

# FRANCES MENSAH WILLIAMS

## Readers'

# BOOK CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 4 | March 2020 |



## WELCOME DEAR READER!

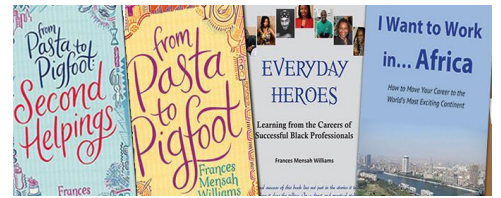
I hope 2020 has been treating you well so far.

As P-Day (publication) approaches, I share my thoughts about diversifying the traditional British rom-com in my new novel, *Imperfect Arrangements*.

I'm also delighted to offer you a FREE novella as a companion book and you can read more about *Sweet Mercy* on page 4.

What's been happening for you in 2020?

[Write in](#) and share your news with the readers' Club!



## MEETING DOROTHY

How the advice of a bestselling novelist changed my life. (p.2)

## TAKING THE BRITISH ROM-COM TO AFRICA

*Imperfect Arrangements* redefines the traditional British rom-com. (p.3)

## SWEET MERCY

Your FREE book!

(p.4)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Meeting readers and a preview of upcoming events. (p.5)

# Meeting Dorothy – the bestselling author with a heart

*'How did you deal with rejection when you first started as a writer?'*

This was the question I put to Dorothy Koomson as I sat in the audience last July at an event to launch her latest romantic thriller, *Tell Me Your Secret*.

I felt emboldened to ask the question because the best-selling British novelist (15 published books and counting!) had just been incredibly frank about her struggles to get her first book in front of a publisher or even an agent. I also asked because, at the time, I had been sending out my manuscript to lots of literary agents in the hope of securing an offer of representation and was fast losing both heart and patience.

What was Dorothy's response? She looked directly at me and said, 'I was rejected by everyone; publishers, agents, the lot. Eventually a small independent publisher took my book and it started from there. All I can tell you is to believe in yourself, believe in what you are writing, and keep going.'

## **An Evening with Dorothy Koomson**

A couple of weeks ago, I relayed this story to the audience when I had the pleasure and privilege of hosting a conversation with Dorothy as she launched the paperback version of *Tell Me Your Secret*. It wasn't to embarrass her (although it did the trick!) but to let her and the audience know that sometimes it takes only a few kind words of kindness and encouragement to make all the difference to someone else's life.

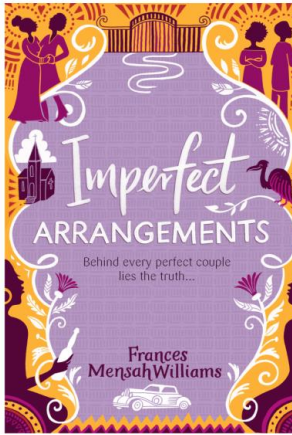
Following that event, I followed Dorothy's advice to believe in myself and my writing, and I've gone on to independently publish the manuscript – because *I* believe in the story 110%!



**In conversation with Dorothy Koomson at the launch of her paperback of *Tell Me Your Secret***

It's been an exhausting, scary, panicky, hilarious and totally satisfying few months building my own team of professional support to bring *Imperfect Arrangements* into being, and I can't wait to share it with you!

# TAKING THE BRITISH ROM-COM TO AFRICA!



Contemporary British fiction in an African setting featuring smart, strong-willed women dealing with themes of substance – think love, guilt, race, careers, identity and the challenges of clashing cultures – and written in a humorous and accessible style. This sums up *Imperfect Arrangements*.

The fascinating and dynamic culture of Accra, Ghana’s capital city, provides the backdrop to this story of the intertwined lives and relationships of three best friends: Theresa, a Black British expat, Maku, and Lyla.

Theresa has gambled everything in leaving London for cosmopolitan Accra with husband Tyler. Feisty Maku is desperate for success – and her dream white wedding to Nortey. Churchgoing Lyla married Kwesi in haste and is fighting her attraction to another man. Each couple must confront the truth of who they have become and the arrangements they have enabled. Against the backdrop of a shifting culture, each woman must decide what – and who – she is willing to sacrifice for the perfect marriage.

*Imperfect Arrangements* explores the complex blend of love, ambition, envy and guilt that can nurture – or crush – relationships, especially when set against cultural norms and conflicting expectations. Described by best-selling British novelist Dorothy Koomson as ‘a brilliantly written novel’, *Imperfect Arrangements* celebrates the joys of love and sisterhood while shining a light on the multi-faceted nature of relationships, both between friends and romantic partners.

## Adding Spice to the Traditional British Rom-Com

‘British rom-com novels have long been the preserve of non-black authors, but there’s room for stories about women who aren’t Bridget Jones,’ says Frances. ‘I believe there’s a huge appetite for diverse stories centred on black and multiracial characters who are equally focused on finding happiness and achieving their own goals. The strong women of colour – the main characters in my novels – navigate multicultural and multiracial worlds and relationships as they grow, develop and do their thing.’

By setting her novels both in London and in contemporary middle-class Accra, against a backdrop of locations ranging from offices to shopping malls, pristine beaches, night clubs, restaurants and traffic-choked roads, Mensah Williams aims to add some international spice to commercial women’s fiction. At a time when members of the African Diaspora from across the world are being encouraged to explore their roots with initiatives like Ghana’s Year of Return campaign, Mensah Williams’ book reflects the duality of culture identity and heritage.

‘Contemporary African cities offer exciting and diverse localities, people, foods, languages, politics, businesses and cultures.’ says Mensah Williams. ‘These are amazing locations in which to set stories about women who face the same challenges, whether they live in Accra, Lagos or Nairobi or in London, New York or Rio: building careers, dealing with demanding families and crazy friends, surviving cultural expectations and, like all good rom-coms, finding and keeping a good man!’

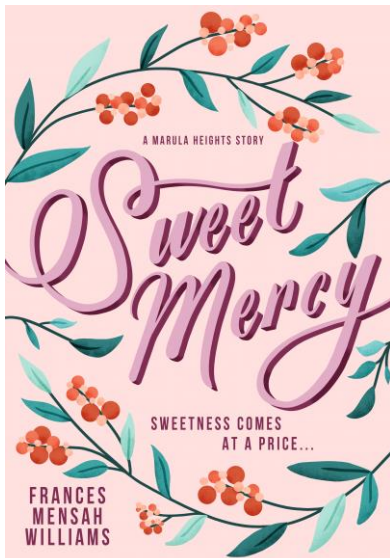
**IMPERFECT ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AMAZON AND ONLINE BOOK RETAILERS FROM MARCH 6, 2020**

[Adapted from the press release sent to the media]



## YOUR FREE BOOK!

To say thank you for joining my Readers' Book Club, I'm offering a free companion novella called *Sweet Mercy* exclusively to members of our Club.



### *Sweetness comes at a price...*

When sweet-natured Mercy married successful businessman and aspiring politician, Lucas Peterson, she abandoned her media career to focus on her husband and raising her son, Hakeem. But with the country now hurtling towards elections, Lucas's eye is on the ministerial position he craves within the Party and when Mercy's best friend, Araba – the niece of the Party leader – returns to Ghana, Mercy refuses to see what's obvious to everyone.

In a desperate bid to regain control of her life, Mercy reaches out to her friend, Max Bamford, a ruthless media boss with a reputation for uncovering corruption. Max's lifeline changes everything, but Mercy's hopes for a new beginning are threatened by Lucas's ambitions and risk the happiness of the person she loves most.

Armed with devastating evidence that can destroy Lucas's political future, Mercy is torn between protecting her son and taking revenge on his father. Faced with an impossible dilemma, Mercy will have to prove that sweetness can be a strength.

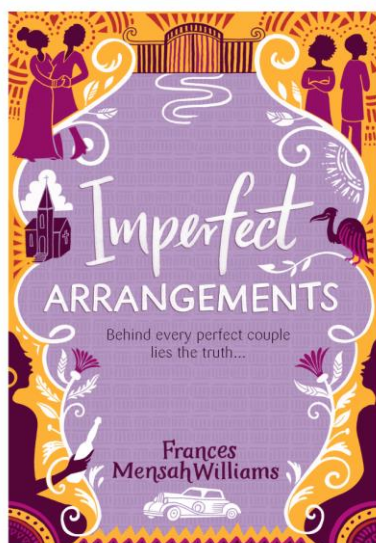
For your copy, all you'll need to do is visit my website and download the book. As simple as that. Collect your free copy of *Sweet Mercy* [HERE](#)

## Ghana's Oxford Street



A snapshot of part of the busy shopping street in Accra, Ghana's capital, which features in *Imperfect Arrangements* and *Sweet Mercy*

# EVENTS



6 March 2020

## P-DAY - *Imperfect Arrangements* Publication Day!!

Don't forget *Imperfect Arrangements* will be on sale from March 6<sup>th</sup>. Copies will be available on Amazon and online sellers in both e-book and print format.

**Individually signed copies can be bought directly from me, so [please contact me on my website](#) if you'd like one signed for you or as a gift for someone else.**

## Meeting Readers

It's always such a joy to meet people who have read and enjoyed my books. Here are some pictures of me with readers who attended the recent In Conversation with Dorothy Koomson event. Thank you to everyone who bought copies of my books!

If we've met at an event, please send in and share your pictures!!



**[Get in touch](#) – I'd love to hear from you!**

*Frances*

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*A final thought...*

**“Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance.”**

-Samuel Johnson

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