

FRANCES MENSAH WILLIAMS

Readers'

BOOK CLUB

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 14 | March/April 2021



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An excerpt from my latest book

THE POWER OF READING

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WELCOME DEAR READER!

Hello!

Can you believe it's March already? This year is just flying by! I hope you are all keeping well as we go into Spring and managing to find some joy despite everything. Thank you so much for joining my Readers' Club and allowing me to stay connected with you.

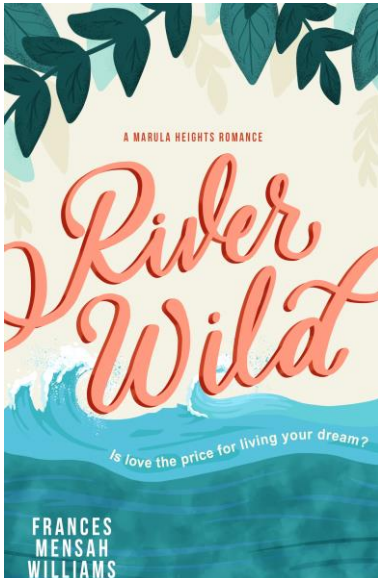
I'd love to hear more about you, so write in and tell us what you're up to and which great books you're reading and would recommend.

[Drop me a message with any news you'd like to](#) share.

Stay safe

Frances x

What's the price for living your dream?



Ambitious real estate agent River Osei loves her job and dreams of living in a home as beautiful as those she sells to her clients. But River's life goals are thrown into turmoil when she negotiates a sale to demanding music mogul, Donald Ayo. He is immediately taken with her, and she is equally taken with his house – a beautiful mansion in the luxurious gated community of Marula Heights. With Donald pressing for a deal that includes more than a house, River is forced to choose between the man she loves and a lifestyle she craves.

Here's an excerpt from the book:

River drew up to the tall gates and stopped the car. She jerked up the handbrake and reached for the iPad lying on the passenger seat, scrolling impatiently through Harvey's email to check the address. Yes, this was most definitely the house. She returned her gaze to the building clearly visible through the golden bars and couldn't prevent

a low whistle escaping from between her lips. After almost five years of selling and renting houses she had seen her fair share of properties but even by the standards of the luxurious gated community of Marula Heights, this ultra-modern glass-fronted structure was something else.

One day, I'm going to live in a place just like this! The thought flitted through River's mind as she stared dreamily at the building and imagined the elegant luxury that lay behind its façade. She was startled out of her reverie by the strident double blast of a car horn and she cursed aloud at the sight of a gleaming silver Mercedes in her rear-view mirror. *This is Ghana, for God's sake. Who the hell arrives anywhere on time, let alone early!*

Earlier in the day, River's boss, Harvey, who was handling the sale of the property, had fled the office for home to deal privately with the consequences of eating highly suspect street food. Harvey's predicament had given River a rare opportunity to finalise the sale of a luxury mansion and earn herself a slice of her boss's commission. With the house viewing scheduled for two o'clock, she had deliberately built in time to familiarise herself with the layout of the property and go through the draft contract. But by arriving so inconsiderately early, Harvey's client had left her no time to prepare for the meeting.

River suppressed a sigh and rummaged in her handbag for the fob Harvey had tossed in her direction before scooting out of the office. She would just have to wing it and hope for the best. She pressed the button firmly and as soon as the gates opened wide enough to accommodate the company-logo-embossed Mini Cooper Harvey insisted she use, she shot through the gap. A glance in the mirror showed the Mercedes following and coming to a stop directly behind her. Unclipping her seatbelt, River flipped down the sun visor to peer into the tiny square of mirror, carefully fluffing the thick mane of natural curly hair that framed her face before checking the bronze gloss she had slicked onto her full lips before leaving the office. With Harvey having worked on this deal for so long and trusting her to make the sale, her first encounter with the famous Donald Ayo was *not* the time to look shabby. She knew from Harvey's frequent complaints that the man was a tough negotiator with an abrasive personality but despite

her boss's grumbles and Donald Ayo's fabled reputation as a ruthless operator, River was curious to meet the well-known – and extremely wealthy – music and TV entertainment producer.

Gathering up her iPad and phone, River slung her precious Prada bag, one of the few indulgences she'd permitted herself from her house buying fund, over her shoulder and opened the car door. The moment she stepped out of the car's air-conditioned coolness and onto the gravelled driveway, the heat from the afternoon sun scorched her bare shoulders and tiny beads of moisture prickled beneath her carefully applied make-up. Resisting the urge to fan herself, River shielded her eyes with one hand and watched a man emerge from the Mercedes and stride in her direction. She barely had time to register the man's height, slim build, and well-cut suit before he was standing in front of her, a leather folder tucked under one arm and the other outstretched in greeting.

'Miss Osei, I take it,' he stated without preamble. Even though she was wearing heels he was still several inches taller, forcing her to stare up at him. His eyes were hidden behind mirrored sunglasses and his lips were unsmiling. 'Thanks for being on time.'

River squashed a flash of irritation at the patronising tone and pasting what she hoped looked like a convincing smile on her face, she returned his firm handshake. The lure of Harvey's promised commission if she closed the deal was strong enough to ensure she kept her cool.

'Harvey sent me a text to say he's unwell and that you'll be going through the final viewing with me?' His brusque tone showed little sympathy for her boss's plight and River bit back the sarcastic retort hovering on her lips. While Harvey could be a pain in the backside, he had slaved for ages to secure this gem of a house for his client and it wouldn't hurt the man to show a bit of compassion.

'Good afternoon, Mr Ayo,' she said pointedly. *At least one of us has some manners.* 'Please, call me River. Harvey has brought me up to speed on where things are,' she mentally crossed her fingers as she continued, 'and I'm hoping we can settle any minor concerns about the property and agree a deal today.'

Find out what happened next by picking up your copy of *River Wild*!

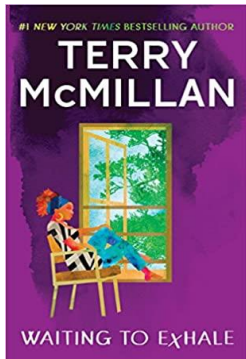
AVAILABLE NOW FROM THE FOLLOWING RETAILERS ([click the icon](#)):



How Books can Shape our Lives

Growing up in North-West London, I happily devoured the books with white protagonists that dominated the shelves of my small library. But there was always something special about finding a novel which featured a black heroine who was equally focused on finding love and her happy ending.

Here are some of the books and authors who have influenced my life and writing.

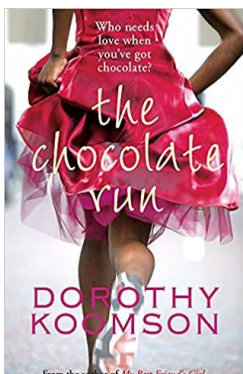


Terry McMillan

After reading *Waiting to Exhale*, I became an instant fan of Terry McMillan. Books like *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* explore the lives of everyday Black women in America and celebrate sisterhood. *Waiting to Exhale* inspired my latest novel *Imperfect Arrangements*.

Lesley Lokko

I was thrilled to discover Ghanaian-Scottish novelist Lesley Lokko's international love stories through her book *Little White Lies*, partially set in Lomé, Togo. Lokko's books encouraged me, as a British writer of Ghanaian origin, to include Ghana as a setting in some of my own novels.



Dorothy Koomson

When I was seeking a publishing home for my debut novel featuring a young black British woman, I found validation and inspiration in *The Chocolate Run* and Dorothy Koomson's romantic thrillers.

Which books have made a difference to your life or work? [Write in and](#) share your picks!

Free Books for You – Deadline 12 March!!!



Hot, spicy, and sweet romances at your fingertips

If you're a woman of colour – or just love a good romance no matter who's the star – it's your lucky day! I've joined up with some other writers to bring you FREE romance stories.

[DOWNLOAD](#) as many books as you like FREE! Remember, this offer is for a [VERY LIMITED PERIOD](#) and will *end on 12 March* 2021!

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE BOOKS [HERE](#)

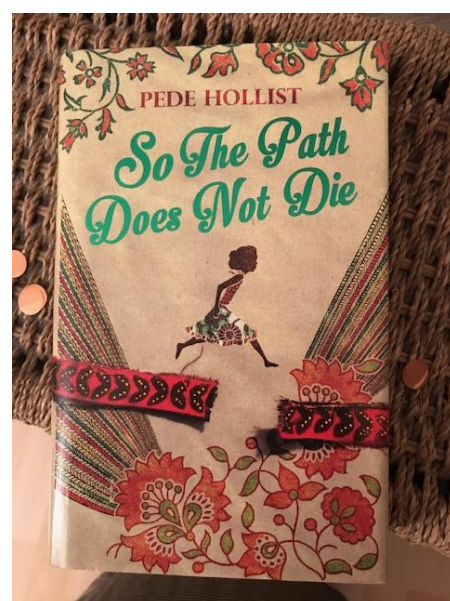
WHAT I'M READING ...

So The Path Does Not Die

By Pede Hollist

This is a touching coming of age story that follows feisty, intelligent, and determined Finaba through childhood and adolescence into adulthood when she leaves Sierra Leone for the new and exciting land of opportunity, the USA.

This contemporary story addresses issues of ethnicity, relationships, and finding oneself, as this young African woman makes her way through the world while navigating the pressures of tradition in the modern world.



[Write in and share](#) *what's at the top of your reading list!*

BOOK REVIEWS of *River Wild*



It was wonderful to see *River Wild* recommended on Twitter by the Romantic Novelists' Association!!!

amazon



“ This is a great book, as always the author brings her characters to life so well. It was a joy to read.”

Q&A

Q: Where Can I Buy Your Books?

A: [Click here](#) for a list of retailers and booksellers.

Q: Where can I review your books?

A: If you have read and enjoyed *Imperfect Arrangements*, *From Pasta to Pigfoot* or *From Pasta to Pigfoot: Second Helpings*, please do me a massive favour and post a short review on Amazon. [Here's a helpful link to](#) post your review of *Imperfect Arrangements* on Amazon! (For readers outside the USA, please use your country Amazon website)

EVENTS

Romance Novelists Association - Culture, Diversity and Writing Romance



As part of #RomanceReadingMonth in February, I took part in a great conversation with a panel of writers on culture, diversity and writing romance organised by the Romance Novelists Association. We had a fantastic discussion which you can watch here:

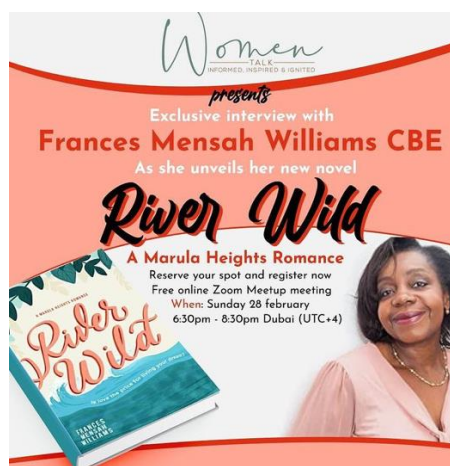
<https://www.facebook.com/Romantic.Novelists.Association/videos/2949883378589895>

Thank you, RNA!

Women Talk UAE

Also in February, it was such fun chatting to the amazing Helen Tucker, founder of Women Talk UAE, and the lovely ladies in the network!

We covered so many topics and – of course – books! Thank you so much for inviting me.



Commonwealth Countries' League

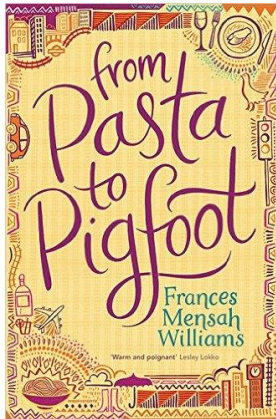
It was an honour to be invited to be the keynote speaker for the **International Women's Day 2021** celebration event by the Commonwealth Countries' League (CCL).

The CCL promotes the education of girls and young women and links together women's organisations throughout the Commonwealth.

I used the opportunity to offer lessons on leadership for young women leaders by sharing some of my experiences of setting up and leading organisations.



Have you read...?

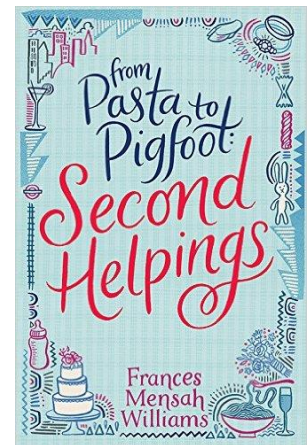


A novel set in London and Ghana following the mishaps of under-achieving PA, Faye Bonsu. On a mission to find love, a disastrous night out leaves pasta-fanatic Faye's romantic dreams in tatters and underscores her alienation from her African heritage. Leaving her cosy middle-class life in London's leafy Hampstead to find out what she's missing, Faye is whisked into the hectic social whirlpool of Ghana where she meets a host of characters. Transported into a world of food, fun and sun, and faced with choices she had never thought possible, Faye is forced to discover that no matter how far you travel, you can't find love until you find yourself.



'Brilliant characters...very true to life and you got a glimpse into Ghanaian life and its culture.'

Pasta fanatic Faye Bonsu seems to have it all; a drop-dead gorgeous and successful boyfriend, a burgeoning career as an interior designer and a rent-free mansion in leafy Hampstead to call home. But with all her friends shifting into yummy mummy mode, a man who seems to have no desire to put a ring on it, tricky clients, and an attractive and very single boss, things are not quite as straightforward as they might appear. Hoping to escape from her suddenly complicated life and revive her wilting romance, Faye returns to sunny Ghana for what she hopes will be the time of her life. But life doesn't always offer second chances and when disaster strikes, she is forced to confront the biggest question of her life and to make a choice that comes with consequences she will have to live with forever.



[Paperback and ebook versions available online](#)

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

Frances

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Facebook: facebook.com/francesmensahwilliams

To unsubscribe from the FMW Readers' Book Club,
[contact me](#)



A final thought...

"Literature is the most agreeable way of ignoring life."

— **Fernando Pessoa**