



PRESENTED BY BLACK ODYSSEY MEDIA
INTERVIEWED BY CHARDAI POWELL

Chardai: Hi, Mika sister! So excited to be doing this interview. You know I adore you, and you're someone I definitely wanted to highlight.

Mika: Aw, thank you, thank you!

Chardai: So let's start from the beginning. What's a book that you remember being a core part of your childhood?

Mika: *Charlotte's Web*, for sure. I had this teacher, and she used to read the book, then play the movie in class. I remember I was always more intrigued with her reading it. *Charlotte's Web* was the first book that had me in a vice grip. I felt all the emotions. It took me through everything. It's the book that sparked my joy for reading.

Chardai: Yeah, totally—it's part of your core. So fast-forwarding a little bit, who are the authors that shaped how you read today?

Mika: Oh, definitely my all-time favorite, Eric Jerome Dickey. We have to give it to the greats—we're talking Eric Jerome Dickey, Nikki Turner, Zane, and Wahida Clark. Then Ashley & JaQuavis came on the scene and really changed the game for me.



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Chardai: If you had to recommend a book from one of their catalogs...

Mika: Eric Jerome Dickey's *The Other Woman*. Go read this book if you haven't read it. I love that book!

Chardai: I'm making my list right now because we love a Mika rec. Okay, take us back to your first day on Bookstagram. What were your expectations, if you had any? Walk us through the experience.

Mika: I remember seeing A.E. Valdez, and I kept seeing *A Worthy Love* pop up. I was so confused because I had never seen this lady in Barnes & Noble, and I'm in there all the time. Right before that, I grabbed *In This Moment* by K. Lashaun off Kindle Unlimited, then that led me to *A Worthy Love*, and from there I discovered a whole bunch of indie authors on Bookstagram. My expectation was to get all these Black recommendations and for it to be a good community—which I still think it is.

Chardai: You're part of a very popular online book club. I think Cover2Cover are really IT girls. How has being part of this club affected how you read?

Mika: Well... I've always read Black, but joining a book club has changed how I read because I'm reading a lot faster and having more fun while reading. Now I have more people to talk all this mess with, and we really treat these characters like they're our family members. But it also helps you process because we all have different opinions. Talking to people about books teaches you to grow and think beyond your own circumstances, because other people might show you a different POV than what you had.

Chardai: When you're interviewing these authors, what is something you always try to bring into the conversation?

Mika: Their personalities. I think their personalities will sell more books than their synopsis will, right? If you're talking to somebody and seeing them in an interview and they're a good time, you're going to ask, "What do they do?" I want people to know in our interviews you can go deep and still have fun.

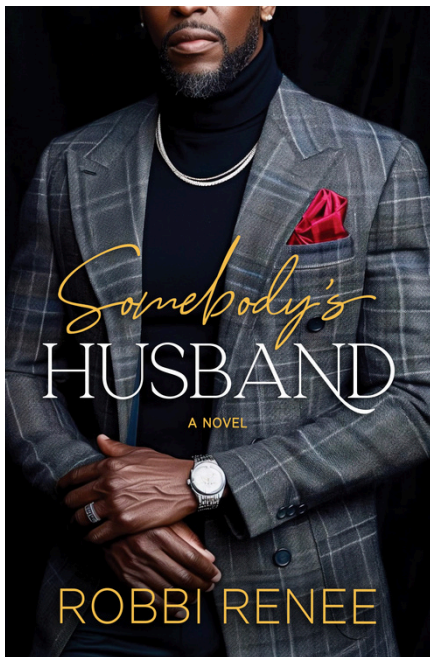


Chardai: What's one interaction with another reader from the community that has stuck with you?

Mika: Oh my gosh, there are so many, but obviously meeting Mimi, Nish, and Kaneisha—my Cover2Cover girls. We went to the Love and Books event out here in Pasadena, so that event is always going to be near and dear to my heart because that's where I met my girls. That's what brought us together in physical form.

Chardai: As a creator/influencer, what do you want to be remembered for?

Mika: Being authentic and trustworthy. When you come to my page, you're expected to get my real, honest opinion on these books—and somebody who is just a good time. I want the best for everyone. I'm super supportive. I want all the girls to win, so I hope that's transparent, like, "she genuinely rooted for us," you know?



Chardai: We feel it, and in that, who is someone in the book space you want to give your flowers to? It can be authors or creators.

Mika: Okay, well it's me you're talking to, so you know I have to name a couple! First, A.E. Valdez and K. Lashaun because they're the first authors that introduced me to this book space. Takerra Allen, Rae Lyse, and Love Belvin for just stimulating my brain and writing the things that the girls want. Shoutout to my girls staying true and always writing urban fiction and Black love—the people who've been doing it for years and years. I'm talking about BriAnn Danae, Aubree Pynn, Shvonne Latrice, Ashley Antoinette. And last, the content creators. The original content creator for me is Robin, a girl from South Central. I liked her—she was real.

Chardai: And I'd love for you to close with your go-to recommendation for a Black Odyssey Media title.

Mika: *Somebody's Husband* by Robbi Renee. And this might be cheating because I haven't read it yet, but I know *Summer's Echo* is going to be my favorite. Also, of course, the Black Odyssey Media holiday series.

Chardai: Thank you, Mika sister! Y'all can follow her at @theplanistobebooked on IG, TikTok, and Threads, and she's 1/4 of the online book club @cover2cover



Chardai Powell is a writer and digital storyteller who believes in the power of Black stories told with care. She is the Social Media Manager at Black Odyssey Media and a former lead bookseller known for uplifting Black indie authors and creating meaningful literary events. She is the founder of Dear Black Love, a community-driven event brand celebrating Black love and creativity, and is committed to using media as a tool for connection, visibility, and joy.



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