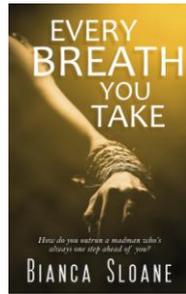


Behind the Book – *Every Breath You Take*



Of all the books I've written to date, by far, this one had the longest, most difficult road.

The idea for this book was in part, inspired by a neighbor of ours back when I was in high school. She had a cute little car, cute little outfits, super nice – really seemed to have it all together. For whatever reason, one day I looked at her and thought, “What if you had it all and in the blink of an eye, it was taken away?” (Yes, apparently, even then, I had the twisted mind of a psychological suspense author).

Shortly thereafter, I started scribbling this story about a character I dubbed Natalie in my spiral notebook. Over the years, I would scribble some more until I lucked into an ancient computer with WordPerfect 5.1 (orange letters on a black screen and everything. Yup, I was living large), and started pecking away on that. I never really got down more than a few chapters and the story continued to languish in my head.

Finally in 2002, armed with a sparkling new desktop computer, I declared this was the year I would write this book.

So I did.

I wrote every night after work and every free weekend until I had a finished manuscript. I remember thinking at the time I would never have another idea for a book (fortunately, *Sweet Little Lies* materialized). I had a good friend read it and give me her feedback and off I went onto the query-go-round in search of a literary agent.

And then... nothing. Squat. Nada. Literary dreams dashed.

In the meantime, every bit of advice I read said to write the next book, so I did (the aforementioned [*Sweet Little Lies*](#).)

Fast-forward to 2012 and my decision to “go Indie.” I had three manuscripts on my by now, laptop, that I figured would be a matter of revising and editing. Easy breezy. While the first two weren’t without their challenges, getting them ready for publication was a snap compared to this one.

Let’s just say for starters, looking at it for the first time in ten years, I realized I had really grown as a writer.

Second, while I still believed in the characters and the basic story, on the whole, the manuscript didn’t really do anything for me.

Long story short, I rewrote it front to back three times, even throwing it in the wood chipper two separate times and starting from scratch. Many times I thought about moving on, but something drove me to figure out the story and keep going.

I’m quite happy with it now and I hope readers will like it, too.

A few other tidbits:

- I named Natalie in honor of my favorite movie star, Natalie Wood.
- Originally, Natalie’s last name was Crawford, not Scott.
- Her boyfriend’s name was Greg, then Brian (which what I finally dubbed her friend Christine’s fiancé) before I finally landed on Jason.
- The story was set in Miami instead of Chicago.
- Natalie was always in the public relations industry, though I kept changing her job description.
- Because I had written it so long ago, I had to update a lot of references. For example, a landline telephone figured prominently into the original plot, so that had to go.

Like so many people, I’d never really listened to the lyrics of “Every Breath You Take” by The Police, until I saw Sting on some TV special and he said it always

amazed him how many people used the song as their first dance at their wedding. He laughed and said he always wanted to tell them, “Good luck,” because if you listen closely to the lyrics, they’re far from a love song. The minute I heard that and listened to the song again, I mean, *really* listened, I knew that was my title.

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