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# Channing Tatum's New Children's Book Aims To Empower Kids to 'Make a Plan'

The actor, producer, New York Times bestselling author, and proud dad discusses the inspiration behind his second book, *The One and Only Sparkella Makes a Plan*. Plus, all the magic fans can look forward to down the road.

By [Maressa Brown](#) | Published on June 3, 2022



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He may be beloved for his moves in blockbusters like *Magic Mike* and *Step Up*, but the role closest to Channing Tatum's heart is being dad to his 9-year-old daughter, Everly. It's also a role that has led to him topping the *New York Times* Best Sellers list as a children's book author.

Last spring, Tatum published his first children's book, *The One and Only Sparkella*, which was inspired by a moment in his daughter's life.

"My daughter always loved wearing the craziest possible thing she'd find—it didn't matter what it was," says Tatum. "This was the first or second week of preschool and I'm trying to get her out of the house to drop her off. I saw her put on one of her favorite things—a watermelon poncho.

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That moment—and realizing that his job is to encourage Everly to have self-confidence—led to the plot of *The One and Only Sparkella*. Fast-forward to this spring, and the proud dad is promoting his second book, *The One and Only Sparkella Makes a Plan*, which came about just as organically.

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"I didn't even mean to write the first book—it just came out of nowhere, and if you talked to any of my English teachers, they'd have been like, 'This is the farthest kid from who'd ever be an author, of all the kids we've seen here, this is definitely not the one!'" jokes Tatum. "And then, that just happened, and it was fun and good, and I was proud of it. Then I felt a lot of pressure to decide the next logical arc of the character."





Ultimately, while the first book was about Sparkella not knowing how a particular situation might turn out, Tatum decided the second should focus on what to do when a scenario isn't turning out as you imagined. "It's about expectations and that moment in which you have this grand plan, and it's just not going like you want it to go," he explains. "And you're just like, 'Wow, what do I do now?'"

That was something Everly experienced as the two were hanging out at a ranch he owns outside of Los Angeles. "We were doing the most dad/daughter possible things, and she was like, 'I want to make a house,'" he remembers. "I was going to build the sickest birdhouse that you'd ever seen. And then she was like, 'Oh, I already have a plan.'"

His elementary schooler, who loves designing and creating, is "an artist in her own right," says Tatum. But that time, her plan wasn't quite right. "I could tell very quickly that her plan was never going to yield a birdhouse —it just really wasn't gonna happen."

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Eventually, Everly also realized her plan wouldn't work. Tatum allowed her to work through her disappointment before they moved in another direction. "We ultimately really did figure it out and made probably one of the coolest birdhouses," he says. "And we created something that neither one of us could have known that we were going to create."

In *The One and Only Sparkella Makes a Plan*, Sparkella is on a mission to make not a birdhouse but "a castle fit for two royal highnesses" before her friend arrives for a playdate, and her dad similarly supports her through a patience-building process of trial and error.



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## The Joy of Reading With His Daughter

When Tatum and his daughter aren't on a building adventure, they spend time reading—a lot! "When we started reading books, we would basically read five books, and we realized very quickly that five books every night was like a really long time," says Tatum. "We were just like 'Oh, we should have done one book, two books.' We'd negotiate down, and say, 'This is a really long book, let's read just three chapters in this book.'"

And over time, he and Everly came up with a whole new approach to bedtime stories. "She's intuitive, and she's really, really creative," he says. "We would make up our own stories. I remember there was a leaf by her bed one night, and I remember we talked for maybe an hour and a half about the journey of the leaf and what it went through to get to this moment to teach us something. Some of it was so silly and funny, and we were trying to make each other laugh the whole time."

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## What *Sparkella* Fans Can Expect Next

Although Tatum's second book might've just landed in readers' hands, they can look forward to even more to come—on and off bookshelves. *Variety* announced that Tatum will star in and produce the live-action movie adaptation of *The One and Only Sparkella*. Per the official logline, the story will "take on the magic of *Sparkella* that sees a father and his

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daughter fall headlong into the infinitely surprising world of her imagination."

Bringing the *Sparkella* story to the screen is a particularly special opportunity for Tatum, who describes movies as his "first books." "I didn't read as much as I watched movies," says the producer. "There's a certain genre of kids' movies that live in the late '70s to '80s and early '90s that I think we're really missing today." about the journey of the leaf and what it went through to get to this moment to teach us something. Some of it was so silly and funny, and we were trying to make each other laugh the whole time."

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While the *Sparkella* film is still in the early stages, the star says he's excited to work on a children's film that reminds him of his childhood. "I want to bring back these live-action films that I grew up on that really have the parents and the children going into a magical world together and experiencing things at par with each other, because imagination is probably the only thing that is going to get you out of whatever situation you're in," he says. "And who's to say who's going to have the best idea there? Probably will always be the kids!"

*Sparkella Makes a Plan*, written by Channing Tatum and illustrated by Kim Barnes, is now available on [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), and wherever books are sold.

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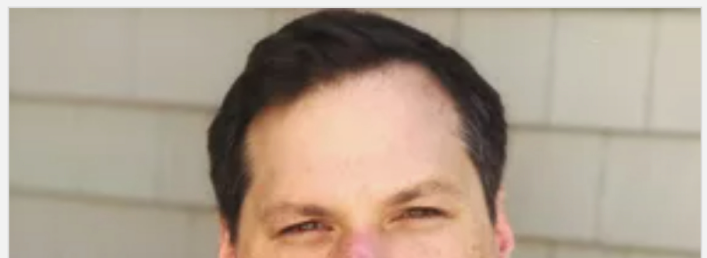
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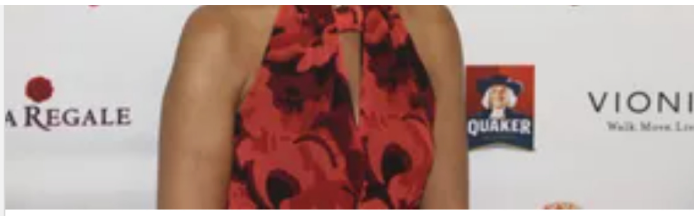


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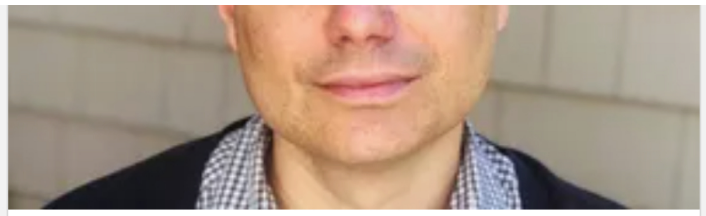




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