



A Belle in Brooklyn: The Go-to Girl for Advice on Living Your Best Single Life

By Demetria L. Lucas



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LIVE A FABULOUS SINGLE LIFE!

Are you stressed about meeting "the one," getting "the ring," and exchanging "I dos" at the altar? Do you feel frustrated by the seeming lack of relationship-worthy guys? Would *you* date yourself?

Move over, Carrie Bradshaw! Dating and relationships guru Demetria L. Lucas, creator of the award-winning blog *A Belle in Brooklyn*, celebrates the joys and the challenges of singlehood in this fun and candid book. Filled with relatable anecdotes and lessons from her own experience, advice garnered from interviews with other experts, and revelations from hundreds of conversations with her Male Mind Squad--a committee of thirty men from varying backgrounds who answer the tough questions about sex, dating, and relationships--*A Belle in Brooklyn* encourages you to embrace your freedom and foster your personal development. It also offers invaluable tips for finding a suitable mate *when you are ready for one*. In the meantime, enjoy your single life--with or without Mr. Perfect.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A Belle in Brooklyn is fun, sexy, witty and captivating. Picture it as your no-holds bar girlfriend telling you a series of real life stories over cocktails. From page one you're invested... because the writing is just that damn good." --**Vibe Vixen**

"This may be slightly sexist, but I'm going to say it anyway -- [Demetria Lucas] is one of the most self-aware women I've ever met. The level of forthright self-assessment she exhibits in her blogs is extremely rare and commendable. It may be an act, but if so, she deserves a f*cking Oscar." -- Very Smart Brothas

Lucas opens up her life for the greater good of her readers. You don't feel as if you've accompanied her to a private exam; it's more like you're hanging out at an intimate girlfriend's gathering." --**ESSENCE**

A Belle in Brooklyn is like a warm hug and firm-but-thoughtful counsel from that girlfriend you trust unconditionally--honest, straight-no-chaser. --**Denene Millner, co-author of the New York Times bestselling *Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man***

"Lucas gives it straight no chaser. She provides brutally honest bits of her personal life-from a frightening sexual assault by a "friend" to laugh-out-loud/this-can't-be-real-life moments (Suge Knight? Comedy.) to those so familiar and almost indescribable pangs of like, love and lust." -- Madame Noire

"Fun, sexy, witty, and captivating."
-- Vibe Vixen

About the Author

Affectionately known as "Belle", Demetria L. Lucas is the author of *A Belle in Brooklyn: The Go-to Girl for Advice on Living Your Best Single Life* (Atria); the creator of the award-winning personal blog *ABelleInBrooklyn.com*; and the founder of *Coached By Belle*, a boutique life-coaching service, where Demetria helps clients solve their dating dilemmas and build healthy long-term relationships. Demetria is also a contributing editor for *The Root*, where she pens a weekly dating and relationship advice column, "Ask Demetria", and is a contributing writer for the websites of *Essence*, *Clutch*, *Vibe Vixen* and *Uptown*.

Demetria was named one of "the Blogosphere's Best" by Black Enterprise Magazine, selected among "30 Black Bloggers You Should Know" by The Root, picked as one of *Essence.com's* "40 Fierce & Fab Under 40", and featured as "The Best of Brooklyn" by Brooklyn News 12. Additionally her debut book, *A Belle in Brooklyn*, was nominated for "Best Self Help" at the 2011 African-American Literary Awards, and her blog was awarded Best Personal Blog in the 2010 Black Weblog Awards.

Since being dubbed "the Black Carrie Bradshaw" in a Washington Post profile, Demetria has become a sought after media personality and speaker. She's appeared on *The Today Show*, *The Anderson Cooper Show*, *The Dr. Drew Show on Headline News*, *Access Hollywood*, *Good Day New York*, *Issues with Jane Velez on Headline News*, and the Oprah Radio Show. She's also been a guest speaker at Harvard, Princeton,

Columbia, Howard, NYU, and Spelman College.

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INTRODUCTION

While I was writing this book in 2010, there was an onslaught of articles (*Washington Post*, *Economist*, *New York Times*), prime-time TV segments (*Nightline*—twice), books, and countless blogs examining “Why Black Women Are Soooo Single.” It seemed that whenever a media source needed some sort of Nielsen ratings bonanza or to send their website’s comments section into a frenzy, they’d trot out a horrific tale of no love and lots of loss. The plot was always the same: a single Black woman from a densely populated city clinging to a flavored martini, a Louis Vuitton Speedy, and/or a perfectly coiffed girlfriend wondering where all the good men had gone. (Go-to answers: dead, gay, unemployed, on the down low, in jail, or with a White woman.)

As I watched, read, and listened to the same story over and over, I wondered why “the problem” of singleness was being presented as a Black issue or even a female one. There are 96 million people in the United States who have no spouse, according to a 2010 study from the U.S. Census Bureau. That means 43 percent of all Americans over the age of eighteen are single. *So where are the news stories about White women and Latinas and Asian ladies who are desperately single and searching?* The closest I saw was “The New Math on Campus” in the *New York Times*, a story where White women at the University of North Carolina talked about their dating dilemmas and all the quotes sounded as if they’d been lifted from an early Terry McMillan novel.

What about the single men? Black ones and the ones of all other colors, too? If women are not getting married and we’re supposed to be marrying them, shouldn’t they get an equal number of stories? I’ve never understood how we’re having an ongoing national discussion about the difficulty facing heterosexuals who want relationships and almost the entire conversation is about or aimed at women.

While *Nightline* had single Black women talking about crying into their pillows and throwing Black men-at-large under the proverbial bus, I couldn’t help but recall that the most prominent tale of Dating While White, *Sex and the City*, featured women well past thirty shown practically high off new experiences, the carefree unaccountability of considering anyone else’s feelings, and the thrill of picking through men like trying to find organic produce at Whole Foods. For White women, singlehood looked exhilarating and adventurous, not desperate, the way it is too often shown for us as a tedious but important exercise to make sure we don’t end up alone. (See Pam from *Martin*, Regine from *Living Single*, or any character from a Terry McMillan novel for reference.)

As I tuned into *Sex and the City* each week or popped in the DVDs during the off seasons, I became increasingly frustrated. I knew plenty of Black women who were single and satisfied or single and searching but more optimistic than desperate. We lived full and adventurous lives, finding ourselves regularly sitting across from (and flirting with) attractive suitors with good conversation and pretty white teeth. It was a rare occasion that any of us sat home unwillingly for lack of a quality male option to happily plunk down his debit card after dinner and a drink. We still got giddy over meeting up with a new guy and exchanging witty banter at chic venues. And we knew there were a lot of cheerful single women like us who enjoyed dating, whose sole focus in life wasn’t how to get a man to put a ring on it.

I began blogging in 2007 because Happy Black Girl stories weren’t being told. I was sick of depictions of my Black and single life that made it look so burdened and heavy. I wanted everyone to know about regular Black girls and women with semidramatic adventures that were pretty painless and very amusing but resulted

in extraordinary growth. I wanted everyone to know about the quality men in the world, the ones I met every day, that I *know* exist, but are rarely shown in the media. I'd been waiting for someone to tell that tale again since it had been years since Tracy Chambers (*Mahogany*), Nola Darling (*She's Gotta Have It*), and Nina Mosley (*Love Jones*) had a say. Then I realized that as a writer, I could just pick up my laptop and start typing.

At the time, I was in my third year as a book editor, working with bestselling romance authors and in my sixth year as a professional journalist, covering entertainment and lifestyles. My musings began on MySpace, quickly gained a following, and moved to a wider audience at HoneyMag.com, where my blog about my "hilarious dating misadventures as a Southern woman living too far above the Mason Dixon" became the most popular feature on the site.

As the audience grew, so did the number of letters in my in-box. Women from eighteen to sixty began thanking me for offering an alternative portrayal of Black life and for writing what they felt but couldn't find the words to say. That's when I *knew* I was on to something that was bigger than me and my girls.

Four months after my blog launched on *Honey*, I accepted a position as the relationships editor at *Essence* magazine, a job that utilizes my desire to debunk the negative depictions of single Black women, tackle our dating dilemmas, and help us live our best lives possible, whether our goal is to have fun or to have a relationship. I've also popped up in newspaper articles (I was dubbed "The Black Carrie Bradshaw" in a *Washington Post* feature article, which I have mixed feelings about) and on TV shows, both as a dating expert who teaches Sandy Denton aka "Pepa" from *Salt-N-Pepa* how to meet men on *Let's Talk About Pep*, and selecting a sexy man to be featured in *Essence* on *Being Terry Kennedy*.

Over the last four years, I've also completed thousands of interviews with men and women to gather information so we can close "the dating divide," hosted roundtable discussions where the sexes are provided a forum to hash out their issues face-to-face, searched for and offered up single men to the *Essence* audience, interviewed hundreds of experts about what we can all do better, became a life and relationships coach, answered thousands of dating and relationship questions on Formspring, and penned a monthly column for *Essence* that tackles current dating issues. Slowly but surely, I'm convinced, a dent can be made in the way we are portrayed, and the way we see ourselves. Together, we can close the gap between how women and men relate to one another.

In your hands, you hold my best attempt to make a difference. I've shared my life—mistakes and all—as well as the insights I've gained. My story isn't perfect, it's not always pretty, but it's honest, with ups and downs and many more highs than lows. Some details have been changed to protect the innocent (or guilty, depending on how you look at it), mostly names and physical descriptions but some places, too. I hope you can learn as much by reading about my trials and triumphs as I did by living and growing through them.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Fuller:

A lot of people always spent their own free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity here is look different

you can read a book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent the entire day to reading a e-book. The book A Belle in Brooklyn: The Go-to Girl for Advice on Living Your Best Single Life it is very good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book features high quality.

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