



Publishing

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“Two of Hearts” Author Melissa Lawson’s Q&A

Q: Where are you from?

A: I was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA but attended high school in Fayetteville, NC.

Q: When and why did you begin writing?

A: I started writing when I was a child. I used to write journal entries, short stories and poems. I graduated to more creative works while in college at North Carolina Central University. I wrote a poem called “Were You There”, chronically my experience at the Million Woman March in 1998. It was published in the “Ex Umbra”, which was our literary magazine on campus.

Q: When did you first consider yourself a writer?

A: I started a relationship blog four years ago called “My Relationship Reality” and my blog followers encouraged me to write a book because of the imagery in my blog posts.

Q: What inspired you to write your first book?

A: Three years ago I was inspired to write about a common theme that kept coming up amongst my friends, family and blog followers, which was, getting over a lost love. I have a music playlist of love songs that I was listening to and it actually inspired most of the book.

Q: Do you have a specific writing style?

A: I am a very descriptive writer. I believe in setting the scene for the readers to make them feel like they are inside of the story. I want them to visualize the characters and feel their emotions as they read.

Q: How did you come up with the title?

A: The title came from the story really. The main character, Kyla, has given her heart to two different men and she is making a huge gamble on the outcome.

Q: Is there a message in your novel that you want readers to grasp?

A: Keeping secrets and telling lies is not a good way to conduct a relationship for anybody.

Q: How much of the book is realistic?

A: Most of the book is very realistic.

Q: Are experiences based on someone you know, or events in your own life?

A: Some of the book is based on events that has happened to myself or others that I know but embellished of course.

Q: If you have to choose someone from Hollywood to play the main characters of your book, who would they be?

A: Kyla would be played by Denise Vasi because she seems like Kyla in my mind. Vincent would be played by Nate Parker. He has the look that I described. Sal would be played by Jesse Williams, he needs to be sexy and irresistible on screen.

Q: What books have most influenced your life most?

A: The book I remember reading the most when I was in college was “Flyy Girl” by Omar Tyree. He was the first fiction author that I got into because of his writing style and I read nearly all of his books.

Q: If you had to choose, which writer would you consider a mentor?

A: Kimberla Lawson Roby would be my writing mentor in my head. She has an awesome collection of books and they are well received by her fans.

Q: What book are you reading now?

A: “A House Divided” by Kimberla Lawson Roby

Q: What are your current projects?

A: My fans want a sequel to “Two of Hearts” so I’ve already begun working on it.

Q: Name one entity that you feel supported you outside of family members.

A: I had a focus group of readers who read along with me throughout the writing process and they are been in my corner for the last three years.

Q: Do you see writing as a career?

A: Yes, I can see myself being a writer.

Q: If you had to do it all over again, would you change anything in your latest book?

A: No. Based on the feedback, I think this book is fine the way that it is.

Q: Is there anything you find particularly challenging in your writing?

A: The most challenging thing for me is making sure that I am being true to the emotions of the characters when they are put in a vulnerable position. I have to channel their emotions so I almost have to put myself in the story.

Q: Who designed the covers?

A: Kari Ayasha from Cover to Cover Designs.

Q: What was the hardest part of writing your book?

A: The hardest part of writing was the intimate scenes between the characters. I didn’t want to cross over into erotica so I was careful not to go too far but it got pretty steamy at times.

Q: Why did you choose to self-publish?

A: I chose to self-publish because I wanted all of the creative control over my project. I also wanted to start my own publishing company for a while so I created Mother Pearl Publishing. I can now publish other writers in addition to my own works.

Q: Do you have any advice for other writers?

A: Don’t be afraid to travel into taboo territory. When you feel like you’re getting writers block, put the book down and come back to it later. Get inspired by music, it helped me write.

Q: Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?

A: Thank you for your support and I hope you enjoy the book as much as I do.

Q: How can we contact you?

A: You can find me on Facebook under Melissa Lawson, Follow my publishing company on Facebook at Mother Pearl Publishing. Follow me on Twitter @mlawsoninspires and visit www.motherpearlpublishing.com.