

A NOTE FROM AUTHOR JASON CARTER EATON



How did I come to find myself in the middle of the Sahara Desert, dressed as a leprechaun, riding a stolen space-zebra on the lam from an intergalactic zoo? Well, that's a very interesting question and one I'm glad you asked.

You see . . . What? Oh, that's *not* the question? You say you wanted to know why I wrote *How to Train a Train*? Goodness, how embarrassing! Well, then, I suppose I should start at the beginning. . . .

I was born. Then not much happened for a while. Then a bunch of things happened, but they weren't really relevant. Then I went to high school. I was voted class writer, but again, none of this has anything to do with trains or train-related activities.

Also unrelated to trains is the fact that I attended Emory University, where I was a Stipe Scholar and editor in chief of the award-winning humor magazine *The Spoke*. As long as we're on the topic of unrelated things, upon graduation I began a career in film as director of development for producer Scott

Rudin, working on such films as *Clueless*, *The Truman Show*, and a whole bunch of others that I don't really remember because I hardly ever slept.

But while I was there, I met the Irish playwright Martin McDonough, who convinced me that if I was serious about writing, I'd have to take it seriously. So I quit, hopped on a plane to Ireland, and honed my skills under the tutelage of a mad genius.

When I got home, I tried my hand at humor books. Alongside several old *Spoke* colleagues, I cowrote *Chelsea Clinton's Freshman Notebook* for Hyperion. Yes, it was as classy as you think.

As penance, I began writing children's books. My first picture book, *The Day My Runny Nose Ran Away*, received high critical praise. My mother also liked it.

After that I penned the YA novel *The Facttracker*. And then penned it *again* for MGM when they bought the film rights. And then penned it yet *again* when they asked for a rewrite.

Along the way, I sold a bunch of films and received story credit for *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs* with 20th Century Fox/Blue Sky Studios. Little known fact: the opening is based on me and my wife when she was pregnant with our son, Milo, and I was a nervous wreck. Good times!

But I digress. I was talking about why I wrote *How to Train a Train*. Hmm, let me think about it for a second. Why did I write it? Hmmmm. Well, I suppose it's because . . . I love trains! And when I was a kid, I wanted a pet train more than anything. In fact, I daresay many kids have that dream. And, frankly, there's no reason reality should get in the way of a good dream.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to feed my space-zebra.

