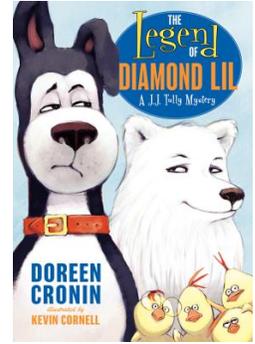


Your Friend, Doreen Cronin

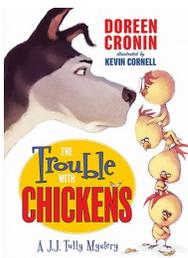
Dear Readers:

I'm so glad you are reading [Diamond Lil!](#) It's only the second chapter book I've ever written!

Diamond Lil is the sequel to [The Trouble with Chickens](#) (illustrated by Kevin Cornell). The original idea for the villain in the book – Vince the Funnel – came from a sketch that Harry Bliss did while we traveling on tour for one of the [Diary of...](#)books. He was doodling on post-its (as he often does) and drew a fantastic picture of a dog wearing one of those giant plastic cones around its neck. Then he gave it to me and said “You should use this in a story...Like a Peter Lorre character (an old-time actor).” I took the post it, and stuck it in my pocket – and in my brain. It took a while, but from a small, simple, but inherently funny sketch of one character, eventually grew my first chapter book. Harry was too busy at the time to illustrate it, but Kevin Cornell dove right in!



When you are done reading the book, you will have “met” almost everyone in my immediate family. JJ Tully – the search and rescue dog – is based on my Dad (JJ Cronin!). The four chicks in the series are the four Cronin Kids (Ken, Doreen, Cathy and Sean). Millicent, aka Moosh, is my mother, Ann. The villain that Harry Bliss originally came up got his name from my Uncle Vince (a very nice guy). Finally, *Diamond Lil*, is my dad's sister, my Aunt Lillian. She passed away just a few months ago, and she may not have been a southern belle like the character who bears her name, but she did have a great personality!! I will leave it to you to decide which one of the annoying – yet adorable – little chickens is me!



Happy Reading!

[Doreen Cronin](#)

For more about Doreen Cronin, visit her website [HERE](#).