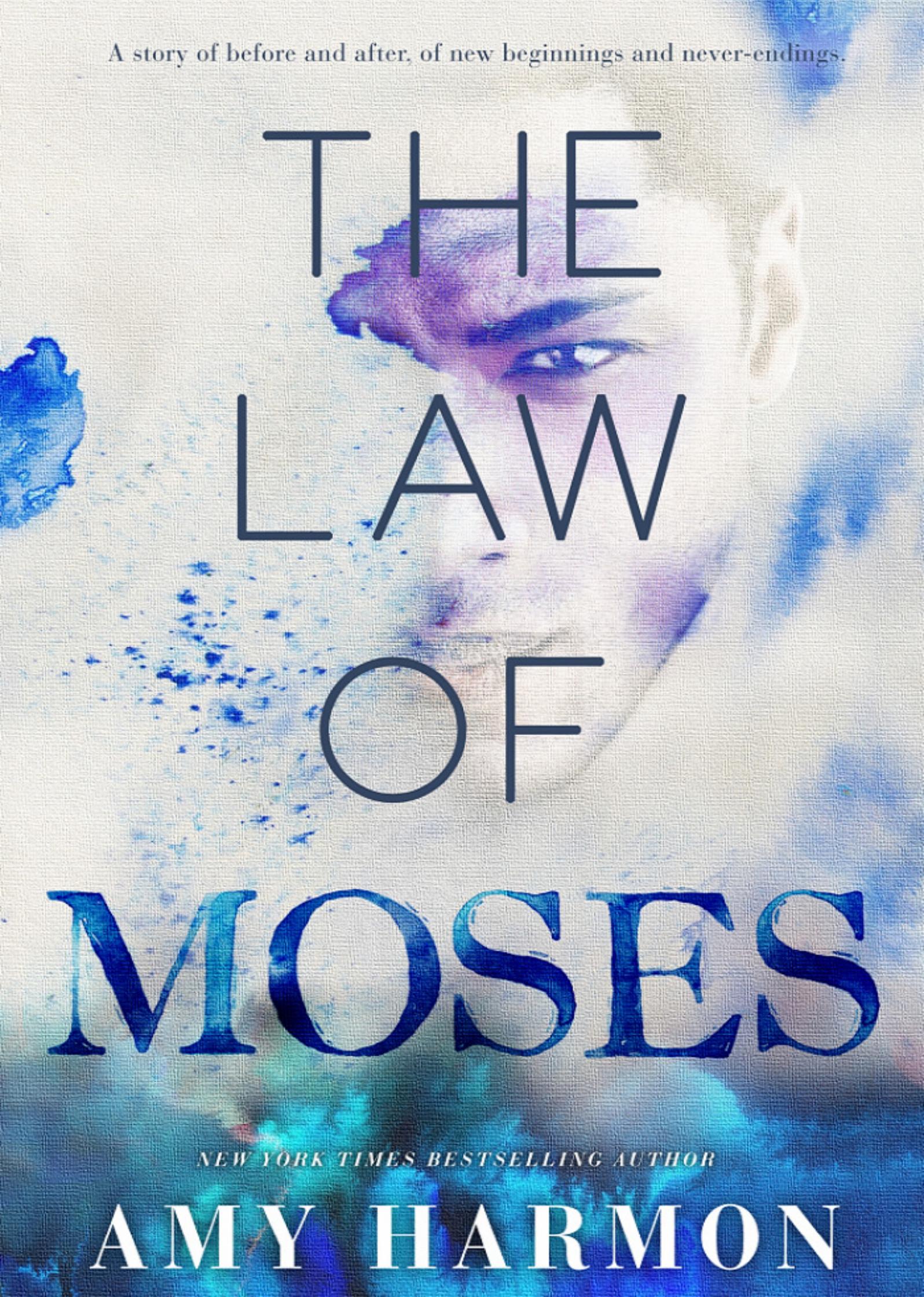


A story of before and after, of new beginnings and never-endings.



THE
LAW
OF

MOSES

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

AMY HARMON

THE LAW OF MOSES

Someone found him in a laundry basket at the Quick Wash, wrapped in a towel, a few hours old and close to death. They called him Baby Moses when they shared his story on the ten o'clock news – the little baby left in a basket at a dingy Laundromat, born to a crack addict and expected to have all sorts of problems. I imagined the crack baby, Moses, having a giant crack that ran down his body, like he'd been broken at birth. I knew that wasn't what the term meant, but the image stuck in my mind. Maybe the fact that he was broken drew me to him from the start.

It all happened before I was born, and by the time I met Moses and my mom told me all about him, the story was old news and nobody wanted anything to do with him. People love babies, even sick babies. Even crack babies. But babies grow up to be kids, and kids grow up to be teenagers. Nobody wants a messed up teenager.

And Moses was messed up. Moses was a law unto himself. But he was also strange and exotic and beautiful. To be with him would change my life in ways I could never have imagined. Maybe I should have stayed away. Maybe I should have listened. My mother warned me. Even Moses warned me. But I didn't stay away.

And so begins a story of pain and promise, of heartache and healing, of life and death.
A story of before and after, of new beginnings and never-endings.
But most of all . . . a love story.



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Recommended for ages: +16



ATTENTION
**THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES SPECIFICS YOU MIGHT WANT TO AVOID
UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED READING THE BOOK.**

CHARACTERS

The love story is centered around Moses Wright and Georgia Shepherd. Do you consider them the only main characters in this novel or do you think there are others who play a pivotal and influential role? If so, who and why?

Do you think the characters were realistically portrayed? Describe these character's personalities.

How does the way the characters see themselves, differ from how others see them? How do you see the various characters?

What did you think about Georgia's attraction to Moses? What drew her in? Why was Moses so resilient to give in to his feelings? What did you think of their early relationship? Should Georgia have given up or should Moses have given in more easier?

What is motivating the actions of the characters in the story? What do the sub-characters want from the main character and what does the main character want with them?

Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices of any of the characters? What would you have done differently?

What past influences are shaping the actions of the characters in the story?

What did Moses mean when he told Georgia "I didn't break any of my rules. You broke yours. And now you're mad at me because of it"?

Should Georgia have tried harder to tell Moses she was pregnant when he was in the psychiatric hospital?

Was Moses's reaction to finding out about his son a valid reaction? Was his anger justified?

What are your thoughts on David "Tag" Taggert? Did you took a liking to him? What do you think about his relationship with Moses? The author has given David Taggert his own story in "The Song of David", are you interested to read it?

Who did you like best? And who do you like the least? Why?

Do the main characters change by the end of this novel? Do they grow or mature? What events trigger such changes?

THEMES, DEFINITIONS & SYMBOLISM

Love

noun

1. A profoundly tender, warm personal attachment, or passionate affection for someone
2. A great interest and pleasure in something

verb

feel deep affection or sexual love for someone

“How on earth are you ever going to explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love?” ~ Albert Einstein

Love is much more than a risk, but is a risk that one can take and grasp and fall into a dark abyss or dig oneself a hole and only crawl back when you overcome your emotions.

How can one truly define what love is? Not even an experienced person can truly grasp or explain *love* to its truest and deepest meaning. Its concepts are just a never ending story of an open book of experiences. But love does lie in one's heart, where memories are but shadows lingering in your soul.

Love is giving someone the power to break your heart, but trusting them not to.

“He was like water—cold, deep, unpredictable, and, like the pond up the canyon, dangerous, because you could never see what was beneath the surface. And just like I’d done all my life, I jumped in head first, even though I’d been forbidden. But this time, I drowned.”

Georgia is a fiery and confident woman with a little too much daredevil in her, while Moses is a multilayered character stamped “crack baby” that nobody has really wanted since birth. Given their beginning, did you think they were good for each other?

Love is difficult to define. But what is love for you?

Loss

noun

the fact or process of losing something or someone

“We had both loved and lost, though nobody really knew it but me. Moses and I had been seen together, but nobody really knew how I felt.”

“She didn’t move. She kept her arms crossed over her chest where I’d kept them pinned while she’d talked, her voice a harsh whisper in my ear. Her chest rose and fell. I put my hand on my own thundering heart and turned away from her, unable to climb to my feet. Unable to do anything but rest my head on my knees. [...] And I put my face in my hands and cried.”

There are two different kinds of **loss** in this story. The loss of **love**. The loss of **life**.

How do you think Georgia coped with the loss of love when Moses was put away? Do you think Moses experienced the loss of love too? The love he never got from his mother and family? The feeling of love he didn’t allow in his life in way of one of his laws? *“Though shall not fall in love.”*

What are your thoughts on the circumstance of Eli's death? Do you feel that the author should have had him die a different way? How did his death change Georgia? And Moses? Do you think the author portrayed their loss in a realistic manner?

Hope

noun

a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen

“And I realized it didn’t always have to be a weapon. What I could do didn’t have to hurt people.”

Do you recognize this part? What do you think Moses meant with this, and what does it have to do with **hope**? Is it the hope Moses gives us through his gift, showing us that life doesn’t end with death? That we will see our loved ones again? What else do you think Moses’s gift can give us? Peace, closure, . . . ?

Grief

noun

intense sorrow, especially caused by someone's death

"The boundaries which divide Life from Death are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and where the other begins?" ~ Edgar Allan Poe

"I thought it would make me feel better, but as I released the balloons and watched them float up, up and away, I was overcome with grief, seeing the fragile little bubbles, all that joyful color, floating away beyond my reach, never to return."

Grief is a multifaceted response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone or something that has died, to which a bond or affection was formed. Although conventionally focused on the emotional response to loss, it also has physical, cognitive, behavioral, social, and philosophical dimensions.

When you tie the hope from Moses's gift together with grief, do you think grief will be experienced differently? When you believe life doesn't end with death, do you think it will be easier for someone to overcome grief? Knowing we will see our loved ones again? That it's not just a physical parting?

How do you think Georgia and Moses each dealt with grief? Are there other characters that you can see grieving, too? What about the way David Taggart grieves the loss of his sister?

Gratitude

noun

the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness

“Any time you start feeling sorry for yourself or you go into a rant about how bad life sucks, you immediately have to name five greats. Five things that are great about today. About life. Go.”

What do you think about the “Five Greats” theme? Is it something you would do? Would you ask your family members or friends to give their “Five Greats” when life doesn’t seem so great?

Spiritual metaphysics

Spiritual

adjective

1. Relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things
2. Relating to religion or religious belief

metaphysics

noun

the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, identity, time and space

“Even as I spoke, the heat started rising up my neck, and the tips of my fingers felt like they were pressed up against an ice-filled glass. It was a feeling I knew all too well and what came next would happen whether I wanted it to or not. [...] I grunted in response as flashing images flipped through my head in a rapid succession, like the girl who lingered nearby had opened a thousand page book in my head and made the pages turn at a dizzying speed.”

What were your thoughts on Moses’s gift? Did you think he was crazy, like everyone else in his family (except for his grandmother) and the town he lives in?

Do you think having Moses's gift would make dealing with the loss of a loved one easier or harder? Why?

How do you think you would feel if you had Moses's gift? Do you think that you would feel the same way that he did about it?

If you had passed away, what would you show Moses to paint for your loved ones?

QUOTES

“Everyone always talks about being color blind. And I get that. I do. But maybe instead of being color blind, we should celebrate color, in all its shades. It kind of bugs me that we’re supposed to ignore our differences like we don’t see them, when seeing them doesn’t have to be a negative.”

This is the most favorite quote from the novel. What are your thoughts about it?

Do you have any favorite quotes or passages in the novel that you enjoyed or found insightful?

Discuss the following quotes.

“If you don’t love, then nobody gets hurt. It’s easy to leave. It’s easy to lose. It’s easy to let go.”

“There are laws. There are rules. And when you break them, there are consequences. Laws of nature and laws of life. Laws of love and laws of death.”

“The dead weren’t angry or lost. They knew exactly what was up. It was the living that didn’t have a clue.”

“People liked religion but they didn’t want to have to exercise any faith. Religion was comforting with all its structure and its rules. It made people feel safe. But faith wasn’t safe. Faith was hard and uncomfortable and forced people to step out on a limb.”

“Forgiveness is usually easier than permission.”

Were there any particular quotes that stood out to you? Which ones and why?

STRUCTURE, WRITING & GENERAL DISCUSSION

What did you think of the overall structure of the novel? Were you engaged immediately?

What did you think about the time-line and points of view? Did you prefer Georgia's or Moses' point-of-view?

How did you feel reading it? Which emotions conveyed the story? Did the story keep you interested?

Would you say this is a plot-driven book or does the story unfold slowly with a focus on character development? Were you surprised by the plot? Or did you find it predictable?

How credible did the author make the setting and dialogue?

What scene did you find was the most pivotal for the book? How do you think the story would have changed had that scene not taken place?

What scene resonated most with you personally in either a positive or negative way?

Did certain parts of the novel make you uncomfortable? Were there any scenes that made you laugh?

What is the significance of the title? Did you recognize it in the book? Would you have given the book a different title? If yes, what is your title?

What surprised you the most about the book?

How important is the setting & time period to the story? How would it have played out differently in a different setting? What about a different time period?

Based on the prologue, did you expect the ending or were you surprised?

Did you think the ending was appropriate? How would you have liked to have seen the ending go?

Fun extras

There are so many great songs and I have a huge playlist that I listen to while I write. Here are 5 songs that I think would be great on a playlist for The Law of Moses.

Counting Crows sings a song called [Colorblind](#) and I think it's perfect for this book.

[Guardian Angel by Noah Gundersen](#). I love Noah Gunderson and I could listen to him on repeat.

A song called [If You Could Read My Mind by Gordon Lightfoot](#). If you've read the book you know there's a scene where that song is mentioned.

[Wild Horses by Natasha Bedingfield](#).

[Storm by Lifehouse](#).

Art that inspired The Law of Moses:

- [The Pieta by Michelangelo](#) – Mary's face in particular
- [Vermeer](#)'s work, the artist who took such care with the tiny details
- Street-art: murals that have an almost graffiti-like appeal (Check out the [Pinterest board](#))

Five Greats Moses learned from the people he interacted with as he painted:

- Little things are often the big things
- Object don't matter, relationships do
- There is no escaping yourself – wherever you go, there you'll be
- Our weaknesses are usually our strengths
- How to love – not just how to feel love, but how to express it

Valentine's Day love notes from Moses to Georgia #1

Georgia,

You know I'm not good at this. I'm better at painting how I feel than I am at putting it into words. I could list my greats, but that list has grown so big and so wide that I would be writing for days. And if my hand cramps up from all that writing, and I can't paint, then I'll get surly and rude, the way I do. Then you might leave me, and the list would be moot anyway.

So I'll just keep it simple.

I love you, Georgia. You gave me the courage to say what I need to say when I need to say it. You and Eli. And Tag too, who seems to always know what to say. If I were Tag I would flirt and say something sexy and you would blush and I would grin. But that isn't me either. And somehow, you love me. I'm your Moses. And every single day, every minute of every day, I am brought to my knees by that knowledge.

Thank you for never giving up on me. Thank you for your forgiveness. Thank you for your love. Thank you for our life together. Thank you for Eli and Kathleen. I guess I listed my 5 greats after all. You've taught me well.

Moses

Valentine's Day love notes from Moses to Georgia #2

Georgia

My five greats have grown and grown, until listing every one of the things I'm grateful for, the things I love about Georgia Shepherd, would take me pages and days. But on this Valentine's Day, I can't help but remember the very first things I noticed, the first things that caught my eye about the girl who would come to mean the whole world to me.

- 1. Your smile – even when you were making fun of me.*
- 2. Your fearlessness – even when you were being thrown from your horse.*
- 3. Your passion – even when you were driving me crazy.*
- 4. Your devotion – even when I told you to go.*
- 5. And I can't help it, I have to say it, those long, long legs – they'll always make the list.*

Happy Valentine's Day, Georgia. I love you. Before, after, and always.

Moses

Q&A with Amy Harmon

What were your Five Greats while writing The Law of Moses?

My Five Greats tend to be very much the “in the moment” kind of things. Sometimes I’m super grateful for Cheetos or just really simple things. I’m one of those people that are just driving down the road and see a beautiful sunset and get really teary and say a little prayer of gratitude for that sunset. That’s kind of who I am, I am the Hallmark crier.

I’m always, always grateful when I’m writing that I can be at home. As hard as that is and as stressful as it can be to try to work when your kids or your family is around and not to be able to communicate the frustration of having that huge responsibility to write a novel and yet to still be mom and to take care of them because they just don’t care if you’re an author and if you have deadlines and if you have fans or readers contacting you. They don’t care if people on Goodreads are nice. *They just don’t care.* And in some ways that’s such a huge blessing because it keeps you grounded in what’s real and what’s important. I’m very grateful for that. That’s always one of my Five Greats, that I’m able to work at home and that I am accessible to my kids.

During the writing of The Law of Moses, I was very grateful for my faith, that families are forever. That it doesn’t end with this life and that’s my personal faith. The book doesn’t seek to convince, it seeks to comfort. So I was really grateful for the knowledge of the faith I have that there is more than what we see in this life.

I was also incredibly grateful for Diet Pepsi. I know I shouldn’t drink it but I love it so much. So I’m incredibly grateful for the mini-fridge that’s in the exercise room just next to me that I can go raid at all hours of the night without waking up my family.

I’m grateful for my kiddos, for Sam who’s always my little partner because he’s the only one at home. And I’m incredibly grateful for my husband, though he was injured (horse sat on his leg) right at the end of the writing process of this book and though he was on crutches, I’m grateful for his help and that he’s doing well.

Were any scenes inspired by real life?

No. They aren’t based on anybody’s experiences. Not my experiences and no experience in general. It was how I believe it to be. I guess I used my own faith and my own imagination. I did go see a medium during this time. Not for a reading but just to see what he said and ask him questions so I could get a feel of how it works for people who do have the gift. To see things the rest of us can’t. But I don’t know anybody that paints like Moses. So no, the events were all *Amy-Harmon-inspired*. It came from my brain and not from actual experiences.

The novel stretches the romance genre limits. How would you describe it?

Anybody who has read my books knows there is an element of spiritualism in all of them. Definitely so in The Law of Moses than in my four other books that are in a similar genre of contemporary romance. But I wrote a two-book series (Slow Dance in Purgatory and Prom Night in Purgatory) that are paranormal. And they are also marked paranormal. But this one didn’t feel paranormal to me. In fact, I thought about it when I was adding the keywords and genres on Amazon. In genres I picked

metaphysical and romantic suspense because I felt that captured the story the very best. And then I can chose keywords and I hesitated to even put paranormal in my keywords because I know what the paranormal genre is and what those books are like. And this didn't feel like that kind of book. I didn't want readers who loved paranormal to go into this book thinking it was something and then not getting it. So it's so funny that I had that backfire a little bit. People told me "You should have told it was paranormal.", while I was thinking the opposite. I think the cover of the book is very mysterious and it also has an African-American male on the cover. So people were like "You didn't tell us he was black!". First of all, who the hell cares if he's black and secondly, his face is ON the cover . . . I don't get that . . . So yeah, I love not being pigeonholed, I hate labels, I love that I can put romance and spiritualism and life lessons in my books and nobody can't tell me that I can't. Reviewers can complain, but for the most part, people that read my books and have read all my books from the beginning, none of those people complained. They all took it in stride. It was the people that *wanted* something or that *expected* something or *don't like me* - that happens too – that didn't like this book.

