

The Write Life for You series
presents...

Authors on Self-Publishing

Advice from Four Authors in the
Game: Sammie Ward, King Dhakir,
Electa Rome Parks, and Tamika
Newhouse

The Write Life for You is a series of articles and commentaries on writing written by author, editor, and educator Shon Bacon and published at APOOO Book Club [<http://www.apoobooks.com/>].

Many writers—once they have a strong, well-developed, and edited manuscript—decide to self-publish instead of seeking a deal with a traditional publishing house. And that's great, but new writers who are at that stage of deciding if self-publishing is the route for them should stop and seriously think about the time and energy that is involved in the process.

For this article, I called upon some lit friends of mine—Sammie Ward, King Dhakir, Electa Rome Parks, and Tamika Newhouse—to offer sound, *real* advice to those looking to self-publish. Each of these authors has started his or her literary career through self-publishing; some have gone on to traditional publishing success and some have stayed within the independent halls of self-publishing and have developed their own publishing houses that now successfully sell their *and* others' works.

Across the board, these authors will tell you that self-publishing is not for the faint of heart, but it is doable if you are determined, if you have a plan, and if you have the drive to administer the plan.

Shon

~~~~~

# Sammie Ward

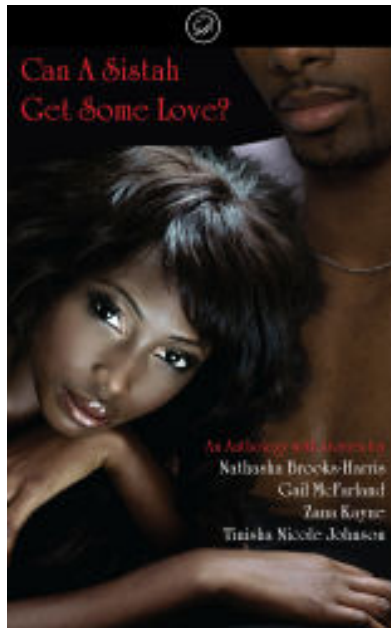


Sammie Ward is an author and entrepreneur; she is the founder and publisher of Lady Leo Publishing. The latest book to be released from LLP is *Can a Sistah Get Some Love?*

**LLP:** <http://ladyleopublishing.org>

**Book Info:** <http://www.ladyleopublishing.org/CanASistahGetSomeLove-Antology.html>

~~~~~



About *Can a Sistah Get Some Love?*

If you're in love with true romance, you'll love the four great stories in the romantic anthology, *Can A Sistah Get Some Love?*

In Nathasha Brooks-Harris' "Arctic Love Call," teacher Ava Chantrelle Wellbourne is through with living in Brooklyn and seeking a change in life and location. On a whim, she answers an ad to teach in all places, Alaska. She's determined to keep her mind on nothing but her new job, but even Ava can't deny snuggling up with Zachary Blackmon on those cold winter nights is just what her heart needs.

In Tinisha Nicole Johnson's, "For Love or Success," successful career woman Jasmine Carter is a woman who dates nothing but white-collared men. But after a string of short-lived relationships, she decides enough is enough until she meets Kevin Matthews. Jasmine doesn't want to admit her feelings for him, because in her mind, the men she dates must have high profile careers. However, it comes to a point where she can no longer deny her feelings. But will love be enough for her to take the chance?

In the blink of an eye, 40-year-old Kayla Powell, the heroine of Zana Kayne's, "A Taste for Love," goes from being downsized from her corporate executive position and losing her cheating boyfriend in one day; to being the inheritor of Tasty Kakes, an upscale bakery. When Kayla finds herself a victim of a robbery, young and handsome detective Clay Weston is sent to investigate the crime, but she's more interested in investigating him. Can she give him a taste of true love?

~~~~~

In Gail McFarland's, "The Twentieth Century Fox," Margie Wilson is definitely a woman of her time. When her husband makes a break for freedom, Margie decides that her time is now. She's determined to transform a new inner and outer self. When she wins a gym membership, personal trainer Justin Gray has his work cut out for him. Is he ready for Margie, The New Twentieth Century Fox?

## Advice from Sammie Ward

**Determination** – If self-publishing is something that you really want to do, you have to be determined to follow through. It's a hard and tedious job to do since you are doing all of the work that a major publishing company does: Bookkeeper, Publicist, Marketer, Printer, Graphic Artist, Editor, etc., etc.

**Learn the Business** – As a self-publisher, you are the company; therefore, you have to learn the business side of publishing. No one is going to see your product/s if you don't do what it takes to get them noticed. Learn what channels it takes to get the titles reviewed, do print interviews, book signings, do radio interviews, get a website, emails blast, reach out to bookstores about consignments to place your books on their shelves, send out a newsletter, mailings. If you have a blog, promote! I can't touch enough on Promotion! Promotion! Promotion!

**Stick with It** – I applaud anyone who writes a novel. You don't know how many times people approach me and say, "I always wanted to write a novel." I know with our everyday lives, it difficult some times to find time to write. But you have to do it, even if you only do a page a day. You can squeeze in a page by getting up an hour early. If you have a job, do a page or two during your lunch break. It can be done by rearranging your schedule. So if you're serious about starting or finishing up that novel, it can be done...just stick with it. Who knows where it may lead to.

~~~~~

King Dhakir



The Man, The King, The Gentleman

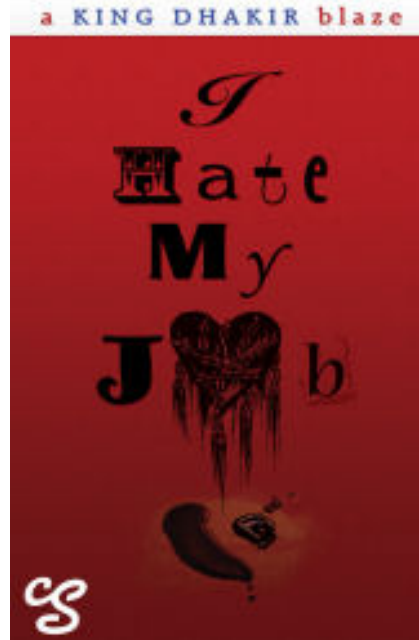
King Dhakir (pronounced Dha-kear) blazes “edutainment” in literature and music that sparks the mind of those who come across his work. Whether through songs or books, he strives to not only educate, but also provide the pleasure of learning through comedy, drama, history, and other forms of writing. The Chicago native pushes emotions from his work which seeps through the feelings of listeners and readers as he takes you to a journey that touches the five senses and various stages of consciousness.

As a music artist, the no nonsense MC sparks the inevitable gift of a true lyricist. Chi-Skilz, short for “Chicago Skills, is his performing name, and has performed across the Tri-State area. He’d developed a love for music by experiencing basement parties in the early 90’s, and listening to his sister’s collection of vinyl records on turntables.

Releasing a music video in the summer of 2006, and two albums in 2005 and 2006 (Sun of a Field Negro EP and Charismatic Superfly, respectively), he would later work on his debut novel I Hate My Job in late-November of 2007.

I Hate My Job is now available @ <http://www.kingdhakir.com>, as the King prepares to serve another dish of that “feel good” to take readers for the ride of their lives.

~~~~~



## About *I Hate My Job*

Surviving while earning scraps and living under the roofs of others, Justice King is a college graduate who struggles with finding his calling in life. Unruly customers, demanding managers and sophomoric co-workers push his patience to the edge while he earns a steady pay-check that only lasts until the next. He faces the challenge of steering away from the temptation of fast money and success as he thinks about the future once rent and property increases evict long-time residents from their homes. As smiles and laughter come in the form of side hustles, skirt chasing, and passing jokes with a close friend, the temporary high outside the workplace is what keeps his mind from exploding. The story of *I Hate My Job* is the vision of people who inspire to live the life of their choice with the sacrifice of getting out their dreams and creating their own vision. It's the story of laughs, cries, pain, and joy, and the battle of lifting the spirits of the inner self.

**Author's website:** <http://www.kingdhakir.com/orderbook.htm>

**Amazon.com:** [http://www.amazon.com/I-Hate-My-Job-novel/dp/1564115046/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1259629072&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/I-Hate-My-Job-novel/dp/1564115046/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1259629072&sr=8-1)

~~~~~

Advice from King Dhakir

Peace to all,

At first I was inclined to drop some game about various writing techniques that may be useful to you. I changed that though because what works for me may not work for you as I study writing as a science more so than an art.

I would rather give you something that's more relatable to everyone across the board, especially for newbies and aspiring authors.

If you wanna check out writing lessons from yours truly, hit up my website @ <http://www.kingdhakir.com> and click the **“Writing Lessons”** link to check out some tricks you can use.

By the way, the name's King Dhakir...the greatest writer you didn't know, but NOW you do.

smile

Let me start off with three points to make your road to success a smooth ease on cruise control.

No Love for the Locals – If you're an author on the up and up, don't get discouraged when folks favor well known authors over you. It's human nature that the majority are more willing to take a shot at familiarity over something that's a stranger to them.

It doesn't help that a lot of new authors are throwing dirt in the game by releasing garbage material, which in turn places you in the stereotype of a new author who's writing just to say, “I wrote a book.”

However, there are also folks more than willing to support new authors. You just have to find them, and lock down your fan base by providing them with knock out material.

Always have a notepad with names and email addresses to put in your database to keep up with your supporters at signings or any other event.

Once you have a strong fan base matched with a killer buzz, sky's the limit. It's all on you.

Biters are Losers – Cookie cutter material is the easy way out. I don't understand why authors copy blueprints instead of creating their own. Then again, not everybody is creative.

~~~~~

Standing out is the sure way to build a legacy. If you follow others, then who'll copy YOU? Not only that, if you follow fads and trends just because it's "easy money," then best believe you'll get lost in the sauce once the popularity of that genre dies down. Too much circulation usually breeds self-extinction.

I wish writers would stop copying what's "hot" and just bang out what comes from the HEART. Let's take a look at Jay Z for an example.

Folks weren't paying attention to Jay when he rapped with that Speedy Gonzales flow with Original Flavor. He was basically rapping like Das EFX and Fu Schnickens, popular rap groups at the time with the tongue twisting style. Record labels turned Jay down left and right, and he almost went back to hustling on the block. Instead of crying over spilt milk, he regrouped, changed his style, slowed down his flow, and dropped Reasonable Doubt, which is an album about guess what? HIMSELF, and the album is considered a Hip-Hop classic.

Fast forward to a decade and some change later, he's arguably the most successful Hip-Hop artist of all-time, had created trends for folks to follow, is worth about a half of billion dollars, and is one of the most powerful figures in the music industry. Not to mention he's STILL dropping platinum albums as a 40 year old. The moral of this short story is...DO YOU!

**Stop Asking for Handouts** – The truth is other authors don't owe you spit, literally and figuratively.

We live in the Internet age, which means you can find out just about anything with the click of a button.

I negotiated my printing deal just by browsing the net and doing my own research. The time and energy is priceless, and worth it. Why rely solely on lawyers and agents when you can find the knowledge yourself? The knowledge is the life saver to know whether you're getting cheated by folks who supposedly have your back.

If you can chat on social sites for hours and play games on them, then you shouldn't have an excuse to cut corners in regards to learning the basics of the publishing business. Knowledge is everywhere, and you have to seek the jewels.

Instead of focusing on authors helping you out, focus on the THREE groups of people below to help your movement:

- 1) The Media - press
- 2) The Public – promoting
- 3) Book stores – book your OWN signings

Enuff said. Peace and Afro Grease -King

~~~~~

Electa Rome Parks

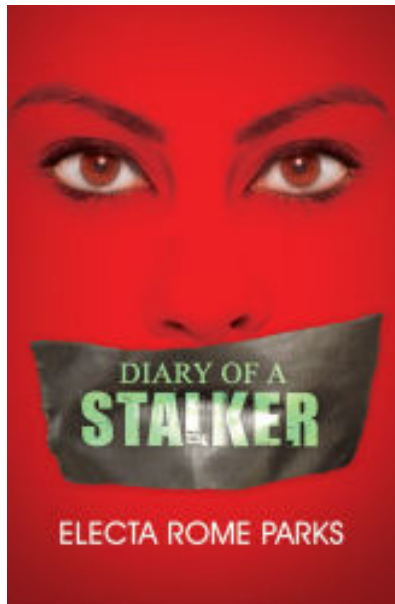


Electa Rome Parks currently resides outside Atlanta, Georgia. After successfully self-publishing her debut novel, *The Ties That Bind*, New American Library, a division of Penguin Group, bought the rights. Electa signed a three-book deal with New American Library. All three books were immediately chosen as Black Expressions Book Club main selections and embraced as Books of the Month by book clubs across the country. Dubbed a “book club favorite,” avid readers have embraced Electa’s true to life characters that tackle prevalent and heavy hitting issues.

Since then Electa has become a bestselling author of several other mainstream (*Loose Ends* and *Almost Doesn’t Count*) and erotic (*These Are My Confessions* and *Ladies’ Night Out*) novels with Penguin Group and HarperCollins. The self-proclaimed, Queen of Real, Electa has been a frequent guest on radio shows, has been nominated for many industry awards and has been interviewed by newspapers, AOL’s Black Voices, Vibe Vixen, Upscale Magazine, Today’s Black Woman, Rolling Out and Booking Matters, to name just a few. With a BA degree in marketing and a minor in sociology, she is following her true passion and working on her next novel.

~~~~~

To find out when and where Electa will be in your area, check out her **website** or her **MySpace** page. To share your thoughts with Electa regarding her work or to schedule an event, please e-mail her at **[novelideal@aol.com](mailto:novelideal@aol.com)**.



### **About *Diary of a Stalker***

Xavier Preston is tall, dark and handsome and the problem is that he knows it. He's a best-selling author who is accustomed to adoring female fans, both young and old, flirting with him, throwing themselves shamelessly at him and trying to get between more than the covers of his novels. And he has always been more than willing to accommodate their needs and desires. However, his womanizing days have finally ended. . . he's engaged to a beautiful woman, Kendall, and he's decided to walk the straight and narrow. Or has he?

From outside appearances, the very stunning Pilar has it all---a great career, a beautiful home and a trust fund that keeps her financially secure. However, looks can be deceiving. All that glitters isn't gold. Pilar is searching for her one, perfect soul mate. And she thinks she has found him in Xavier. She believes in going after what she wants with a vengeance. . . and she wants Xavier. And that is not negotiable.

When Xavier meets his fanatical fan, Pilar, who declares herself his #1 fan, he gets much more than he bargained for. What starts out as a one-night stand quickly spirals out of control and into a dangerous game of obsession and pain with both parties playing to win.

~~~~~

Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/Diary-Stalker-Urban-Renaissance-Electa/dp/160162199X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1263412554&sr=8-1

Advice from Electa Rome Parks

Initially, I used self-publishing as a vehicle to position my product, gain reader feedback, build my readership base, establish a sales record, learn the industry and key players and hopefully, in the process, garner the attention of an agent/publishing house. I accomplished all of these goals through self-publishing.

Yes, I would definitely do self-publishing over in a New York minute! For me, self-publishing was like being in the trenches; I worked my butt off and learned such valuable lessons. Now, as a mainstream author, I can appreciate it all the more.

Below are three pieces of advice I think are vital for anyone serious about going into self-publishing:

Huge commitment – Self-publishing is a major commitment, and you should treat it as such. It will utilize your time, energy and money. And to be truly successful as a self-published author, you have to fully expect to give wholeheartedly of all three. There cannot be any half-stepping or half-commitment; you will get out of it, what you put into it.

Treat it as a business – Once you make the important decision to self-publish, you enter the realm of becoming an entrepreneur. You will wear many hats from publicist, marketing guru, bill collector, coordinator, editor, etc. during your venture. Go in with a concrete business and marketing plan in place. Have a vision, know your short and long term goals. Know your target audience and market. Be informed and most of all be professional.

This is your business and your product (book) represents who and what you are as an author. It can literally make you or break you.

Research - don't delve into it blindly – Again, self-publishing is a major commitment and lots of hard work. Do your research! There is no excuse not to because there are hundreds of books on the subject that can provide valuable information that can ultimately save you time, errors and major headaches.

~~~~~

Beware! Self-publishing is not for everyone. You do not want to rush blindly into it only to find out you don't have the time, energy or money to see it through. It's too late to decide it is not for you when you have 5,000 books stored in your garage waiting for you to do something with them. Do your homework!

~~~~~

Tamika Newhouse



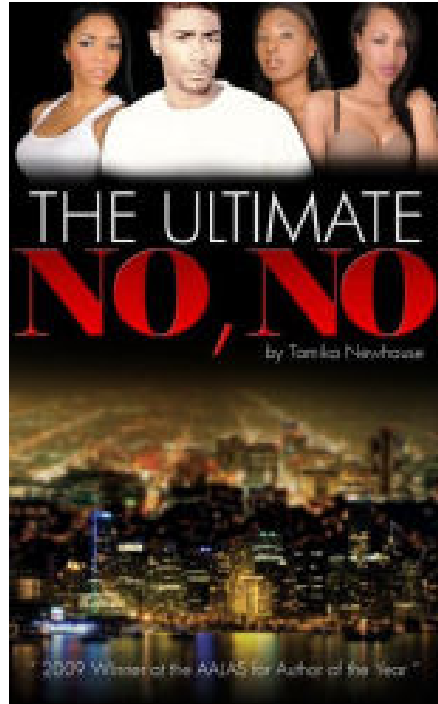
Tamika Newhouse is the Best Selling author of *The Ultimate No No*. She is also known as the creator and President of African Americans on the Move Book Club, which is an online book club catering to avid readers across the nation. In March 2009 Tamika was announced the Woman of the Year by Alive Magazine and nominated as Best Radio Personality by the Black Book Clubs Rock Awards. African American Literary Awards awarded her as Self Published Author of the Year in less than a year after the release of her first novel.

She is currently the CEO of Delphine Publications and has the vision of building a powerful company. She can be heard on the syndicated AAMBC Radio, where she interviews new and seasoned authors. The show showcases many of the authors' talents and their current projects.

Tamika created the national tour group called Literary Sistahs, where she and authors tour all over the nation. She is currently living in San Antonio with her husband, son, and daughter. She released her second book *The Ultimate Moment No Regrets* in September 2009 and is currently working on her third novel, *Cookie: A Fort Worth Story*. She plans to release her fourth novel, *Will Love Ever Know Me* next spring.

You can learn more about Tamika by checking out her official website, <http://tamikanewhouse.com>.

~~~~~



## About *The Ultimate No, No*

When Dahlia decides to get even with a man, named Troy, who broke her heart she thinks of a master plan. To her dismay after asking Nitrah, her best friend to help her get even, she falls in love with Troy. Not only does this cause a huge rift, the ladies must soon face the fact that they both have lied and their secrets will unveil. Troy thinks he has finally found true love with Nitrah but what will happen when he finds out their relationship is based on a lie. This novel includes, love, sex, deceit, and betrayal. Five characters tell the story as they see it. Learn what *The Ultimate NO NO* is when it comes to love.

*The Ultimate No, No* can be purchased at Delphine Publications,  
[www.delphinepublications.com](http://www.delphinepublications.com).

~~~~~

Advice from Tamika Newhouse

Know Your Business – No one who is going into a new industry should be ignorant to the business. You must continue to research different elements from the book quality, importance of editing, how to market, and etc.

Go Beyond Cyberspace – You cannot be successful by just advertising online. Build events around your book and get out there in the public and perform book signings. Also know and remember no one is going to promote you more than you, so invest in yourself. As long as you never give up, your investment will never go sour.

Compete with the Big Boys – You must look and compete with mainstream publishers. They already have a foundation, so for you to even have a chance of success you must look the part. Your book must be of great quality. You must have availability on your books, and most of all you must get out there and promote.

~~~~~

## About Shon Bacon



**Shon Bacon is an author, editor, and educator – all of which connects with her being a true wordsmith.**

As an author, she has published both in the creative and academic arenas. Shon loves writing about strong yet flawed women who learn to love themselves despite the flaws. And if they're lucky, they learn to love someone else, too. In 2001, Strebtor Books/Simon & Schuster released Shon's co-authored novel, LuvAlways: The Opposite Sex & Relationships. It was followed with 2003's Draw Me with Your Love. In 2004, Shon's short story "1-800-Hot-Talk" was featured in the popular anthology, Chocolate Flava. Shon marks 2005-2007 as her "academic" years as she contributed and co-edited three academic textbooks that are currently being used as the official textbooks for freshman composition at the university where she taught. In 2008, Shon returned to creative publication with three stories published through Lady Leo Publishing: Connections, Got Til It's Gone, and Under the Mistletoe. In 2010, Shon's debut solo novel, Death at the Double Inkwell will be released.

In 2007, Shon moved into a past love – screenwriting. With her very first script, she was a 2007 quarterfinalist of the PAGE International Screenwriting Award Competition for her TV pilot, Running from Miss Right, a miniseries. In 2008, she was a finalist of the WILDsound One-Page Screenplay Competition for her script Burdens, and in 2009, her feature screenplay, The Problem with Being Happy made it through the first round of the PAGE International Screenwriting Award Competition. Currently, she's writing several feature-length and short scripts for competitions and representation.

~~~~~

Not only does Shon work with her own words, but she's also very dedicated to helping others achieve their literary goals through her editing and columns at various online sites.

As an editor, Shon edits manuscripts for individual clients and small publishing houses. Through her Writers Boot Camp, she helps new writers move from story idea to story outline in 28 days.

As an educator, Shon taught freshman composition, developmental writing, Writing for Radio/TV, Introduction to Mass Communication, and Media Writing at McNeese State University in Louisiana. Occasionally, she still teaches fiction writing and fiction workshop through their continuing education department.

Currently, Shon is in Lubbock, TX, where she is pursuing her Ph.D. in Technical Communication and Rhetoric at Texas Tech University.

You can learn more about Shon by visiting her official website [<http://shonbacon.com>] and her editorial website, CLG Entertainment [<http://clg-entertainment.com>].

~~~~~