

## **FAQs: Twenty Questions with the Author Kim Dalferes**

### **1. Why did you write your first book, *I Was In Love With a Short Man Once*?**

My nana's apple pie recipe. Nana made the best apple pies, but she never wrote down the recipe. Now she's gone and no one in the family can recreate her masterpiece. I came to realize that if I want my side of any story remembered, I better put it in writing.

### **2. Who should read your books?**

Everyone! Isn't that every writer's answer? Honestly, I think the stories in my books appeal mostly to women, probably over 40, who have had kids and relationships and jobs and heartbreak. We've all made mistakes and behaved badly once or twice and I think my stories validates that it's OK to be a screw-up every once in a while.

### **3. How do you determine which life anecdotes write about? Your stories are funny—from your perspective, what makes them funny?**

Not all the stories in my books are meant to be funny. Certainly the story titled "9/11" in *I Was In Love With a Short Man Once* is somber. I've included a few stories about my grandparents in my books that are more poignant than funny. But most of the stories are humorous, I think, because they could happen to anyone. How many times in your life have you been told: "You know, tomorrow you are going to think this is really funny." And, the next day, aren't you usually laughing at yourself?

### **4. You dedicate about a third of *I Was In Love With a Short Man Once* to stories about your son Jimmy. Tell us about being a single mom.**

I loved being a single mom, I truly did. The beauty of being a single parent is that there is no compromising, you just make a decision and go with it. However, it can also be very difficult, especially if you have to travel the way I did when I worked for the Justice Department. When you are a single parent, if you don't have family living close by, you absolutely have to create a support network. It was by the grace of the universe that during my time as a single parent I lived next door to a woman who worked as a type of "au pair" on nights and weekends. Now that I think about it, I probably should have dedicated my first book to Helen.

### **5. You've noted in your books that Greg is your second husband. What makes your second marriage different from your first?**

I think the biggest difference is age and maturity. When I married the first time I was 22—way too young to be married (you hear that girls: WAY TOO YOUNG). The second time around, at age 37, I could let more things go. Oh, and this is important: at the start of my second marriage I happened to read *The Sweet Potato Queens' Book of Love* and it offers some of the best relationship guidance out there. Here is my favorite advice from the book's author Jill Connor Browne: The five men you must have in your life at all times are: 1) Someone Who Can Fix Things; 2) Someone You Can Dance With; 3) Someone Who Can Pay for Things; 4) Someone You Can Talk To; and 5) Someone to Have Great Sex With. My greatest relationship epiphany is that all five of these men are not likely to be the same person, and that is OK

**6. Tell us something about you that is not in your books.**

I am left-handed. I still can't believe I've not mentioned that key piece of information. We southpaws are, after all, only 10% of the general population. Oh, and I never eat eggs. N-E-V-E-R.

**7. You don't seem to be easily embarrassed—can you recall any time when you have been genuinely flustered?**

Well, there is one story in *I Was In Love With a Short Man Once, Trivial Pursuits*, which describes when I had to fake an orgasm in public...on a cruise ship...in front of my Dad. Yeah, I can definitely say that I was flustered on that occasion. Think about it: you may have faked the "big O" a time or two in your life, but did you do it in front of 100 people? Well God love you and bless your heart if you answered yes to that question.

**8. What is your very least favorite thing?**

Shoveling snow! There is absolutely nothing fun about shoveling snow. It may get hot in Florida, but you don't have to shovel humidity.

**9. There's a rumor that you are a brilliant salmon fisher(wo)man. Is this true?**

Well, I think the answer to that question depends on your perspective. Compared to someone who has never fished for salmon, yes, I am a champion. Compared to everyone in my family, no, I am the token girly girl. You will read more about this in my second book: *Magic Fishing Panties*.

**10. Is there anything that you flat out cannot do?**

I cannot sing; I really can't. Oh, I try, but I am just awful. I am hopelessly tone deaf. Children have cried because of my singing. People have prayed for my soul because of my singing.

**11. You seem to be pretty proud of your alma mater. What is it about FSU that makes you such a fan?**

I had one of the best times of my life at Florida State. I was broke, but everyone was a poor student so it didn't matter. It was such a great experience to have my whole world of possibilities in front of me. And of course they have the best football program—EVER!

**12. What is the best thing your mom taught you to do?**

Fry chicken! My mom makes THE best fried chicken and she taught me all her secrets. You cannot be a good southern gal and not know how to properly fry chicken. Mom also taught me the fine art of proper southern style potato salad—without eggs, naturally.

**13. If you could go back in time and tell your younger self one thing, what would it be?**

Don't worry about money. Oh, and wear a better bra; some day you are going to regret that lack of support.

**14. Name something on your “bucket list” that you think you will likely accomplish.**

I would so like it to be that I'll get to meet George Clooney. However, I think a more reasonable answer is that I'll finally get around to learning to play golf. I've got my left-handed clubs and I'm ready to go.

**15. Is there any advice you would give to other writers?**

If possible, write for yourself. I know it is a bit of a cliché, but if it's an important subject for you, the story will write itself. Oh, and secure yourself a good copyeditor—they are worth their weight in gold.

**16. Your author's picture in your first book is your school kindergarten picture circa 1968. What made you decide to use this picture?**

That picture truly embodies my personality. My hair is sticking out in crazy directions, I'm wearing polka dots, and look at those eyes!! You can see the mischief in those eyes, even at age five.

**17. Your books have many messages for women. In your opinion, what makes women powerful?**

All women need “get-out-of-jail” girlfriends. The type of women who will bail you out of jail, no questions asked, or be sitting right next to you in the cell. My get-out-of-jail girlfriends are my soul mates and my source of power. I also recommend that every woman own at least one red coat. You put on a pair of boots and a red coat and you can rule the world.

**18. When will your next book be released?**

Look for *Magic Fishing Panties: The continuing tales of a crazy southern Irish gal*, to be available summer of 2015.

**19. You work as a criminal justice public policy consultant. How do you find time to also write?**

I outline ideas on my smart phone at very weird moments. A story included in *Magic Fishing Panties* is based on the notes I wrote on my Facebook status while I was trapped on a city bus for five hours during a blizzard. I had been working all day as a facilitator for a client meeting in DC and then, afterwards, I was trying to get back home to Fairfax. I found myself surrounded by strangers in just the most surreal situation.

**20. What do you identify with the most: being crazy; or southern; or Irish?**

Crazy. Now, I don't mean that in any clinical sort of way and I've been told the term “crazy” might even offend a few people. I relate to crazy as defined as being or acting foolish, outrageous, zany, bizarre, or passionate. Being crazy is fun; it's the polar opposite of mature, serious, or humorless. I was born Irish and I was raised in the South, but I choose to be crazy. It's all of life's silly little choices that make us who we are, don't you think?