



*The Bookish Magazine | August 2020*

MELANIN INK

# THE MISSION

*We are here to add some melanin to your pages.*

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THAT?

We mean that for too long, Black authors have been invisible in the bookish world. Only a select few are deemed worthy of joining the ranks of their white counterparts on bookshelves. The line for approval is long, the door narrow, and the gatekeeper is strict and has unreasonable expectations that are forever shifting and changing.

We say, we don't need a gatekeeper!

Our books are bombs and we will blast our way through the gilded walls that guard the publishing world.

We will build our own doors to opportunity.

We will create our own spaces that celebrate Black excellence in the bookish world.

Following in the steps of the Black authors and creators that came before us, our aim is to create a space where Black authors and creators are supported, promoted, celebrated, and loved on, so that their works and creations can reach the people who so desperately want them. We want to be able share their news so they can screenshot it and share it on Twitter.

If you know, then you know.

Our publication is open to all Black creators, but our goal will always be to support our Indie mutuals and other Self-published authors who need a platform. Like all things related to *Written in Melanin Publishing*, this publication will be Blackity, Black, Black and we hope you're here for it.

## WHY CALL IT MELANIN INK?

When we decided to embark on this undertaking, we had no idea what to call this publication we wanted to create. It wasn't a literary magazine, because we weren't aiming to publish short fiction stories in every issue. It didn't match our average understanding of a magazine because it was going to be short and sweet. Add into that dilemma, we wanted a title that would reflect our truest intentions — that would give nod to what we were searching for and what we were hoping to create.

In the end, *Melanin Ink* | *The Bookish Magazine* won.

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# THE MISSION

*We are here to add some melanin to your pages.*

We were able to decide on this name because we're looking to read books that are dripping in melanin — where the characters are Black and Brown and fully seasoned. We wanted books where characters who looked like us could go on adventures, be magical, fall in and out of love, and find joy. We wanted books that were going to explore what it means to be Black and Brown in this world without limiting us to telling only the stories of our pain and struggle. That is an undeniable part of our experience, but it is not the only experience.

We wanted a space to highlight, celebrate, and share books written by people who look like us and face our similar struggles, but still pen stories of Black Girl Magic and Black Boy Joy. We wanted to share the stories of those who can't stop the melanin from flowing into the stories they ink onto the page.

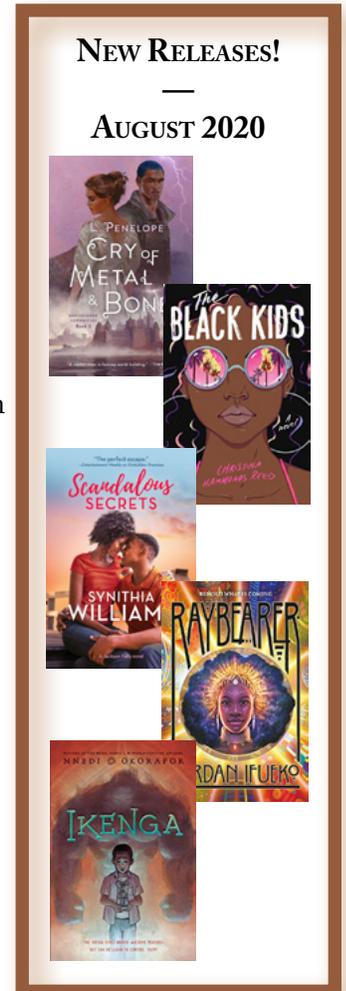
And so, *Melanin Ink* has been born into this existence. We hope that you stay and enjoy the content shared here as we continue to grow.

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM MELANIN INK?

Everything.

Interviews. Announcements. Book recommendations. Networking opportunities and more. If it happens in the Indie and Self-publishing worlds, our ambition is to be the ones who share it with you.

If you'd like to contact us for a feature or space within *Melanin Ink*, then please feel free to reach out to Chelsea and LaKase at [MelaninInk@WrittenInMelanin.com](mailto:MelaninInk@WrittenInMelanin.com).



**CHELSEA**

&



**LAKASE**

# INTERVIEW

## Who is Chelsea Lockhart?



C. M. LOCKHART

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)

Chelsea Lockhart is a woman in love with words in every form. Storytelling has always been her passion and it is the thing she has dedicated her time to pursuing since she was old enough to make decisions for herself.

She is the author of *Keeping Promises*, a novella that explores the love story between two friends who've known each other their entire lives and what love looks like when it has shifted form so many times. Her second book, *Casualties of War* looks at what it means to face the past, forgive others and move forward. It is set to release in the winter of 2020.

She is the owner of *Written in Melanin Publishing*, a company designed to create and promote books by Black authors — the creator of the *Melanin Library*, a website to discover and explore books by Black authors with Black and Brown main characters — the creator of *Melanin Ink*, the magazine whose purpose is to share news of the Indie and Self-publishing worlds.

### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR BOOK? WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION?

My book is about two childhood friends navigating their relationship as it evolves from the innocent love that children have for each other through puberty to the more romantic love of adults. However, change is never easy and their relationship is full of ups and downs. So, when they meet each other again five years apart, they have to decide if they want to give what they had together a fresh start or move forward without each other for good.

The inspiration for this story came towards the end of my high school career. I had a lot of “what ifs” on my mind at the time — a lot of questions about my future — and I wondered what it would be like if I'd already met the person I was meant to be with. What if he'd been staring me in the face the entire time and I just hadn't known? What if it was someone I knew? One of my friends I'd known since I was a kid?

That idea sparked the story of Jason and Kamry — the idea that you can know the person you're supposed to be with all along. That growing up doesn't always mean growing apart — and even if it does, that doesn't always mean it has to be forever. What would it look like if we tried to keep those promises we made to our friends when we were kids and didn't know any better? That's where this story came from.

### MELANIN AWARENESS BOOKS



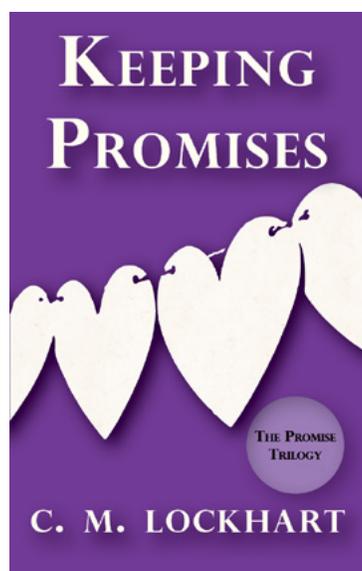
# INTERVIEW

## Who is Chelsea Lockhart?

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT KAMRY?

My favorite thing about Kamry is her confidence in Jason's love for her. Despite all the ups and downs they go through together, Kamry is never shaken from her faith in the knowledge that Jason loves her back just as much as she loves him. I really enjoyed writing that into her character because she has the kind of faith in Jason that I had in my first love — the kind of love that's trusting because it's never truly been broken before.

Even if everything else in her world is shaken to its core, she trusts Jason with her complete heart. Because, as they like to say — that first love is the sweetest.



Jason and Kamry met in the second grade. They were best friends who did everything together — it was inevitable that they would fall in love. And in any other lifetime, they probably would have ended up together — but that's not how their story went — they didn't get the "happily ever after" they thought they deserved.

At least, they didn't the first time around.

It's been five years since they've laid eyes on each other and the feelings that time should have erased are still raging strong for both of them — but they're not kids anymore. Experience and caution have replaced recklessness and naivety. They aren't the people they once were — but they are still far from strangers — and Jason wants nothing more than to keep the promise they made to each other as kids. Kamry is hesitant though because she knows the truth — some promises are just too hard to keep.

### WHAT WRITING ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Write despite the voices in your ear telling you that you can't make a career out of it. They're wrong. You can. You will. Just sit down, write everything, and have the best time of your life.

Oh, and save that story you're writing right now to a flash drive. In about three years the website you're posting it on is going to shut down and that hard drive on your dad's computer is going to be in a landfill somewhere — along with that eighty-some thousand words you've written. Save yourself some heartache down the road.

### SUBMITTING TO MELANIN INK

Melanin Ink is a bookish magazine designed to promote, celebrate, and support Black authors and creators. To that end, we are open to submissions for those looking to be included in upcoming issues. Submissions do not guarantee publication and we reserve the right to choose what is added into each issue of Melanin Ink.

We currently accept submissions for:

- Interview requests,
- Book releases and announcements,
- News regarding upcoming conferences, conventions, and networking opportunities,
- Artwork and bookish fanart by Black creators,
- Book reviews from Black reviewers reviewing Black books.

To submit, email Chelsea and LaKase at [MelaninInk@WrittenInMelanin.com](mailto:MelaninInk@WrittenInMelanin.com) with what you're submitting for in the subject line.



# BOOKS



## Bookish things.



### MELANIN LIBRARY APPROVED BOOK

Melanin Library Approved books are books that are read and enjoyed by two or more trusted members of the Written in Melanin Network. The title is only given when the approval is unanimous. The books that receive this title are ones that we of *Melanin Library*, *Melanin Ink*, and *Written in Melanin Publishing* as a whole recommend to you without hesitation. We hope you enjoy them.

In this book, Evie is a budding actress who is about to get her big break when her trust in the wrong person has things going left for her. With her career on the line, she decides to take matters into her own hands.

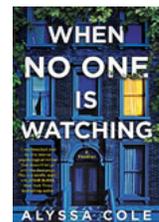
The plan is simple — make an appearance with her grandmother, who is none other than *the* Evelyn Conaway. But when Evelyn turns Evie down and disappears before sunrise, Evie takes it upon herself to track her grandmother down.

The only clue she's got? The cute boy who's been helping Evelyn out. So, with him in tow, a few "borrowed" dresses, and stolen invitations, the chase begins. But Evie may not be ready for everything she finds at the end of all this.

We loved this book to heaven and back. If you love YA romance, you'll love this book.

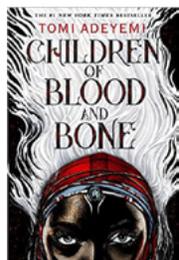
### NEW RELEASES!

SEPTEMBER 2020



### CURRENTLY READING WITH CHELSEA & LAKASE

#### CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE BY TOMI ADEYEMI



#### WHISPERS OF SHADOW AND FLAME BY L. PENELOPE

