



## About... **Jasmine Johnson**

[www.jasminejohnson.co.uk](http://www.jasminejohnson.co.uk)

If you pass this down-to-earth lady in the street as she goes about her day-to-day life, you'd never believe that she possess such creative prowess, such depth or even the ability hold you captive to pages and pages of hot, steamy prose. She is likeable, lovable, and when she smiles, it is like a ray of sunshine.

She writes the words that make the hearts of every individual who dares to read her, sing... She goes where other writers fear to tread... She tells it like it is – cutting no corners and sparing no emotions... She is a writer with mission... a writer who writes from the pit of her creative stomach... a writer with a 'message' at the heart of each story she tells. So... who is this creatively gifted female?

Jasmine Johnson was born in Jamaica. An ex-scholar of Watermount Primary School in St Catherine, Jamaica, she immigrated to Britain as a teenager, where she completed her Secondary education at Hatherley Girl's School in the quiet town of Gloucester. A Media & Communication Studies graduate from the University of Wolverhampton, she now resides in Birmingham, West Midlands.

### **Mother of One...**

She is a proud mother of a fine son, Andre Johnson.

### **Talent discovered in Jamaica...**

Jasmine has always written: ever since she was a little girl in Jamaica, where her creative potential were first recognised, especially by her teacher, Mrs Scott, who often read her stories out to the class. Back then, blessed with this vivid imagination, she wrote poems, short stories and songs.

### **Vivid imagination...**

Renowned for her vivid, almost tactile depiction of emotional situations, Jasmine has proven a unique sense of 'depth'. She has the ability to evoke all your senses when she tells a story: As well as laughter, audience members have been known to be reduced to tears by her poignant, heart-wrenching delivery, as she would take them, almost tangibly, to specific scenes, acting out the parts vocally.

### **Main Theme – Relationships...**

The subject of 'Relationships' is Jasmine's main theme. This is what really excites her to write: the black man/black woman relationship excites her the most. Jasmine once said, *'There will always be something to write about when it comes to turbulence in relationships. When I look at where we're coming from, where we're at and the fact that we are yet to work out where we are going with this 'lurve' thing, it gives me a whole lot of scope to write. Nobody likes conflict in real life, but you only have to watch a few soaps to know that it's a darn good subject for the dramatic pen!'*

### **What she hates most...**

Having to leave her writing to sleep is one of the things Jasmine hates most about her writing. She gets so involved; it is hard to tear herself away at times.

### **What she likes most...**

But what she enjoys most is creating a character, carrying him/her successfully through the story, doing whatever the hell she wants to do with him/her. To Jasmine, that's the beauty of fiction; the fact that she can take her characters wherever she wants to, make them do or say whatever she wants them to. She enjoys acting them out also. Whenever Jasmine writes a scene for each of her characters, she becomes that character. Feels what they are feeling. Like acting, she takes on their moods, hence her readers' sense of affiliation with her believable characters.

### **Doing It For Herself...**

Following the publication of her first novel, Mr Soon Come' in 2001, Jasmine has successfully self-published her second and third, The Devil I Know and The Day Hell Broke Loose. She has solely seen through their production, from the writing, editing, all the way to the publishing.

### **What inspired Jasmine to Self-publish?**

Jasmine found that it is difficult for black writers to get their work published by mainstream publishers. For instance, in the beginning, she sent her work off to as far a field as Ireland. Everywhere and anywhere there was a publisher, she sent it. Letters all came back, worded nicely, but simply saying, 'Thanks but no thanks.' She found that the mainstream publishers were going for what they knew. They could not 'feel' her work, and she came to the conclusion that, unless you can 'feel' a story, it isn't going to grab you, so black writers trying to make it with mainstream publishers is like trying to sell ice to Eskimos

**Self-Publishing Workshop...**

She has been invited to give a Self-Publishing Workshop at The International Black Media Festival in Oxford in October 2005.

**Acting...**

But Jasmine doesn't just stop at the static words on pages. In 2004 she turned her hands to drama when she joined the Birmingham Theatre School. Her debut role was in a dynamic presentation to grace the stage: *'HUMANIMAL'*, an effective piece of devised theatre directed by Hannah Phillips. Its theme questions, *'How close is the animal inside you?'*

**Comedy...**

And there's more to the talented lady yet: In 2005, (her 3rd year's appearance on the *'In Celebration of My Sisters'*) show, Jasmine turned her hand to Comedy as she hit the stage of Birmingham Hippodrome with a side-splitting, self-written comedy sketch: *'Berdie - To Cut a Long Story Short'*. Jasmine delivered the sketch via the voice of Birdie, (a character she invented), and was blown away by the audience's sidesplitting reaction.

**Dance...**

In 2007, alongside another three Birmingham writers: Ava Ming, Sue Brown and Kim Trusty, Jasmine performed in *'Kitchen Sink to Black Ink'*, in which she tells of how music influenced her writing. With a selection of reggae tracks ranging from Toots and the Maytals to Dawn Penn, she soon had the audience mesmerised as she told her story through dance moves, reminiscent of years gone by.

**Readings...**

Jasmine has been invited to read in cities like Birmingham (where she now resides), Bristol, Leicester and London.

**Working with children...**

Jasmine doesn't just write for adults. Keeping her adults' writing separate, she is also a hit with children. In the past, Jasmine has shared her creativity with children by going into schools and teaching them how to bring out their creativity. She has also shared stories from the Caribbean with children at Handsworth Library, in a theme entitled *'Memories From The Islands'*. Her children's play, *'THANK HEAVENS FOR MY SENSES'* was performed by the children of Regent Park Primary school in Birmingham.

**And in her own words, at the peak of her creative career, Jasmine said, *'I have only just begun'*.**