

FRANCES MENSAH WILLIAMS Readers' BOOK CLUB

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 15 | May/June 2021



WELCOME DEAR READER!

Hello!

This year is just flying by. How is it May already?? Crazy, right?

It's been a hectic year for lots of us and thank you so much staying in touch and keeping connected to our Readers' Club.

I'm waiting to hear from you, so do write in and tell us what you're up to and any great books you're reading and would recommend.

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

Stay safe,

Frances x

In this issue...

MARULA HEIGHTS

Welcome to the world of my novella series

A TASTE OF GHANA

A fantastic recipe for you from Ghanaian chef Patti Sloley

ROMANCE BOOKS

- SALE -

WHAT I'M READING

BOOK REVIEWS

EVENTS

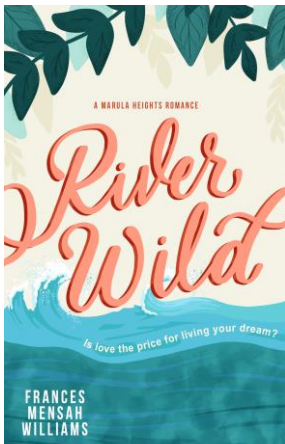
What's been happening?

Welcome to Marula Heights!

Marula Heights is luxurious gated community (fictional, of course!) in Accra, the capital of Ghana.

While the homes in Marula Heights may be beautiful, its residents are wrestling with secrets and lies. Behind the high walls and ornate gates, the happy, successful lives and apparently perfect relationships of the people living in these properties aren't always as they appear...

Read about the lives and loves of the residents of Marula Heights in these novellas and a full-length novel:



Is love the price for living the 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. Putting marriage to her artist boyfriend Cameron on the back burner, River's only focus is to hit her house fund target.

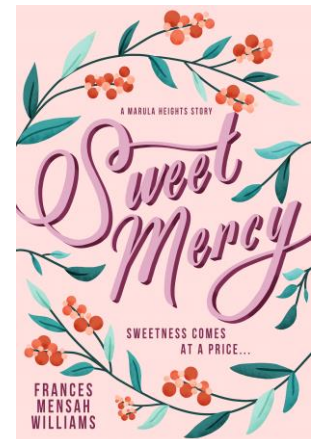
But River's plan is thrown into turmoil when she negotiates a sale to demanding music mogul, Donald Ayo. He is immediately taken with her, and she is equally taken with his house – a beautiful mansion in the luxurious gated community of Marula Heights. With Donald pressing for a deal that includes more than a house, River is forced to choose between the man she loves and a lifestyle she craves.

But living the dream isn't always what it seems and even the best fantasies come at a cost. Faced with the real-life consequences of her choice, River must learn that a house is not a home and love is not for sale.

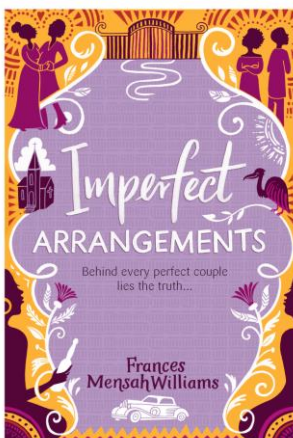
Sweetness comes at a price...

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.

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.



NOVEL



There are two sides to every story...

In the sun-soaked capital of Ghana, best friends Theresa, Maku and Lyla struggle with the arrangements that define their relationships. Ambitious, single-minded Theresa has gambled everything to move with her loving husband Tyler from London to cosmopolitan Accra. Feisty Maku is desperate for professional recognition – and her dream white wedding. Churchgoing Lyla married Kwesi in haste, but while she battles her growing attraction to the mysterious Reuben, her husband has bitten off more than he can chew with his latest mistress.

Facing lies, betrayal, and shattered illusions, 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.

A Taste of Ghana



Patti Sloley is a chef on a mission to introduce the world to the glorious and exciting African food that she was taught to cook by her mum growing up in Ghana. Described by Executive Traveller magazine as Ghana's best kept secret, Patti is inspiring and exuberant with an infectious zest for life. Her creative style and her natural artistry comes across in vibrant dishes, she never fails to bring something exciting to the table. Hers is food from and for the soul.

As a resident chef at the Jean-Christophe Novelli Academy, she ran courses on African-fusion called 'A Taste of Africa' and demonstrates her Ghanaian fusion dishes at food festivals, schools and on social media. She has written two cookbooks - '[A Plate in the Sun](#)' and '[A Date with Plantain](#)'.

Patti has kindly shared her delicious **Easy Chicken Curry recipe** with our Readers Club!



INGREDIENTS

SERVES 4

- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2cm/1 inch ginger, grated
- 1 tsp black onion seeds
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 1 tsp each of spices: cayenne pepper, curry powder, coriander powder, turmeric
- 2kg/4 lb chicken pieces
- 250ml/9fl oz coconut milk
- 1 scotch bonnet chilli or 3 fresh green chillies
- 500g/18oz vegetables like carrots, mushrooms, courgettes, sweet potato, aubergine
- salt and pepper to season
- Oil to shallow fry

HOW TO COOK PATTI'S EASY CHICKEN CURRY

1. Heat a large saucepan, then lightly fry the onions, garlic, ginger and black onion seeds. When the onions turn lightly golden add the plain flour and spices and stir for a few minutes until fragrant.
2. Lower the chicken pieces in batches into the pan and brown on both sides.
3. Pour in the coconut milk, add the peppers and simmer for about 15 minutes.
4. Stir in the vegetables and add a little hot water if you want to thin out the sauce. Cover and continue to simmer until the chicken and vegetables are cooked through.

Will you try this delicious recipe? [Write in and](#) share your pics!

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR READERS' CLUB MEMBERS

Meet Maria!



Maria Gulczyńska-Baci is a Polish EFL teacher/translator. She studied TESOL at ASUonline, USA, Socio-Cultural Studies at Edinburgh University, UK, and Literary Studies at Poznań University, Poland.

She has been a waitress, a sociologist and an actress.

Maria now lives in Italy, writes dramas and occasional poems or social criticism essays, and country line dances in her free time with a group called Mad Boots. Find out more about Maria at <http://amazon.com/author/mariagulczynska>

Why not tell us about yourself? Drop me a line at francesmensahwilliams@gmail.com

May Romance Books for Sale



Hot, spicy, and sweet romances at your fingertips

If you're looking for romantic fiction books with black protagonists or by black writers, take a look at this gallery of African American Contemporary/Historical/ParaNormal/Suspense/Romance written by African American/Black authors **for sale**.

CHECK OUT these books until June 13 2021!

WHAT I'M READING ...

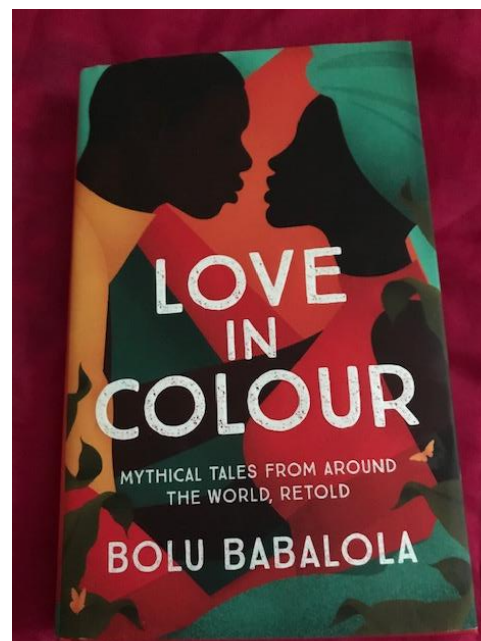
Love in Colour

By Bolu Babalola

This book is currently at the top of the pile of books on my bedside table. It's a fascinating collection of short stories centred on the theme of love.

Some of the stories are mythical, and others contemporary. I haven't yet finished it, what I've read so far shows a richness of language and what looks like a very diverse range of tales.

Have you read this yet? If so, let me know what you thought of it.



[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 and on Amazon by the amazing author Katy Moran!!!

amazon



5 Star Review!

“ I devoured this novel in the space of two evenings. I really, really enjoyed it – feelgood commercial romantic fiction with a vivid Ghanaian setting.

I can't wait to move on to the rest of the series. The light touch, lovable three dimensional characters and romantic shenanigans reminded me of Veronica Henry's books.’

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 my books, 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

The BECOMING Summit



IN COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Becoming Summit

Becoming: Women in Leadership

MEET THE SPEAKERS

Frances Mensah Williams CBE

In 2015 Frances's acclaimed first novel 'From Pasta to Pigfoot' was published by Jacaranda Books and selected by WH Smith Travel as one of the top 25 of its 100 Summer reads. Selected as one of the Top 20 Inspirational Women from the African Diaspora in Europe, Frances has received several commendations and awards for entrepreneurship and skills development in Africa and was presented with the 2017 Community Pioneer Award by the African Diaspora Awards. Frances was awarded a CBE by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the 2020 New Year's Honours List for services to the African community in the UK and in Africa. Speaking on: **Finding Your Voice- 1:15 - 1:35 pm - Saturday 20th March 2021**

March 19th -21st 2021

In celebration of International Women's Day in March, I was so excited to join a panel of 15 speakers for The Becoming Summit. Streamed out of Dubai, the event featured amazing women from around the world, each with inspiring stories and great advice on everything from entrepreneurship to writing.

Absolutely fabulous!

Replays of all the talks are available here:

<https://selar.co/m/EnergeticEJ>

BBC – Novels That Shaped Our World

My big event in April was sharing a stage with the incredible best-selling author, Dorothy Koomson, and romance writer, Sareeta Domingo. Hosted by Brent Libraries, this event formed part of a BBC sponsored series on novels that shaped our world.

You can watch the recording on YouTube via this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAG-5A44QWY>



INSPIRED BY

THE NOVELS THAT SHAPED OUR WORLD

LIBRARIES CONNECTED

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LOTTERY FUNDED

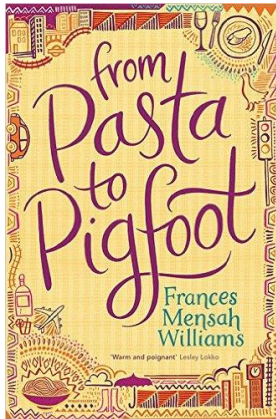
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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LOTTERY FUNDED

Have you read...?

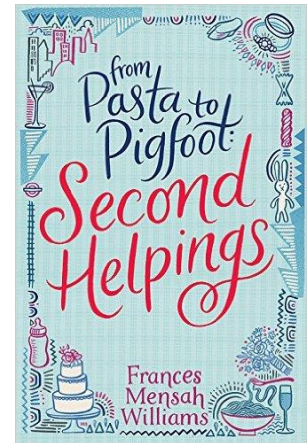


A novel set in London and Ghana following the mishaps of under-achieving PA, Faye Bonsu. On a mission to find love, a disastrous night out leaves pasta-fanatic Faye's romantic dreams in tatters and underscores her alienation from her African heritage. Leaving her cosy middle-class life in London's leafy 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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Twitter: @FrancesmensahW

Facebook: facebook.com/francesmensahwilliams

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



A final thought...

"A writer only begins a book. A reader finishes it."

— Samuel Johnson