

ISSUE XXI

VOLUME IV

DE MODE

Authors' Special

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PARIS re-MADE
LOOKBOOK
FALL-WINTER 21-2022

Priyanka Pradhan

Enchanting tales straight from
the heart of the mountains:
The Himalayas

The
ultimate
guide to
**BE THE
HOME CHEF**

Attitudes
about
sexuality
and aging
an essential
health research
by Harvard
Medical School

DUBAI TOUR
WITH ROSE RAYHAAN
BY ROTANA
5th World's Tallest Hotel

De Mode
spring & fall
**FASHION
WEEK
SUMMARIES**

24
**MUST-READ
BOOKS
OF THIS
SEASON**

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE BY DE MODE NEWS BUREAU



DEMODE



MISS * UNIVERSE
CONFIDENTLY BEAUTIFUL

Andrea Meza

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FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

Presenting you DE MODE (Vol. 4, Issue 21) AUTHOR'S SPECIAL GLOBAL ISSUE featuring **Author Priyanka Pradhan**, an Indo-UAE award-winning author. She will take you on a journey into the Himalayas through the stories from her book: 'Tales from the Himalayas'. Read her exclusive interview with DE MODE.



Setting a benchmark for comfort and style in Dubai, Rose Rayhaan by Rotana was awarded as the 'Tallest Hotel in the World' from 2009 to 2012 by the Guinness Book of World Records. With Rose Rayhaan, we successfully completed our first cover project in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. We are really grateful to **Mr Hadi Vazir** for his endless support in the execution.

Staying aware of the entirety of the furthest down the line must-read books can rapidly transform into a staggering undertaking - finish one, add five more to the heap, and the cycle wears on until it's essentially too horrendous to even think about focusing any longer. Here's another arrangement: Leave the arranging of what's good and what's terrible to us, devoted perusers of perfect taste. We read a ton of books in the first quarter of 2021 and consider these to be the 24 best deserving of adding to your ceaseless heap this season.

This Fashion Week Season for FW2021 was wonderful for many different designers and pushing creativity as we are all experiencing these restrictions internationally. As we look forward to this coming Spring and Fall, designers are upbeat and hopeful for us as a planet recovering as one. Trends such as prints, neutral and almost pastel colours adorned the season. Sustainability, local artesian focuses, crisp detailing, and contemporary with hints of classical designs evolved further.

Enjoy reading DE MODE APR-MAY-JUN 2021 GLOBAL ISSUE and share your feedback BY RATING US ON GOOGLE.

Nikhil Chandra Rana
Nikhil C. Rana (Nick)
FOUNDER & Editor-in-Chief

DE MODE
WORLD'S NO.1 FASHION, BUSINESS & LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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from top brands by
Michael Foust

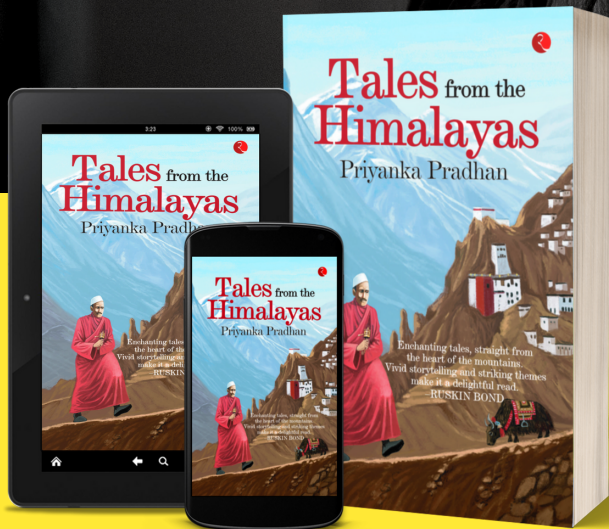
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Adventures

storyteller
Priyanka Pradhan



Outfit: BALYSAH @balyseh
Make-up & Hair: Elena Zhosan @elena_zhosan_
Location: Rose Rayhaan by Rotana, Dubai
Photo: Chrisanson Thomas @chris_catphotography



'TALES FROM THE HIMALAYAS'
BY PRIYANKA PRADHAN

It is runner-up for the Montegrappa Writing Prize 2020 at the Emirates Literature Festival (Dubai), where it was picked amongst the top 5 manuscripts amongst entries from Middle East countries such as the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

www.priyanka-pradhan.com



Outfit: BALYSAH @balyсах
Make-up & Hair: Elena Zhosan @elena_zhosan_
Location: Rose Rayhaan by Rotana, Dubai
Photo: Chrisanson Thomas @chris_catphotography

PRIYANKA PRADHAN

PHENOMENAL



Priyanka Pradhan is a Dubai-based journalist with experience of 13 years in television, print, and electronic media, across India and the UAE.

Specializing in business and lifestyle genres, she reported for CNBC Network 18 (Storyboard) and Economic Times Now (Brand Equity) as a correspondent and assistant producer in Mumbai. After moving to Dubai in 2011, she served as assistant editor for The New York Times Style Magazine (the UAE and Qatar editions) and Bloomberg Businessweek Middle East as well as features editor for Sorbet Magazine (UAE and EU)

She contributed as a travel writer, to various lifestyle magazine titles such as Conde Nast Traveller (UAE and Indian editions). She was also a regular contributor to regional and international magazines such as Harper's Bazaar Middle East, DestinAsian (Indonesia), Al Nawras (in-flight magazine for Air Arabia), and Villa 88 (UAE).

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

While writing the book, my first thought was that I hope I do justice to the stories because they were inspired by my grandmother's tales. I did put a lot of pressure on myself to write responsibly and make sure the stories had substance and quality, because they're a tribute to my favorite storyteller.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

Well, it wasn't a literary pilgrimage, per se, but in Paris, I visited the famous Shakespeare and Co bookshop for its incredible history and rich heritage. I also loved the Ernest Hemingway tour of Paris, where I retraced the life of the great writer during his time in Paris.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

The most unethical practice in this industry is the business of paid reviews! Not many book bloggers and reviewers are interested to review a book without being paid and this is unsettling because it means integrity and quality of reviews is tremendously compromised. Ultimately, readers and book lovers are misled, and that's not fair to them or the authors.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing does both- energize and exhaust. It is a very intensive exercise and consumes so much of one's mental, emotional, and physical resources that it is bound to exhaust the writer. However, the fact that you're writing and finally seeing that story on paper, does lift your spirits.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

I think a big ego wouldn't work for anyone, in any profession or industry, even more so in the creative line of work. Our work is so subjective that it comes under a lot of scrutiny and criticism- rejection is a part of everyday life and one has to take critical feedback in the right spirit.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

Publishing my first book has actually had zero effect of my writing process. It should've ideally made me more disciplined, but it really hasn't. It's the same old battle - procrastination v/s productive work, everyday.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

"Literary success" is a big phrase! I think I'd be happiest if someone who's bought my book thinks it was worth his/her time and money and that he got value out of reading my book. When I get feedback from children about how they enjoyed reading 'Tales from the Himalayas', that means success to me.

Q: What's the best way to market your books?

Social media, hands down. The way we consume media has changed dramatically and so the marketing efforts have to adapt to the changes. L for one consume news, features, entertainment is entirely online and mostly on social media-it's the platform to market everything from books to real estate!

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research, to me, is of utmost importance because it lends depth and dimension to your story. A solid story is a well-researched story and this has been ingrained in my system since the beginning of my journalism days. I do thorough on-ground research, in-person and phone interviews, referencing and lots of reading before I begin.

**Priyanka also bagged
 Ruskin Bond Promising
 Writer award for 'Tales
 from the Himalayas' at the
 Dehradun Literature
 Festival 2019, where the
 manuscript was handpicked
 and awarded by Mr. Ruskin
 Bond, from amongst
 hundreds of entries by
 Indians across the world.**



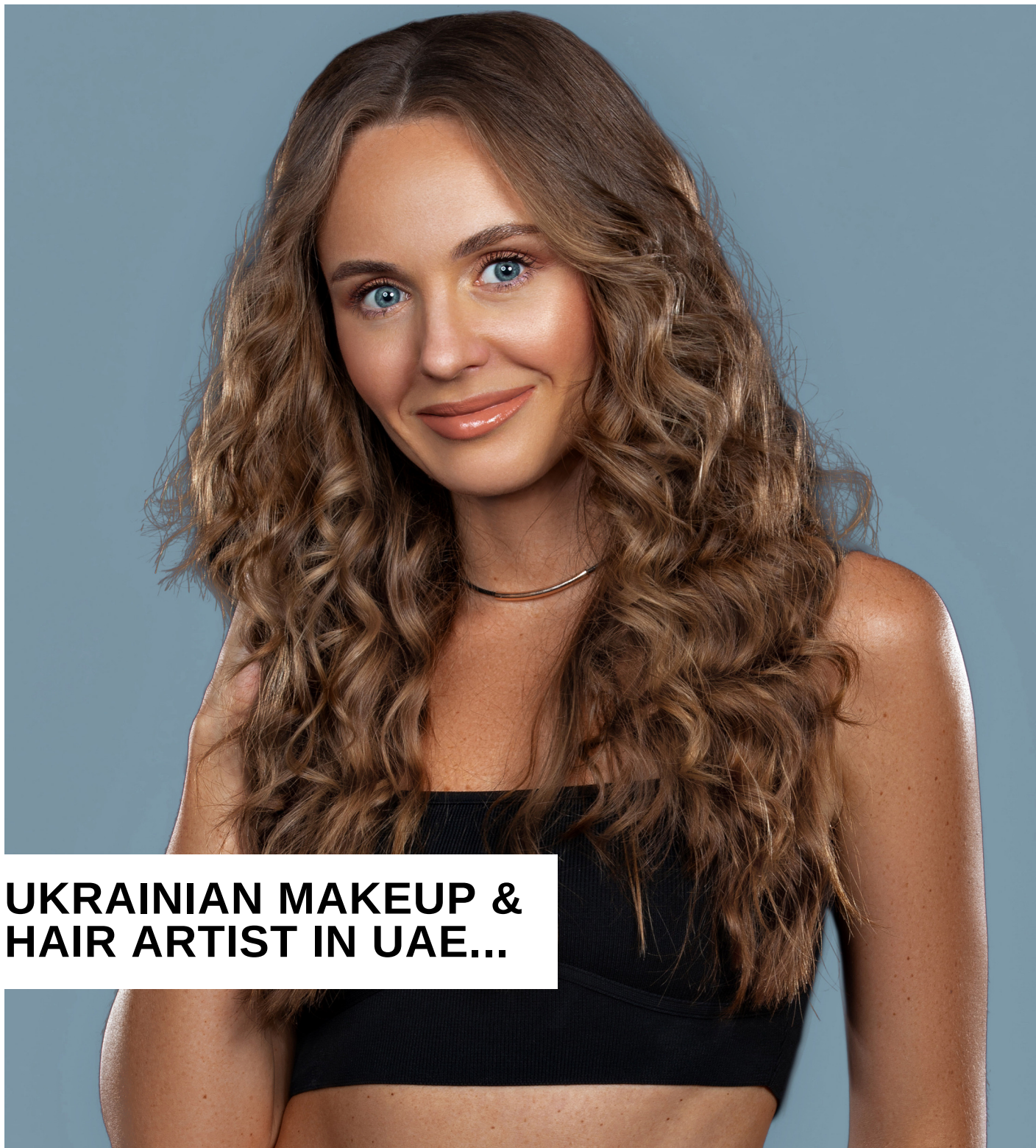
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 Make-up & Hair: Elena Zhosan @elena_zhosan_
 Location: Rose Rayhaan by Rotana, Dubai
 Photo: Chrisanson Thomas @chris_catphotography

Stories such as, 'The bagpiper' offer an insight into the musical history and tradition of Uttarakhand, while stories such as 'Kaafal' are my adaptations of local children's folktales, passed down by oral tradition for hundreds of years.

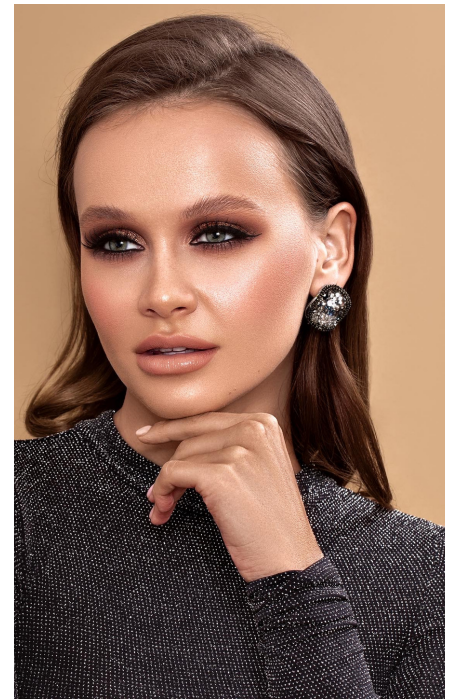
Another highlight of the book is a story called 'The villain' touch upon a very deep-rooted issue in Indian society – that of color prejudice, especially amongst young girls. The story aims to help children appreciate their uniqueness and accept their color of skin and their bodies, with pride. The book also features two real-life characters and their stories – Gaura Devi, who pioneered the 'Chipko movement' (tree-hugging) to set an example for forest protection across the world, and Nain Singh Rawat, who is one of the greatest explorers and surveyors in the continent. Both real-life heroes from the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand.

Tales from the Himalayas is a collection of seventeen short stories from Uttarakhand, the Himalayan state of northern India, invite young readers to discover the mountains, through its stories. Just like the people of Uttarakhand, their stories are simple and heartfelt. There are tales of snow leopards, ghouls, and monsters, of courage and kindness, but most of all, about having faith in oneself. While the backdrop for these stories is the rustic setting in remote, high-altitude villages and towns of Uttarakhand, possibly far removed from the worlds of the readers, the central themes and characters of the stories aim to be relatable and relevant for children anywhere in the world. The endeavor is to offer children a taste of culture and tradition from the Himalayas and an appreciation for diversity.

ELENA ZHOSAN



**UKRAINIAN MAKEUP &
HAIR ARTIST IN UAE...**



Elena moved to Dubai in 2012 to focus on her career and began working with MAC Cosmetics.

She trained in Paris and graduated from one of the most prestigious makeup schools "MakeUp Atelier".

Her work can be seen on many UAE magazine covers and editorials. She works with influential brands and publications of the Middle East.

For her, make up is more than mere glittering surfaces, it is an important signifier of the importance of both creativity and humanity. She does makeup & hair for special occasions such as weddings as well as for fashion and catalogue shoots.

She makes sure the fashion and beauty lovers always look their best and caters with exactly what her clients want.





Rose
Rayhaan
by Rotana
Dubai

RAYHAAN

ROSE
BY ROTANA

travel to dubai

Setting a benchmark for comfort and style in Dubai, Rose Rayhaan by Rotana was awarded as the 'Tallest Hotel in the World' from 2009 to 2012 by the Guinness book of world record. Enjoy your stay at the marvellous 4-star skyscraper on your next visit to Dubai.



2

The 72 Storey building offers 462 rooms & suites with panoramic views of Dubai, capturing the stunning Burj Khalifa and overlooking the Arabian Gulf.

3

Surrounded by a lively neighborhood with restaurants, bars, and retail outlets, the 4-star Rose Rayhaan by Rotana is located on Sheikh Zayed Road and is just a few steps away from the metro station.



4

The hotel also features Club Rotana with access to VIP lounge, private reception with express check-in/out, complimentary breakfast, evening canapés and selected soft beverages served throughout the day plus complimentary Airport transfers within the city.

5

Each of the 462 spacious rooms and suites is designed to create an ambiance of charm and luxury. The rooms offer one of the best views overlooking the iconic Burj Khalifa, the Arabian Gulf, and the city.



6

The rooms/suites also provide a sense of comfort and convenience with 24-hour in-room dining, complimentary Wi-Fi, 40-inch LED tv with local and international channels, complimentary tea & coffee making facilities, personal in-room safe, housekeeping, and laundry service.

7

All rooms and suites are equipped with a kitchenette with a full-size refrigerator, freezer, and microwave oven. Some units also include a washing machine ideal for long-staying guests.





8

To heighten guest comfort, Rose Rayhaan by Rotana caters to various tastes and palates. Petals, the in-house all-day-dining restaurant, serves a lavish buffet for breakfast and a set menu for lunch, and dinner.

9

For those looking for a strong brew, the lobby-level Café Rose whips a heavenly cuppa' paired with homemade pastries and baked goods.



10

On the other hand, Aquarius is ideal for light bites with mocktails by the poolside.

11

Enjoy the roof-top temperature-controlled swimming pool with one of the finest views in the city.



12

Talking about fitness, Bodylines Fitness & Wellness Club is a fully equipped gymnasium also offering a pool, spa, jacuzzi, sauna, and steam rooms for in-house and external guests.

13

The hotel also offers a spa with professional and qualified masseuse. Allow our expert therapists to squeeze out any post-workout soreness, courtesy treatments for the mind, body and soul.



12

MUST-READ BOOKS OF THIS SUMMER

DE MODE brings you an unbelievable list of 12 amazing books written by Author Praveen Khumar N, Author S.G. Blaise, Author K.J. Kruk, Author D.W. Plato, Author Xandrea Castaldi, Author Joy L. Brite, Author Keith Brandon, Author Taylor S Norman, Author Effie M. Kalaitzdis, Author Carlos Harleaux, Author Melody Saleh and Author Joy Jenkins that you must read this summer season during sunbath with a collection of drinks & snacks and don't forget to drink lots of water and use your sunscreen when tanning, to avoid your beautiful skin getting burnt..Winkies! Also, read the exclusive author interviews that will help you understand their writing style and the level of research they have done to put their book on your table.



'BATTLE FOR POWER'

BY PRRAVEEN KHUMAR N

When it comes to the goriest of crimes, the offenders often mess the evidence and fabricate a false diversion to mislead the investigators. As a consequence, many investigators get themselves entrapped into the deception and choose to close these cases presumptuously with the planted evidence that seem circumstantial. But, I, Thilak Ratnagar, have never addressed a case as presented- cause there is always more than what meets the eye!

On a day that started casually, all it took was a single call from the Commissioner asking me to investigate a dead body in a Lake to turn my world upside down. What seemed like a suicide dragged me into a black hole of multiple high-profile murders, a personal involvement, and a national threat.

Author Praveen Khumar N has very well brought the theme in an interesting manner, there's no surprise this IITian has huge knowledge on the subject and passion for bringing the Novel with emotion and the dedicated Police Officer Mr Thilak's role in cracking the case, with the support of PM to save our future Scientists and the Mission.

Join Author Praveen Khumar N on a 50-hour journey into a topsy-turvy ride full of thrills, twists, turns, multiple face-offs with death in unwinding a treacherous plan to break the backbone of India. Get your copy now.

available at
amazon

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PRRAVEEN KHUMAR N is a Civil Engineer from IIT Madras and currently works for a leading housing finance company as a country head. He is an avid book reader, a trained singer and a huge cricket enthusiast apart from being an excellent leader in his professional life.

"Battle for Power" is his second book and was launched by Padma Shri Kamal Hassan and published by Emerald Publishers. He has authored a best seller novel titled " An Incredible Indian Rescue", which is available on all major platforms.



BOOK REVIEWS

'I must appreciate Mr Praveen Khumar for his intelligence and in-depth knowledge on a difficult subject and his ability to present it as an interesting story for the readers. Here is an unputdownable book, and I recommend the readers to read it in one go to savour its moments and appreciate its brilliance.'

~ **Dr.G.Dhananjayan - Film Producer & Founder-Director of BOFTA FILM INSTITUTE**

Refreshingly beautiful storyline!

One of the finest gripping stories I have read in a very long time. The book is like a wonderful weekend drive and the narrative flows through beautifully. The author's painstaking research reflects the depth of such a detailed plot. Highly recommended!

~ **Siddharth**

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR PRRAVEEN KHUMAR

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

It's a mix of both. I have always had the passion to write, but then it was in 2016 I decided to pursue that passion rigorously when I realized that there were hardly any novelists in English from the state I hail from, that is Tamil Nadu. With that, I made a personal goal to establish myself as a 'successful English Novelist from Tamil Nadu' writing novels on par with International standards!

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

My friend 'Mani Bharathi' is my prime inspiration. He graduated B.E in Computer Science and Engineering from an esteemed institution, yet, instead of choosing to place himself in a cushy job like many others, he chose to follow his heart and pursue his passion for serving the Indian Police Force. And yes, he went on to live his dreams, and his amazing spirit and work inspire me every single day.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

The focal point of all my books is centered on the core issues that are prevalent in my country. Though I ensure to add a romantic dimension to my plot, I strive to keep the strings tied to the critical issues that are pressing the nation, in order to intrigue the readers and garner their interests on the pressing issues that the nation is firefighting with. By doing so, I get the satisfaction of being a sensible citizen. I believe in the need for constructive discussions on critical issues and thereby I feel happy in establishing a medium that promotes such fact-based thoughts and healthy debates.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Of course, yes! Awards/rewards are key motivation factors, especially for young writers like me. The award, announces to the world about our presence and pushes us to produce a lot more meaningful work.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

If you are not making mistakes, then you are not doing anything. I am positive that a doer makes mistakes. - John Wooden.

"If you are resisting to change you can't grow an inch, if you are resisting temptations you are in the path of tremendous growth"- Prraveen Khumar N.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

The sheer thought of thousands of people reading my work is itself an inspiration. Having the ability and energy to give them good content to read is an inspiration. Having the capability to make the readers aware of the prevailing issues that have to be addressed, is an inspiration. Having a medium to channelize their views and perceptions, is an inspiration.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

My work has to impact the readers' perspective and should enable them to discuss the issues addressed in my books both with facts and possibilities, wherever they can. It could be in their living room, or a public platform. In any norms, the content that I write should be powerful enough to rearrange their thoughts to action. Thereby, to educate, empower, and channelize the readers into a productive world, is the ultimate meaning of me being a writer.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

Extremely Proud. Pen is mightier than the sword!

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I usually take 3 months at the least to research the core issue that I try to cover in my books. Since we have access to all the materials at a click of a button it is much easier now. It is hard to imagine writers of Yester generations as they had to visit multiple libraries to get the facts right.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It's a great privilege. A writer completes his work in the confines of his study room. But then, it is YOU, who take our books worldwide and announce the world about us. You leverage the status of our books and accentuate the richness it contains. I am extremely honoured to have associated with such a big brand to promote my book. You guys are amazing!

Follow Author Prraveen Khumar and enjoy reading more from his desk on his official Instagram page: [@authorprraveenkhumar](https://www.instagram.com/authorprraveenkhumar)



'THE LAST LUMENIAN'

BY AUTHOR S.G. BLAISE

The Last Lumenian by S.G. Blaise is a sci-fi fantasy novel. It is the first instalment of this series. This riveting story is filled with action, adventure, romance, drama, and suspense. Lilla, the female protagonist, is a princess with a heartwarming and beautiful personality. She is brave yet a bit confused, she is strong yet soft-hearted. The story starts with Lilla on a space mission, her ship in peril, facing multiple collisions with asteroids.

She faces certain death, seemingly no hope of survival. The story rewinds to where all it started. What is her mission? Where is she travelling? What is the source of her peril? Who are the refugees? If you are into an out-worldly civilization based story with advanced technology, this book is for you.

The story takes you to a universe filled with epic battles, vivid mind-boggling backdrops, wonderful events, magical tools, and a constellation of galaxies with deep, dark characters who are blessed with technology blended with elemental magic. They live in vast worlds, fighting for power and amidst it, all is a strong female hero. As she fights to save the Seven Galaxies, she also fights inner battles to become the hero she needs to be. A thrilling story for readers of all ages. **Get your copy now.**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

S G. BLAISE hails from a faraway land in Europe. She wrote her first short story at ten. A terrible nightmare with spider-like creatures inspired her to put her dream to paper. The following day, she read the story to her class and got a positive response. She thinks adding a joke or two helped.

At the time, author S.G. Blaise didn't really think she would be a writer. She wasn't thinking about it much at that age. Not to mention, she really didn't like to read. She can never forget the moment when it all changed. At 13, she picked up the book her dad had been trying to convince her to read for years and decided to give it a chance. Author Blaise read it, standing by the bookcase (it was a small book, no more than 200 pages). From that point forward, her passion for books and reading continued to grow. She began to identify her favourite authors and genres.



AWARDS

- 2020 New York Book Festival - Winner: Romance
Honourable Mention: Science Fiction
- 2020 San Francisco Book Festival - Winner: Science Fiction
- 2020 Annual Best Book Awards - Winner: Best Cover-Fiction
- 2020 New England Book Festival - Winner: Science Fiction

VISIT AUTHOR S.G. BLAISE OFFICIAL WEBSITE TO READ MORE FROM HER DESK, www.sgblaise.com and www.thelastlumenian.com and follow her on Instagram, [@sgblaiseofficial](https://www.instagram.com/sgblaiseofficial)

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR S.G. BLAISE

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my dream come true and my passion. There is nothing else I would rather do.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The Last Lumenian started out as a dream during a cross-country European trip in 2012. As I was writing the idea down, in the middle of the night with the only illumination coming from my phone, that dream morphed into a story spanning multiple books. The final push to writing my book came from simple advice: Just sit down and write. Which I did! Worked on the story for six years until it was ready to be published.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing changed me in so many ways and is still changing me. It's hard to put into words. Writing is therapeutic and healing. It revealed aspects of my personality that I wasn't aware of until then. Writing taught me to be more open-minded and patient. I learned that writing is a journey and not a sprint.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I think winning a competition is one of the most amazing ways to get validation on the hard work one puts into their book. It is an honor and a wonderful feeling. I am happy to share that The Last Lumenian has won four awards since it was released.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

Being a writer allows you to highlight aspects of life, magnify issues and show how they can play out if nothing changes. It also allows you to show life where certain issues are not considered issues, but simply part of normal life - accepted, and not discriminated against. Both of these aspects can be powerful for the reader as they experience the story unfold and get a new perspective about life.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." ~ By Maya Angelou

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I absolutely love being an author! I have dreamed about writing ever since I was 10 years old.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

For me, being a writer means telling the best stories possible for the reader. Providing them a much-needed escape from reality for a few hours.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Writers are their own worst critics, often resulting in giving up on a draft merely because they believe it is not perfect. It takes perseverance and commitment to keep going, often for years before the manuscript is ready for publication.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

When I write my books, I strive to tell a cinematic and immersive story that the readers can't put down.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

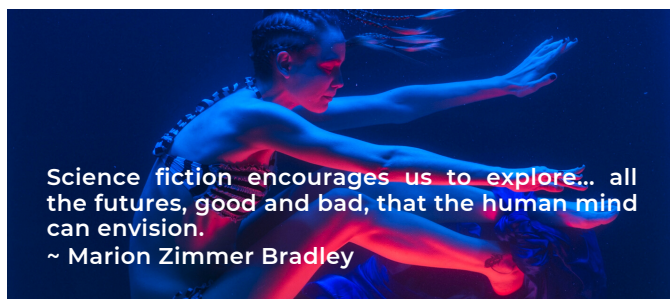
Emotions and past experiences allow a writer to add their truth to an otherwise fictional story, thus creating a universal connection between the reader and the made-up characters.

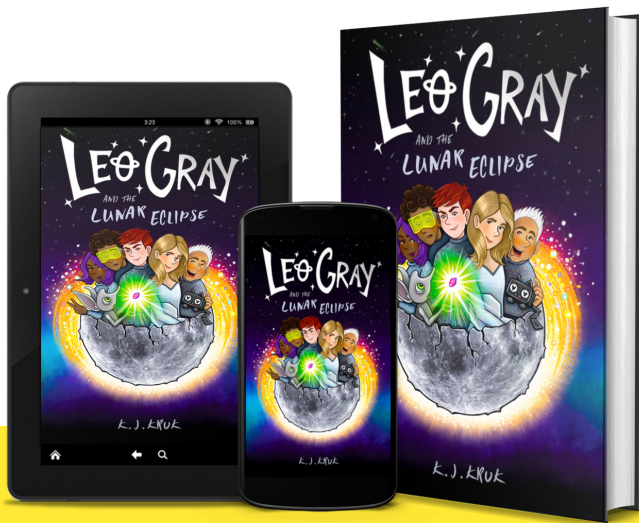
Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I usually spend months developing the story before I start writing. Since my books are Sci-Fi/Fantasy, I also spend a lot of time on world-building, even though most of them don't make it into the story, only the necessary information that helps move the story forward.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Thank you for the honour and opportunity to feature my book and me in your magazine, DE MODE. It was an unexpected and pleasant surprise.





'LEO GRAY AND THE LUNAR ECLIPSE'
BY AUTHOR K. J. KRUK

Who hasn't dreamed of going to the moon? That dream for eleven-year-old Leo Gray is about to come true—but he's in for the surprise of his life!

In the year 2113, most people live in robotically maintained homes, ride around in self-flying cars, and wear ozone-resistant clothes. Most people that are; just not Leo Gray's parents. They're stuck in the past, and science know-it-all Leo is completely fed up with his beyond-embarrassing living arrangement with them. But when he enters a rocket-building competition for a chance to attend the Lunar Academy, Leo's luck finally seems to turn in his favour!

However, it's not long after stepping foot into his dorm room that Leo discovers the moon's celebrated city is harbouring a world of dark secrets. It's soon a race against the clock for Leo and his friends Andromeda Groves (a code-hacking whiz from Canada), Pavo Digby (a history buff from Brazil), and Grus Pinwheel (a musically gifted and comically endearing Aussie) intercept and foil plans to destroy the city—leaving the group's leader faced with a decision that no eleven-year-old should ever have to make: save Earth or save himself and the city he fought so hard to reach. Leo Gray and the Lunar Eclipse is an epic adventure set in a wonderfully imaginative, futuristic world overflowing with robots, anti-gravity sports, superhero-Esque suspense, and page after page of laughter and heart that will leave boys and girls equally gripped under its spell!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

K **J. KRUK** is a multi-award-winning author and illustrator of the bestselling hit middle-grade novel, *Leo Gray and the Lunar Eclipse*. Kruk is also the creator of The Super Stellar Dream Scholarship - a year-round scholarship that provides financial assistance and encouragement to students pursuing innovative and altruistic goals in the Arts and STEM—and is the founder of **TOLA**, an online learning platform that promotes creative thinking via individualized educational content with Leo Gray Books.

Author Kruk has created a highly imaginative futuristic world that is bound to ignite young minds for years to come! With impeccable command of the English language and a solid dose of humour, K. J. Kruk will leave readers thirsting to know: What comes after *Leo Gray and the Lunar Eclipse*?



BOOK REVIEWS

"A humorous and heartfelt sci-fi tale."
~ **KIRKUS REVIEWS**

"Young readers will find much to love in *Leo Gray and the Lunar Eclipse*."
~ **READERS' FAVORITE**

"I found it a lot of fun to read and enjoyed using my imagination and I believe kids will enjoy it too."
~ **A GARDEN OF BOOKS**

VISIT AUTHOR K.J. KRUK OFFICIAL WEBSITE TO READ MORE FROM HER DESK, www.kjkruk.com, AND FOLLOW HER ON INSTAGRAM, [@krukgalaxy](https://www.instagram.com/krukgalaxy).

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR K.J. KRUK

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

It allows me to hop out of the craziness of my normal day-to-day life and just let go of all of the noise and drama and mentally paint whatever I want to create. In many ways, it brings out my nerdy inner goddess!

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I didn't start to write my book thinking that I was doing anything more than creative journaling. But I did have a final "I need to publish this!" moment when I recognized the fact that my younger self could have been uplifted by its story.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Though my work has certainly won a surprising number of awards, I don't chase public approval for any art that I create (books included!). Actually, I think the whole concept of rating any form of art is so grossly objective that I'm still baffled as to how it's done! But I do believe in patting yourself on the back for hard work or even small triumphs, or tantalizing yourself into getting one more interview done! I always need a bit of extra encouragement for those. There will definitely be a mini "Go me!" party at my house after this.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

It's become clear to me, over the years, that the majority of readers are still praising major corporations over individual authors. (And this applies to authors on both sides of the traditional publishing fence.) You're not going to get diversity if you keep eating from McDonald's or Burger King your entire life. If you're a true book lover, you need to go out and find those special, hole-in-the-wall eateries like Anthony Bourdain. And for publishers looking to thrive in these new times, they too need to realize it's only a matter of time before readers gain more curated access to those exact book-eateries that agents keep failing to point out. It's not always the case, but a good number of books pushed out by top houses are generic slices of bread that most closely resemble their top-earning, popular book. For the sake of human intelligence, publishing houses and readers alike need to get more creative and less selective with their selections. If you shop consciously, read consciously! And support books for their rare and unique art over their trending "Everybody's Reading It" Instagram status.

Q. What is your favorite Quote?

"In all that you do live love." Too many people think of love as an overrated romanticized act. Instead, it's a magic key to living the life you've always dreamed of. Just live love. The rest will follow!

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

There's always something brewing in my brain that I want to get down on pen and paper...but Time is always yapping at me to do otherwise. So I'm always so elated when I do get a moment to sit and write it all out and express myself creatively. There's absolutely nothing better than tapping into raw, free-flowing imagination.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer is being a creator. It's being bold enough to speak your story and insightful enough to realize that everyone will think one way or another about it. But, at the end of the day, they will THINK!

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write what I want to read or what excites me in the moment, so I don't think or try to project how others will consume my mind's blabbering. However, when I get to editing, I do stop and attempt to take things in as a multitude of potential readers, to hopefully clear out any misreadings. But I genuinely try to keep my work as close to what I originally wrote and was imagining during the time when I was in my "creative element" as possible.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I don't do any research before or during my writing process. Now, I might have to look up a term or two that I've forgotten or double-check my mental scrapbook on something I learned years ago...But I wouldn't write on something that didn't come to me naturally. Where's the fun in that?

Q: Do you have an upcoming book?

I do have an upcoming book! (Or maybe two...) And you know the drill: Spoilers!

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

So honoured to have my book in DE MODE. Sending my love and my very best wishes to all of your readers across the globe! Stay fashionable. Stay smart. And keep reading!



'THE DRAGON FROM GUANGZHOU'

BY AUTHOR D.W. PLATO

During the Qing Dynasty in 1801, pirates kidnapped Mógū from a floating brothel off the shore of Guangzhou. So began one of the most notorious adventurers to take on the waters of South China.

Mógū's rough start as a discarded daughter raised by nuns worsened after puberty when she was sold to work on a flower boat. Shrewd and determined to come out on top of each bad situation, Mógū prospers from a golden opportunity with the pirates who kidnap her. Quickly adapting to sword fighting and collecting riches, she shows Zheng Yi and Po Tsai more lucrative ways to live.

Over miles of open ocean, plundering Portuguese and British fleets, through love and loss, Mógū rises to each challenge with surprising grit. Negotiating amnesty for her band of outlaws, she seeks a place of her own for peace and happiness.

In her best book yet, Author **D.W. Plato** weaves an unforgettable tale of how one woman's strength leaves us inspired and thinking long after turning the last page.

'**The Dragon From Guangzhou**' is definitely one of the most enjoyable books you'd have read in a long time. If you're a historical fiction fan, we recommend you to have this book on your reading list. DW Plato's narrative and characters are what lifted this book out of the ordinary and into something special.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DW. PLATO is an award-winning author residing in central New Mexico. When she's not writing (or reading), she's travelling the world looking for new ideas for her novels. (when travelling was a thing... currently she's doing the stay home and wear your mask thing). Once travel restrictions are lifted, she's looking forward to a nice long vacation in Hamburg, Germany with her husband where their daughter resides.

Author D.W. Plato has four books available on Audible, iTunes, Amazon, Kindle or linked from her author website, www.dwplato.com (want autographed copies? just ask)



- The Sinners' Club (2016) A little romance, a little LGBT. Atheist boy meets LDS girl.
- Glue (2017) New Apple Book Awards Official Selection Winner'18 #betterthanfiftyshades (sex, drugs, and rock n roll! ADULT CONTENT-over 18!)
- Trials & Tribulations of Modesty Greene; A fictional book about Harriet Tubman's historical legacy (2018) New Apple Book Awards Official Selection Winner'18 plus Readers' Favorite Annual Writing Contest Bronze Winner in the audiobook category, 2019, and last but not least...
- The Dragon from Guangzhou (2021); the life and times of the notorious pirate Ching Shih (Plato's best work to date!)

VISIT AUTHOR D.W. PLATO OFFICIAL WEBSITE TO READ MORE FROM HER DESK, www.dwplato.com

Follow her on Instagram, [@dwplato](https://www.instagram.com/dwplato)

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR D.W. PLATO

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I've wanted to be an author my entire life, literally, as long as I can remember. Year after year, I put it off, destination procrastination, time restraints, self-doubt, etc. After a life-altering tragedy in January of 2015, I realized just how short life is. Death has a way of putting important things into perspective. It was that heartbreak that pushed me to pen my first novel, *The Sinners' Club*. I wrote it in seven months but then it was as if the flood gates were opened and couldn't be closed. It felt very great to hold my first novel. It was overwhelming.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

I'm not sure it does, LOL! Sometimes when I write I'm crabby and irritable, the marketing aspect makes me crazy and anxious but with any innate talent, practice makes perfect. Writing pushes me out of my humdrum life giving me a break from reality and the creative process makes me happy.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Rewards. Awards are based on a panel of judges of one sort or another, a small group of people. Rewards resemble karma to a degree, you get what you give.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

My writing is contemporary even though my subjects are mostly historical. That's fresh. Plus, I have a soft spot for life's underdogs, specifically women, women of color, and the LGBT community. There is a much-needed trend happening with these marginalized groups. It would be amazing if my stories could somehow benefit that movement.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

I get the majority of my novel ideas while traveling. When I get really inspired it's usually because I've come across a factual event that needs to be told. With each story I write, I feel there is a message for the reader, and being able to teach, or enlighten my audience is inspiring.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

There is no 'meaning'. What is the meaning of being an actor, an athlete, or an artist? Writing books makes my heart sing and everyone should do what they love to do whether it has meaning or not.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

In the writing world: "You can always edit a bad page, but you can't edit a blank page", Jodi Picoult. In my everyday life, my epitaph, the quote that will be on my headstone, "We'll figure it out."

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

Accomplished. As mentioned, I've wanted to write books forever and now I've started, I'm not going to stop. It's a feeling of achievement. How many people can say, "when I was a child I wanted to grow up and be a (fill in the blank)"? I can.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

That quality work is easy and free, it's not. To put out the best work possible, a writer needs a team; beta readers, editors, cover designers, narrators, etc. These things aren't cheap but necessary to produce a quality product. My best advice to anyone thinking they want to publish a book is to start by getting a good editor, two if you can afford it (it's the best money you can spend on your book). Also, a new author needs to define why they are writing in the first place. If it's about money, they may want to rethink where they're putting their resources.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

Original. I write for me, not necessarily the readers. The readers are the exquisite sounding board I get to continually practice my craft.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The research is my favorite part of the creation process! I've travelled to the other side of the world for research, interviewed people, read books on similar subjects, watched films, and of course, (my favorite resource) Google. My research doesn't end until the final draft is done. I've got no problem rewriting or adding something to a manuscript if I've discovered something new along the way.

Q: Do you have an up-and-coming book? What's it about?

I have a personal goal to write a book a year for the rest of my life, so the short answer is yes even though I don't know what those stories will be about, yet. Historical fiction is my favorite genre but I would love to dabble in other realms like romance, thrillers or sci-fi.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Wow! (is 'wow' a feeling?) I'm honoured, excited, and grateful. Although I don't have any grand expectations about being an author, this opportunity has left me feeling fortunate and proud of my work. The idea your readers will be introduced to my stories thrills me!



'THE SOVEREIGN'

BY AUTHOR XANDREA CASTALDI

"The Sovereign" is a thought-provoking novel that explores the future as it is predicted to be, not what one so altruistically expects. But in its technocracy, it leaves behind the humanity-extinguishing robots for the more profound. Bringing the reader into this high-tech dystopian atmosphere sees our colonization across the galaxy at the expense of diving deeper into ourselves and our own nature. Within the latter 21st Century, technology takes a hold of our society, our lives, our bodies. Do we become better as a human race or do we succumb to the nature of the beast within? Can we trust each other? Can we trust ourselves? Are we capable of survival in the future we dream about so adamantly? What does it take for us to survive? Are we willing to make the sacrifices it takes to make it?

After a century of endless wars to change the tides of economies across the globe, the North American Union is on the verge of civil war. With technology blended into the cellular makeup of life, Union President Maxwell Waterhouse plans to usher in the new century as the Head of the International Governance Council by any means necessary - and his citizens are on to him. Having raised up a ruthless military backing and groomed an iron-synthetic fist, he calls on his strength of intellectual will to capture the coveted IGC seat and all that comes with it, chopping down every roadblock - living or synthetic, foreign or domestic - in his path.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

X **ANDREA CASTALDI** is an independently published author of the science-fiction novel, "The Sovereign" released through Palmetto Publishing in Sept 2020. Originally from Kansas City, Missouri, she received her undergraduate studies in Motion Pictures, specializing in Screenwriting from the University of Miami and her Masters in English and Creative Writing at Southern New Hampshire University.

Born into a God-fearing family of educators, intellectuals, musicians, and hard workers, she credits her grandmother and aunt for planting the seeds of both education and a love of story and her parents for introducing her to music as a child. She began playing the drums in 3rd grade, writing tv scripts in 4th grade, and feature-length films in 9th grade. After completing her Masters' degree, she pursued teaching English at the secondary, undergraduate, and graduate levels. She followed her father's footsteps, a college seminary instructor, finding the most gratification at the graduate level. With the aid of teachings and writings of J. Gresham Machen, A. W. Tozer, Russell Moore, and David Platt taught a writing-intensive research course on Millennials in the 21st Century Church. From the time she started writing, she was heavily into historical fiction and nonfiction studying ancient Greek, Egyptian, and Nubian civilizations, and periods throughout American History.



She is currently working in the healthcare administration and can be reached on Instagram **@xandreacastaldi** or on her website at **www.xandreacastaldi.com**

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR XANDREA CASTALDI

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

I believe writing is the emotional conviction of passion, and the strength of it ebbs and flows over the course of a project. There are some stages where it wanes when I'm eager to write but no words come. But in the times where everything - ideas, words, and passion - align, it's a beautiful flow to be in.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

"Do it, what are you waiting on? The only person stopping you is you, and if you died today would you be happy with never having done it?"

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

It's a natural way for me to connect to what I believe I am good at and want to be better at. It's usually one or two things every person can do without needing to be paid to do, and for me, that's writing. I'm an imaginative person with a researcher's brain, so I get to tap into every personal strength when writing.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I do, but for me personally, intrinsic motivation and the things I get from the process are rewarding in themselves. It is a wonderful thing to receive recognition and accolades from peers and leaders in a particular field or industry, nor would I turn them down having rightfully earned them. However, my most valuable reward comes in the process of creating a captivating journey through words and having others go on and enjoy that journey.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

As a young black woman, I decided that my first published novel would be within the science fiction genre. That alone is a step toward further change in many literary circles, even though it's not a new concept by any means. I recently came across a post on social media that aimed to discredit black sci-fi authors on the sole basis of being black sci-fi authors and all I could do was smile. Not only am I a black woman, but many of my characters are also of different nationalities and backgrounds from across the world. My writing doesn't reflect my world, it reflects *the* world. Diversity in science fiction is not and should not be an exceptional concept. It should also not be a concept that writers of colour should be forced or expected to be the sole champions of.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a creator, the master of world-building, but also having an outlet for my creativity. I get satisfaction with many forms of creativity but writing is the outlet that's become the most personal to me. It provides a voice that I am incredibly selective about using.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

Like I'm just getting started. I've been writing for twenty years but am just now publishing my own books, so I'm learning more about the business side of authorship, which I didn't think I'd enjoy but I do. It feels like I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

There's nothing new under the sun, so I try to bring original ideas to similar tropes, but I overall stay original. There isn't much research that goes into what readers want because that can be a detriment to what I want to give. Every reader wants something different, and those that want what I have, take it. Those that don't, won't. And it's okay to not be "for" everybody.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

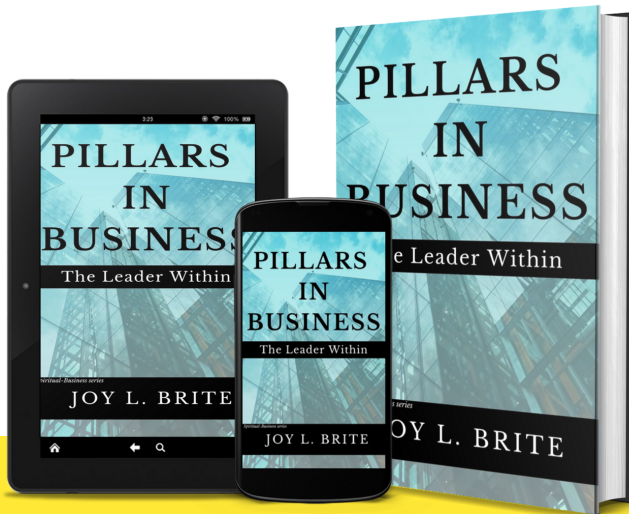
I don't think feeling emotions strongly is a disqualifier if someone wants to write. I think having a story or idea and not writing it is the only hindrance.

Q: What kind of research you do & how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Many times accidental research is what leads to a story idea, but once I start writing, I research according to where that story appears to be going. More research goes into the writing process as it's happening, not prior. I've written many stories where I'll research something and end up not using the scene I researched for, but will still use the information to enrich the world, character, or dialogue. So I blend it into the writing process. Once I finish the first draft and am set on how the story goes, I'll go back and research to fill in gaps, make more accurate certain styles, languages, mannerisms, settings, etc.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm honoured, humbled, and blessed to be featured with DE MODE. Any way provided for an author to thrive is a blessing, so I thank you very much for the amazing opportunity. I hope that readers enjoy reading "The Sovereign" as much as I enjoyed writing it.



'PILLARS IN BUSINESS'

THE LEADER WITHIN
(SPIRITUAL-BUSINESS SERIES 1)

BY AUTHOR JOY L. BRITE

A Life-changing book rendition inspired by true experiences. This short story will motivate and inspire you to see how spirituality intertwines in the business world. How you choose to lead your life or how you choose to ignore those opinions. Sharing with you how the seven deadly sins and seven virtues influence your life and how they can affect your achievement of becoming your true self. 'Pillars in Business: The Leader Within' brings inspiration and motivation to unlock your true potential. Learning to be self-aware and not live in fear to strive to be your true potential.

Pillars in Business: Productive Talking (Spiritual-Business series 2) A Life-changing book rendition inspired by true experiences. This short story will motivate and inspire you to see how spirituality intertwines in the business world. How you choose your words, tone, and actions. What choices will you make because of distractions or temptations? Having the choice to see the bigger picture and choose the path towards your bigger picture. What choices you will make because of distractions or temptations. Having the choice to see the bigger picture and choose the path toward your bigger picture. My 2nd book 'Pillars in Business: Productive Talking' is How do I speak with my words I choose and the actions I will take? The more purposeful you are with your words your actions will follow through. Will your actions follow your words?

available at  **BARNES & NOBLE** 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J OY L. BRITE has been writing for decades in just notebooks waiting for an opportunity that never came. So she decided to make her own opportunity for her dreams to come to life. In the writing journey, her 2nd-grade teacher was hugely influential. When Joy was 7, her second-grade teacher asked everyone to write a story. Later she told her that she enrolled her story in a state-wide writing contest. She was so adamant to make sure she knew that it is okay if she didn't win. Author Joy was okay with it. Few weeks passed. One day during recess, she came up to her and said, "Joy! You won!". The contest organizers held an award ceremony where she was awarded the first prize.



She remembers being so excited and having her pink dress on was adding more charm to the excitement. She was appreciated for her talents. It was an amazing day in Author Joy's life. Her teacher gave her such hope she shared with her that she could see her being a young author with a published book. At age 13, she thought of her first unofficial book but with money shortage and not knowing whom to talk to about becoming an author she put her dreams on the back burner.

Putting regular efforts, the day came when she can truly own her name and become **Joy**. She allowed herself to connect with the divine and the divine grace bestowal upon her to make a purposeful life. Then it became official and she started producing content of the knowledge she loves to share of spiritual and business sense. Now it is official!!! She is living the dream!

She is also an "Inspirational Coach" and can be reached on Instagram @pen2paperjoy or on her website at www.inspirebyjoy.com

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JOY L. BRITE

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The sense of knowing you have a purpose in life that you know you are not fulfilling.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing allows you to bring a voice to your words. When I read what I wrote it gives me a sense of accountability. To walk the talk. I call it the 'power of words.' Sometimes it starts with your words to bring a purpose in your life.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in both. Sometimes you are awarded in accomplishments in life and in life you are rewarded for those accomplishments.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

Exactly what I am already doing! Bringing my unique storytelling abilities to life.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

One of my favorite quote that kept me continue to grow is a quote that came to me. "How we choose our WORDS can turn into a SWORD whether intentionally or unintentionally. Words can cut deeply or words can empower. -Choose Wisely!"

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

My writing is my passion with my words carrying the emotion.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

I love it as you write with the power of words you begin to heal from your own story.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I feel Wonderful! To be able to express stories that inspires and leave my legacy behind.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Procastation, denial, fear, and self-doubt.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to reader what they want?

I try to be original. I have the need to break the mold.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

Yes, I do! I am working on my third book for the

Spiritua-Business series: Pillars in Business. It is about how we all sign up to play a part and how we are all playing that part. Finding a way out of pitying oneself.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

So when it comes to writing for me I first get all the raw ideas written down. Especially if I have this nagging feeling of needing to get the information out. Then I spend the time to research to help get a clear understanding or some advice that will help organize myself for the specific piece I'm writing about. I don't calculate the time how long I do my research. I look at the information I am searching for until it gives me the answers I am looking for.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Amazing! Like I am on Cloud 9 ready to take flight and fly! I am honoured and grateful to have this opportunity. Thank you for the chance. I have been through a lot. Really wanted to see my work getting published in a magazine.

BOOK REVIEWS

Awesome read! This is actually the third time that I've read this particular book, and I'm sure that I will read it again in the future. This book has reminded me of some of the most basic principles of influence that I may have forgotten. Because of the new context, I bring to this reading of the book, I have also seen some new insights that will help me.

This is Joy's first book, it's all the best information put into the most simple, straightforward manner, put very clearly. I'm really glad I read this. It had a number of things I want to go back to. Much of it is very obvious, but she has pointed to reflect on and develop, too, so very useful.

I loved reading this book. It is easy to understand, straight to the point, and summarized well with her recommendations. A very good book on becoming a better me. I had the honour of reading this and then doing a discussion with 8 of my friends.

~ RM, Reviewed in the United States



'LOST UNIVERSE: THE PROPHECY'

BY AUTHOR KEITH BRANDON

Lost Universe was born in 2018 after long years of experience in life and watching countless hours of Star Wars and Star Trek. Telling stories of fantastic worlds set in the future or in the mystical past, was something I always enjoyed and it was the best way to express myself. Aliens and especially the greys were the focus of my imagination and I knew I had a story in me about them. So let me give you a little description of the story right here.

Sixteen adventurers depart from Earth on a mission to find the end of the universe. They never considered whether the end of the universe wished to be found...or even whether it should be...Gaining acceptance into the Galactic Alliance is not an easy task, but it turns out that it is the aliens who need the help of humanity this time, and that is why they have been welcomed with open arms. From the moment the humans arrive, the adventures begin, especially now that they have been placed on the endangered species list. Kidnapping, cloning, and now even the galactic mafia have become part of the game. Why has the galaxy been shaken up by our arrival? It turns out that there is a prophecy about an ancient place called the "Home", but there are growing questions as to whether this place does actually exist.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KEITH BRANDON was born in Hungary in 1980 and did most of his schooling there before he decided to take on the world and start his adventures. He spent some time in Copenhagen, mostly learning English.

After spending a year or two in this inspiring environment he returned home and decided to work on ocean cruises in the Bahamas and Caribbean as a waiter, which was really a lot of fun and hard work. During this time he began working on his ideas and after four years of cruising settled in England and began writing the stories. His interest was always in the stars or far away lands and mysterious places.



In this big genre, he guesses Lost Universe could be compared less to Asimov's Foundation or Herbert's Dune. His greatest inspiration came from them and the Sword of the Truth series by the late Terry Goodkind. Dealing with the real staff of life, the very things that we face in our societies now in these days, but what if that would happen in thousands of years in the future or in a place where there is magic? Competing with these giants is almost impossible but one has to raise the standards and should try to walk in their footsteps with original ideas that would appeal to a new generation of readers and older ones too. So he tries his best to create a fun and enjoyable series of stories that will entertain anyone who reads it.

VISIT AUTHOR KEITH BRANDON OFFICIAL IG TO READ MORE FROM HIS DESK, [@zmdoriat](#)

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR KEITH BRANDON

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Yes, of course. But emotions have to be understood well as you have to be able to tell your readers how your characters feel or why they think as they do.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

Since I was a huge fan and a believer in extraterrestrials I needed to create my own story which does not portray the aliens as invaders.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing a story brings out my talent not my best. I can think about my book as the best but others may not share that. Poets, sculptors, and other artists may feel the same way. It is a creation and a way to express your talent.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Yes, I do. Awards are a reflection of a story, which should encourage other authors to seek to compete with one another to write quality stories.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

To write original stories. Writing the 'same' is easy.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

'Your life is yours alone. Rise up and live it!'
~ Terry Goodkind

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

It inspires me the way that I can express myself and tell what I want to say about the universe.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I think it is an honor. I've been blessed to tell stories and create worlds. I believe many artists and talented people feel the same way.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The big traps that I have fallen into myself too, is impatience, rushing to get the book out as soon as possible. And believing that being an author is a competition with other writers. And if your work does not get to the top immediately or made into a film right away then all is lost and there is no hope. Though it may sound funny in many cases, that is reality. Be patient. It is not easy but the wheels of fate will turn in your way if you work hard at it.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I do my best to be original but at the same time, you have to understand what the market demands. Obviously, there is no point to write 'another' Harry Potter or a new 'Picard' show with some different twists, hoping it will sell. G R R Martin understood this well. He was original, still able to appeal to fantasy fans who love dragons and dwarfs and so on.

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion and emotion at the same time. It is an awesome feeling to create a story and build up a world and characters and reveal the secrets of the universe.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

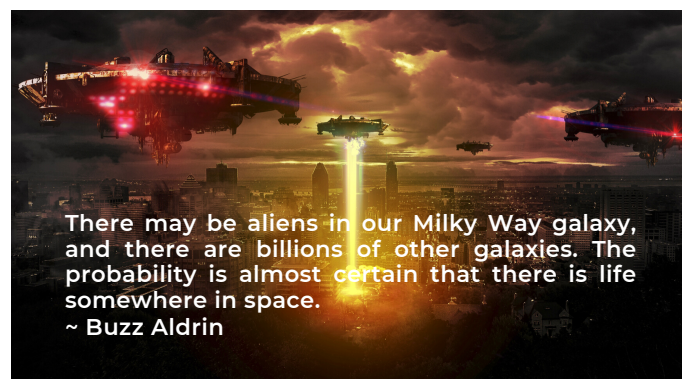
Depends on the story. In sci-fi, I don't really write deeply scientific stories, but research places and names or available tabloid stories about aliens or possible theories about the universe, and then I make my conclusion and turn it into a great story and fiction.

Q: Do you have an upcoming book? What is it about?

I have 2 upcoming books. One is a vampire story coming out shortly and the sequel to Lost Universe a bit later this year.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It's an honour and I feel grateful to have the chance to introduce myself to a broader world of readers. Thank you to the team of DE MODE!





'THE ABC's of LOVE'

BY AUTHOR TAYLOR S NORMAN

A pocketful of modern-day scriptures and affirmations for a new generation that loves, and lives simply with the knowledge that love faith and the power of hope are what grounds the ancestral roots of our being, our souls, and makes us complete.

This is a little book with a big message, and whether you choose it for yourself or gift it with love to another, each line will touch your heart with its delightful truth and profound words. As an advocate for love, and as an author who loves deeply, it is Author Taylor's intent that through her words she will help guide those who are seeking a loving well-balanced relationship.

Author Taylor believes wholeheartedly that if you are open enough to see there are certain intrinsic criteria's, unique dynamics required in the achievement of a successful, good, and loving relationship and her hope is that her little "Bible" of love, with its big message, touches the hearts of those who seek the joy of what love can be.

She used the analogy of the alphabet because from A to Z our relationships can be intensely profound, and yet incredibly life-giving, and beautiful. Each letter written in prose takes on a meaning that means something special to her. And she hopes now to you. Are you ready for your ABC's? Get your copy today.

available at
amazon kindle

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TAYLOR S. NORMAN is a vegan feminist and active supporter of the LGBTQ community, together with being a supreme advocate of love and light, who is working towards achieving equality, and acceptance, and recognition for everyone. Her chief work is in the purpose and belief that through her writing she will be able to help others Rise.

Taylor is a vibrant native New Yorker and a well-seasoned traveller of life. In this "The ABC's of Love" her second published book, she explores the realms of achieving a well-balanced relationship with the affirmation of poetry in keywords. She is also the proud author of her debut novella "The Lesbian Whisperer" which is also for sale on Amazon.com in paperback and eBook formats, in which she explores the deep and intimate love shared between two women.



She also has published "The Circle", "I Recognize You", and same-sex wedding vows in form of poems in various journals. Taylor's very own story, and her personal journey of self-discovery, together with the realization and knowingness of who she really is, something she willingly shares in the hope that her wealth of knowledge and experience will help others on their own personal journey of acceptance of self and others to live a limitless, happy and fulfilled life.

To each and every beautiful souls that read her words, she is being thankful.

VISIT AUTHOR TAYLOR S. NORMAN OFFICIAL IG TO READ MORE FROM HER DESK, @taylorsnorman

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR TAYLOR S. NORMAN

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion. I am sure that everyone was born with some special talents and abilities. These can be writing, singing, acting, dancing, and so on. Every person has an opportunity to follow his or her own way and achieve great success.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I wrote my first book □ for the LGBTQ community and women coming out!

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

My soul is filled when I write. I am grateful for every precious moment my writing journey offers me. It allows me to see the miracle in each experience.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Rewards grateful to write. The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more. Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe. The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

By writing my heart and being authentic. Authenticity is everything! The keys to brand success are self-definition, transparency, authenticity and accountability. Details matter. That inner voice has both gentleness and clarity. Truth is a point of view, but authenticity can't be faked.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

'In order to write about life first you must live it'
~ By Ernest Hemingway

Q: How do you feel being an author?

It means being vulnerable to others. For me, being vulnerable means sharing your own feelings openly, bravely, but also having the guts to allow the other person to go at their own pace, even if you are anxious for them to move quicker. It means being patient, trusting, allowing the other their own experience.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

I love being an author. I love the challenge of bringing a book to life, of creating something from nothing other than my thoughts. I love getting a more organized mind, the diverse creativity that

writing brings out in me, the constant learning, and most especially, the camaraderie.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Don't focus on it being perfect. Trying to be perfect is something a lot of people have tried, but none have succeeded. It's impossible to be perfect, no matter how hard you try. What typically happens is someone pushes themselves so hard because they want to be good at writing, that eventually it turns into more of an obsession with being flawless. You're aiming to be perfect without even realizing it.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write original works from my life experiences. Readers want something that's real. They want to live in your book. They want to become your characters and feel every joy & heartache right along with them. They want to see, smell, hear, feel taste. It's one thing to create a story. But if you're using your life, your experiences, and your personality, then you have all the material before you even start.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Anyone can write, you do need some depth. Let pieces of your life interweave themselves into your book, along with completely made-up parts. It's a more flexible option than writing your life story. You can edit out the parts you don't like and add plot twists you think would make it better. It keeps that realistic feeling.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I don't research subjects.

Q: Do you have an upcoming book? What is it about?

My upcoming book is 'Awaken Me' sequel to The Lesbian Whisperer in my trilogy.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Thank you so much for the opportunity. I am honoured and thrilled to be featured in your beautiful magazine, DE MODE.



'HIGH PRIESTESS'

BY AUTHOR EFFIE M. KALAITZIDIS

The book is centred around Author Effie's spiritual awakening with moments of revelation & magic. The poems were written on aeroplanes, in passenger seats, on a friend's couch & in the middle of late-night hauntings.

'High Priestess' is a brief but meaningful chapter in Kalaitzidis's life that was the catalyst to align her with divine purpose. Sometimes someone comes into your life for a season & changes it forever. The majority of the book is about falling in love with what someone is mirroring back to you - the light & the dark & that letters you write to the moon will come true. Priestess starts out with a section of prose titled "Quarantine Tarot Reading" that gives the reader a look into what a typical lockdown afternoon was like for Kalaitzidis - trying to communicate with the ghost in her friend's apartment while reading tarot & doing ritual. The poems in the book tell the story through angel numbers & tarot cards, of how Kalaitzidis started opening up to the way the universe was speaking to her through signs & symbols. This is something most readers will be able to relate to like seeing 11:11 on the clock or finding a feather outside to let you know you're not alone.

'High Priestess' felt like the perfect title for Kalaitzidis as she now works as a psychic tarot reader, but also because the whole time she was writing the book she was completely unaware that she would publish it someday. While writing over the course of the year that changed her life exponentially, she had an inner sense that there was a reason for it & that it would make a lot of sense one day.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EFFIE M. KALAITZIDIS is an intuitive tarot reader & poet living in Chicago, Illinois. Before COVID-19, she worked as a professional makeup artist writing poetry in her notes app in her spare time. The effects of the pandemic resulted in her losing her job. Instead of taking this as a step back, she used it as an opportunity to heal & deepen her spirituality. One day she decided to start sharing her tarot messages on Tik Tok & went viral overnight with one of her videos reaching 2M+ views. This resulted in her starting her own tarot reading business. The messaging in her reading advocates for others to share their unique talents & creative expressions. As a leader & wanting to set a good example - she decided it was time to publish her first poetry book.

The response was overwhelmingly positive & created a stronger sense of community amongst her followers. Effie has a passion for the arts in all regards & is often quoted saying things such as "be art" or "life is art" - reminding others & herself constantly that we are all ethereal beings here to enjoy this human experience for what it is, no need to make it stressful - "we get to co-create our realities it might as well look how we want it to." It wasn't always this way - before the pandemic, while working as a makeup artist, Effie was constantly burning herself out at both ends, living a life of routine, sleeping on a friend's couch & feeling trapped & uninspired.



Follow Author Effie on Instagram, @effiekala

By freeing her mind of self-limiting blocks & opening up to her spiritual gifts she was able to unlock a completely new direction for herself. Although it wasn't easy & there were a lot of things to be sacrificed, friends & connections lost, things that had to change, it was worth it in the end. Kalaitzidis hopes her story can inspire other artists or creatives who are feeling trapped to work on their blocks to experience the type of freedom she has been able to create for herself.

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR EFFIE M. KALAITZIDIS

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

While I am very passionate about writing, most of my poetry & inspiration comes from emotion. I'm a Cancer sun & moon meaning I'm highly sensitive & empathetic, I feel EVERYTHING & it took a while to learn to not let my emotions consume me, but rather that I should transmute that energy into art & self-expression.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I remember one morning in August. I had been workshoping a collection of poems for a couple of months & I had this feeling like I needed to just do something with it. It was honestly very out of the blue & pretty impulsive. A lot of the poems in the collection were for somebody that I no longer had a connection to - the love was unrequited & it almost felt like a complete waste. I knew I couldn't think of it that way I needed to alchemize the situation & grow from it. The story from beginning to middle really inspired me & it didn't even have an ending yet.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in rewards - awards are physical & mean nothing to someone like me. It is more rewarding for someone to tell me that my poetry inspired them to pick the pen back up again than for me to get some sort of award or acclamation for the work that I've done. I don't do it for validation. I do it to inspire.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing brings out the best in me because it is how I best express myself creatively. It's something that's always come really naturally to me & when I share my poetry with others I feel like I am being my most authentic & true self. Being authentic & sharing my inner world is how I share my light with others. It's truly magic because writing the poem is healing for me & reading the poem is healing for the person on the other end of it. It's important to share the things you're naturally gifted at - these are usually passed on through different lifetimes & they may have to do with your soul's purpose for reincarnating. I have an artist's soul.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

I plan on bringing change to the literature world by continuing to share my poetry - I feel as if poetry was slowly being forgotten. With the effects of the global pandemic & more people waking up to remembering that life is about more than the 9-5 job & the money etc, I can sense people will start being creative again even if it's just for themselves. I want to be an example of there being another way. While the effects of COVID-19 were damaging for some - it was a necessary upheaval for others - I think there will be a huge way of new art that

comes from this change. I'm excited to be a part of that revival.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

Writing inspires me the most when it comes out of nowhere. In the middle of the mundane that random burst of creativity that I can channel into something that just works & flows. I think that moments like those are super powerful. The process of writing when an idea strikes like that is sometimes more moving for the poet than the actual poem.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer is defined to me as someone who can notice the small details of the world around them & exaggerate & romanticize its meaning into something anyone else can relate to. There doesn't have to be any other meaning other than being an observer. Writing is a detailed recording of the way you are experiencing your reality.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I definitely try to be as original as possible but there have to be some elements that are for the reader, that's why I like to use angel numbers or tarot cards as poem titles. Maybe the numbers mean something specific to me & the poem's story but it can mean something entirely different for the reader but that's what gives it meaning to them.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The research that I do for writing comes from the daily information that I gather in my spiritual discoveries as well. My writing is heavily influenced by symbols & signs from the universe so I am often journaling the meanings to different number combinations or street names or the type of butterfly I see on a walk. Poetry is in the small details of things. Sometimes you can find a deeper meaning to a poem by researching the smaller details a little further, it's like finding a hidden gem. I like to add those elements to my writing. Since my writing is very personal I think adding those universal codes for people to find help invites people into the story & gives them a way to make it their own.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DEMODE?

I am extremely excited to be featured in DEMODE! Opportunities like these are something I used to dream about coming by, I've always wanted to share my story & I am very grateful for the opportunity to do it on this scale. DEMODE is a magazine for entrepreneurs, lovers of art, literature fashion & I couldn't think of a better fit.



'A SWIPE IN THE WRONG DIRECTION'

BY AUTHOR CARLOS HARLEAUX

Mike has locked his heart for love. After a recent broken engagement and friend-zone placement from Cookie, the only woman he genuinely loves, Mike decides to give up on long-term relationships. His two best friends, Ben and Tavin, take him to Las Vegas to celebrate his 35th birthday and shake up his luck with the ladies.

However, Mike is unsuspecting about his best friends' plot to secretly set him up on a dating app. Initially against the idea, Mike quickly falls head over heels for a woman he meets in the app. There is only one problem. She is more exciting than he realizes...and she may cost him his life.

Is his new fling a ticking time bomb waiting to happen? Swipe left or swipe right? Choose wisely. Your next swipe may be your last.

"Candy? Hey, you finally answered. I have been trying to get in contact with you for a while. Um, how have you been?" Mike asked.

"The hostility doesn't let up. I'm better. How are you? I'm sorry for being MIA. I had to take some time to get myself together. I was headed down a bad road," Cookie explained. Despite a few touch-and-go check-ins, Cookie had not had an in-depth conversation with Mike in nearly a year.

What happens next? Read the full conversation in "A SWIPE IN THE WRONG DIRECTION". Get your copy now.

available at
amazon **BARNES & NOBLE**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CARLOS HARLEAUX is a poet, author of eight poetry books and five novels, and a publisher (**CEO of 7th Sign Publishing**). 2021 marks 10 years since the release of his first book, a poetry collection called *Blurred Vision*. His latest books include a chilling novella about online dating called *A Swipe in the*

Wrong Direction and a 10-year celebratory poetry collection about life observations in 2020, called *Cataracts*. Although poetry is his first love when it comes to literature, he has also enjoyed writing novels within the last few years. Carlos launched his publishing company, 7th Sign Publishing, to help other indie authors release their literary works. Since its launch in 2013, 7th Sign Publishing has published over 10 books for other authors and assisted many other authors.

If there were one word to describe his writing style, it would be relevant. Whether it's poetry or fiction, he keeps the reader's perspective in mind. The beauty of it all is many people have experienced many of the same issues either he has experienced or others around him have experienced. In addition to writing, he enjoys blogging about music, food & beverages, and life lessons. He is also one of the founding members of the '**Brown Liquor & Cigars**' podcast, which is a weekly group discussion that tackles relationships, life and social issues from a male viewpoint.



Carlos believes in always moving forward and pushing himself to new heights. He is taking a break from releasing a new book in 2021, but is coming up with an audiobook, "**Eleven: Things We Never Said**", an introspective poetry book about love gone wrong, which was originally released in paperback in 2019.

Read his interview with DE MODE on the next page and follow Author Carlos Harleaux on Instagram to read more from his desk, **@peauxetic**

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR CARLOS HARLEAUX

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I self-published my first book, *Blurred Vision*, and did a lot of research on my own for about two years before I started the process. I kept making excuses for myself, mainly from fear. Money was my last excuse. A few months before I released *Blurred Vision*, I received a bonus from work that was almost exactly what I needed to publish my book. So, that eliminated my last excuse.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing helps me organize my thoughts and, more importantly, it allows me to purge a lot of feelings. Overall, it's a wonderful way for me to express my creativity.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Awards and rewards are wonderful. I think everyone loves to be recognized to a certain extent. However, I don't think anyone should chase awards because they all boil down to someone else's opinion of your work. I believe people go wrong when they create with the intention of recognition. That just stifles the true creative process. The audience can usually tell the difference as well.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

My goal is to write material that is not only thought-provoking but also inspires people to make a positive change. Also, I like to try things that haven't been done before or add a new twist. For example, one of the deciding factors for me to release my poetry book, *Eleven: Things We Never Said*, was the fact that there weren't many books that dealt with divorce specifically in a poetic style, from a male perspective.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

I have so many. That's a hard one. The first one that comes to mind is from the late Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

For me, writing is taking experiences, thoughts, and observations from everyday life and making art from those moments. A great writer grabs you and pulls you into the experience with them.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I absolutely love being an author. I may be a little biased but I think it's one of the greatest professions. Writing allows you to explore various personas, places, and events that transcend time.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The main traps I hear from aspiring writers are not knowing where to start, being too critical of themselves, and not having a clear vision. I believe those three things are so important. Many aspiring writers get stuck in their thoughts, which blocks them from the very thing they should be doing: writing. Just write. Sometimes, you just have to write and forget about trying to make every word and sentence perfect in the moment.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

Sometimes it's a hard line to tow because as a writer, you do want readers to connect with your work. However, I think originality always wins. Don't try to be the next Stephen King, J.K. Rowling, or Shonda Rhimes. Just be you. People can sense authenticity and I think that is only recognized through originality.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Most definitely. I know several writers who are what many people would label "emotionally detached" in real life. However, they tend to let their writing show emotions. That's not my path as a writer, but I think it's possible.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The research typically depends on the book. For my latest book, *A Swipe in the Wrong Direction*, I researched information about online dating site trends and feelings towards it from people who have used it. According to some data I found, the busiest day for online dating profile activations is the first Sunday after the new year. That's why I decided to release the book on Sunday, January 3, 2021.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

Yes, I do. I'm working on a novel called *Trigger Pointe*. At first glance, "Pointe" appears to be misspelled, but it's a double entendre because the main character's last name is Pointe. The book details several triggers that ultimately lead him to turn towards an illegal means of making money to survive. I've been writing that book for a little over a year now and I plan to release it sometime in 2022.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am very excited to have my book "*A Swipe in the Wrong Direction*" featured in DE MODE. This is a wonderful opportunity and I'm grateful for the exposure with such a respected global brand.



'FACADE'

BY AUTHOR MELODY SALEH

The Unbroken Series follows four women in South Florida as they tackle a myriad of personal problems and romantic entanglements. Regardless of what personal tragedy or challenge each woman faces, the bond is unbreakable.

Frustrated by recurring but unsatisfying erotic dreams, Amber sets out to seduce a sexy attorney. However, their attempt at a relationship suffers numerous setbacks. Newly pregnant Debra tries to rebuild her life in the wake of tragedy and finds herself torn between two potential love interests. Up-and-coming, fashion designer and single mother, Zya, struggles with what she thought she knew about love while her daughter is the victim of a hate crime. Aspiring model Dominique wants to get her life back on track after a health scare, but changing her wild ways overnight proves to be more challenging than she thought. Eventually, events spiral out of control for everyone as at least one life is left hanging in the balance.

Get comfortable and forget your bookmark as you find out if fantasy is better than reality in Book 1 of the complete, fast-paced Unbroken Series.

This is the first book in 'Unbroken Series' trilogy, and readers should not expect many resolutions or answers. In fact, the fates and lives of some characters are left in the balance, and the novel ends on a cliffhanger. We recommend this book to women who like stories about female friendship and who also enjoy books that focus on romantic relationships. Author Melody was inspired by 'Sex and the City' and 'Fifty Shades' TV show. If you liked that show, you will most likely enjoy this book. **Get your copy now.**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MELODY SALEH is the author of the book **Facade** (Book 1 of the Unbroken Series) and a **cancer survivor**. The biggest defining moment of her life was being diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer at thirty-five. She was a single mother at the time; her daughter has just turned fifteen. She wasn't afraid for herself, she was scared for her daughter. The range of emotions during that time, Melody wouldn't wish on anyone. Would she see her graduate high school? Would she be the mother-of-the-bride, or hold her grandchildren in her arms? The fear was overwhelming at times. But that experience has helped her become who she is today. And for that, she wouldn't change a thing. Birthdays are for celebrating—it's a gift of another year of life. Things she used to take for granted, she doesn't anymore. Just three months after celebrating her tenth cancer-free anniversary, she was diagnosed again—second cancer in the other breast. Luckily for her, it was a new primary, not a recurrence. Yes, she used the word lucky and cancer in the same sentence. Her treatment option this time was a no-brainer... double-mastectomy and she'd have bigger, perkier ones—her silver lining.



Melody met her Prince Charming in Jan 2000. When they married in 2001, she was suddenly allowed to become more involved with her community. Helping others was always a passion of hers; now she could truly make a difference. She became involved with her local animal shelter, wildlife sanctuary, Women in Distress, the American Cancer Society, and Habitat for Humanity. Her days were filled with giving of herself to help others less fortunate. She began writing her first novel in 1994. Her new book released on March 30 of this year, is a suspense thriller, **The Job**.

Read more from her desk on www.melodysaleh.com or follow her on Instagram, [@melodysaleh_author](https://www.instagram.com/melodysaleh_author).

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR MELODY SALEH

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

I feel it's the other way around; I'm inspired to write. Everyday occurrences spark new plots for future work. I could be anywhere, and the what-ifs begin to unfold. My mind has always worked that way...looking for alternate endings in different situations.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

A dream I had after reading an Anne Rice (writing as A.N. Roquelaure) novel. It's the first part of Chapter One in *Facade*. It was so vivid, I had to write it. After letting a few close friends read it, they had to know what happens next. I wanted to know as well.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Give me a quote from a bestseller author regarding my book over an award any day. I guess that would be a reward. I also love to hear from a reader who stayed up all night to read my book...they couldn't put it down. Knowing they escaped in my words is so satisfying.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

By breaking the rules. My *Unbroken* series breaks lots of rules. Is it romance? Suspense? Women's fiction? It's all the above—and more. I write about real life. People don't always get their happily ever after. When one door closes, another one usually opens, and for the better.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many you can get through, but rather, how many get through to you." ~ Mortimer J. Adler

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Passion—although I write with lots of emotion. My current, or the next story, is always floating through my mind. I'm constantly writing even when I'm not in front of my computer. I admit I get frustrated when other responsibilities keep me from it. The middle of the night seems to be the time my mind is most active.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

To get my stories out for the world to read, and I have so many of them. I come up with at least ten great story ideas while writing one. I'll never catch up. Knowing readers around the globe are enjoying my words defines me as a writer.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

Very proud. That sense of accomplishment to publish my work for others to enjoy.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Well-meaning friends and family who offer to edit your book are a significant step before you hire a professional. English teachers/ professors may have

command of the language, but they don't know the nuances of dialogue and fiction writing. I made that mistake — don't do it.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

A movie projector plays in my mind when I write. I feel like I'm more of a stenographer than a writer, typing as fast as possible to keep up. I go where the story takes me—I can't force it.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Fiction...probably not very well. You can't write a thriller or mystery if you can't express fear. Or a romance novel without explaining the internal body reactions and sensations when someone you love is nearby. Non-fiction, absolutely. Facts and figures don't require emotion.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I typically research as I write. Thank you, Google! I'm what you call a pantser; I write by the seat of my pants. I needed medical facts to learn for my latest book and what would burn hotter and faster when water is used to extinguish it—fun stuff like that.

Q: Do you have an upcoming book? What is it about?

The Job, a suspense thriller, released March 30. A killer with ethics—retired because one was broken. Called back for one last job. This time, it's personal. Destroy the mark and take away everything he loves. When the target's wife is racing the clock to release a groundbreaking cancer treatment to save millions of lives, can Sam fulfill the contract?

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It's an excellent opportunity to showcase my work. There are millions of books available for avid readers to choose from. This exposure provides me with a different avenue of being discovered. Thank you team DE MODE.

FACADE EDITORIAL REVIEW:

"One of the book's greatest strengths is the women's unwavering friendship as they encourage and support one another. Readers who settle in with a bucket of popcorn will enjoy watching these four women careen from one mishap to the next, always helping one another bounce back and pursue their chances for happiness." ~ Booklife



'A SECRET SERVICE'
BY AUTHOR JOY JENKINS

Carter Owens, daughter of a Secret Service agent, is trained to disassemble any weapon, any situation & anyone. Her biting sarcasm and razor-sharp mind make her impossible to beat in a word fight and when talking doesn't work, she uses her fists. She attends Hamilton Prep, Washington D.C.'s most prestigious high school, where everyone is related to someone in power, except her.

When Hamilton Prep receives a flood of new students, Carter's role as social outcast changes when she makes two unexpected friends. Friends who are hiding a secret. As Carter uncovers the truth, she confronts challenges she is unequipped to handle and finds herself in a dangerous situation.

For a girl trained to see everything, Carter never saw this coming.

The book **"A SECRET SERVICE"** revolves around Carter and her two new friends at high school, the challenges they face in their day to day life and how they overcome them. The writing style and quality of Author Joy Jenkins are very much commendable and reading her book will make you a fan of her writing. Coming into the characters, you'll fall in love with the characters, they are so well developed. When it comes to female characters, you can expect their strong presence in the storyline. Being the protagonist of this book, Carter is such a dynamic character to read about. **Get your copy now.**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J OY JENKINS came late to the reading game, due to vision problems. She holds a strong love for Young Adult since it's where her love of reading began. Now she writes Young Adult hoping to inspire the next generation. When she isn't creating in her little writing studio outside of Boston, Joy can be found buried in a book or discussing literature and drinking tea with her family of artists.



BOOK REVIEWS

'All the perfect elements in this book meant I couldn't put it down! I was lost in the world of 'A Secret Service', my mind consumed by Joy's words. I would recommend this book for anyone looking to beat a reading slump they've been stuck in to help them jump back into just how incredible books can be. 'A Secret Service' was a truly enjoyable read and I quickly labelled it as a favourite, wishing to return to the world of the Secret Service and Hamilton Prep many times again.' ~ **Emily Khan.**

'So so so good! I can read this book over and over and never get tired of it! The characters are amazing and the story is brilliant. I suggest this book to anyone.' ~ **Matthew D.**

Loved this!!
Read it when it was free multiple times but still couldn't wait to read it again. Once you pick it up you won't set it down until it's finished. Start 2021 off right with this book! ~ **Emily Gleeson.**

Read more from her desk on www.joyjenkins.com and follow her on Instagram, [@joymoment](https://www.instagram.com/joymoment)

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JOY JENKINS

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion. Very rarely do I ever come away from writing where I don't feel happier than when I first began.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

Strangely enough, the thing that sparked my first book was a street name: 'Colfax'. Something about seeing that name set off an idea in my brain, so I pulled out my phone and dashed off a quick scene snippet to my sister and the rest is history.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing turns me into a problem solver. When I hit a bump in my novel I have to sit back and reevaluate the situation. It also teaches me to trust my imagination, knowing that I will find the answer.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in the thought that doing what you are passionate about and what you were born to do is its own reward.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

I want to write strong female characters that inspire the next generation.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

Pare down. Make it matter. Expand the boundaries. Up the stakes. ~ Tennessee Williams

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

I'm inspired when a character faces the hardest of times and we see that they can make it through.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

It means putting to use the gifts that God has given me.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

It's the best job in the world. I could be called a workaholic except my work is so enjoyable!

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Editing while they are trying to write. When they do that, all creativity stops and they often find themselves unable to complete their work. Solution: complete the book, then edit it.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I always try to be original, I want to surprise my readers. I want them to hate and love the twists I pull on them. I want my books to feel like a breath of fresh air.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Possibly, but I believe it makes writing harder. In good fiction everything is three times bigger, so for a writer to reach that level they will really have to strive.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

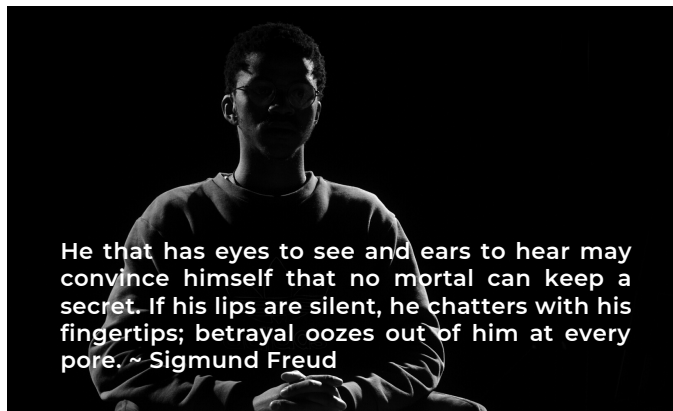
It depends on the book. For A Secret Service, I would say I have been doing research for this book, all my life since I grew up in love with action movies. On top of that, I did research the Secret Service and how it worked. I try not to overdo it on research because I never want to get too caught up in the facts that I lose the story.

Q: Do you have an upcoming book? What is it about?

I'm always writing, I have a lot of projects completed, one book in process, and three ideas I'm flushing out. What the next book to be published will be, that I'm not sure about. But follow me on Instagram (Joymoment) and you'll be the first to find out!

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Pretty fantastic. I'm an indie author and the fact that I'm featured in a magazine is wonderful!



He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore. ~ Sigmund Freud

FASHION

WEEK

SUMMARIES '21

BY MICHAEL FOUST, PHOTO-JOURNALIST, DE MODE (PARIS, FRANCE)



PHOTO: KidSuper Press Release ©2021

This Fashion Week Season for FW2021 was wonderful for many different designers and pushing creativity as we are all experiencing these restrictions internationally. As we look forward to this coming Spring and Fall, designers are upbeat and hopeful for us as a planet recovering as one. Trends such as prints, neutral and almost pastel colours adorned the season. Sustainability, local artesian focuses, crisp detailing, and contemporary with hints of classical designs evolved further.

A mix of both Homme and Femme were also prominent showing that designers are now combining in order to reduce consumption and waste. International fashion has united not just in Paris, but in New York, Milan, and Shanghai Fashion Weeks.

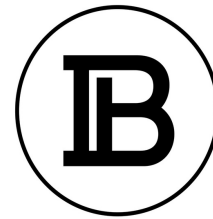
Visuals from both film, lookbook's, and editorials were presented as virtual coverage continued due to travel restrictions and variations in restrictions. Up and coming designers to more established fashion houses made the SS2021 and FW2021 season incredible to watch and to be involved in.

Catwalk shows are typically the headliner, this time around the first column was primarily supplanted by the rocker as brands either live-streamed their far off catwalk shows or broadcasted creative short films to exhibit their collection. Paris Fashion Week AW21 womenswear report, featuring Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior, Loewe, Hermes, Rick Owens and Issey Miyake.

Explore the extremely ravishing collection from the fall/winter 2021 and spring-summer 2021 wardrobe of famous brands.



Balmain for the Femme FW2021 collection had glimpses of travel, flight, spaceflight, modern textiles, and the profiles of the couture were perfect in every way. Bright colours and earthy hues, the shimmering fabrics, and the aviator look graced the designs. There is only one way forward from this time; looking into a bright future with enthusiasm and hope for we all in this together, and Balmain with Olivier Rousteing at the leading edge is pioneering this elegantly.

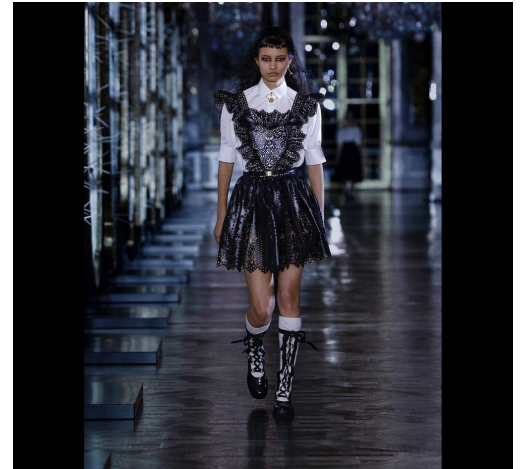


BALMAIN

PARIS

FALL/WINTER 21-22 COLLECTION

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“

Maria Grazia Chiuri has continued to create magical designs for **Christian Dior** with creative insight she has brought a nice balance of what it is to be female at its essence and merged it with the vision of Christian Dior past and present. The classical lines of the golden age of flying with Amelia Earhart, a woman pioneer in the field, was present in some of the styles which was a fine touch. A school like styles, warm and cosy outerwear, and defined strong and purposeful outfits, also graced the collection. The prints, colours and lighter than air materials in the designs fly effortlessly across the floor as the models walked.

”

Dior
FALL/WINTER 21-22 COLLECTION

PHOTO: Christian Dior Press Release © 2021



KidSuper Studios

a real company built on unreal ideas.

*Colm Dillane's FW2021 collection for his brand **KidSuper Studios**, carries the NYC attitude, approach, and also a modern perspective in fashion sustainability. Using the inspiration around him, and a bit of a retro feel; his compositions are unique and styled with original upcycling. The colours are bright and motivated by the NYC demeanour and climate that attracts international attention and love.*





PHOTO: MOSSI Press Release ©2021

Another local Parisienne designer, **Mossi**, presented his FW2021 collection rebirthing his brand. The harmonious details of his own contemporary canvas had an elegant placement on the styles. Bright and expressive colours he used both as accents and for the overall garments, created agility to the textiles.



KRISTINA FIDELSKAYA

The organic, modern, and graceful lines of the collection from **Kristina Fidelskaya** was absolutely perfected. The western looks, along with a contemporary style balanced together beautifully. Her attention to the precision in the overall look and gorgeous styles made the AW2021 collection "BIBI" stand out as the models gracefully walked.



PHOTO: Kristina Fidelskaya Press Release ©2021



Paris *re* Made

LOOK BOOK EDITION FALL-WINTER 21/22

Paris re Made is sourcing vintage garments and pieces by high-end luxury brands, as well as deadstock designer fabrics and turning them into redesigned pieces directly in our studio in Paris. Each piece is handpicked for its quality and attainability. The sourcing trajectory is a challenge as well as a delightful treasure hunt. By refreshing and re-tailoring these pieces we turn them into new classics while still showing respect to all the brands that we work with. We value their heritage, and by presenting their fashion story in new reshapes and redesigns, we aim to shift perspectives on fashion values. Paris re Made continues to work on a circular fashion model by focusing on recycling, upcycling and repurposing what already exists and is readily available. We want to tell a story about clothes being re-loved,

re-appreciated and re-worn, and the way to do that best is in a new re-made design from Paris re Made.

Paris re Made editions are non-seasonal, flexible with multiple drops a year. There is no distinction between men's and womenswear, every piece is non-gendered. We divide our collections into two lines: the Signature edition and the Private edition. The Signature edition is our house collection. A selection with all-around seasonal re-designed pieces. The Private edition contains high-end re designed pieces that combine extraordinary shapes and brands in one design. We develop a design based on a concept that permits us to reproduce the design in higher quantities. Even so, each piece is vintage meaning every design stays unique, custom-made and one of a kind.





MUST-READ BOOKS OF THIS SEASON



THE LIST

Staying aware of the entirety of the furthest down the line must-read books can rapidly transform into a staggering undertaking - finish one, add five more to the heap, and the cycle wears on until it's essentially too horrendous to even think about focusing any longer. Here's another arrangement: Leave the arranging of what's good and what's terrible to us, devoted perusers of perfect taste. We read a ton of books in the first quarter of 2021 and consider these to be the 12 best deserving of adding to your ceaseless heap this season.

Books by globally recognized authors - Cameryne Kayne, Desiree Middleton, Jayden O'Hara, Linny Lawless, M.L. Stark, Laura Hamilton, Tasha Boyd, Sadeeqa Johnson, Jennifer Saint, Shamoly Khera, Wendy Walker and Rebecca Winn are on the list. Also, read their exclusive interview with DE MODE.



available at
amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'BECKLAN'S DOLL' BOOK 1 OF THE CRESTEMERE SERIES: BY CAMERYNE KAYNE

On a hunt into the unknown, Audrina Henry is determined to find what she's looking for in the abandoned city of Crobania; a life-changing promotion to land her dream gig as head anchor at PNN news. But when she finds herself inside a hidden world, she's beyond stunned while adapting to her newfound role as a Blood-doll to an immortal kingdom. However, she's not to serve just anyone; she's to serve the dark prince of Crobania, Master Becklan Crestemere. And as his charms take by her storm, she's strong-willed and ready to escape his web of seduction... until he kisses her. It's not long before she finds herself falling for the unthinkable, an immortal Prince and the underworld in which he reins.

Becklan Crestemere loathes his new status as the most sought-after bachelor in Crobania, but it is his duty as an immortal prince to provide a queen for his kingdom. He must take a wife before the king, his uncle, retires the throne. Meanwhile, his future hangs in the balance with an arranged marriage until his estranged cousin gifts him with a Blood-doll. But when Becklan discovers the unknown woman in his mate his world shifts into a lust-fueled pandemonium while trying to save the kingdom from inevitable ruin. Audrina suddenly becomes his obsession, and the answer he's been searching for all along. He doesn't want just her blood. He wants her in his bed, for good.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cameryne Kayne is a paranormal romance guru since she was young, residing just above the Mason Dixon line in Pennsylvania. Where she enjoys downtime with her two children, and her black Siamese cat, Duchess. She reads as much as writes. Inside the darkness of paranormal romance is where her passion for writing can be found, where she invites you into the world of the Crestemere Series. Starting with her novel debut, her first publication and the first edition to the series releasing in July of 2020, Becklan's Doll. A besotted and heart-racing tale between love and sacrifice.

The second edition of the Crestemere Series; Nathan's Locket. Book 2 is set to release next March 21, 2022. Pre-order available from January 10, 2022.

FOLLOW HER ON INSTAGRAM: [@author_camerynekayne](https://www.instagram.com/author_camerynekayne)

VISIT AUTHOR CAMERYNE KAYNE OFFICIAL WEBSITE: www.ckayne.org



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR CAMERYNE KAYNE

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

It's definitely a passion.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The persistence of other authors.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing stories with a resounding life lesson brings me so much joy!

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in the recognition of hard work, yes.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

By introducing positive morals long forgotten over the decades.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

As long as they love the soup, does it matter what bowl it's in? –Cameryne Kayne.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

The story itching to be heard inspires me the most.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

I think the meaning of being a writer is to have the skill to take the reader on an unexpected journey and have them leave with an experience.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I feel accomplished but the job is never done.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The writing imposter syndrome is of the worst, but only a figment of the imagination. Your inner heckler.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

The key is being original while delivering what the reader wants, for me it's that magical happy ending we all need.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Anyone can be a writer, and you don't have to be emotionally involved. But chose what you know, the rest will come.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

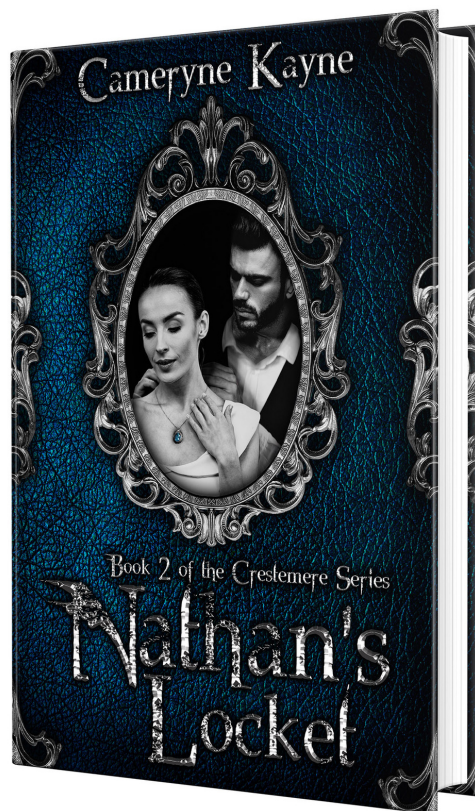
It depends on the situations but usually, I refer to the internet for my sources. As for how long it takes, I keep going until I'm accurately satisfied with my sources.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

I do. I'll be releasing Book 2 of the Crestemere series; Nathan's Locket.

ABOUT THE BOOK

His plan was to let his mate experience a normal life before he takes her from it. Nathan Crestemere only became a professor to carefully step into her life to introduce himself. After gifting her a special locket to protect his claim, he stepped back out. Only to discover her desperately in need of his help on the run, and married.



Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm positively thrilled to be featured in DE MODE magazine this year! I'm very grateful and humbled by this opportunity.



available at
amazon Walmart*

'FINDING THE BEAUTY IN UGLY SITUATIONS' BY DESIREE P. MIDDLETON

Finding the Beauty in Ugly Situations, written by Author Desiree P. Middleton will take you on an emotionally uplifting ride as she guides you through the very ugly chapters of her life. Beginning early on in her childhood by experiencing grief for the first as she knew it when she lost her favourite barbie doll after it was chewed to pieces by her brother's German Sheppard puppy. Desiree timelines these very ugly instances chapter by chapter as she vividly describes childhood sexual assault, having low self-esteem, rape, teen pregnancy, dropping out of high school, experiencing domestic abuse, heartbreak, alcoholism, financial strains and much more.

This book will keep you entranced chapter by chapter, captivating your attention, by not allowing you to put it

down once you pick it up. Giving you the motivation and courage that you may need to overcome your own ugly situations. The author's stance within this story is to "just keep living...", encouraging you to never stop where you are, if she can overcome, so can you, regardless of what you may be facing. Written during a time when she was dealing with heartbreak due to an unfaithful marriage, Desiree turned back to her love for writing to heal past the pain. She credits her ability to indulge in her writing emotionally to help create vivid, and powerful stories leaving the reader to feel similar emotions. Her gift of motivating herself and others is what creates this amazing work within this 173-page book. Be sure to read and be amazed at what one can overcome, you will feel a sense of wanting to push forward even through your own ugly circumstances.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Desiree P. Middleton, born in a small rural town thirty plus miles away from Charleston, South Carolina called McClellanville. The only daughter and the youngest of two boys, Desiree's parent's Patricia and Kevin Middleton Sr. recognized that their daughter had a gift at an incredibly young age. Her mom, a local school teacher and journalist at heart, would practice writing and sight words with Desiree before she could read and comprehend clearly. This developed and nurtured her gift of reading and writing. Desiree, at the age of thirty-four, now resides in Summerville, S.C. with her three daughters, Armani (15), Amaya (14) and Taylor (4).

Desiree is known around her community for being a **motivator, entrepreneur**, and one who chases her dreams. Becoming the founder of a female empowerment group '**W.O.N.D.E.R.F.U.L Organization**', which focus on helping women deal with and cope through trauma, such as rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, teen pregnancy etc. Desiree personally faced and survived all these worse situations in her life, so she encourages women to know that life does not end here, it goes on even after you have been through the worst.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR DESIREE MIDDLETON

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I literally feel like a million bucks! I wake up every day saying to myself "Wow! I'm a real-life author!", every time a new order comes through on my website or I get a royalty check from the sites selling my books, I just am in awe! Considering where I was and where I am, and the fact that I know that I have such a long more way to go... it excites me.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I am definitely original. I am the creator. My readers know that I will deliver each time when they know that I am coming out with something new, they anticipate it heavily because they already know Desiree is coming with something that's either going to encourage them or have an unexpected twist that will shock them. That is how I am, you never can figure me out, you just never know what you'll get. I don't like being predictable.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Honestly, I write on whims. My books are usually written without much thought. I have this creative growth spurt I call it, one minute I can write until my fingers are numb, just bursting, and then I would have writer's block for months and can create absolutely nothing.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

You definitely can be; however, emotions make it so much better, and even more so when you are able to cast emotions vividly through your writing. It is a gift for sure.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

I hope to bring a change in the literature world by encouraging those like me to read and write. I believe a lot of the things that I have been able to experience and accomplish so far has been because I read, write, and speak well. I would also love to be able to provide people of colour, like myself, with more reading options that look and act like us, things that we can more relate to., which is why I follow Ashley Antionette so heavily, she is a famed urban fiction writer and reading her stories really gives me insight into a life that I can relate to but in a fictional way.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

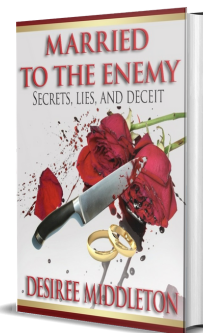
It's always so funny when I am asked this question because I don't answer with the intent to be negative, however, that is usually how it's perceived, but I wrote my first book after I separated from my second husband. I was in a very emotional state, I was angry all the time. I recognized that I needed to somehow release this anger that I was feeling, so every time I had a thought about my current situation, I'd sit down and write. Most times, without even noticing, I'd have sat and written for hours. I shared my writing with my mom and a couple of my friends, and they encouraged me to publish the book, but ultimately it was written just to heal and get by.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

YES! My newest book just released in March; it's called 'Married to the Enemy'. It's my first urban fiction novel, a genre that I hope to dive more into.

ABOUT THE BOOK

It's about a young girl named Melody, who learns a lot of life lessons in love, deceit, secrets, lies and what it means being married to the enemy. It's one of those mind twisters, where you feel like you know what's going to happen then in the end it happens nothing like you thought it would. The entire book is a plot twist, I had a lot of fun writing that one.



Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am HONORED, to say the least! I know that this opportunity is a sign from God of things to come. I have been praying a lot lately and this one thing was a sign that whatever I want, and manifest will come! I really hope that this opportunity will provide me with millions more as readers hear my story and become intrigued with wanting to know more about this little, small-town country girl, Author Desiree.

FIND MORE ABOUT HER WRITINGS, PODCASTS & MERCHANDISE ON www.authordesiree.com.



available at
 **BARNES & NOBLE**

'HUMAN: BREAKING, HEALING & FLOURISHING' BY JAYDEN O'HARA

Jayden's poetry book, *Human*, illustrates ideas of self-love, healing, heartbreak and learning to love. Her poems are on thoughts she has had and different challenges she has faced throughout her life. She wanted to share her work to guide others in understanding self-love and healing from trauma. She wrote this book to build a community of positivity, allowing people to learn from each other.

She always has been inspired by a variety of writers including Atticus, Rupi Kaur and Courtney Peppernell. All of them have a different style that speaks differently. She always wanted to write her own style in hopes that it speaks to others as well.

Her journey of writing and compiling '*Human*' brought

her few challenges too. The biggest one being the actual fear of writing a book and sharing her work. Poetry used to be a well-kept secret of hers that very few knew. Slowly this secret of Jayden grew to hundreds of people and, that terrified her a lot while writing her book. But the support she received through this journey was overwhelming.

She believes that her work can inspire others to look at life with a little more grace and look at themselves with a little more love and acceptance. DE MODE recommends '*Human*' as a must-read book for all.

'*Human*' can be found online on Amazon, Chapters Indigo, Kindle, Word Smash Barnes and Noble and Apple Books as either paperback or eBook.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR & POET JAYDEN O'HARA began writing poetry when she was about 13 years old. Writing poetry was her way of dealing with stress and anxiety. She is a young aspiring author and always wanted to publish a book for a long time, and something about the Covid-19 lockdown gave her the time and courage to do so. Throughout her high school, she was involved in a writers' club where they would discuss each other's work, and this was the first time in her entire life that she shared her work with anyone. Author Jayden also joined the Literary Café, where they would showcase their best work, and there she learnt that how incredible it felt to have people simply enjoy your work without tearing you down for doing something that you love. The poems in her book '*Human*' were written from the age of 13 to the age of 19 and are little pieces of who she is today. These pieces are based on all types of personal experiences, where she had to learn about both herself and others.

FOLLOW HER ON INSTAGRAM TO ENJOY READING MORE FROM HER DESK: @jayden.ohara



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JAYDEN O'HARA

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion and my ability to express my emotions. It is something that brings me so much joy. Reading a poem, I wrote is like looking at a painting I have just completed and that feeling of joy you are filled with is just incredible. I also just love hearing from loved ones how they can relate to my work, whether it is a good or bad experience.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

My final thought before making my decision to publish my work was wanting to help and support others with their mental health by building this community. I wanted my words to remind people of how worthy and deserving they are and how much they have to look forward to.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in rewards, nothing of the materialistic type of awards, but that rewarding feeling of doing good for others. The reward of self-growth from helping others around me, the reward of helping others in general.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

I want to bring up a change in the literature world by creating meaningful content that may remind others of the good they deserve. I want to use this book to create a community that can freely discuss their thoughts and ideas and learn to understand their self as an individual.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

My favourite quote is "Have you ever had a feeling there's more to you than the person everyone else sees. A person hid deep within the very fabric of your soul- you must pull that thread, unravel the truth of you and wake within yourself, that great giant, you already know you can be." ~ Atticus xx

Atticus is the poet that truly inspired me to publish a book, his work speaks to me. His work creates this picture in your head, he writes with so much imagery. You can imagine each of his pieces and when compiled together, it creates a movie in your mind.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

My goal is to be original; I create my own work for me, that I want to share with others and if people like it, that is great, but if not, that is totally okay too. Off-

-course, over the years poetry has trended a lot more, and I think people really enjoy the aesthetic of it. But I simply write because it is what I love doing.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

I think some common traps for aspiring authors could be getting sucked into a really overpriced publishing company or getting too caught up with the money and doing work that only the readers want, rather than what the author wants.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

In all honesty, I did not do a ton of research before putting my book together. I researched the publishing company I wanted to work with and the artist I wanted to work with to create the cover of my book. I also researched the best and cheapest packaging I could do for my book deliveries. I already had previous research just from using social media to see the up-and-coming trends of poetry, but as I previously mentioned, I do not write for profit.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

Writing inspires me because it gives me the ability to create art that reminds each person of something unique to that individual. Each person reads a poem and pictures something different, whether it is a loved one, someone they lost, how they imagine themselves in the future or an ongoing issue they are learning to deal with. For me personally, this is a passion project right now, if I could make it into a career, that would be incredible, but if not, I am very content writing for myself.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

I have begun writing more recently, ideally in the next 2 or 3 years, I would like to publish another book, but as a full-time student, that will be a work in progress for some time. Of course, I will release updates on some new work coming out.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am so excited to have my book featured on DE MODE magazine, this article just feels unreal, and I think is another really great accomplishment and a fantastic experience. Thank you so much for making the opportunity possible!



available at
amazon

'STRUCK IN THE CROSSFIRE' BERZERKERS MC SERIES #1 BY LINNY LAWLESS

The story comprises 2 characters: Stryker and Izzy. Stryker - A club member's betrayal killed those that I loved, and revenge is the only justice you serve because that's all you have left. You keep fighting and keep breathing, even when you're empty of any soul. I had to fight and kill to earn the President's patch of the BERZERKERS MC. We rule our criminal empire of underground fighting. Money and blood are all that's important to me now. The brazen dark-haired spitfire named Izzy made a stupid choice to steal from my club, and now I'm obligated to deal out her punishment and decide her fate. But it's not easy

when she ignites this basic primal need to protect her instead.

Izzy - I survive this outlaw MC world of fighting, killing, and gambling. It was the hand I was dealt in life. And when you're desperate to keep the ones you love safe and alive, you will do anything. I come face-to-face with the devil himself - Stryker - the President of the BERZERKERS MC. His hard body is quick and lethal. His dark eyes are empty of any kindness or mercy. But there's something else I do see in him, and it kindles a strange warmth straight to my shielded and tattered heart.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR LINNY LAWLESS grew up in Northern Virginia, just outside Washington DC. She is a bookworm, biker chick, and international best-selling indie author. She published her debut novel, "Salvation in Chaos," in January of 2018 and is very passionate about writing suspenseful and action-packed romance.

In the 1980s and 1990s, she mainly read historical romances. Her two most favourite authors of all time are Jean M. Auel and Anne Rice. Some self-published writers inspired her to dive right in and write her own stories. Since 2018, she has attended book signing events all over the United States, making a healthy connection with talented writers, photographers, models, editors, and fellow readers. Author Linny has only just begun her journey as an indie writer, plus she also designs book covers and graphics for other authors.

She writes characters who are far from perfect. The anti-hero is her favourite type of character to write - that bad guy you should hate but end up liking because you can relate to him somehow. She wants the reader to feel what her characters feel - sadness, happiness, love, hate. Author Linny's favourite story theme is vengeance, and her favourite romance trope is enemy to lovers.

FOLLOW HER ON INSTAGRAM: @linnylawless | VISIT HER OFFICIAL WEBSITE TO DISCOVER ALL HER BOOKS: www.linnylawless.com



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR LINNY LAWLESS

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I began writing and self-publishing books in 2018, and I've learned so much along with developing new friendships and business partners in the indie author community. I'm only just beginning my journey as a new chapter in my life.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I do a combination of both. I write my characters to be original and unique and sometimes base their characteristics on people I know in real life. I also want to deliver what readers enjoy with romance tropes, my favourite being enemies-to-lovers.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I've interviewed people I know who are in the profession of a character I may be writing. I also do tons of research on the internet, reading books, and even watch YouTube videos!

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I think they can still be writers because maybe they feel strong emotions through their writing, which may be therapeutic.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

Writing is my passion, and I'd like to help inspire others who express themselves through writing. I'm a big supporter of new aspiring writers and hope to be more of a marketer or promoter someday!

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

One of the provoking thoughts that made me write my first book was that life is way too short, and when I'm long gone, my written words will remain for others to read.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing brings out my imagination and compassion for others. I write from 1st point of view of the character, and it feels as though that character is telling the story, not me.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in rewards rather than receiving awards – even though awards from your peers' recognition can

be accomplishments to be proud of too.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

One of my favourite of many quotes is, "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer." by Frank Herbert from his book, "DUNE".

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing inspires my mind and keeps it open to imagination. I sometimes wonder what it feels like to be someone else, what it feels like to live in someone else's shoes.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The one common trap I've personally fallen into as a writer is my self-doubt. To all those aspiring writers out there – believe in yourself and don't take everyone's negative opinions about your work stop you from writing.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer is a way of expressing myself, like a painter, a player of instruments, an actor, or a singer.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

I have a few upcoming books to release in 2021. My next book, "Dane" is the 3rd in my Capitol Corruption Series – a romantic suspense story about Dane Neri, a corrupt man in organized crime who falls in love with a woman who's one of his enemies.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Dane Neri is the King of Atlantic City, and no hooker, gambler, or business spends a dollar outside of his corrupt network. Dane's enemies are many, but he destroys them, using their blood and wealth to expand his ever-growing empire. Dane could never get Aurora Owens out of his mind after they'd spent one amazingly erotic night together five years ago. Today, Aurora is the notoriously rich and feisty Maryland Madam, running her own corrupt enterprise of satisfying the sexual appetites of rich men and shady politicians. But now, she's become Dane's enemy and his next target to destroy.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm very humbled that DE MODE reached out to feature me in the magazine.



available at
amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'BURNING DESIRE FADES - PART 2' BY AUTHOR M. L. STARK

BURNING DESIRE FADES: The Psychopath and the Girl in Black Prada Shoes' - Part 2 presents the continuation of the malicious agenda of Doctor Bates and will leave you in a trance of shock with its vigorous narrative. A moment ago, it seemed, it was yesterday full of happiness. Tomorrow it is a matter of survival for Mary as her life is on the brink of insanity to her Knight in Shining Armor. As she meets Drake again she becomes a slave in the madness of love. Before Mary notices the dangerous life, she gets deeply trapped in Drake's dodgy mesh, but it's too late for her to escape. Fraud, lies, dominance, torment, and the complexity of an abusive relationship evolve, and will unexpectedly be a new part of Mary's life. Drake's sinister betrayal sneaks slowly in as he lures Mary like a ravenous wolf in sheep's clothing.

On the outside, it seems Drake is loving and has a high IQ, above normal. On the inside, he is a devious psychopath. The story will drastically unfold to a complexity of a love drama, crime, fraud, and Drake's delusions of grandeur. At a secluded area outside Hong Kong, the mafia attempt to kill Drake. We will follow the two sweethearts in how they try to escape from the difficulties with the Asian Mafia. Not only once, but several times the two lovebirds are on the run in the shadowy darkness of the night, fleeing as two shifty thieves. Mary will experience love, hatred, and deception; however, will she continue to be Drake's victim in his mystiques and hefty deceptions he gets during the nights? **This is part two of the Burning Desire trilogy. It will obsess you.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR M. L. STARK wrote the "Burning Desire" series based on experiences from her personal life. For the past decades, she wanted to write a book about her life experience, from being born in the strict late Catholic fifties in Germany, to be abandoned as a newborn baby and left in miseries at a German Catholic orphanage. At the age of 8-year-old, her mother immigrated to Denmark where she shortly after was finding herself being brought up in several different orphanages. She was growing up during the free hippie time in a fast-growing developing time age in Denmark until she became an adult person in the twenty-first modern century, where she went through three difficult stages in life. 'Childhood Horror!' and 'Matrimonial success, living in a rich environment with love and hate, until the difficulties appeared in the marriage ending with a divorce' until she lastly was dating a mean suppressive person. Phase three; 'Living in Hell!' She is a mother of 4 and is blessed with four grandchildren. During her 21-year period of marriage that tragically followed the trauma of the death of her first-born child. Author M. L. Stark also enjoy helping abandoned animals and supporting children's causes if needed as it gives her the greatest optimistic values in her life.

LEARN MORE ABOUT AUTHOR M. L. STARK JOURNEY ON www.ml-stark.com.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR M.L. STARK

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

I am passionate about my writing and do it from my heart and soul. It energizes me, even it at times pulls out my teeth's until I'm exhausted. Emotionally, I've spent four tough years completing my books. I wanted to give up, but then my passion, anger, and feelings pushed me to complete the projects. Giving up was never an option.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

Helplessness! I wanted to scream. Get the anger and the abuse out of my system. I needed to shed light on, a tabued subject of fake adoration from love scammers, and sociopaths. With this real-life tale of the double-edged sword of love, readers will find the line between love and manipulation is anything but clear-cut.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

I craved to shed light on psychological abuse. Increase awareness of the blindness in adoration and the fake love sociopaths use to mentally abuse others. Living with a narcissist is more than difficult to get through. I feel good about telling the story as I believe it can help other preys and non-victims to understand about mental abuse.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

The best award was finishing, and achieving my life-long goal of writing my books and get them published. The best reward I got; I grew emotionally and mentally stronger and got my life back. No reward or award can beat that.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

Hopefully by involving readers in the real-life story of emotions and struggles gives a glimpse into this rare life from the victim's perspective. However, the series does a profound service to readers – exposing the truth of what it's like to live and fall in love with a stop-at-nothing, callous psychopath. Maybe it's the first series of its kind on the market.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

One life, one encounter.
— Japanese Idioms

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

I learned so much about myself and how to be an even better person. My tolerance grew stronger along with more understanding of other people's daily struggles. My knowledge of the world grew vastly within my curiosity in my research.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

I needed to get control of my physical and emotional devastating life. I was like the wreck of a ship in my own vessel. When Part 2 was published it felt as I had claimed Kilimanjaro and my burden fell off my heavy shoulders. The misery stopped squeezing my heart and soul. I was free of the agony.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

All the promises from the self-publishing companies. They only want your money and not what's best for you. And too many Instagrammers who offer paid reviews for you on Amazon. As a writer, you can easily fall into those traps. Don't! It can damage you.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

In 2014, I began to research sociopathic behaviour and along with my first-hand experience dating a sociopathic man, I reflected on that entire experience. In 2016 I got the courage to write and along with my writing, I continued researching, which often related to my ideas popping up for the books.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I'm only original. I'm aware of my way of writing is different from other Authors. But I am who I am, and I will not compromise with my true story and pretend something else. The writing is as I've experienced it, with humour, sadness, anger, trauma, love, and joy.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

Exciting! Exhausting! Funny! And time-consuming! But it's also life-changing and inspiring. I learned many new English words and found joy in how to control synonyms in both my first language and in English. I got wiser with social media and research in what you must do to get success.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Yes! I consider myself as living proof as I was not feeling emotionally strong when I began my writing process. Yet, I succeeded in becoming a writer, even I had to backtrack years of my unfortunate life. Had I felt emotionally strongly there would be no story. If you want to reach the goal, you can achieve it.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Exciting and interesting. Honoured of getting the opportunity when I was invited by DE MODE. I'm looking forward to getting the book in the magazine.



available at
amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'MELANCHOLY VISION' A REVOLUTION SERIES NOVEL BY L. C. HAMILTON

'Melancholy Vision - A Revolution Series' by Author L. C. Hamilton is an urban fantasy path that lets the reader dive into a world full of magic, horror and diverse LGBTQAI+ characters. The opening story to a deeper layer of magic between creatures, conflict and a corrupt system. Are you ready to join?

The story begins with Kilian and Jegor Lancaster, two cousins and magicians in the world called the New Born Kingdom. They live in the palace of Icon, the city where the journey starts. Their newest case kicks off with a tragedy of 19 dead Trickster, that all got killed in one night. Eventually, this leads to a much bigger opening – a prophecy that the two cousins are involved; The Legend of Merlin.

Together Jegor and Kilian need to find five other children

children of the seal to protect the magical barrier between the human world and the New Born Kingdom. They are up against a group called the Seven Deadly Sins that want to throw over the regime of Icon and the whole magical system. The journey takes the two cousins on a road between loves, lies and a corrupt system that gets revealed bit by bit. Both of them have to face struggles that they have never faced before. Kilian is also confronted with owning up to his responsibility as the future king of Icon.

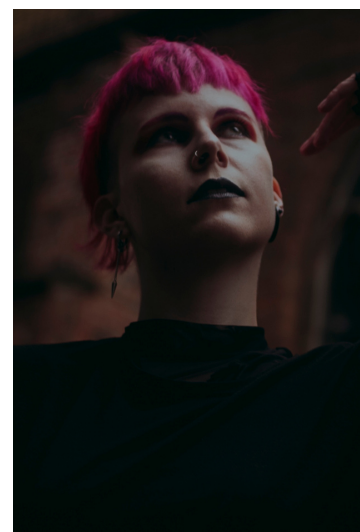
The world invites the reader on to a journey of moral conflicts, where they then get to decide who the good and bad guys are. A ride between magic, mythology and monsters, as well as politics. **Melancholy Vision is the first book in a lgbtqai+ diverse series of eight books in the Revolution Series.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR L. C. HAMILTON is a 25 years old genderqueer author, artist, podcast host and spiritual and creative mentor, known better as Laura, Lola or Charles Hamilton. As a genderqueer person, Hamilton is confident with any pronouns and stands for breaking and bending gender norms and roles in any aspect of life. Hamilton currently lives in London, the centre and heart of the creation when it comes to her book series and all things around the Revolution Series.

After 12 years Hamilton picked up the pen for the first time and started to write her own stories, knowing that one day she wanted to bring stories into the world that would make a change. By now Hamilton has created an LGBTQAI+ urban dark fantasy multiverse, the so-called Revolution Series and started through with a team of twenty creatives, to build and grow the Revolution Series beyond the books. The Revolution Series is a safe space for any gender, sexuality and ethnicity – what once started as help between friends, has now grown into a creative collective, which drive is here to bring the change in the world that the creative industry & especially the book industry needs.

LEARN MORE ABOUT AUTHOR L.C. HAMILTON JOURNEY ON www.revolution-series.com



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR L.C.HAMILTON

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Both. One can't exist without the other. My passion is driven by emotions.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

If you would have asked the girl back in 2015 that came to London for the first time as visit, I would have said: Because I want to be a writer. Three years later when I actually started to write the book, the answer is: Because I wanted to inspire people and give the magic of my words into the world. And as for now: I also want to present more diversity and lgbtqi+ in the book industry.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

It reminds me of who I am every day. No matter what happens in the world right now, deep down I will always be a writer and I was born to be a writer and make a change through my writing in this world by inspiring people. The idea that someone somewhere out there is reading my book and takes something away from it that changes their mindset or makes them revolt in their own form of art is something that really fills me with joy.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

By raising my voice for more LGBTQAI+ and diverse character representation and that's what I am doing and trying my best for with the Revolution Series.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. And however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up."

~ Stephen Hawking.

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

It teaches me lesson in life whenever I write. And the best thing and inspiration from me is, that sometimes I discover parts, words, ideas and imagination of myself that I didn't know I was capable to write down until I do it. Besides that whenever I read words from some of my favourite authors, I am amazed what words can do in our minds and how they can touch us.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

It's crazy, magical and wild and I am totally blessed by living this dream. Because at twelve I started to have this dream, at fifteen I spoke it out loud the first time and now I made it happen and live my dream.

Q: What kind of research do you do before beginning a book?

I have two types of research phases. The one before, when it comes to world building because I need to take certain information into consideration for certain scenes. The second phase is more of my kind because I'll do my research while writing and that's when I add things usually to my vision board, get into the deeper layers of the characters etc. Without research half of my book wouldn't exist. It's essential.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

A good mixture of both. Originality comes certainly first but to the readers who love my book and enjoy the journey, I am here to listen to them and see what the readers would love and like. And when it comes to diversity and LGBTQAI+, I always consider facts.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Yes. Because even if you are someone that isn't capable of having that strong emotional connection it shouldn't stop them from trying and going for it anyway. The emotional aspect is one thing in the writing process. The research is another. The message here is essential, you can be anything and anyone in the world of art. Nobody is perfect and you certainly don't need to be, to be a writer.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book?

Melancholy Vision has just been out into the world and I am already working on the second book in the series as well as the German translation of it. This is just the beginning in a series of eight books but as I said it's a multiverse and the sister series called **Oleander Chronicles** is also already a work-in-progress.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Honestly I'm thrilled and blessed. For you guys to give me a platform to be presented and speak up, is just amazing. I really hope that whoever sees this interview, takes something away from it. The best solution of course would be to buy the book and become part of the Series. But if anything I am just happy if people start to think about my words or if they want to reach out to me and my team they can of course do that too. I am honoured and happy to have this presentation, thank you from the bottom of my dark-fantasy thrilling heart.



available at  Get it on  Apple Books

'BROKEN FRENCH' A WIDOWED, BILLIONAIRE, SINGLE DAD ROMANCE BY TASHA BOYD

BROKEN FRENCH is a standalone (not part of a series), contemporary romance. It includes luscious scenes of sparkling blue ocean, and tantalizing, seductive food, as well as a smoking hot, dirty-talking Frenchman. If travelling scares you, or sexy times scare you, then this book is not for you. But if you're looking for a decadent armchair vacation after being stuck in one place for over a year--a story that will make you laugh, swoon, fan yourself, and cry--then this one is for you!

Take a decadent and sizzling armchair vacation to the South of France this summer ...

Josie Marin thought she was getting a promotion at her architectural firm, but instead, her career implodes. She impulsively takes up her roommates' offer to nanny for a little girl on a mega-yacht in the South of France. Even though she can't stand boats, this seems like fate giving her an opportunity to lick her wounds in a bucket list paradise while she figures out how to get her life back.

But this little girl she's arrived to look after has a daddy. A widowed, hot, billionaire of a daddy. And if there's anything that Josie needs less than having to be stuck on a yacht, no matter how luxurious, it's an inconvenient and highly combustible attraction to her new boss. A man who, for all his wealth, is grumpy, conceited, and utterly closed off.

Xavier Pascale is on an emotional island of his own making. It's just him and his daughter and he likes it that way. He works hard, his shareholders are happy, his best friends are his bodyguard, and the people who work for him. What's wrong with that? But then he meets Josephine Marin. Her arrival in his life is like a deep ocean tremor along a catastrophic emotional fault line. And now... well, now, he's very, very aware of his isolation and his very human need. But he can't be distracted. When he gets distracted terrible things happen.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR NATASHA BOYD (writing romance as Tasha Boyd) is a USA Today and Wall Street Journal bestselling author of contemporary romance, romantic comedy, and historical fiction.

Her historical fiction, *The Indigo Girl* takes on the true story of 16-year-old Eliza Lucas and the indigo trade in 1740's America. It has won numerous library and reader's choice awards.

Tasha Boyd romances have been translated into French, Italian, German, Turkish and Indonesian and sold in over 55 countries around the world. Her latest romance, *BROKEN FRENCH*, is a feast for the senses set mostly on a yacht on the French Riviera. Author Natasha Boyd was born in Europe but currently lives in the Southeastern US until she can persuade her family and her dog to move.

LEARN MORE ABOUT AUTHOR TASHA BOYD JOURNEY ON www.natashaboyd.com



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR TASHA BOYD

Q: How do you feel being an author?

I love being an author. I know how I feel when I get lost in a book. I get to travel on a vacation of the mind away from my every day worries. I love that I get to bring that to others. Several times I have received messages from people who are sick or caring for a very sick loved one and they have shared that my books helped them forget and feel happy or escape for a little while. And that is enormously satisfying to know you have brought someone a small joy.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I don't try to do anything other than writing the story as it wants to be written. If I tried to make something original, I would probably fail. Story uniqueness comes from my unique perspective about how I see the world, so I tell the story my own way. Do I want to give the readers what they want? Sure. I'm a reader so I give myself what I want too!

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

It depends. For my historical fiction, there was a lot of research not just about my character who was a real person, but about the politics and socio-economics of the time in which she was living. Not to mention I had to research and understand the intricate and complicated process of extracting indigo dye. But then I write a fun romance set in the South of France, and yes, I have been there so my experience is based on research of sorts, (and what fun research that was! Back in pre-covid travel times), but mostly it's an opportunity to marinate in my imagination and google beautiful images on the internet. And drink a lot of rosé (for research of course).

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I'd never tell anyone they can't be a writer. I imagine it might be difficult to write if you don't feel empathy, because how could you fully climb into your character's shoes? You might simply imagine what it's like to be in their shoes which probably means a deeper level is not reached. But I don't know. I sometimes cry while I'm writing certain scenes (for sure in my newest book BROKEN FRENCH) but I'm not sure that makes me a better writer.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

My first book? I wanted to write a fun story that I wanted to read. A modern Cinderella story about a famous guy picking an ordinary girl. I couldn't find one I liked, so I wrote one! It's called EVERSEA, about a movie star named Jack Eversea.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

Whether you think you can, or think you can't, you're right. (I can't remember who wrote it. Perhaps the business self-help guru Jim Rohn? But it's my favourite because your mindset in all you do is the most important thing to master).

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Worrying about what others will think is a common trap that stops being from writing. It is difficult to keep the voices of family and friends and critics silent long enough to write as if they are not looking over your shoulder and judging. You can try to pretend to be someone else as you write. And don't tell anyone what you are doing if you don't want to. Writing is for YOU, not them.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

There should always be change when needed. Right now we need to hear more diverse stories that more truly reflect our diverse world. Stories that have been forgotten or ignored before by perhaps narrow-minded publishing executives. I think that's why my book The Indigo Girl continues to do so well because we are hungry for untold women's stories, but also we are hungry for minority-centred stories, culturally educational stories and stories of real human struggle and joy. Also, one note about romance novels. It is one of the largest selling genres in the world. One could argue it keeps the publishing industry afloat. It's time it was celebrated. The women characters depicted in modern romance are strong, and they know (or find) what they want and need in life.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Thanks for featuring my book in DE MODE. If anyone is missing travel like I am then they will LOVE taking an armchair vacation to the French Riviera with my characters in my newest book BROKEN FRENCH. And it's a sexy and delicious book, so clear your afternoon (and maybe pre-prepare dinner for your family) because you won't want to put it down!



available at
amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'YELLOW WIFE: A NOVEL' BY AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR SADEQA JOHNSON

Born on a plantation in Charles City, Virginia, Pheby Delores Brown has lived a relatively sheltered life. Shielded by her mother's position as the estate's medicine woman and cherished by the Master's sister, she is set apart from the others on the plantation, belonging to neither world.

She'd been promised freedom on her eighteenth birthday, but instead of the idyllic life she imagined with her true love, Essex Henry, Pheby is forced to leave the only home she has ever known. She unexpectedly finds herself thrust into the bowels of slavery at the infamous Devil's Half Acre, a jail in Richmond, Virginia, where the enslaved are broken, tortured, and sold every day. There, Pheby is exposed not just to her Jailer's cruelty but also to his contradictions. To survive, Pheby will have to outwit him, and she soon faces the ultimate sacrifice.

DE MODE recommends "Yellow Wife" as a must-read for this season.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AUTHOR SADEQA JOHNSON is the award-winning author of four novels. Her accolades include the National Book Club Award, the Phillis Wheatley Book Award, and the USA Best Book Award for Best Fiction. She is a Kimbilio Fellow, a former board member of the James River Writers, and a Tall Poppy Writer. Originally from Philadelphia, she currently lives near Richmond, Virginia, with her husband and three children.

She is also the author of "Love in a Carry-On Bag", "And Then There Was Me: A Novel of Friendship, Secrets and Lies" and "Second House from the Corner: A Novel of Marriage, Secrets, and Lies". All of her books are available in Kindle, Paperback and Hardcover format ready to deliver in any part of the world. Available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop, Target and Simon & Schuster.

LEARN MORE ABOUT AUTHOR SADEQA JOHNSON JOURNEY ON www.sadeqajohnson.net

FAMOUS REVIEWS

"A fully immersive, intricately crafted story inspired by the pages of history. In Pheby, Sadeqa Johnson has created a woman whose struggle to survive and to protect the ones she loves will have readers turning the pages as fast as their fingers can fly. Simply enthralling."
- **Lisa Wingate, #1 New York Times Bestselling Author of "Before We Were Yours"**.

"Yellow Wife by Sadeqa Johnson is a page-turner of a novel that is utterly transporting. Johnson's rich historical detail and enchanting prose sucked me into another world from the very first page. The book is a reminder that the inner lives of black women are as complicated as they are fascinating and make for some of the most affecting literature in American history. I loved it."

- **Attica Locke, New York Times Bestselling Author of "Heaven, My Home"**.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR SADEQA JOHNSON

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I'll try to write a book and if it doesn't work out, at least I have a job in publishing and I'll still be surrounded by books.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing balances me. When I don't write I feel cranky and my patience is really short.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Awards, please bring them on!

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

By writing about people who have been marginalized and blotted from the history books.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

The entire universe is conspiring to give you everything that you want."

Q: How does writing inspires you the most?

Writing inspires me to rub myself raw and then be brave enough to let in the air that will heal my wounds.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

Showing up everyday and getting words down on the page. Even when I don't feel like it. Even when I don't think I have anything important to say. Even when I'm afraid. I must show up.

Q: How do you feel being an author?

It's a blessing to be able to create a whole world from my imagination. It's so rewarding when readers tell me that they've stayed up all night finishing my books. It's the best job in the world. I am living my purpose.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

They give up before the miracle happens.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write for myself first and then hope that someone wants to read it. The story has to embed itself into my skin, the characters need to follow me around and insist that I write their story. That's when I know I've got something.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I believe everyone can write, all that's needed is willingness and belief.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

For *Yellow Wife*, I spent about three months researching before I started writing. I visited plantations in Virginia, went to libraries, museums and read books about slavery and pre-civil war. As I was writing the book, I would come upon a scene that needed detail, like dressing a woman and I'd have to stop and look that up. I have to be careful because sometimes research is more fun than writing.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book?

I'm currently working on my fifth novel. It's in the beginning stages but it's a historical novel that takes place in the 1940s and 50s.

Q: What is it about?

I love writing about women who have surmountable challenges that they have to overcome. In my next novel I'm writing about two women.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

This has been awesome! Being interviewed by DE MODE makes me feel hip and relevant, thank you!

MORE FAMOUS REVIEWS

"Through the eyes of a character with uncommon access and compassion, Sadeqa Johnson's novel *"The Yellow Wife"* evokes a vision of one woman's tenacious survival of antebellum cruelty and objectification." ~ **Washington Post**

"A deeply researched and truly transfixing narrative told with heart, soul and skill — one that will no doubt grip the reader as much as it did the author." -- **Toronto Star**

"Seldom do I get to enjoy a novel so wholly engrossing, so exquisitely researched, so timely. Sadeqa Johnson has brought a fresh telling to a story we think we already know, making it beautifully relatable and human. Riveting and suspenseful, I highly recommend this novel." ~ **Kathleen Grissom, New York Times Bestselling Author of "The Kitchen House"**.

"There's Pain And Tragedy In 'Yellow Wife' — But Also Great Joy." ~ **NPR**



available at
amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'ARIADNE' BY AUTHOR JENNIFER SAINT

A mesmerising retelling of the ancient Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. Perfect for fans of CIRCE, A SONG OF ACHILLES, and THE SILENCE OF THE GIRLS.

'ARIADNE' gives voice to the misused Princess of Crete who betrayed her father to save Theseus from the Minotaur. Relevant and revelatory.

As Princesses of Crete and daughters of the fearsome King Minos, Ariadne and her sister Phaedra grow up hearing the hoofbeats and bellows of the Minotaur echo from the Labyrinth beneath the palace. The Minotaur - Minos's greatest shame and Ariadne's brother - demands blood every year.

When Theseus, Prince of Athens, arrives in Crete as a sacrifice to the beast, Ariadne falls in love with him. But helping Theseus kill the monster means betraying her family and country, and Ariadne knows only too well that in a world ruled by mercurial gods - drawing their attention can cost you everything.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Due to a lifelong fascination with Ancient Greek mythology, **Author Jennifer Saint** read Classical Studies at King's College, London. She spent the next thirteen years as an English teacher, sharing a love of literature and creative writing with her students. ARIADNE is her first novel and she is working on another retelling of ancient myth for her second.

Writing has always been a passion for her. She has been writing stories for as long as she remembers. For Author Jennifer, it's a way of escaping to another world and inhabiting different voices that can be soothing, therapeutic, absorbing or frustrating at times - but always worthwhile. However, writing was something she found she was always putting to one side especially once her children were born and there were always so many demands on her time to manage her teaching career and her family. The writing felt like an indulgence and was something she wasn't prioritizing until she decided to write ARIADNE and make writing part of her daily routine again.

In a world where women are nothing more than the pawns of powerful men, will Ariadne's decision to betray Crete for Theseus ensure her happy ending? Or will she find herself sacrificed for her lover's ambition?

ARIADNE gives a voice to the forgotten women of one of the most famous Greek myths and speaks to their strength in the face of angry, petulant Gods. Beautifully written and completely immersive, this is an exceptional debut novel.

BOOK REVIEW

What happens after the monster is defeated and the princess leaves with the hero? Jennifer Saint's ARIADNE is a shimmering tapestry of two sisters bound by deceit and the shadows of family history. . .With a fresh voice and keen insight, Saint adds flesh and bone to an ancient myth, drawing the reader into an uneasy world of ever-afters.'

~ **Yangsze Choo, Author of 'THE NIGHT TIGER'**



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JENNIFER SAINT

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The inspiration for *ARIADNE* was a combination of factors. I had always loved Greek mythology and read Classical Studies at university, which was where I discovered Ovid. He was a Roman poet who wrote a series of letters from the perspective of the women in myth and this collection included Ariadne and her sister Phaedra. Years later, when I was reading the story of Theseus and the Minotaur to my children, I remembered Ovid's *Heroides* and wondered if anyone else had written Ariadne's story as I was so interested in what that familiar legend would look like from her perspective. I couldn't find a version of it so I decided to write it myself.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing makes me put my phone down and switch off from the rest of the world. It gives me the opportunity to focus and to work hard at something. Everything I write teaches me something new and allows me to hone my craft. I feel like there is always so much to learn and so many ways to develop and it's such a privilege to be able to do this.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research is an ongoing process all the way through writing a novel for me. I start by reading as much source material as I can – plays, poems and texts from ancient Greece and Rome about the characters and myth that I'm writing. I also look at paintings of classical subjects and I search for vases, statues and artefacts from the past to immerse myself in the subject as much as I can. I have a separate notebook for each novel & I keep adding to my research as I go.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

It's great to be rewarded! I feel like the best reward I can get from writing is when readers respond to my work. Hearing that my novel made someone cry, that they connected with my characters and that they were transported to the world that I built – this is the most rewarding thing in a writer's life. Books have changed my outlook on the world and books have made me feel inspired and moved in so many ways so to know that I can do that for other people is just incredible.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

There is such an appetite at the moment for Greek mythology retellings from new perspectives and I'm

very proud to be a part of that. These are stories that belong to us all; stories we all heard in childhood and that so many of us love. But the stories are so much richer when you look beyond the heroes, magic and monsters to the heart and soul within. I think it's so valuable to retell and reinterpret these tales in a fresh way and to draw the parallels between ancient lives and the way we live today – there are still so many relevant themes and messages and there is something very special about sharing a direct connection with the long-distant past.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

I love Mary Shelley's quote when she was writing *Frankenstein*. She wrote 'I felt that blank incapability of invention which is the great misery of authorship when dull Nothing replies to our anxious invocations.' I find it so helpful to remind myself that all authors experience this! Even Mary Shelley, while writing a Gothic masterpiece that was innovative in so many ways, felt the grip of writer's block but she went on to create a work that we still love now, two hundred years later. It inspires me to keep going even when it feels impossible and to have faith in myself.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

A part of writing is observing the world and people around you so that you can create characters that your reader can believe in. I definitely call on my own emotions in my writing and without that, I'm not sure I could make a reader feel those emotions as well.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer and how does writing inspire you the most?

Anyone who writes is a writer! I always worried that I couldn't call myself a writer until I got an agent or a publishing deal but the truth is that if you write, you can and should call yourself a writer. There isn't a set of qualifications that you have to achieve first. You just need a pen and paper, or a laptop or even a phone – and an idea!

I like to read a range of books and enjoy writers from a broad selection of genres who inspire me differently. I love the way that Barbara Kingsolver transports the reader into nature.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It's an honour to be chosen for *DE MODE*, thank you very much for featuring *ARIADNE*!



available at  Get it on  Apple Books

'BEDAZZLE' BY AUTHOR & DR. SHAMOLY KHERA

Bedazzle reveals the art and science of confidence in today's world. The book puts a spotlight on how the human mind has the power to self-actualize its truest potential through self-evaluation, self-awareness & reach heights of unlimited achievement. Bedazzle deconstructs the core aspects of subconscious motivation and handpicks the triggers to understand confidence at a deeper level. Successful people are often perceived as confident but it is less acknowledged that it is immense confidence that makes them successful in the first place. The book reveals multiple action plans that can aid a person in maintaining consistent confidence.

It's not just inner confidence, portraying this externally is equally essential is dominating today's world as well as one's sphere of work and life. From body language to voice, to the walk and the elevator pitch – all of it matters. Bedazzle unravels the perceptions of the human mind and how we can rewire our inner programming to

reinforce positive perceptions. Because only when a person masters both inner & outer confidence, can he truly Bedazzle!

BOOK REVIEWS

MUST READ FOR NON-FICTION!!

Bedazzle is an amazing non-fiction book and I think I can say that the best one I have read yet. It's true I have read less non-fiction but this one really won my heart. This book teaches us all about confidence. It talks about things that make a person confident, which factors affect our confidence, how we can develop our confidence with small but impactful steps.

~ SEJUTI MAJUMDAR

GOOD BOOK FOR A NEWBIE IN THE SELF HELP GENRE, SPECIALLY YOUNGER AUDIENCE!!

~ THE POSTBOOK

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Shamoly Khera, author of the debut book *Bedazzle*, published by Bloomsbury, is a well-known personality in the Indian media & TV industry. She has many accolades to her name and has had an illustrious career as a TV Presenter. Her professional education in medicine and a celebrated career in working with top Bollywood celebrities and corporate executives has armed her with numerous anecdotes, stories & observations that are now part of her personality.

Born and raised in Mumbai, Shamoly pursued medicine and practised as an aesthetic physician for the first few years of her career. She later switched fields to pursue her passion in media and anchoring. She studied theatre with Barry John Acting School, performed in plays and then took up TV presenting & producing with leading media networks. Over the last decade, Shamoly has been the face of various television networks like UTV Stars, Zee, TLC, Colors, MBC and created connect with a wide audience across cultures and continents. Besides being an author and coach, she currently is the Director at her content distribution house - One Take Media Co.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR & DR. SHAMOLY KHERA

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Interesting question. I would say both. Writing for me starts at bringing clarity in my thoughts, till it heads towards having its own purpose and life. It certainly is an emotion of expression, one that I have deep passion for.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

There was a dearth of literature on confidence, something that talks about where confidence stems from – that answers questions like is confidence a trait that we are born with or do we build it as we grow? While coaching people to emanate confidence while speaking, I realised that it was equally important to train their minds effectively besides training their voice and body. Hence, as a cumulative effect of bringing all this research together, Bedazzle was born.

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Personally, writing is an extension of what I think and believe in. I voraciously recommend writing to everyone who needs to bring clarity and structure to their views & thoughts. Besides, writing paves the way for other like-minded people to connect with you.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Awards gratify the ego; rewards satisfy the soul. Both are essential for human motivation and are instrumental as a push to keep moving forward.

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

We as authors cannot plan a change on will. The changes will be visible on retrospection. As our books release, you will notice the kind of changes it has on its' readers, on critics, on future writers – every book has its own life and charts its own path. A great example of such change is Chetan Bhagat's writing – it opened the doors for college stories of romance told well and a huge market for young authors with young stories flooded the market since then. As far as my writing is concerned, I do hope to inspire lost souls to find their confidence, to choose what they want and someday share their transformation with the world.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

There are so many. One that comes to my mind right now is 'If you think you or think you can't, you're right' by Henry Ford. Our limitations are created by self, just like our goals and ambitions.

Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer?

For me, being a writer is bringing meaning to the chaos in the world around us, to make sense of the mental chatter. Being a writer is opening the doors of the mind of those who read, making them see things that they

might have missed, of making them feel new emotions, of uplifting, enlightening and inspiring them.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I am extremely conscious about evidence based research – everything that I write or talk about needs to have an authentic source to make a valid point. Hence, I don't rest until I am sure I have the exact information I need. In terms of time, I keep making notes, collate material that seem connected with what I am planning to write. When I feel I have enough clarity on the content of the book, I start the writing process that can span over a couple of weeks.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly and how do you feel being an author?

I feel everyone feels emotions strongly. It's just that the awareness levels of some may be low or they may be less attuned to their own emotions and not express much. Writing in fact works as a therapy for such people, because the more you write, the more you get to know your other-self. That little voice in your head – that's the subconscious mind we need to get acquainted with to write and express.

I feel complete. This has been a dream for too long and being a published author means a lot.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

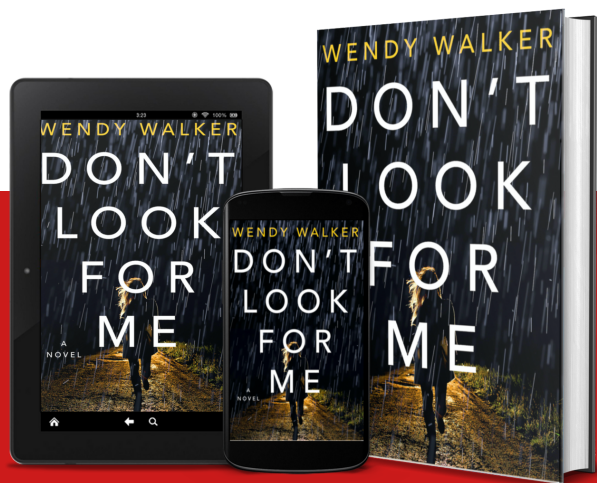
Aspiring writers should stop worrying about the existing books or trends in the market. These will keep changing. A writer should write about things that speak to them the most because those are the subjects they will be truest to; those topics have the most potential to create a deep connection with the readers.

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

My next book focuses on women. I feel there is a need to articulately address a lot of issues in today's world concerning woman – I cannot reveal much now but will surely share once it's closer to completion!

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am honoured to be in DE MODE. Thank you for bestowing this recognition. You earlier mentioned rewards - this is just like that - soothing to the soul and reassurance of the work done so far. Gratitude to you and your team!



available at  Get it on  Apple Books

'DON'T LOOK FOR ME' BY AUTHOR WENDY WALKER

They called it a “walk away.” The car abandoned miles from home on a stormy night. The note found at a nearby hotel. The shattered family that couldn’t be put back together.

It happens all the time, they said. Women disappear, desperate to leave their lives behind and start over.

But is that what really happened to Molly Clarke?

When a new lead comes in two weeks after the search has ended, Molly’s twenty-one-year-old daughter, Nicole, begins to wonder. In spite of their strained relationship and the tragedy that rocked their world, nothing about her mother’s disappearance makes any sense.

Against her father’s pleas and the scepticism of local law enforcement, Nicole returns to the small, desolate town where her mother was last seen, determined to find the truth. The locals are sympathetic and appear eager to help. The innkeeper. The bartender. Even the police. Until secrets begin to creep from the hidden corners of their

lives. When Nicole learns about another woman who vanished from the same town, then discovers a small hole cut into a fence that guards a mysterious, secluded property, she comes closer to finding the truth about that night – and to the danger that is all around her.

For Molly, the night she disappeared began with a storm, running out of gas, and a man with a truck who offers her a ride to town. The man is not alone – with him is a beautiful little girl who reminds her of the daughter she lost five years ago. It feels like a sign. It feels safe. And Molly is overcome with the desire to be home, back with her family - no matter how broken it has become. She accepts the ride.

But when the doors close, locking shut, Molly begins to suspect that she has made a terrible mistake.

Don’t Look For Me is a claustrophobic, anxiety-inducing psychological thriller that will keep you up past your bedtime. Get your copy now!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wendy Walker is the bestselling author of *All is Not Forgotten*, *Emma In the Night*, *The Night Before*, *Don’t Look for Me*, and *Hold Your Breath*. She has sold rights to her books in twenty-three languages as well as film and television options. Most recently. Her work has been featured in the Reese Witherspoon Book Club, Emma Roberts’ *Belletrist*, and *The Today Show*. Her next novel, *American Girl*, will be published by Audible Originals in late 2021. She is currently at work on her next work in the genre of psychological suspense.

Wendy started writing while taking time off from her legal career to care for her young children. Living in suburban Connecticut for most of her life, she developed a fascination with the culture and social dynamics of this area and explored these themes in her first two general fiction novels, *Four Wives* (St. Martin’s Press 2008) and *Social Lives* (St. Martin’s Press 2009). She also edited three compilations for the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, *Power Moms*, *Thanks Mom* and *Thanks Dad*.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR WENDY WALKER

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I was taking time off from my legal practice and decided that I wanted to find work that I could do on my own schedule so I could care for my children. When I started to think about my options, the idea of writing a novel popped into my mind so I must have always wanted to do it!

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing makes me look at the world in a very empathetic way. With every event and person I encounter, I try to understand what drives people and what causes things to happen because that is always the start of a great story. As a result, I have come to think this way and it is now a part of me.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I research as much as is needed for each book. Sometimes it's a lot and other times very little. I always seek help from professionals in the field, and I rely heavily on the Internet as well.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I think awards are overrated. The publishing world is very insular and often times books are overlooked for awards they deserve because the author is not well connected. My books are commercial fiction and so I focus on the reward of pleasing my audience and bringing joy to readers!

Q: How can you bring up a change in the literature world?

I think that with commercial fiction that is trying mostly to entertain readers, change can occur by introducing diverse characters into the story and by trying to show readers how and why people may come to behave in ways that are not normal or expected. This understanding of human behaviour can increase empathy for others that hopefully will translate into everyday life.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

There are all kinds of writers. Some are driven by passion and emotion. Others are motivated by intellectual pursuits and a desire to educate readers. There is room for all kinds of writers. What they all have in common is the desire to share their thoughts and/or feelings with others.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?**Focus on the present.****Q: For you what is the meaning of being a writer and how does writing inspire you the most?**

It depends very much on the genre. For commercial suspense, the meaning is truly to provide an escape through entertainment. Since the beginning of time, people have sought to escape the often painful realities of life by hearing stories about other people and places. Books can provide this relief and enable people to rest their worries and find excitement, laughter and pleasure where there may not have been any.

Writing inspires me to be creative and to use my imagination. I am a very linear thinker by nature, so writing forces me to think in a different way.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

There are so many traps for writers! The industry is a business and many writers don't know what it is about when they first get a book deal. It's so important to have the right people helping you along and watching out for you. Many wonderful books do not get the attention they deserve and reach readers who would love them because of the business side of writing.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

It is a combination of both things. I write what I enjoy and feel passionate about, but I always keep in mind what my readers like about my books and try very hard to give them a consistent format and pacing. Readers come to expect certain experiences from each writer they follow and I think it's important to keep them in mind since they are the ones buying the book!

Q: Do you have any upcoming book? What is it about?

My next novel is called American Girl and it will be first published as an Audible Original. Print publication will come at a later date. The Audible format has enabled me to craft the story with some scripted scenes that I think listeners will enjoy. It is the story of a neuro-diverse teenage girl who goes to great lengths to protect the people she loves after a wealthy and ruthless business owner is murdered in their small, rural town.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

This is a wonderful opportunity! Thank you for having me DE MODE.



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amazon BARNES & NOBLE

'ONE HUNDRED DAFFODILS' BY REBECCA WINN

John Muir once said, "When you tug on a single thing in nature, you realize it is connected to everything else." This simple but sage truth is at the heart of *One Hundred Daffodils*, a collection of connected essays inspired by moments that author, naturalist and horticulturist Rebecca Winn, observed during contemplative moments in nature. These moments became deep noticing of the wisdom of nature and combined to give Winn the courage to create an entirely new life for herself at midlife, and complete self-reinvention after the end of her 30-year marriage, and a subsequent devastating relationship with a beguiling younger man. Elegantly written with uncommon honesty, and beautiful, lyrical prose, *One Hundred Daffodils* offers readers the kind of relatable connection that we all hunger for and love to share with each other. It is a book whose words, like those of a trusted friend, are often raw, frequently funny, reliably uplifting, sometimes painfully familiar, and

always vulnerable, honest and wise.

One of the overarching invitations within the pages of *'One Hundred Daffodils'* is to look closely at the world around us, guiding readers to an awareness of nature's power to teach, comfort, and inspire. The book shows us the power of connecting with nature on an energetic, psychological, emotional and spiritual level, and translates those experiences into relatable, inspiring stories of the kind we hunger for and love to share.

Parsed into manageable essay lengths, **'One Hundred Daffodils'** is the kind of book readers return to again and again, and that women give to each other, because we've all been there in one way or another, and there is nothing more powerful and inspiring than the story of someone who has experienced an emotional abyss and emerged in the other side, not always with grace, but eventually into it, which makes it a must-read book for this season.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebecca Winn is the author of *One Hundred Daffodils*; *Finding Beauty, Grace, and Meaning When Things Fall Apart*, which was considered for the National Book Award in 2020 and the Pulitzer Prize in 2021. She is a multiple award-winning landscape designer and floral designer with 39 awards in design, including a LUXE Magazine RED Award (Residential Excellence in Design), and over 300 awards in horticulture. Rebecca is also the creator of the inspirational Facebook blog, *Whimsical Gardens*, which has over half a million devoted followers.

Born in Dallas, Texas, Rebecca's family moved to Europe when she was in first grade, providing her with the opportunity to grow up surrounded by many rich, diverse cultures as well as the majestic, centuries-old gardens of Italy, Scotland and England, which strongly influenced both her garden designs and her writing. Rebecca's eye for nature's beauty and her unique blend of wisdom, insight and humour inspired her to write her first book.



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR REBECCA WINN

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Yes! I didn't know it before, but once *One Hundred Daffodils* sold to a publisher, and I was writing full time, I discovered that I had never felt as much joy with any kind of work before as I did while writing this book. Writing is now my passion!

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

One Hundred Daffodils began as journal entries that I wrote while contemplating in my garden. They began to take form as a book when my best friend, who works in literary publicity and marketing, told me she felt these short essays could be valuable to readers if they were collected together in a book.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Absolutely! I have won many professional awards over the course of my life, and appreciate the recognition of my peers and the industry at large. Sometimes, even being in the running is enough. *One Hundred Daffodils* has been considered for the National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize, which is amazing to me - especially for my first book!

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"When crisis strips away our masks and guides us inside to our authentic selves, the beauty it reveals can be staggering. When we are unmasked, we are vibrant; we are radiant. When we are wholly ourselves, it is holy." ~ excerpted from *I Am Autumn*, in *One Hundred Daffodils*

Q: How does writing brings out the best in you?

Writing helps me explore my personal experiences more deeply, and gives me a vehicle to analyze and understand them. Whenever we examine ourselves and do the internal work to understand why we act and think the way we do, that makes us better, more compassionate people. When we improve ourselves, it's better for us, those around us, and the world.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing is simultaneously private and unprotected. It is intimate and exposed. What inspires me most in the process of writing is the exhilarating feeling of being completely and totally honest - fully and courageously oneself. There is great personal risk in writing for the public to read, but the freedom one feels when having the bravery to tell the truth is enormous.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

I think the biggest traps for aspiring authors are self-criticism and listening to the negative warnings of others. It is easy for people to tell you that you cannot be or do what you want to be or do, but you must not

listen to them. Your life is yours to create, and your dreams are yours to claim.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I am extremely conscious about evidence based research - everything that I write or talk about needs to have an authentic source to make a valid point. Hence, I don't rest until I am sure I have the exact information I need. In terms of time, I keep making notes, collate material that seem connected with what I am planning to write. When I feel I have enough clarity on the content of the book, I start the writing process that can span over a couple of weeks.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly and how do you feel being an author?

I think everyone feels emotions strongly. Some people just do not give their feelings a voice. Those people, in particular, could benefit from the outlet writing provides. However, for a writer to get published, I do believe they must allow their emotions, and also have empathy for others. This is essential for their work to be relatable for readers.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I do not think about what the reader wants when I am writing. I believe that kills authenticity. I write what is in my heart, and trust those words will find their audience.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm delighted and honored to be featured in DE MODE, particularly because *One Hundred Daffodils* was released globally in hardback, as well as e-book and audio, so, fortunately, DE MODE's worldwide audience will have access to my book, no matter where they live!

BOOK REVIEW

"This is not a voice we have heard before. - Rebecca Winn tells the story of her recovery from loss in a tone that is casual and comfortingly conversational yet stunningly eloquent and authentic. Winn's description of working through loss updates the less than helpful and unproven "stages of grief" from decades ago. Grief does not take place in neat simplistic prescribed phases." ~ **Julia Ann Dodson, LCSW.**

ATTITUDES ABOUT SEXUALITY AND AGING



**Sex isn't just for the young.
Research is showing that older
Americans are sexually active.**

The sexuality that's such a big part of our teens and young adulthood has more staying power than younger people usually recognize and can continue to spice things up well into old age. Results from a University of Chicago survey published in 2007 suggested that over half of Americans continue to engage in sexual activities well into their 70s. Now another batch of findings from a survey conducted by researchers at Indiana University suggests that 20% to 30% of long-lived Americans are sexually active into their 80s.

Both of these surveys are cross-sectional — snapshots of behaviour in a given period — so making pronouncements about trends would be getting ahead of the evidence. Still, there's reason to believe that sexuality is assuming a larger role in American old age. Millions of men are now taking erectile dysfunction drugs like sildenafil (Viagra) or tadalafil (Cialis). Growing numbers of Americans are enjoying relatively good health in their 60s, 70s, and 80s, and, not surprisingly, the University of Chicago study found a close association between good health and sexual activity among older people.

Consider also who is getting old these days — the baby boomers, a generation that came of age in the 1960s and '70s when sexual mores were changing, and a demographic group that hangs on to its youthful ways.

But the "frisky seniors" storyline can be overdone. Sexual activity does subside with age. Biological factors tug in that direction, as do social arrangements: older people, especially women, often end up single when a spouse or partner dies. The Indiana University researchers found that sexual activity with a partner is common among those in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, dips significantly for both men and women in their 50s and 60s and then drops further once people enter their 70s.

Old age doesn't preclude sexual activity, although it also doesn't make it any easier. Men experience declines in testosterone, which adversely affects sexual arousal and desire. There are age-related changes to blood vessels and smooth-muscle tissues that can make achieving an erection more difficult. Chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure become more common in old age, and in many men, they adversely affect erections more than any of the strictly age-related changes.



A STATISTICAL PICTURE OF THE SEXUALITY OF OLDER AMERICANS BEGINS TO EMERGE FROM THAT ARTICLE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SURVEY RESULTS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS:

Sexual activity tapers off with age. Both surveys show a decline in sexual activity with age, although the drop-off isn't as steep as one might expect, and a significant minority (especially men) defies the trend. In the Indiana study, 35% of the men age 80 and older reported that they had intercourse with a woman a few times or more in the past year. In the University of Chicago study, 38.5% of the men ages 75 to 85 reported having sexual activity with a partner in the previous year.

Older women are less sexually active than older men. Both studies show that older women — even the "young old," in their 60s — are less sexually active than men of the same age. The gender gap widens as people get older. The University of Chicago researchers noted that the women in their study were less likely than the men to be in a marital or intimate relationship, and even more so with age, presumably because men tend to die at a younger age than women. Differences in the amount of sexual activity that occurs outside of a relationship contribute to the overall gender disparity. In the University of Chicago study, about one in 20 women who were not in a relationship reported being sexually active in the previous year, compared with about one in five men who were not in a relationship.

Partnered sex gets high marks. In the Indiana study, over three-quarters (78%) of the men ages 50 and over rated their most recent sexual experience with a partner as either extremely or "quite a bit" pleasurable. About two-thirds (68.2%) of the women in that age group rated their most recent experience with a partner that highly.

Masturbation is common. Most men (63%) and almost half of women (47%) in the 50 and over age group reported masturbating in the past year, according to the Indiana survey. As with other sexual activities, the percentage declined with age, although a significant number of those 80 and older indicated that they masturbated.

The University of Chicago survey found masturbation to be almost equally common among those in a relationship and those not in one.

Good health matters. The University of Chicago researchers found a strong association between good health and sexual activity, particularly among men. Diabetes seems to have a greater negative effect than either arthritis or high blood pressure on both genders, but especially on women. In the Indiana survey, a woman's evaluation of her last sexual experience did not vary with her self-reported health status.



ARTICLE BY CHEF MESEIDY RIVERA

MAKE DISHES WITH GOOD QUALITY INGREDIENTS & TECHNIQUES

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BE A HOME CHEF

Cooking is a skill that improves and develops over time with practice. No one is a fabulous cook from day one. I learned a lot through trial and error before I went to culinary school. In the beginning, I had a few successes and a ton of failures. I don't want you to struggle and get frustrated as I did, so I have some helpful tips for you.

- **Use herbs and spices:** There is more to seasoning than salt and pepper. Embrace the power of fresh herbs and dried spices! Herbs and spices are magical and essential for adding flavor and depth to any dish. Using herbs and spices takes your taste buds on a culinary adventure.
- **Mise en place:** No, I am not speaking English. *Mise en place* is a French term used in culinary circles that means "putting in place." If you hear some fancy foodie say that they got their *mise* ready, it means that all ingredients have been gathered and prepped for cooking.
- **Take care of your knives:** A sharp knife is everything. There is no tool more important in the kitchen than a good knife. It makes your time in the kitchen easier, more efficient, and, believe it or not, a sharp knife is safer. A dull knife is a dangerous knife because the force needed to make a dull knife cut makes you more likely to injure yourself than if you used a sharp knife. There are a few important tips for caring for your knives. First, do not put your knives in the dishwasher. The heat from the dishwasher will dull the knives.
- **Read the recipe:** Reading the recipe through is especially important if you're a new cook. Process and technique matter and to successfully execute a dish, it's important to know what to expect and not miss a step. There is nothing more frustrating than needing a dish to be ready in 30 minutes and realizing that something has to marinate or cool for an hour. Reading a recipe first all the way through will help you avoid a lot of frustration and make cooking a positive experience.
- **Salt:** Salt is a natural flavor enhancer and can pull out amazing flavors from the simplest recipe. If you're using iodized table salt, consider switching to kosher salt. Kosher has a cleaner flavor, and the large flakes make it more difficult to over-salt.
- **Taste as you go:** Flavors change and develop as you cook. For example, something may get saltier as moisture evaporates, or the dish may lose acid the longer it cooks. It's important to taste as you go so you'll know if you need more salt.
- **Temper your protein:** Normally, the term *tempered* is applied to adding something hot to eggs, but it's also important to do it with your proteins. Before cooking, leave your protein out on the counter for 10–15 minutes to take off some of the chills. Tossing cold protein into a hot skillet causes it to seize, which results in a tough steak or cut of meat. Leaving it out for a bit helps the protein cook more evenly, keeping it tender and juicy.
- **Dry your protein for a good sear:** Pat your protein dry with a clean towel or paper towel before adding it to a hot skillet. If a protein is wet when added to a hot skillet, it will steam instead of sear.
- **Rest your protein:** I know you're hungry but give that protein a minute to rest. It's been working hard to become delicious. When protein cooks, all of the juices bubble and boil on the inside. If you cut into it right after taking it off the heat, those bubbling juices will pour right out. Give that steak time to rest so the juices calm down and redistribute into the protein.



CHEF MESEIDY RIVERA

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT | COOKBOOK REVIEWS | PHOTOGRAPHY & FOOD STYLING

She is the creator, cook, and photographer from the recipe website *The Noshery*, where you will find recipes that are always from scratch, ideas inspired by her travels, and cooking techniques she learned along her journey from home-cook to chef.

Chef Meseidy is a graduate of Platt College Culinary Arts Institute who has worked in restaurants, catering, and freelance recipe development. She is the author of *Weeknight Gourmet Dinners: Exciting, Elevated Meals Made Easy*. Her dishes are influenced by her life as a former military brat, restaurant experience, and Puerto Rican roots. She focuses on pairing interesting ingredients together and is always on a mission to create the perfect bite for you to recreate at home.

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