

Nourishing Dreams

by Anna Alexander

This month in Nourishing Dreams, I am spotlighting the brains behind this operation. I have known Kim for at least 10 years and we've grown together, laughed, cried and shared many crazy ideas and adventures. I want you all to get to know my wonderful friend and find out just who would show up at a dinner party if she had her way. Enjoy!



Anna and Kim

How did you come up with the idea of starting a professional muse business? What makes you qualified to be a muse?

I've always been creative. I've also always been a helper. Someone tells me they want to do something and my first instinct is to figure out a way—usually more than one way—for them to make it happen. I'm an idea person and a fixer, and I really think that creativity and creative thinking, learning to follow our muses rather than follow the beaten path, is going to change the world and make it better. All of this just made being a professional muse seem like an obvious choice.

What makes me qualified? Besides passion and a real desire to help people realize their own creativity, and a sparkly tiara? I have a degree in psychology, and a post-graduate teaching certification. I've also completed Eric Maisel's creativity coaching trainings, and I'm taking certification courses through the Creativity Coaching Association.

When you write, where do you draw your inspiration?

Really random things I'll hear a song on the radio—often one I've heard a hundred times before—and suddenly I'll have a story in my head. Or I'll overhear a snippet of conversation and start building a story around that. Sometimes just seeing someone on the street—today it was a tattooed girl in a flowered dress carrying a skateboard—will get me started building a story around them. I'm pretty sure stories just float around out there waiting to collide with my head.

Besides writing, what other creative endeavors do you partake in?

Whichever ones I can't hold myself back from. I love to learn new crafts and techniques and art forms, so sometimes I get carried away and try to do every creative thing out there. The ones I return to regularly, though, are embroidery and painting. Both have morphed over the years, though, so now instead of cross stitch I do encrusted beaded embroidery, and instead of oil painting I do mixed media acrylics.

If you had the chance to have dinner with your favorite writers, who would they be and what would you ask them?

Okay, this is related, and I just have to be a fangirl and brag a bit. A couple of years ago, I got to have lunch with my favorite author, Charles de Lint. I was taking a workshop he taught, and we ended up at the same coffee shop getting soup to take back to the classroom. So I got to walk along with him and another person and chat a bit. I'm pretty sure I swooned. Probably made a complete fool of myself.

Still, I would absolutely invite him to the dinner. Who else—I have so many favorites! Neil Gaiman. Jim Butcher. Ray Bradbury. Stephen King. Edgar Allan Poe. (How big is the table, anyhow?) Patricia Briggs. Kat Richardson. That seems like a good list. What would I ask? “How do you step away from the daily things that demand your attention and give your writing the focus and energy it needs?”

What do you think is more important and why – the story or the story teller?

There's no difference. Story is there, out in the ether wandering the Universe, but it doesn't take a particular form until it blends with a story teller. A story can't happen without its teller, and each teller, even with same starting point, creates a story that couldn't have happened without that particular story teller. The two are completely entwined and can't be separated or ranked. It's the melding that makes the magic.