

# Gillian Philip

## Children's author

### The cancellation

Gillian Philip used to be a children's author and was one of a number of people writing books under the pen name Erin Hunter.

In 2020, she added the hashtag #IStandwithJKRowling to her profile on Twitter, now X. Philip was then subjected to an extreme 24-hour social media pile-on that included death threats.



**"You have all these people you don't know pouring out hate, trying to get you fired and saying that they hope you die in this horrible way...It's extremely intense and there is no escape from it. There were people trying to support me, but I was hardly seeing any of that as it was so torrential."**

Philip's contract was immediately terminated by her publisher with the tacit support of her agent. She was told she had erred by putting her personal opinions on her professional social media account. There was nothing in her contract that prevented her from doing so, and other Erin Hunter authors had made political statements on their own accounts with no repercussions.

**"No-one got in touch with me during that period to ask what was happening or "Are you OK?". By the morning of the 26th, they were taking everything as gospel that the mob were saying. They were believing all these anonymous accounts."**

Philip had previously shown loyalty to her publisher at great personal cost: she continued, for example, with unpaid overseas tours when her husband got admitted to hospital and when her mother, recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, had absconded. "I thought that loyalty would be reciprocated," she says. It was not.

### The effect

She lost her livelihood. "There was no point from that moment writing anything to be sold to a major publisher," she says. "I'd been dropped by my agent and I knew that was the kiss of death."

**"It really killed the ability to write for me."**

Philip now earns a living by driving trucks.