

AUTHOR Q&A



Beyond the Broken by Sharisse Kimbro

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SHARISSA KIMBRO, *BEYOND THE BROKEN*

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- 1. IN YOUR WORDS, WHAT'S YOUR BOOK ABOUT?** In short, the book is about what happens when the life you planned for isn't the life you get. It explores what is really going on behind the mask of 'no worries' and 'too blessed to be stressed' that so many women (particularly African-American women) wear. These themes are shared through the friendship of five women who are college friends from Stanford and who have each achieved some level of success, but each have found some aspect of their lives lacking. Whether it is a baby that won't come, a lost job, a marriage that is fading away, motherhood that is overwhelming, or singlehood that is lonely...each of the women have experienced loss, pain, hurt and disappointment. And as more and more secrets are revealed, so is the beauty that lies beyond the broken.
- 2. WHERE DID YOU GET THE IDEA FOR *BEYOND THE BROKEN*?** I was inspired by the seminal Langston Hughes poem, "A Dream Deferred." After having what I call a 'mirror moment' — a moment when you look at yourself in the mirror and do not recognize the reflection staring back at you. My life was riddled with disappointment, and I wondered what happens when the life you planned for isn't the life you expect, or what happens to a dream deferred?
- 3. DO YOU SHARE ANY TRAITS WITH THE CHARACTERS IN YOUR BOOK?** There is a little bit of me in each of the five characters in the book. In one way or another, I have shared feelings of isolation, loneliness, despair, hopelessness, anger, betrayal, frustration, being overwhelmed, etc.
- 4. DID ANY OF YOUR INSPIRATION FOR THIS BOOK ORIGINATE IN YOUR REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES?** As in all fiction, my life experiences informed and shaped my perspective and some anecdotal moments in the book are real. I also pulled from the stories of other women of all races and ages that have experienced loss, dashed hopes and shattered expectations, but like me, have endeavored to discover the goodness and wholeness when we find the strength to rise above the brokenness.
- 5. WHY DID YOU SELF-PUBLISH?** I tried the traditional route, but I decided to self-publish — with the help of Open Books Editions — because I realized that I didn't need anyone's permission to tell my story and the stories of women like me — African-American, accomplished and still hurting. And when I discovered that the lion's share of the marketing and publicity rests with the author either way, I was even more motivated to do my own thing. With the revolutionary changes in the publishing world, there's just so much more opportunity in self-publishing.
- 6. DO YOU HAVE ANOTHER PROJECT IN THE WORKS?** I am working on the sequel to *Beyond the Broken*. In the meantime, my work with *Beyond the Broken* is just beginning. The early response has been so powerful and positive, it has just been overwhelming. I hope that as the characters uncover their respective truths, readers — men and women alike — will connect with their own truth and be inspired.

About Sharisse Kimbro

Sharisse Kimbro earned a BA in English and an MA in Sociology from Stanford University in addition to a law degree from the University of Michigan. She has enjoyed a successful career in the public and private sectors but never lost her passion for putting life into words. She resides in Chicago with her family.

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