



## Meet Alice - and her creator, Davina Bell



### Davina, where did the character of Alice come from?





I think Alice comes from the part of me that believes we are put on earth to try and do something beautiful with our lives. To me, there is almost nothing more beautiful than ballet, and that's why I chose to write about a ballerina. When I started writing Alice's story, I spent a lot of time looking at a photograph of my favourite aunt when she was a girl, and I imagined she was Alice. My aunt died a few years ago, but writing Alice's story made me feel close to her again, and reminded me how warm and safe and loved I felt when I was in her home. So I tried to write about a home and a family that made me feel those things again, and Alice was at the centre of that, making it all happen.

Alice is so much more confident and enthusiastic and beautiful than I was when I was her age. But one thing we have in common is that our emotions are fierce. So I guess a short answer is that Alice comes from how deeply I feel things.

### And what do you like best about Alice?

When you live in a country that is free from war and hunger, and you're cared for and comfortable and talented, it can be easy to forget about people who struggle. I love that Alice has everything she could ever need, and yet she still cares deeply about the world, and thinks about big questions, like how it is that she has such a lovely life when others are struggling. I admire that she cherishes how lucky she is. Each day, I try to do the same, and even though I mostly fail, I think it's still important to try.



### Some quick facts about the character Alice Alexander

She was born in 1907, so she would have lived at a similar time to Rose, but been a bit younger • Her story is set in Peppermint Grove, a suburb of Perth, WA • She has a big family, including three sisters, two brothers, a cow, a goat, chickens and a dog • Her father is away at war • She dreams of being a famous ballerina when she grows up.



The original 'Alice'  
(Davina's aunt)

