

THE **TELLER** MAGAZINE

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AMRIT-K

Poetry and Literature

Poetry and literature hold the pulse of language, where silence speaks and words find rhythm beyond reason. They carry the weight of time, capturing fleeting moments, untold truths, and the depths of human experience.



THE MAKING OF A CULT CLASSIC AUTHOR
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The Making of a Cult Classic Author

By Emily B. Scialom

I don't write about shoes, hair or tractors: I focus upon things that matter to me. Mostly this means dissecting religion, equality and love. Many of the qualities my work promotes—honesty, tolerance, faith—may seem somewhat archaic given the current cultural climate, but I write about them because I believe in the power of literature to alleviate human suffering. I have been taught, comforted and enlightened by books throughout my life. Through devouring work by writers such as Neale Donald Walsch, Raymond Moody and Brian Weiss, I have expanded my understanding and managed to conceive of worlds beyond this one.

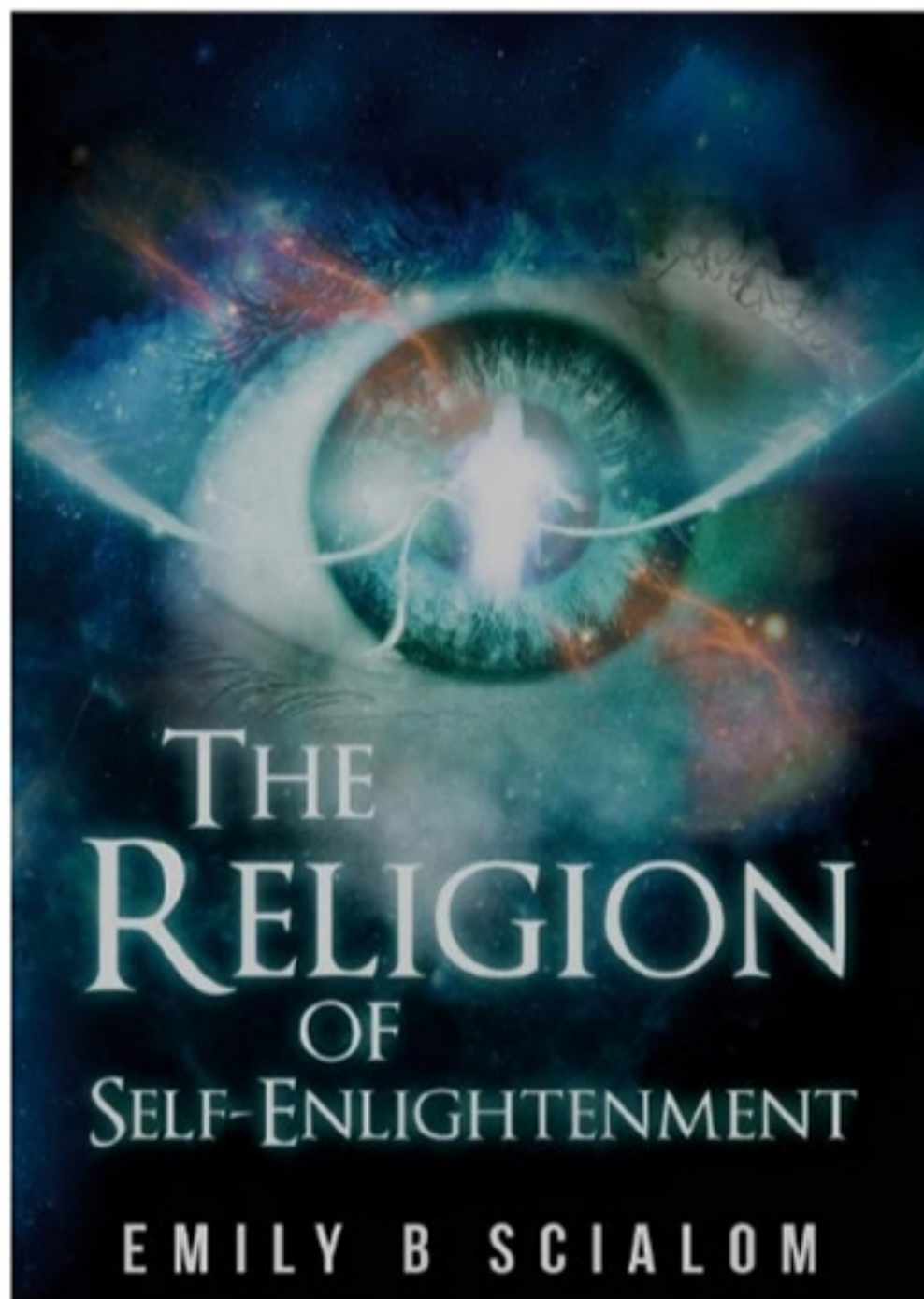
My love affair with words began at the tender age of eight when, as instructed by my teacher, I wrote A Poem about a Quarry Pond. The final lines, "Pond, please tell me the secrets that lurk beneath your surface bed/And that will be with you when your seeds are dead" continue to strike me as being very thoughtful for such a young person. My first attempt at writing a poem became nationally published in a collection of



Emily B. Scialom

children's poetry as the result of winning a school competition. As a teenager, I then became internationally published. After writing hundreds of lyrics during my troubled adolescence, I began writing my first novel in 2008.

The Religion of Self-Enlightenment (The ROSE) took me eight years to complete owing to difficulties with editors and publishers, but it was ultimately the most rewarding experience of my life. The narrative which emerged follows the spiritual awakening of an initially proudly boring young man named Carrick Ares. Having had no beliefs at all until a near-death experience in a car accident aged 29, Carrick is intentionally portrayed as a metaphorical everyman. The ROSE explores





powerful themes such as identity, meaning and purpose with an unrelenting, obsessive intensity. It proved to be a true labour of love: the force of my emotions during that turbulent period of my life can be sensed on every page. The ROSE has now been declared “a modern cult classic” by various media outlets in the UK and US. I have been delighted by every small step in the right direction and feel excited for the future.

Since its publication in 2016, I have been on a wild rollercoaster ride in terms of promotion and criti-

cal reception for The ROSE. Many people have read and loved the book. Reader reviews are overwhelmingly positive and strangers have approached me in public to celebrate the effect The ROSE had on them. Yet others have felt so challenged by my words that they have resorted to burning the copies I have given them. Although such reactions are painful, I reassure myself by insisting

that great literature divides.

Highlights of my literary journey so far include a Times Square billboard campaign, being interviewed on BBC radio several times and gracing the covers of multiple magazines. My work has featured in The London Book Fair, The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books and The ROSE was also selected as a finalist in the Book Excellence Awards. My achieve-

ments may be unremarkable in the grand scheme of things, but they mean the world to me.

I released seven books in seven years between 2016 and 2023 and am now a journalist for a major regional magazine, The Moment. I enjoy the opportunity to write about subjects I would not usually be exposed to, and the challenge of producing articles readers want to engage with never grows tired.

Furthermore, I would be doing a disservice if I did not mention that I have been on a spiritual as well as a literary journey. A memoir entitled *Wild to the Max* will be released in the coming months, my eighth literary offering. It aims to cover the first 40 years of my life as well as my journey to becoming a Christian. Faith is a difficult topic to write about because people's opinions can be aggressive; across the world people are divided by beliefs and religious intolerance. However, this is exactly why I feel mature and balanced communication is so important when it comes to our beliefs.

Given the prevalence of religious conflicts and bigotry in our world, I strongly believe that out of all my books *The Religion of Self-Enlightenment* is the perfect story for these times. Through the

novel's discussion of spiritual confusion and attempts to resolve our collective trauma, it is clear to me that *The ROSE* has the potential to contribute to the conversation about why we are here and what it is to be human. That may sound bombastic or even egomaniacal, but I am not here to sacrifice my truth for the comfort of others.

I wish I could make the whole world sit up and take notice of my work. Although it has been a long and arduous creative journey, it has not been unrewarding. Every life I have gently touched, every insightful sentence I have ever written and every moment that a reader has devoted to understanding my message is to be truly treasured. Given the state of the world, we need to find the words to reach through to people, even save them. The deluge of AI slop and plagiaristic theories



which occupy the public space must be challenged by the indomitable wonder of the human spirit. I hope and pray these words will reach through to you and perhaps move you to look a little more closely at my work. After all, as I have found, the future of even the most wayward soul can be redeemed by words.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emily B. Scialom was born in London on July 27th 1984, and spent her childhood years in Glastonbury, Somerset. She has lived in Cambridge, England since 1996 and currently works as a journalist for *The Moment* magazine. Her upcoming memoir, *Wild to the Max*, will be her eighth work and aims to explore the mercurial nature of her first four decades of life.

