

A BSB Interview With Gabrielle Goldsby

by Connie Ward, Bold Strokes Books Publicist/Author Liaison

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What made you decide to become a fiction writer?

I've always been a storyteller. My father likes to tell stories, so I suppose I got it from him. But I began to want to be a writer after reading several Nancy Drew books. When I learned that the series was available in several different languages all over the world I was enthralled. It never occurred to me to write my stories down until then. I had to find fan fiction years later before my dream became reality, but I would have to credit Nancy Drew and the equally fictitious Carolyn Keene for showing me the possibility.

What type of stories do you write? And why?

I write both romance and suspense/thriller stories centering on lesbian relationships. I devour both romance and suspense fiction regularly, so I simply write what I'd like to read.

What do your family/friends think about your writing?

My friends are very supportive of my endeavors. Life is too short to surround yourself with people who don't respect your craft. Family can be a totally different story. You can't just make new family. I, however, have been very lucky. My mother and father are extremely supportive. My mom attended an autograph session recently and my father has sold at least a dozen or so of my books to his friends—a fact that I try not to think about too closely. My parents tell me often how proud they are of me for becoming a published author, but they are no more proud of me than I am of them for being two loving, kind, and progressive individuals.

Where do you get your ideas?

I get my ideas from lots of different places. If I write an embarrassing scene in a book, more than likely it's happened to me. Trust me on this, if you have ever tripped and fallen on your face in front of an attractive woman, there is nothing like putting it in a book to exorcise the memory. I have also gotten ideas while writing a totally unrelated book. I have had to remove whole storylines because they overpower the main one. When I'm looking for new ideas to pitch to my publisher, I go through those snippets to see if they would make a good book.

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How do you write; do you plan everything out or just write?

I have done both. In a perfect world, I would skip down to my office every morning and write brilliant prose about women loving women. After four books and several short stories, it doesn't come that easily anymore. Now I do a hybrid of plotting—complete with character bios (this is very necessary for suspense or stories with a mystery subplot) to writing as the story comes to me. Plotting is a lot easier on the nerves, but letting the story unfold is a lot more fun for me.

What makes *Such a Pretty Face* special to you?

They're all special but SAPF started out with a question that writers are only now starting to answer. Why are all fictional characters perfect? Don't get me wrong. I love looking, reading, and even writing about beautiful women, but since when did women above a size 10 get excluded from that club?

I spent most of my life as an overweight adult. I couldn't tell you how many times someone told me that I had "Such a Pretty Face," as if the other bits of me weren't so nice to look at. I'm not angry, nor do I regret that period in my life. I had, and still have, the very same partner I had 120 pounds ago. True love should have no gender, size, or color constraints. Those are the stories I want to tell.

How much of yourself and the people you know are in your characters?

My books are full of people I wish I knew. My characters are often my dreams and fantasies. I used to say that they weren't me, but of course to a very small degree, they would have to be. My characters are usually born from a fear that I have, or a desire unfulfilled, but by the time I'm done filling in their backgrounds and upbringings, their reactions are often very different from mine.

Which is your favorite among the books/stories you've written? Why?

I wrote a short story called "Best of My Life" for the *Romance for Life* anthology. The story was written as a letter from one partner to another. I really feel the story reads exactly like I meant for it to. Believe it or not, that doesn't always happen for me.

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Which lesbian authors inspired you the most? Do you have a favorite of this author(s)?

It would be impossible for me to answer this question without sounding like I'm doing some serious butt kissing, so let me answer it by explaining what my favorite author does and what I aspire to do in my fiction.

Some of the first lesbian fiction that I ever read created a yearning in me that I had never experienced when reading fiction. A desire to know what happened to the characters after the story that I was peeping in on ended. I wanted to know that they were all right and I wanted to hear more of their story. After I read that book and then several others, I had the answer to what constituted a good book and a great writer.

Do you have any suggestions for new writers?

I have two suggestions, actually. First a new writer, all writers, in fact, have to get the story down on paper, computer, recorder, toilet paper, whatever, just get it down in its messy glory. Second, you must finish the story, ie: type "The end". Sounds easy, doesn't it?

When you're not writing what do you do for fun?

I love lifting weights, hiking, and camping. I lift at least five out of seven days a week. I don't get the chance to hike and camp as much as I used to, but it is wonderful for the creative process. It forces me out of my box and often helps when I'm stuck.



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