolf field is very well-trodden ground. I first became enamored with the depth and breadth of the Celtic fae universe after reading W.B. Yeats' *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry*, where I learned there was a lot more to that mythos than leprechauns and the banshee. (I used it as a jumping-off point for my dark fantasy *The Only Song Worth Singing*, which came out in 2025 and focused on a couple of lesser-known fae, including a fairy mistress, who bedeviled an Irish rock band on tour in the 1990s.) When I started thinking about what TV and movies the fae would make if they were making their own entertainment, I referred back to my college days working on local cable access news, where all the pros were on camera, but we student amateurs were behind the scenes.

That divide opened the concept of a fae-run TV network, with humans on camera, and I wanted to have a wide variety of fae and folklore characters that maybe we hadn't seen so much before (hence Cris, the pombero, and Emma, the werepanther). That felt richer and more diverse than only focusing on familiar weres and vampires.

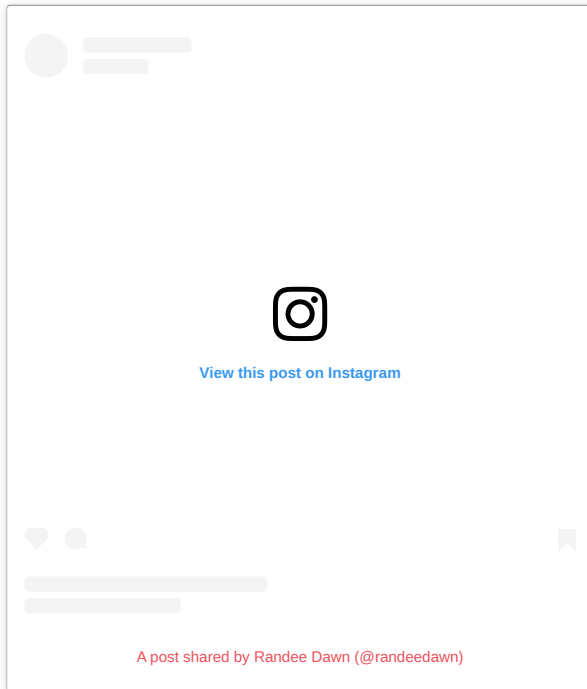


Between your journalism for outlets like *Variety* and *Today* and your fiction, you spend a lot of time in showbiz. Is there a specific Hollywood horror story that was so wild you had to give it to a mythical creature to make it believable?

To use real Hollywood horror stories would be to turn my lighthearted fiction into something ... well, horrifying. I think the fun stuff comes out in the petty small things. In *Tune in Tomorrow* we have a character who becomes pregnant, and in order to hide it from the fae (because there are no children/babies on camera), she has to wear a suit that makes her look enormous. That was a direct call back to a time when I interviewed a particular soap actress about how they'd hid her real-life pregnancy from the cameras (it wasn't convenient for her character to be pregnant on the show, and this is a common thing to do). Then something I printed pissed her off (it was a legitimate quote), and she got the publicist to yell at me, and my editors were briefly unhappy with me. The "Tune" character she's based on is absolutely inspired by that actress – and that stupid incident over, well, nothing.

You've written an unofficial companion to Law & Order: SVU. If Winnie Arrowmaker ever had a crossover event with Olivia Benson, would they be best friends, or would it be absolute chaos?

I absolutely LOVE that idea, and honestly, it had not occurred to me. May I take it? (By the way, *The Law & Order: SVU Unofficial Companion* was co-authored by me with the late Susan Green, just to make sure the credit is parceled out correctly.) I think Winnie and Olivia would actually work quite well together – they're both strong-minded women dedicated to protecting the innocent, and are good-hearted, but not without their own demons and shadows. I think Winnie would approve of Olivia's close relationship with her onetime (detective) partner Elliot Stabler – and would encourage them to finally get naked together. After all, Winnie's been quite close with her (writing) partner, Neal, for many years...



Lastly, if you were magically gifted a “Veil-approved” streaming service that only showed reality shows featuring mythical creatures, what would be the first show you’d binge-watch?

Oooo, *Unsolved Mysteries* would be amazing in this area. The fae world is mysterious, opaque, and often impossible to understand. Could we get a unicorn to host, do you think?

Thank you, Randee, for a fun and exciting interview!

You can pick up your copies of Randee's *Tune-iverse* series from any of the links above or from your favorite local indie bookshop!

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