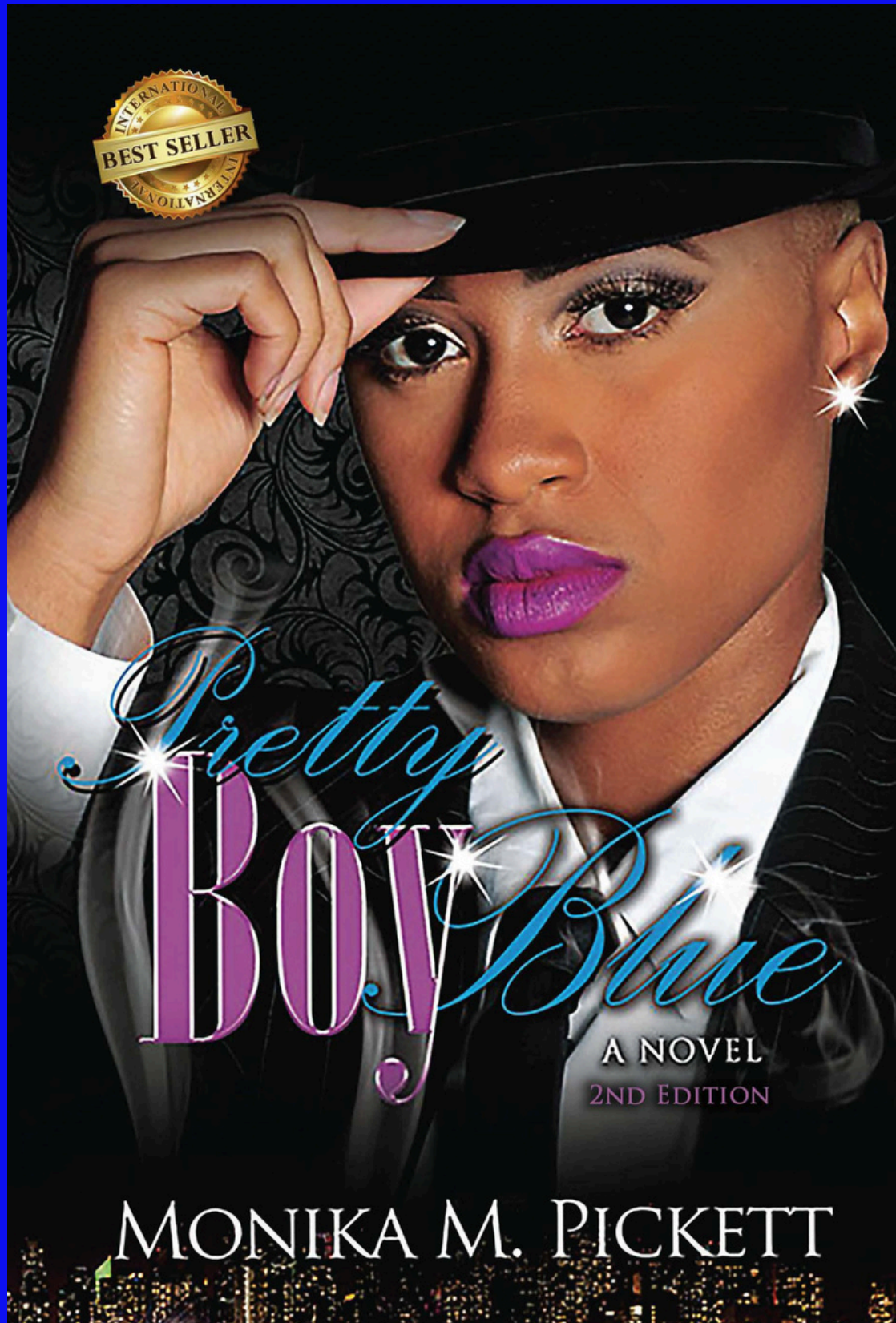
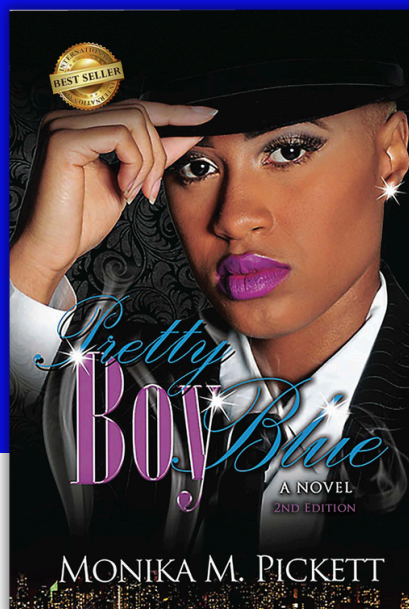


Press Kit





Pretty Boy Blue

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LGBTQIA Fiction / Romance



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monikampickett.com

Synopsis

From playing house as a child to her first kiss as a teenager, Nikki Blue knew that she was different from other girls. One day her slice of the American dream would include a white picket fence and a wife. While her family life is in upheaval and her loved ones battle around her, Nikki's struggles escalate as her childhood innocence is stolen and she is uprooted over and over again. Despite her father's abandonment and her mother's denial, Nikki is determined to discover her truest self. She stumbles through adolescence with the visage of a debutante and the attitude of a cocksure college boy. To escape being bullied in school, Nikki finds solace in the Washington, DC, gay and lesbian club scene. Flamboyant gay men and drag queens teach her the nuances of being fierce.

Key Selling Points

- Centers the LGBTQIA community
- Encourages readers to be their authentic selves
- Universal story of resilience, growth and love

Audience

- LGBTQIA community
- Lesbian women
- Womxn
- Black readers (U.S. and Global)

Monika M. Pickett is an author, cultural commentator, mother, grandmother and broadcaster. A highly sought after speaker and LGBTQIA rights advocate, she encourages being one's authentic self. Monika is the author of the international, best-selling *Pretty Boy Blue* trilogy. She has contributed to numerous publications and was a recurring host of "Inside Out" on WPFW-FM 89.3. Monika is a member of the Black Speakers Network. A former advertising sales executive, she earned a master's degree of Human Services from Lincoln University and a MBA from Johns Hopkins University. She is a veteran of the United States Army where she served as a medic in Operation Desert Storm and received an honorable discharge.



About Monika

By the age of five, I knew I was different from other little girls. I liked different things and I felt different.

As a teenager, I "came out" at a time when being gay was something you kept hidden because it was unacceptable. My father disowned me. My mother didn't understand who I was. I found kinship and love within the gay community, particularly among gay men and drag queens. They helped me to navigate my feelings and the world. They helped me to survive.

After fulfilling my heart's desire to become a mother, I was still searching for love and found it in all the wrong places: unattainable women who were "straight" and others who lived half lives, afraid of what the world would say.

When I finally found my happy ending, it turned into a nightmare from which I couldn't wake. After enduring and recovering from a stroke, I was house-bound and depressed. I lost my independence; I couldn't work. One day I picked up a pen and started journaling. I wrote feverishly releasing everything that had been burdening my heart.

Then, I had a painful divorce and couldn't find my path. So, I continued to write. Writing awakened something inside me; it ignited a spark that I didn't know existed. Creating the character Nikki Blue, my protagonist, was freeing. I could channel my feelings of anguish, joy and triumph. I would reinvent myself! I could be authentically me.

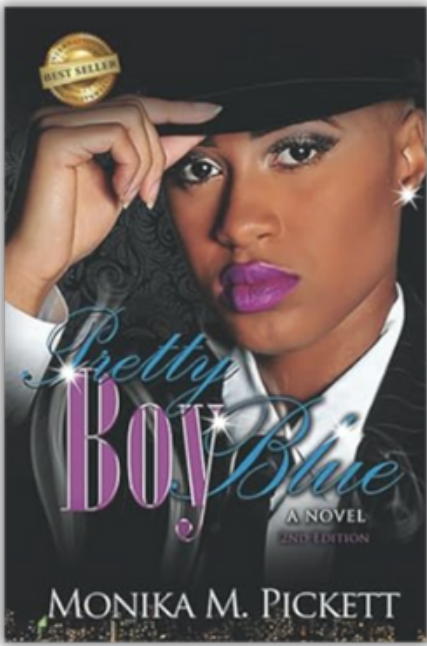
Those difficult periods birthed my career as an author. *Pretty Boy Blue* was my first novel. Pretty, because everyone said that I was "too pretty to be like that." Boy, because although I love being a woman, I've always felt like a cocky boy on the inside. Blue, represents my sadness from the bullying that I endured.

Three novels later, I am an LGBTQIA advocate, grandmother and cultural commentator. I have authored columns and a blog, hosted radio segments and book signings. And I have only begun to find my purpose: being my authentic self.



Excerpts

Ecstasy



"You're sexy," she said. "You got a girlfriend?"

"No, I don't." We danced until the DJ changed songs.

"Thank you for the dance," I said, and walked over to the bar. "Hi, I'll have another Heineken."

"You really are a beer girl." Cindy smiled as she popped the top.

"I know I should be more cultured and order wine or something."

"Are you a friend of Lette's or Dean's?"

"Lette is like my big sister. I met Dean through her."

"Oh, so . . ." Before Cindy could finish her sentence, I felt Leila's presence, then felt her lips brush against my ear.

"It's hot in here. Come take a walk with me." I turned to face Leila, who was close enough to kiss me.

"Okay."

She grabbed my hand and led me out the back door. We walked for about a block before she stopped at a car.

"Come sit with me." She pulled out a set of keys and unlocked the back door.

"Whose car is this?"

"Dean's ride."

I felt nervous as Leila got in the other side and sat in the back seat. She ran her fingers through her hair. She had a roughness that frightened yet excited me, like she had seen some things. She leaned in and cupped my breasts with both hands.

"Nice, very nice."

What was I doing? I can't do this! I shouldn't do this.

Excerpts

Just open the door and get out, Nikki . . . but I wanted her and she wanted me.

I leaned in as she buried her face between my breasts. I grabbed her dreads, feeling her breath against my skin. She reached under my shirt and unclasped my bra, pulling it down, and my breasts fell free. She pushed my breasts together as she caressed both my nipples with her tongue.

I grasped her head and whispered in her ear, "You're making me wet." She stopped sucking my nipples and unbuttoned my jeans.

"Let me see for myself." I knelt in front of her and she forcefully turned my body in the opposite direction.

"Get on your hands and knees."

Before I could resist, she pulled my pants down over my hips. We were in the backseat of a car on a neighborhood street. *What was I doing?* This was so wrong but it felt so good. I got on my hands and knees and before I could rationalize my whorishness, she spread my cheeks and slid her tongue deep inside me. She moaned as she ate me from behind.

"Yes, I like that!"

I heard her unzip her jeans. She held my ass with one hand and I realized she was masturbating with the other. I pumped my ass against her face as I listened to her masturbate. I didn't know if I was more turned on by her eating me or listening to her own motion.

"Oh, God!" She plunged her tongue deeper inside me as I came.


She said, "You're fucking nasty!"

I was spent as I pulled my jeans up and fell back onto the seat. Before I could say anything, she leaned over to kiss me on the lips and I turned my cheek.

"Kiss me!"

"I can't."

I put my bra on. "Because I don't know you. Kissing is so intimate, so personal."



Excerpts

She tossed her dreads and sat up. "Are you fuckin' kidding me? I just ate your pussy in the back seat of a fuckin' car and you can't kiss me?"

"I'm sorry . . ."

She adjusted her clothes. "I can't believe this shit!"

"Leila . . ."

She got out of the car and walked toward the house.

I tried to compose myself and not look like I had just been fucked in the back of a car by a stranger. What was wrong with me? What a slutty thing to do. But I didn't feel slutty. I was in control and I liked it.

Excerpts



Through the fire

“So, babe . . . I talked to Karlos. I know he’s only seven but he needs to understand what we’re going through.”

“What did you tell him?” she asked.

“I told him you’re sick and that you may be tired a lot.”

She frowned.

“Why did you tell him I’m sick? I’m not claiming this!”

“I’m not claiming it either but the reality is you have cancer. He’s a child and he needs to understand what that means for all of us if we’re going to be a family.”

I was relieved when the doorbell rang. I had to be strong for her.

Tommy was a tall, good-looking man. He looked like someone Valencia would date if she were into men. She introduced me as her baby. They must have been close because she wasn’t out at work.

“Let’s do this,” she said, her voice soon followed by the sound of the clippers when he turned them on.

I sat on a stool in front of her as she gently wiped her tears. I held my breath as her long locks fell to the floor.

I tried to make her laugh to keep us both from crying. “Oh . . .that’s sexy! You’re giving me Demi Moore in *G.I. Jane!*”

Tommy turned off the clippers and handed her the mirror. She lowered her head.

“Come on, babe. You are still the most beautiful woman in the world to me,” I said.

She reached for the mirror and wiped her tears as she stared at her reflection. She exhaled and handed me the mirror before leaving me and Tommy to sweep up her hair.

We hid her shaved head with wigs. It was fun trying on outrageous colors at the beauty supply store. I tried to support her with every ounce of strength I had.



Excerpts

I felt helpless when she cried herself to sleep in my arms that night.

Valencia was at a work function that next evening. I was grateful to have the house to myself. I went to the bathroom and stared at my image in the mirror. I fought back the tears as I pulled the clippers out and plugged them in. The buzzing sensation was soothing as I slowly shaved my head.

I cried as I mourned the life I thought we would have. Although I didn't have cancer, I wanted my partner to know that I would walk through the fire with her, come what may.

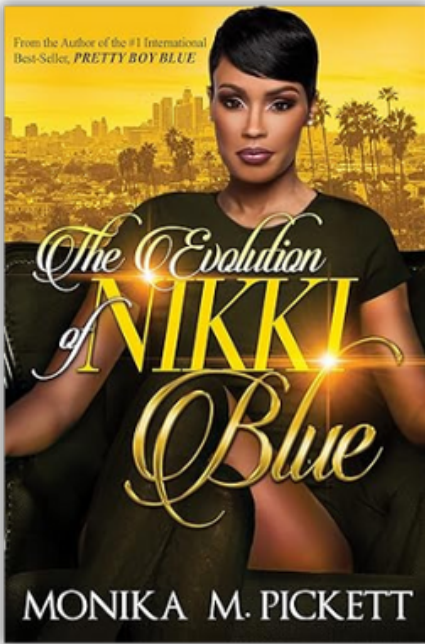
I was in bed by the time Valencia got home.

She got undressed and took a shower before coming to bed. She wrapped her arms around me and kissed me on my neck. She nuzzled the back of my head and pulled away as she ran her hand over my head. I cried as she began to sob. I turned over and held her.

"We are going to beat this . . .together."

Excerpts

Mula-la



We made a coffee run before heading up 95 North. My mother was in the back seat scrolling the internet while me and my sister caught up.

“It hurts me that you’re so sad.”

“I know, Cec. I’m trying to regain my independence but it’s so hard. I never thought I would be starting over at fifty.”

“I know but now, you can finally live the life you’ve always wanted. You don’t have to stand in anyone’s shadow. You have your beautiful grandchildren and you will find someone who is courageous enough to love you openly.”

“I don’t know if I even believe in love any more. Maybe I’ll join a convent.”

“Have you heard from...I will never say her name. What a fuckin’ disappointment. Oops... sorry, mom.”

“She can’t hear you. For some reason, she won’t wear her hearing aids. But I blocked Mona. She can only communicate with me through my attorney. She’s late on the first ten-thousand-dollar payment. She was supposed to wire it to my account last month. I gotta go through this shit for two years. She had the nerve to tell Karlos she has resources and I don’t. If you’re all that, be a bad bitch, pay a lump sum and be done with it. As matter of fact, let me check my account. That bitch better give me my money.”

The sun was shining as we drove over the Delaware Bridge. My jaw dropped when I accessed my account on my phone and whispered to my sister.

“Cec...”

“What?” She squealed when I placed my phone in her view. “Eeeeeee! Yes!”

My mother sat up between the front seats. “What happened?”

“Mommy, Nikki’s first lump sum from the divorce settlement just hit her account.”

“Woowhoo! You deserve it.”

Excerpts

My sister started hunching her shoulders. "Look at God! You're looking for an apartment, working on your second book and you're going to be back and forth to Chicago with your babies. Okay...but you know I'm petty. We need a theme song to remember this day."

I thought for a minute. "Oh, damn...wait."

I scrolled through my play list and the beat from Rihanna's *Bitch Betta Have My Money* blared through the speakers.

We fell out laughing as we started singing at the top of our lungs:

Yayo, yayo, Mu-la-la, Yayo...Bitch better have my money, Y'all should know me well enough, bitch better have my money, please don't call me on my bluff, pay me what you owe me.

We figuratively pulled the trigger on the verse and laughed until we cried.

"I call the shots, shots, shots, like bra, bra, bra!"

My mother sat up and started singing.

"Yeah...get my money, bitch! Better get me my money!"

Me and my sister laughed harder.

"Those are not the words, mom."

We sang until we couldn't sing anymore. I sat back and transferred money to my accounts that were in arrears. That weekend was one of the best weekends I had in a long time. My spirit felt lighter as we drove to our favorite Jersey sub shops for the road trip home.

"I can drive some, Cec." She looked at me.

"We would never get home and I gotta work in the morning."

I playfully pinched her on the arm. "I love you. Thank you for being such a wonderful little-big sister."

Interview Topics

1. Being authentic
2. Current climate toward the LGBTQIA community
3. Living and thriving with chronic illness
4. Same-sex marriage and divorce
5. Resilience through life changes
6. Lessons from the *Pretty Boy Blue* series
7. The key to reinventing one's self
8. Coming out at a young age
9. Advice to aspiring authors
10. What your journey teaches us





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