



Elli Lewis

Trophy Life

Q&A

Elli Lewis drew upon her experiences as a lawyer to the stars to write her novel, Trophy Life. Here, she lifts the lid on some of the experiences that inspired the story.

DESCRIBE *TROPHY LIFE* IN A NUTSHELL

Amy is an accidental trophy wife who must survive the very peak of London high society. It's tongue in cheek, unapologetically glamorous chick lit choc full of strong characters, but it's also about lost love and learning to cope with whatever life throws at you.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE A STORY SET IN LONDON'S ARISTOCRACY?

Quite frankly, I couldn't resist. To me, reading is an escape and I wanted to create a world filled with luxury and glamour. It's something I've thought about ever since my time as a lawyer in the City, when my clients had the kind of wealth and fame that's usually restricted to films or magazines. Having seen that world, having been on the inside of it, I wanted to bring the reader down the rabbit hole with me.

TALK ABOUT YOUR MAIN CHARACTER, AMY. HOW DOES SHE BECOME AN *ACCIDENTAL* TROPHY WIFE?

Amy has so much potential, but she allows life to happen to her. She doesn't take control or make decisions. I think we can all be guilty of that sometimes, just falling into this or that. I wanted to explore what could happen if you took that to an extreme and poor Amy was my guinea pig.

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WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE CHARACTER IN THE BOOK?

It has to be Amy's sister-in-law, Giselle. She's beautiful and enviable, but she's also smart, funny and kind. I like that she's not what she seems, nor what society wants her to be.

DO YOU BASE YOUR CHARACTERS ON REAL PEOPLE AND ARE ANY OF THEM YOU?

I would be absolutely terrified of basing the casts of my stories on real people. I even avoid using the names of people I know. But I definitely mash up elements of friends, family and celebrity personas in bringing characters to life. As for me, I use my characters to voice a lot of my thoughts and there are echoes of my story in Amy's, but we are very different. The only exception to any of this is that my husband always makes an appearance in my books and he can always tell where.

THE BOOK DOESN'T TAKE A LINEAR CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACH. WHAT INSPIRED THE STRUCTURE?

One of my favourite authors is Paul Torday and his works, particularly *The Irresistible Inheritance of Wilberforce*, taught me that we mustn't take the structure of a book for granted. Without giving too much away, I felt that writing the book in this way allowed the reader to see what led Amy to make the decisions she did and that it didn't happen overnight.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A WRITER?

I have always loved writing and I am an avid reader so I think the answer has to be yes; being an author was always my dream job. But for a long time it seemed out of my reach; something akin to being a popstar or a premiership footballer. What's more, it definitely didn't happen overnight. After my time in law, I worked as a copywriter and ran my own agency for a while, writing marketing copy and occasionally ghost or feature writing. The books were a natural progression. I already wrote for a living, but I started writing creatively, for myself, in my own time.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Lots and lots more books. I've written another two and I'm working on getting the next one - The Lottery Club - ready for publication.