

A CONVERSATION

R.L. Stine

Goosebumps
HorrorLand

Questions & Answers

Q: How is the new HorrorLand series different from previous Goosebumps books?

A: *I've always said that Goosebumps books are like a roller coaster—full of thrills and chills and fast twists and turns. But Goosebumps HorrorLand is a whole new ride. Each edition is two books in one. The first is a complete Goosebumps story. The second is a continuing story set in the scariest amusement park ever—HorrorLand.*

Why is it so scary? Because the meanest, creepiest villains from all the Goosebumps books are in HorrorLand, and they want to make sure no one gets out.

Q: These are the first all-new Goosebumps books to be published in eight years. What inspired you to go back to Goosebumps?

A: *My readers! Everywhere I went kids asked me: When are you going to write new Goosebumps books? So now I am.*

Q: What is the most surprising thing that has happened to you as a result of the popularity of Goosebumps?

A: *Everything that has happened to me has been amazing and surprising. I got the chance to do things that I dreamed of when I was a kid: I got to ride on a float in a parade, I got to go behind the scenes at Disney World, I've been on TV. I got to throw out the first pitch at Yankee Stadium (actually I let my son do that). I met my all-time hero, Ray Bradbury. But the biggest thrill was and continues to be meeting and hearing from so many kids who enjoy my books.*

Q: What inspired you to call the series Goosebumps?

A: *I was stumped. I couldn't think of a name for the series. Then I saw an ad on a TV station that was showing horror movies. The ad said, "It's goosebumps week on Channel 11." That was it!*

Q: Goosebumps HorrorLand is set in a scary theme park. Do you have a favorite theme-park ride?

A: *Here's the truth. I love theme parks but I'm a real chicken on rides. I'd rather invent scary rides for my books than go on them for real.*

Q: What inspired you to write the first Goosebumps HorrorLand book, *Night of the Living Dummy*?

A: *I've always thought dummies were scary. There's something about those dead wooden eyes staring at you and then suddenly coming to life. Creepy!*

Q: Do you own a ventriloquist's dummy? If so, has it ever insulted, chased, or attacked you?

A: *I do own a ventriloquist's dummy. It looks just like me! So far, it hasn't ever chased me or attacked me. But you know, people have told me that dogs always sense ghosts and evil things before humans do. Well, my dog, Minnie, who is normally a very quiet, calm dog, is absolutely terrified of the dummy. She barks at it and shivers with fear whenever she sees him! So now I can't help wondering if she knows something about the dummy that I don't know.*

Q: Slappy is a villain that the fans love to fear. What makes him so popular?

A: *Face it—all of us would like to be a little mean and a little rude sometimes. Slappy is mean and rude ALL the time. I think that's why the fans love him.*

Q: What advice do you have for readers who hope to write their own books someday?

A: *My advice is to read as much as you can, and to try and write something, anything, every day. Think of it this way—when you write, you are a writer!*

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Q: Why did you decide to write scary books?

A: I always liked scary movies and books. When I was about eight or nine, I started reading scary horror comic books. They were called Vault of Horror and Tales from the Crypt. And my brother and I went to every scary movie. We didn't get scared—we always LAUGHED!

Q: What scares you? Do you have any phobias?

A: I have one phobia—I can't jump into water. I have to step into a swimming pool; I can't jump or dive in. My nephews think it's a riot that a scary guy like me is afraid to jump into a pool!

Q: Do kids come to your house for Halloween? What do you give out?

A: Kids come to my apartment in New York City because I have a skeleton and a cupful of eyeballs and a lot of creepy stuff. I always give out copies of my books along with the candy bars.

Q: Goosebumps has sold hundreds of millions of books worldwide. When did you first realize that Goosebumps was going to be such a huge success? How did you celebrate?

A: I was in my hometown of Columbus, Ohio, driving to a bookstore for a book signing. I remember I was stuck in a huge traffic jam and I was really worried I would be late and was growing more and more annoyed at all the traffic. When we finally approached the bookstore, I realized that the traffic jam was caused by all the people who were coming to see me! I celebrated by signing hundreds of books!

Q: What's the weirdest fan letter you've ever received?

A: It's the weirdest and also my favorite. Here goes:

"Dear R.L. Stine. I have read 40 of your books and I think they are really boring."

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