

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For E. Marie Sanders

- *Why did you write the book (TKA)?* I wrote my book primarily to encourage my students to read, something that very few do now. The types of students I had would not think of reading a whole book, but they told me that if I wrote a book similar to the stories that I shared in class to help them understand the skill I needed to teach, they would read the book. On another level, I wrote to minister how youth and young adults don't have to succumb to the pressures of sex even after having sex before. It bothers me that teens and young adults just think that sex is an automatic thing in a relationship.
- *What will the reader get out of it?* It is my hope that youth and adults alike will get the idea that pre-marital sex, does not have to be a requirement of a social relationship. I want readers to know that self-control can keep them out of trouble. I think there are too many stories out there that display that we should give into our desires and indulge in whatever we want to at the moment. Where are the stories for those who want to hold off from sex but have to deal with a sexual past? Where are the stories where lusts don't dictate what a person does? There are a few out there, but they are outnumbered by the pieces that promote sex.
- *Why is this book relevant?* I know it hasn't gotten any easier since I graduated, so I know there's a host of others that need something to relate to, such as this story. Indeed, the subject is a passion of mine, especially withholding from pre-marital sex after experiencing sex because I know it can be done - but it's hard denying your body what it craves, what it desires, what it longs for, and people/ literature/the arts just need to learn to be real about it. It's not a preachy book- I didn't set my characters up in that way. However, the Word is slipped in every once in awhile with the hopes that it will compel the reader if he/she is in the situation. Sexual scenes were dealt with sensitively, but I think they're realistic enough to paint the picture without making readers want to run out and "do it!"
- *How did you get into writing?* Another reason I started writing period has to do with the literature/classics that we teach in school. I appreciate what's included in most standard high school state curriculums. However, the average student who is not thinking about college, who does not have a clue about the difference between a Montague and a Capulet, gets into the classics. It takes an extraordinary teacher to pull rival gang members into reading Romeo and Juliet in the same classroom and get them to see the result of the fighting families and have them apply it to their situation. I did it for 12 years... but I also told them stories of things that happened to me in high school and college. Of course, I used dramatics to draw them into the stories, but all were authentic and true. One day, one of my students told me (in addition that I need to go to Hollywood and become an actress!), "Mrs. Sanders, you should write books. I don't even like to read, and I'd buy your books!" What a push that was! If I remember correctly, I went home and wrote that night clear through the next morning... and I took the next day off from work. I finished the first part of *To K(no)w Avail* that quickly and decided to start using what I wrote as lessons for writing in the classroom and to teach critical literary elements my students had to master for the state test. In the beginning, I had no idea how the story would shape up, but eventually, it evolved into what it is now.
- *What inspires you?* The students I had the privilege to teach inspire me. The youth I get the chance to minister to on a weekly basis inspire me. God, who gives me all of my ideas and drives me to do all that I do, inspires me. Real life situations that plague our communities inspire me.
- *Where do you get your ideas?* It is realistic fiction. From both my own experience and the experiences of others mixed with a large amount of imagination, I know it's hard to live a life for Christ and still deal with wanting to have sex from both the guy and girl's perspective (most people think it's just from the guy's perspective, but not so in my book!).
- *What distinguishes your book from others?* This book is written from two different first person point of views instead of a third person omniscient or singular first person point of view; that way, the reader sees two sides of one story. There may be times where it seems a little redundant, but the different viewpoints put a spin on the same story.

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- How do you want readers to perceive your book? **I want readers to perceive this book as a piece of realistic fiction, where the very same story may be happening to someone they know down the street!**
- Provide a description of your book's theme. **The theme of my book addresses the urges within physical attraction that often conflict with Christian standards of purity. It also explores a young adult's relationship between a boy/girlfriend and God. Like I said before, it's not a preachy book, but I hope that it will minister to the reader if he/she is in the situation.**
- Describe your target audience by such factors as age group, interest, education, gender, etc.: **My target audience was 16 to 30 year olds, those who may be able to reminisce about their college years, and any Christian who may experience similar struggles of the main characters. In the initial months of its publication, though, I've learned not to be surprised at the demographics of the novel's readers! I have 75 year-old plus women enjoying as well as twenty-something guys! It's not written on a level that would be specific to any level of education.**