

Q & A With Fiction Author Patricia M. Muhammad on Her Historical Romance Novel, Hidden Valor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-United States, 2021-May-05— /ToStories/-Multi-genre fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad discusses one of her historical romance novels, Hidden Valor and her writing process.

1. In a previous press release, you stated that you avoided Regency England for your historical romance novels. However, Hidden Valor takes place in London, England. Are you now inclined to be swept in the Regency mainstay of historical romance novels? Not at all. Regardless of what country I choose for the setting of my historical romance novels, I usually choose the mid to late 18th century. The Regency and Victorian periods are much later than this. Also I think relevant is that my first historical romance novel I set in Liverpool, England. I try to use a different country I have an interest in during the 18th century, then I revisit it with a different city as I continue to write more historical romance novels.
2. You have visited London, England on three occasions, did any of your stays there inspire you to write Hidden Valor? No, not one. Each time I was there for a different reason and only on one occasion did I visit some of its historic sites and buildings.
3. Speaking of London, England, do you think you could ever live there? Yes, in a heartbeat and without hesitation.
4. What is one of your favourite excerpts of Hidden Valor? I have more than one. This is a surprising one, as it reflects the nuance of duty, affection and romance that the duchess and duke share:

* “This is in your capacity as a royal advisor in these matters,” the king said. He politely glanced at Duchess Arabella. She desired to slink away from her comfortable seating which provided her with no reassurance in this instance. Before the duchess could speak, she felt her fiancé's words forming before he could utter them. An awkward, but courteous silence ensued. The queen looked to her husband but knew he was well within his anointed right. Besides, justice was the pinnacle of their pursuit and for the duchess to overshadow what was of formal significance with her fleeting emotions was to be considered the act of an immature aristocrat. However, since no one was able to transition with ease to the subject at hand, the queen duly provided Duchess Arabella with the occasion to proffer at minimum, a brief response. She raised her head a bit and cast her glance towards the duchess. Duke Everett hoped that she would remain silent. Duchess Arabella looked profoundly at each person. She became ensnared in a situational conundrum. 'I am to serve my husband and thus the Crown. I need not any acknowledgment of myself,' she thought. “However, right here in this moment, silence has taken hold of these quarters. The king spoke and perhaps has insulted me...yet I am to now represent the House of Carrington of which my brave and handsome fiancé is the patriarch.' A couple of the chamber guards looked to one another in confusion. Even they realized that the king and queen expected the duchess to articulate herself. 'The queen in her grace invites me to speak, yet words of intelligence I cannot find. Either way, I am to disappoint one or many with silence as speech.' “Your Grace,” it seemed as if the entirety of the

grand royal chambers exhaled in collusion, “I am of the king's court and I do wish to serve. My service is to Duke Everett, this is the oath we have made to one another. I understand that it is he who appears before you in official duty. I respect his call and the royal authority who has issued it. I only ask that I remain secure with you during their meeting.”

The queen appeared pleased. The king was rather surprised. They had daughters, most of whom resisted any instruction from their mother and father. Arabella's words could only raise hers and Everett's favour from the Crown. The duke barely moved. Duchess Arabella did. She took hold of his hand right before their Majesties. He was proud of her but was careful not to boast. Still, he pecked the back of her covered hand. “You may find yourself in our presence as you please, Duchess Arabella,” the queen said.

She wished to say more, but more utterances in the present would have exceeded her purpose—to establish herself as a recognizable member of the king's court beyond their first sequestration. The king appeared defeated, yet this was not an unfamiliar occasion—at least wherein the queen was involved. The tension had fully eased. “We mustn't' further delay. Duke Gideon needs tending, and the sooner he is deposed, the greater chance to restore the full dignity of the Crown,” he said. His Grace stood up, followed by the queen and everyone else in their quarters.

Duchess Arabella watched as Everett bowed and neared the exit. She felt faint. This was no time for an intimate embrace or for him to brush his lips against the softness of hers. Her conduct, especially now, had to reflect her poignant speech. The king and queen were always watching the ennobled, whether to bestow a favour or issue a rebuke; but most importantly to preserve their safety. As the door closed behind the duke, Arabella placed her right hand palm flat against the door. She now stood with her back towards the king and queen and in between the two guards.*

It is when the duchess recognizes the importance of her fiancé's duty (Duke Everett's) to serve the king and queen, yet she is politely adamant that she and her beau not be separated from one another while he serves the Crown. She acknowledges her duty to him as soon to be lady of the House of Carrington, all while recognizing his duty to the throne. Duke Everett would be incapacitated in properly serving the king and queen if he were to be distracted with his fiancé's well-being. Thus, the Crown agrees for them to be together continuously so long as it does not hinder his royal service. Duchess Arabella's affection for the duke and his for hers, require for them both to seek a compromise so that their hearts do not falter and neither of them being able to fulfill any of their duties, including to one another.

5. Which of your characters was the most fun to write in *Hidden Valor*, but also generally? For this one, I would have to say Duke Everett. I intentionally made the duchess a bit unrelenting with her initial resistance to him. Though while in sequestration within the king's court she matured with the duke's guidance. Duke Everett had a natural patience about him. First with the land dispute he lost before the king and queen, then the murders which happened with courtiers issuing false rumours of him as the culprit, then to addressing the duchess whom

- he knows would be his wife but her wit, coy and hesitancy were part of a wall that he was able to chisel through by his natural affection for her. When both believe they have their fate soon to be wed, the Crown calls upon the duke. This requires the patience of both the duke and duchess, but his patience is coupled with a deliberate need to fully be with his betrothed.
6. What level of "steamiiness" is Hidden Valor? Hidden Valor is sweet romance all the way.
 7. After having published a few of novels, do you feel that the process has gotten easier? Not at all. It is great to understand a procedure of what you need to in order to have a published book. 1. Complete book manuscript 2. Edit 3. Consult with a bookcover designer, etc. My experience is that you will always have mistakes, whether numerous, few, or just one.
 8. The goal of a writer is to give the readers characters that they can really connect with. Do you think the characters in your books have as much depth as you hoped for? I think most of them do. For my fantasy and science fiction novels it seems more natural for them to because they have to develop and relate to a higher level of thinking to interact with time, another world or elements. Sometimes I will incorporate humor naturally because that is just the way the character or situation developed. So I think for many they do have a lot of depth due to their circumstances.
 9. What advice can you give other authors with finding that authentic voice that speaks to the reader? I think it varies depending on the writer. I noticed over time that I would think as if I was in those characters presence, overhearing their conversation.
 10. What is the hardest part about being a writer? Staying focused.
 11. What have you taken away from your experience so far that you can offer someone who is just beginning? Set your goals but give yourself a break. Pressure yourself to see your book to the end with a manuscript you are proud of. Know that you will make mistakes. Also know you can revise and edit. It is your creative work, you can do what you want with it.
 12. Do you outline your books or wing it? Describe your process. I generally write as I go. I have a section on my writing process on Patreon. In the past I would deny I had a writing process, but then I heard one author said most writers outline and those who do not write it, do so in their heads. I am realizing that there is a lot of validity to that.
 13. Which of your characters/books was the most fun to write? The most fun to write characters are split between my sci-fi/fantasy contemporary romance crossover series Silhouette Lost and my mystery/detective romance novels. In Silhouette Lost, the tone of the circumstance has a spectrum of light-heartedness to ethereal, wonder to acceptance of a higher duty. The characters vary, growing throughout the series, wielding power with restraint, allowing for others to show forth their ethereal might when the situation and destiny calls for it. I think it is an continuous dynamic. For the mystery/detective romance novels, the characters' quirks, peeves, habits seem easier to write. I think it is because the crime is the center of the story, so how the detectives interact with one another and towards the focal point allows for these traits to be naturally revealed. In one of these novels, the protagonist and her love interest share sweet, but deepened adoration for one another. Yet he naturally teases her about some of her habits, some of which initially caused him to become enamoured with her. I thought that it was a

fun way to show how the detective could be steadfast with her personality but still understand how others, especially her husband sees her. It plays off each other where she is still herself and he loves her for it.

Hidden Valor is currently available for purchase as and ebook at these online retailers:

Amazon ASIN: B08K9H2X5H
Barnes & Noble: 2940163078301
Smashwords: 9781005473990
Tolino Media: 9783752117790
Thalia EAN: 9783752117790
Kobo ISBN: 1230004260349
Google Play: GGKEY:D1L2J86DC8W
Lulu: N/A
Apple Books: N/A
DriveThru Fiction: N/A

About the Author: Patricia M. Muhammad is an American fiction author of crossover contemporary romance, science fiction, science fiction/fantasy, mystery/detective romance and historical romance genres. She has written 20 novels. Patricia is currently based in the United States.

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