

Silk is a story about five generational women going through different life challenges. In friendship, there is no 'judgement', only love and support. Through abuse, career challenges and parental responsibilities, these women EXEMPLIFY courage, love, patience, and wisdom.

SILK - 10th Anniversary Edition

by Athena Dent

Order the complete book from the publisher

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9925.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**

Silk

10th Anniversary Edition



Athena Dent

Copyright © 2009-2018 Athena Dent

ISBN: 978-1-63263-798-7

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

The characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

If you give any type of medical, legal or professional advice, you must also include a disclaimer. You can find examples of these online using your favorite search engine.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2018

Second Edition

Margaret

Growing up in Georgia; such a beautiful place with rich history. I am the middle child of 9 siblings (which means I'm #5). I grew up in a loving and close family, but I always felt 'empty.' Like I was out of place. I got along with most of my siblings; except for my oldest brother, Richard who pretty much felt he was the 'man' of the house, when our father was out working. Richard liked to bully all of us, especially me. I didn't particularly know why, but we used to always get into it. It was bad enough that I felt the way I did about myself growing up.

You see, I wasn't as pretty as my other sisters and I was a little on the heavy side. But, Richard made me feel five times worse. Always cracking jokes on me; he was always hitting me on the back of the head and calling me 'beanpole' (because I was tall). I was taller than him. One would think I would have beaten him up already, but I didn't dare. You see... Richard was 'HUGE'; not 'fat' huge, but 'muscle' huge. He would lift weights all the time, so he could be healthy and look good for the girls.

As we got older, heading into our mid-twenties, the jokes continued. We were finished with college and out in the workforce. When we use to have family get-togethers; there goes Richard running at the mouth, "Hey beanpole, how's life treating you?"

Momma would shut him up in a minute and one time at a family reunion she said, "Boy, would you be quiet. I told you I don't want to hear that nonsense. You

better act like you have the good sense GOD gave you. That's your sister. Remember that!"

But after that day, I never heard another peep out of him. As time went on; while my sisters started dating (I have four sisters) and soon two of them got married, I was the only one who stayed single. I wasn't bad looking either; but I always felt I wasn't pretty enough for a man, until I met Robert.

It was 1977 and I was in a coffee shop having a cup of Coffee and a piece of cake, when this tall man (And I mean TALL. He must have been around 6'4') approached me. He asked me in a deep voice if he could sit down at my table (there were no other seats available at the time) and the word, "Yes" just came out of my mouth.

He sat down across from me and when he smiled; (Oooo-weee) those pearly whites just sparkled. He was dressed nicely in light colors and he talked with a southern accent. Boy, we talked for hours and the next thing I knew, the coffee shop was closing for the night. He escorted me home and behaved himself as a man should. As we were walking, I noticed that he was not as tall as I initially thought and that was a good thing. We looked good together. We had such a good vibe and it seemed like we walked for miles.

Those escorts and cups of coffee continued for many months, which turned into almost two years. On our 2nd Anniversary, he took me on a picnic and gave me a cupcake with a ring sitting on top of it.

His words echoed in my head and I remembered those words to this day- "I love you, Margaret. You are the woman I prayed that I would meet someday. You

make me very happy, so I want to return the favor. Will you marry me?"

I grabbed him so fast that I knocked the cupcake out of his hand. I was squeezing him so tight, he told me that he couldn't breathe. I did manage to get the word, "Yes" out.

I told my best friend, Genny the good news. Genny and I have been friends, since Junior High School. She had been trying to hook me up for years; when I told her the good news, she was ecstatic. She had already designated herself as the Maid of Honor. She had already met Robert.

She told me, "I'm going to keep my eyes on him. He's seems a little rusty."

She had me in tears. Robert took me to meet his family a few times and they really adored me. They thought I was the best thing that could have happened to Robert. My family had already met him a few times at family dinners and everyone liked him, except for Richard.

One day Richard took me aside for a talk, "Sis, do you love Robert?"

"Of course, I do," I said without hesitation.

"That's all fine and good, but does he *really* love you?" he says sarcastically.

He started shaking his head, "There's something about him I don't like. I can't put my finger on it, but my gut feeling never lets me down. I think you should reconsider."

I remember snapping back at him, "You're kidding, right? The same person who use to put me down, made fun of me all the time and didn't think nothing of it. You are the last person I would listen to. Thanks, but no thanks."

"I'm sorry for all the things I've said to you, but this is different. I'm your brother and you're my sister. I'm just looking out for your best interest. Besides, I'm a man and men pick up on certain things that a woman wouldn't."

"Well, I'm old enough to make my own decisions."

I made sure I got in the last word.

And so, on August 15, 1979, Robert and I got married. The wedding was beautiful (Richard came, but you could tell he was not as happy as everyone else. I think he came, because my parents told him to come). Things were great for the first 15 years, then.....it happened. He started to change slowly.....for the WORSE. First; he started cursing a lot, then he demanded more sex.

I said to myself- 'Okay, that's what I'm here for. To satisfy him, so he doesn't have to go and get it elsewhere. I'll just try to keep up to please my husband.'

By this time, I was already reaching my retirement (after being on my job for 25 years) and he didn't want me to work anymore.

I said to myself- 'Great. I wouldn't mind having a man take care of me.'

BIG MISTAKE. I didn't have the high sexual drive like he did, but I thought I was doing all right. But, he didn't seem to think so. He became more verbally abusive, then sexually abusive.

He never beat me; but when he wanted sex and he would make sure he **'got it'**. Sometimes I didn't know whether I was his wife or his concubine. It didn't matter how I felt. I felt like I was having a meltdown. I haven't told anyone in my family, except for my best friends (Genny, Sylvia, Joy and Crystal). Genny was more

SILK

concerned about me than anyone else. I call her 'sis' more than by her real name. She told me to give him a chance, but he has to 'do the work' to keep the marriage together.

Genny told me if he doesn't, she said and I quote, "Get the hell out, before he knocks you out."

I started thinking I got married 'for better or for worse', **but this is not what I had in mind.**

Joy

I moved to Atlanta from New York, when I was 21. I needed a change, BIG TIME. I grew up in the heart of urban society (other people may refer to it as the 'the ghetto'). I grew up in a small family; my mother and father who are still happily married after 25 years, my brother, Keith who is five years older than me (that makes me the baby) and myself. My parents worked hard and made time for my brother and I to be raised properly. Not 'boot camp', but a strict and loving environment. No designer clothes, shoes or unnecessary things; just the basics.

My brother and I are close (he really is a big brother). We are both competitive and are very involved in sports. I have a few friends, but a lot of acquaintances. Besides my parents; my brother would always talk to me about the different aspects of life, especially men. But me, I'm headstrong and stubborn. I would listen to every word my parents and brother had to say, but it would go in one ear and out the other. Eventually, things started going wrong.

I knew once I finished school, I wanted to have my own Interior Design business. But, then I met Jason. WOW, what a cutie and smart, too. We met my last year of high school (he was in his senior year, too). We talked about what we wanted for the future. My parents liked him and thought he would be good for me, but they told me to take it slow and that education came first. Right after graduation, Jason and I started getting serious and then, we became intimate.

SILK

I didn't use protection, because I was afraid of gaining weight and messing up my system (I realize now that was an excuse). Jason used a condom, but it broke and the result was my first child at 17 years old. We had a baby boy and named him Justin. My parents were not pleased and by that time, my older brother had moved on his own and he didn't know what had happened (I told my parents not to tell him). Jason was very supportive and I promised myself (and my parents) that I would not get pregnant again. I knew I had to stay focused on my goals. Our son was born beautiful and he was the apple of my eye.

I started using protection not long after the first baby. My parents were getting worried about me and my future (so was I). My parents and I agreed that I would stay home, until Jason and I became financially stable enough to move on our own. Jason began working full-time and going to school to be an Accountant. Everything seemed fine for a while; but then he started being 'absent.' He wasn't coming around to visit me or our son. He would always say that he was too busy working or with school. I told him that was an excuse and that he had to make time to see me and his son.

While having lunch with one of my best friends; Theresa, she told me that she saw Jason in N.C. with another woman, while visiting her family. I told her that didn't mean anything and then she went on to tell me that Jason was kissing and embracing this other woman. I felt so sick, I ran into the bathroom and threw up. How could he do that to me? We have a child together. What did that other woman have that I didn't have? I knew Theresa was telling the truth. We have been friends for years, she had her own man and she

couldn't stand people who lied. She could sniff a liar from a mile away.

I cried and cried for weeks. Weeks went by and he finally showed his face to see his son and give them money. He couldn't even say anything to me.

He just handed me money and said, "I'll see you in a few days."

Before he even took two steps; I screamed on him, "That's it! That's all you can say. I can't believe you could do me like this. I thought we were going to be in this together."

He didn't even turn around; all he could do was sigh. After I finished what I had to say, he just walked out. I didn't care at that point. I just wanted to get him out of my system. I started thinking of ways to do just that, so I started to go out with one of my friends, Michael.

BIG MISTAKE! I got pregnant for a 2nd time. Now, I was really disgusted with myself and so were my parents. Michael was just a friend, nothing more. I just did it on impulse. Now, I knew I was really stuck! He was there for the birth of our daughter, Janet. He has been very supportive considering the circumstances. One thing we both realized, we did not want to get married. We know that would be a mistake. A lot of people tend to do that for the simple reason that the woman becomes pregnant.

However, it is important that both people have similar values, beliefs and a meeting of the minds. One thing for sure, Michael and I will always be friends. The goals I had set for myself were going nowhere! I would've never imagined that I would be in this kind of situation. If one is not careful, one's life can slip

through one's fingers and that is what was happening to my life.

My parents and I sat down; talked things over and made a decision that I would move to Atlanta, Georgia and live with my Nana and Auntie. My mother said that there were too many distractions in New York City {I agreed}. I was going to miss my parents, but I knew this was the right move for me.

So, a day before my 21st birthday; my father packed up the car with all my belongings, the three children (Yes, three. I'm too embarrassed to explain the last one. But, little Prince, Jonathan steals my heart every time) and drove me to Atlanta. I had spoken to my best friend,

Theresa three days prior and she said she would visit me once I got settled. Michael promised me once he started working full-time, he would send more money and visit his daughter. Michael is a good person and I know he will do the right thing.

So, here I am in Atlanta. The start of a new life. My grandmother took me to a Women's Conference and I met a lot of positive women there. Women who were head of corporations, Entrepreneurs, in politics and doing grassroots work. I found it to be very uplifting and truly **awesome**. I met four women, who eventually became my best friends: Genny, Sylvia, Margaret and Crystal. They call me their 'lil sis', because I'm the youngest out of all of them. I call Genny- 'Momma Sis'; because not only is she like a big sister, she's like a mother, too.

They have me laughing all the time and tell me that men are not going anywhere, so there is no need for testosterone at this moment. They help me with my children and keep me focused. I call them my

‘Guardian Angels.’ I know GOD sent them to watch over me.

I am very grateful.

Genny

The flowers, the cooking, the people. That's what Atlanta, Georgia is all about. I loved growing up in Georgia and if it didn't pay growing up the oldest child, I don't know what did.

I came from a very, VERY large family. I am the oldest of 15; that's right, 15 brothers and sisters. My mother is one heck of a woman and she raised me to be as such and my father is a diamond in the rough. Very few men came from his stock; good-natured, GOD-fearing, honest, hardworking and humorous (I could go on and on).

However; there were two things that drove me crazy: he snored like a propeller of an airplane, when he slept (you could hear him throughout the whole house) and his belching. Oh my goodness; we would all be sitting at the dinner table eating and just as he would take the last bite, chew and swallow his food, we knew it was coming. So, everyone would brace themselves and he would let out this big ROAR like Tony the Tiger! (we would be laughing hysterically).

There was never a dull moment in our house. My parents just celebrated 60 years of marriage. Now that's what I call 'wedded bliss.' I earned the nickname, 'The Warden'; because when mommy and daddy wasn't around, I ran a 'tight ship.' My brothers; yes, my brothers and sisters would come to me for everything. Every question they could think of, I had an answer for it (some answers came quicker than others).

My mother told me when I was born, she knew I was 'special.' She said GOD gave me the spirit to be a

'leader' and she saw it from an early age. As I got older and the rest of my siblings joined the nest, my leadership qualities became quite apparent.

My mother and father taught me first and foremost to put GOD first, then never take advantage of my role in this life. Always be humble, good-hearted and fearless (some people earn this, while others already come pre-packaged). It seemed those things were already built into my spirit. As I watched over my siblings, I didn't treat one any different from the other.

My brothers tried; but didn't succeed in trying to 'keep a girl in her place' (whatever that means). My oldest brother, John who was born right after me (1 ½ hours later) thought he could 'train' me.

I told him one day (I was 16 and he was 14 ½), "Boy, you must be losing your mind. Momma taught you first and foremost to always respect women, even if they don't respect themselves. So; if you want to get stupid, go ahead."

I'm a mixture of a tomboy and a sophisticated lady. I can get rough and tough with the guys, when it comes to sports. But; when it was time for me to get dolled up, **BOY OH BOY, look out!** Even my brothers were shocked, when they saw the transformation. I always took care of myself and felt a man would have to do the same. Growing up in Atlanta; there were a lot of good men to pick from, especially back in the day. When I turned 20; I asked my parents if I could start dating and they agreed it was fine, but of course I had to bring the guy home to them for 'inspection.' I always prayed that they wouldn't scare whomever I brought home half to death.

I would always let my best friend, Margaret know who I was going out with. Margaret and I have been

friends; since we were young, for almost 30 years. But, she is more like my sister. So; after every date, I would call her and tell her all about it. Margaret would give me a rating: 0-5 peaches (that's Atlanta style).

Zero meant 'SEE YA' and five peaches meant, 'KEEP HIM, LOCK HIM UP AND THROW AWAY THE KEY'." So, when I met William (at the time, I was 23), I said to myself- 'This is the best peach cobbler any woman would want to eat.' What a man!

It was as if GOD had answered my prayers and said- 'Here you go. Take good care of him.' I could not have asked for a better man. He wasn't perfect (which no one is), but he was just right for me.

We met in the library on a Friday afternoon. He came and sat at the table I was sitting at (mind you, the library was not crowded). While he was reading his book, he kept looking up at me and I kept peeking at him. I started grinning like 'Garfield the Cat' and eventually he said, "Hello."

We started talking and after that we decided to have lunch. My oh my, it was heavenly (**I'm not talking about the food**). I truly believe in 'Love at first sight.' We both knew right away that we were meant for each other. After about five dates, I finally took him home to meet my parents.

After they 'interrogated' him; my father looked at me and said, "He's a good man" (my father hasn't been wrong yet) and my mother said, "He's the one. I feel it. Snatch him up."

So, I did. Two years later; on the day we first met, we got married. It was a joyous and blessed day. William and I both cried. I could feel his spirit merge with mine. As the years went by, William has proven himself to be a GOD-fearing, good-natured,

hardworking, loveable man. I wouldn't trade him for any man in this world. We have beautiful children, who are grown adult and we are proud grandparents.

We have faced many challenges, but none more great than when he admitted to me that he was an alcoholic. I was in shock! I didn't even realize his drinking had gotten out of hand. Whenever we went out, he would have no more than one drink and William knew I didn't drink. He told me it was something that just snuck up on him. He didn't realize it, until it got out of control one day. He was driving home one evening after having more than what he normally drinks (he said it was three), and he thought he could make it home. He lost control of the car and drove into a small ditch.

Thank GOD he didn't hurt himself or anyone else. Marriage is supposed to be for better or for worse (there are exceptions), so I am praying that it does not get worse. It is going to be quite a challenge for the BOTH OF US.....

Sylvia

I love growing up in Atlanta, in the country. Waking up in the morning; smelling the crisp, clean air and hearing absolute silence, right before the birds begin their daily ritual of congregation and conversation. I am a straight up 'Country girl,' through and through.

I never wanted to live in the city, yet I don't mind working in the city. I can't take all that hustle and bustle all day. It's nice to be able to come home to peacefulness at the end of the day.

I grew up in a close-knit family. My parents were very much in love, when they got married and still are to this day. My parents had four children (I am the third child} and I had a beautiful childhood. I was blessed to have everything I needed and then some. My mother use to call me 'Princess', because she said I looked and behaved like one. I can honestly say that I was not 'spoiled' (I definitely knew what the word, 'NO' meant).

I grew up a quiet kid and am studious. I was always in clubs and school activities. Even though I didn't spend my time 'drooling' over boys like most of my friends, I still wanted to hopefully meet a 'nice guy.' The guys that I use to meet acted too silly, arrogant or nerdy. I figured guys are not going anywhere, so what's the rush (my parents taught me well). From a child, I always liked to watch TV. I liked the reporters and how they reported the news. To me, they gave so much depth to a story and could make a story seem interesting or boring. So; once I finished high school, I went straight to college for Broadcasting.

Even while I was in college; I had a few friends who were trying to get me to date, but I wasn't interested. I found school and my career to be more important (AGAIN, men will always be there). Now that I am 34 years old and have a successful career, I am ready to be in a serious relationship.

As far as being sociable, I haven't been doing all that good. I go to different social events; such as concerts, museums, conferences, church functions, but so far nothing. Maybe I'm looking too hard. I'm not looking to rush into marriage and my parents are not pressuring me for grandchildren (they already have six from my other sister and brother). I'm still trying to figure men out (who knows how long that could take).

Whenever I need to 'exhale' (that means to get something off your mind}, I meet up with my 'sisters.' I met Genny and Margaret at a Women's conference. They are so much older than me, so I look to them for advice and wisdom (they haven't let me down, yet). I know over time, I will acquire my own wisdom. Also, at the conference I met Joy who I consider my younger sister. She needs a lot of guidance in her life right now. I pray every day that I can be of help to her. She deserves to be happy and her children, too. They are adorable. I enjoy getting together with them and just talk (and go shopping, too).

They have been setting me up with a couple of men to go on dates with (especially Genny) and I've gone on a few dates, but nothing came of it. Except for one, who I managed to build a friendship with. Genny and Margaret both tell me I should take my time and that the right person will come to me (well, I hope he comes soon).

SILK

To be honest, it's not easy being alone. I get that feeling.....that feeling of needing to be held, to be with someone who has the same or similar outlook on life. I feel that's why we were put on this earth. To be connected to another person and cultivate something positive and prosperous. Only GOD knows when my time will come. I try to make well-thought out decisions, so that I can have a stable foundation (for me, that is TOP priority).

I think the reason why relationships in this country fail at such a high rate is that people look at the superficial aspects of a relationship and marriage. Time is not to be wasted or abused. Just as person should value life, the same should be done, when dealing with another person in a relationship. I pray to have the same thing that Genny has and that is to meet that 'special' someone and pray for longevity.....like taking a looong walk on the beach.

Crystal

Hot Atlanta, my home town. The climate, the people, just beautiful. I was born and raised here. I come from a jolly family (full of fun and good natured). My parents had 12 children and I am #6. My parents raised all of us to strive for the best and be the best at whatever we decide to do. Out of all of my brothers and sisters, I am the MOST outspoken.

Having a 'mouth' has its advantages and disadvantages. In some cases, I've been able to get my younger siblings out of bad situations and let my older siblings know they couldn't push me around (it worked sometimes). The down side is that I lost a job once; because a customer was getting on my nerve (actually, my last nerve) and was being difficult. I told her off and I didn't feel bad about it (the manager was acting like a wimp) and I got fired for challenging a customer. I broke that rule- 'A customer is always right.' If you ask me, who was the IDIOT that wrote that rule, because it sure isn't right.

I've always been outspoken, in school and at home. I never believed in taking crap from anyone and even though my parents taught me to say what is on my mind, they also taught me to 'watch' my mouth and bite my tongue sometimes (I'm still working on that). I'm sharp as a whip, which is the reason why I wanted to be an attorney. I want to fight against the '**bad**' people, who are corrupting the world. Even if they are not the 'BIG FISH.'

I felt it is important for me to make a difference in this world. In my family, I'm known as the female 'Johnny Cochran.' Whenever someone in my family or

friends want legal consultation, they come to me. When I'm not busy battling cases, I spend time with my family and my 'sisters.'

Not my biological sisters, but my 'Sistahs': Genny, Margaret, Sylvia and Joy. I met them at a Women's conference and since then, we've been inseparable. We get together once a month at each other's house and we call it the, 'Sweet Sister Brunch' (we have so much fun). We eat, talk, laugh, eat, talk, laugh some more and then, we get our little dance on. It can be reggae, soul, jazz and even rock n' roll! Sometimes we 'go to church' and listen to gospel music.

Sometimes, we would be in tears either from laughing too much or talking about our personal lives. It's good when you can be around good people, who give off that 'good' vibe and at the end of the brunch, we walk away feeling **RENEWED**. Also, in my spare time I play sports with my family members or my other friends like volleyball, basketball, baseball, kickball; you name it, I can do it. I am the pretty 'boy' in the family. My mother says I'm just as rough and tough as the males in our family.

One thing I can honestly say.....I'm not having any children. I know I can't predict the future; but I know it, I feel it spiritually. I have so many nieces, nephews and other kids that I mentor that it fills that 'void' in me. It is not that I am against having children or just focused on my career; but there are so many children in this world that do not have parents or family to raise them. I will adopt a child someday; but in the meantime, it is important to me that I continue to be successful in my life. I'm not looking for a whole lot, but I know sometimes people pay a price to be successful.

Meaning, you may have to give up or sacrifice something.

Am I willing to? I know this world has a lot of obstacles and ignorant people, who are unfortunately in charge of making critical decisions.

That's what life is all about; taking each day, one day at a time, one step at a time, s l o w l y.

BIOGRAPHY

Athena Dent was born and raised in the Bronx, New York City. From a young age, she has always enjoyed helping others and she has been a persistent, positive, productive person throughout her life (she credits her strong family upbringing).

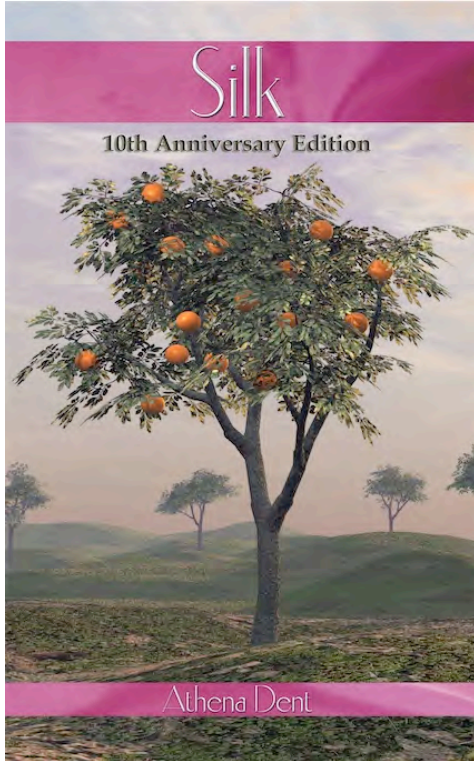
For the past 35 years through working in various professions:

Health Consultant, Nursing, Educator/Teaching, Social Work and Retail her compassion and dedication to help others continues to be her focus. She also has over 20 years nurturing, teaching and counseling infants/children/teens.

She has a B.A. in Human Services, years of Medical training/experience, is a Community Advocate and does volunteer work. She holds positions in two Non-for-profit organizations. She has been a Writer for the past 30 years and an Author for the past 10 years; she has completed four screenplays, written six books and self-published four (which includes a sequel to this book, "Emerging Cocoon"- **2017 FINALIST PHYLLIS WHEATELY BOOK AWARDS**)

She is also an Editor and Ghostwriter. She has a Black Belt in Tae Kwon Doe and has studied Wing Chun, Jujitsu and Tai Chi (she continues to practice Martial Arts).

Ms. Dent is a wife and mother of two teens; one of which has special needs.



Silk is a story about five generational women going through different life challenges. In friendship, there is no 'judgement', only love and support. Through abuse, career challenges and parental responsibilities, these women EXEMPLIFY courage, love, patience, and wisdom.

SILK - 10th Anniversary Edition

by Athena Dent

Order the complete book from the publisher

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9925.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**