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*Hi-res images available upon request*

## Co-Authors Shein and Davis to Release a Poignant Coming-of-Age Tale of Resilience and Friendship

**Pensacola, Fla. (Sept. 2020)**—Child cancer is a difficult subject for any writer to tackle. Weave it together with a powerful tale of animal advocacy and you have *KONA*, a touching coming-of-age novel (and soon-to-be major motion picture!) from co-authors Melissa Davis and Erik Daniel Shein.

Forthcoming from World Castle Publishing early next year, *KONA* tells the story of Melanie Parker, an Arizona teen [Grab your reader’s attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]

striving to live a normal life after being diagnosed with cancer at the tender age of nine. When Melanie secures her first summer job at the Oasis Aquarium, developing an instant friendship with Kona, a resident dolphin, and her cute new co-worker, Chase, it seems as though things might finally be looking up. Little does Melanie know just how dramatically her life is about to change.

“*Kona* touches on all your emotions. You become a part of the journey, and it inspires you to remain positive and believe that miracles do happen,”



**Erik Daniel Shein**



**Melissa Davis**

says Shein, a trained herpetologist and longtime animal advocate. “It brings an understanding of a beautiful bond that a human can share with an animal and hopefully deter people from harming them.”

For Davis, whose favorite stories to write are those with strong leads that her own daughters can admire and relate to, the inspiration for *KONA* was born from a need to offer children and parents struggling with cancer a glimmer of hope.

“We each have our reasons for writing this book. For me, I wanted something that resonated with kids,” says Davis. “While *Kona* is a fictional retelling, I was inspired by several children who are still dealing with childhood cancer themselves. Their strengths and determination are endless—inspiring and uplifting in so many ways. And while we see these kids as fighters, we often don’t give light to the struggles and emotions they carry with them every day of their lives. The story of *Kona* offers that and so much more.”

Officially slated for release on Feb. 1, 2021, readers can pre-order *KONA* (Hardcover, \$22.99, 978-1-95164-224-2; Paperback, \$12.99, 978-1-95164-225-9; e-Book, \$6.99, 978-195164-226-6) from the World Castle Publishing website or anywhere books are sold. *KONA* will be distributed by BCH Fulfillment & Distribution. To learn more about the authors or to stay up to date on the highly-anticipated major motion picture release, visit [www.worldcastlepublishing.net](http://www.worldcastlepublishing.net).

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# KONA

by Erik Daniel Shein  
and Melissa Davis

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## AUTHOR BIOS

### Erik Daniel Shein



A visionary storyteller and animal activist, **Erik Daniel Shein** blends his talent for children’s and young adult writing with a passion for CGI animation and animal health and well-being. He got his start first as a trained herpetologist, studying reptiles and amphibians, before turning his gaze to the art of written and visual storytelling.

As one might imagine, he is deeply passionate about animals, often featuring them in his stories and content, and he weds this passion with his philanthropic pursuits as a fierce advocate for animal rights. He has authored and co-written more than 30 novels and feature films, including the animated fantasy adventure tale, *The Legend of The Secret Pass* (Lions Gate Entertainment, 2019).

In addition to his writing, Erik is the founder and CEO of Shein Partnership LLC, a creative asset and intellectual property firm, with projects ranging from Live Action and CGI animated feature films to television specials and series, and book publishing. A revered leader in the entertainment and publishing domains and a man of many talents, Erik is also a talented producer and voice actor.

### **Short Bio**

As a visionary storyteller and animal activist, Erik Daniel Shein blends his talent for children’s and young adult writing with a passion for CGI animation and animal health and well-being. He has authored and co-written more than 30 novels and feature films, including the animated fantasy adventure tale, *The Legend of The Secret Pass* (Lions Gate Entertainment, 2019), which first began as a co-written novel by Erik and fellow author, Melissa Davis. In addition to his writing, Erik is the founder and CEO of Shein Partnership LLC; a revered leader in the entertainment and publishing domains; and a producer, voice actor, and trained herpetologist.

## Melissa Davis



From a young age, **Melissa Davis** aspired to be a writer. Growing up in Southern Illinois, she grasped for every book she could lay hands on, evolving from prolific reader to creative writer in her adolescence, penning poems and stories as early as second grade. As a teen, she attended the Illinois Summer School for the Arts, where she began to dream of becoming a published author.

But fate had a brief pitstop in store for Melissa. In college, she studied to become a teacher, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Education from Illinois State University in 1999. She would spend the better part of a decade teaching before the voices of characters not yet created and stories begging to be told finally drew her back to her adolescent calling.

Shortly after her publishing debut, Melissa welcomed her first child, setting in motion the delicate balancing act of her adult life—celebrated author and dedicated mother. In the decade since returning to writing, she and fellow author, Erik Daniel Shein, have co-written more than a dozen children’s and young adult books. As evidenced by the character of Melanie in *KONA* (forthcoming Feb. 2021), Melissa has a special passion for writing strong female leads that her own daughters can aspire to. She lives in Central Illinois with her family.

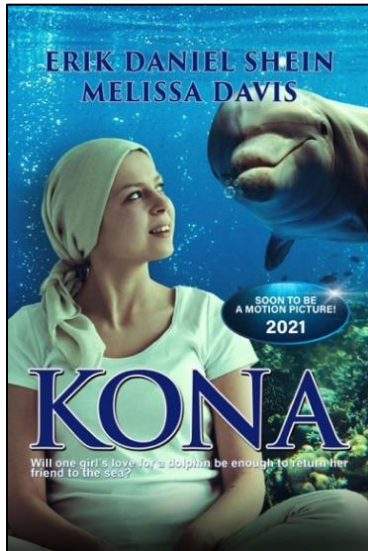
### **Short Bio**

Growing up in Southern Illinois, **Melissa Davis** grasped for every book she could lay hands on, evolving from prolific reader to creative writer in her adolescence. But fate had a brief pitstop in store for her before she would become the published author of her dreams. Melissa spent nearly a decade teaching before turning to her adolescent calling of books and writing, and so beginning the delicate balancing act of celebrated author and dedicated mother. Today she co-writes alongside fellow author, Erik Daniel Shein, and lives with her husband and daughters in Central Illinois.

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and Melissa Davis

## FACT SHEET



*“The dolphin had not asked to be captured from the free life in the ocean, just as Melanie had not wanted to be held captive to her illness. They were two souls being controlled by some other puppet master.”*

**Authors:** Erik Daniel Shein and Melissa Davis  
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**Trim Size:** 6x9 (Hardcover; 296 pages)  
6x9 (Paperback; 296 pages)  
**Pub. Date:** February 1, 2021  
**Distributors:** BCH Fulfillment and Distribution

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

Melanie Parker’s life finally feels normal. She has her first summer job at the aquarium and a cute new co-worker, Chase. It’s the life of any normal teen. But when Melanie’s leukemia returns, it all comes crashing down. Like Kona, the lonely dolphin she has befriended, Melanie feels trapped by fate—that is, until the Charlie’s Dream Foundation steps in and offers to fulfill her single wish. Strengthened by her newfound friendship, Melanie resolves to fight to return her new friend to the wild. But before she can save Kona’s life, Melanie must once again fight to save her own.

## WHAT MAKES THIS BOOK UNIQUE?

When Melanie meets Kona, a resident dolphin at the Oasis Aquarium, her life is forever changed. Sweet and loving, Kona shows Melanie what true, judgment-free friendship is like. To Kona, Melanie isn’t a child cancer survivor, but a good friend. But as their friendship begins to grow, Melanie realizes just how miserable and lonely her new friend is living in captivity. When presented with the opportunity to free Kona and change the trajectory of her life, Melanie finally understands what all of those years of fighting for her own life have truly prepared her for: the opportunity to advocate for the voiceless. *KONA* is a story of friendship and resilience, of standing up for what you believe in – even when it’s hard – and ultimately, of never giving up.

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## BOOK DESCRIPTIONS

### 10-word:

With a single wish, two friends' lives are forever changed.

### 15-word:

When Melanie receives the opportunity to free her friend, Kona, both lives are forever changed.

### 25-word:

When Melanie receives the rare opportunity to free Kona, a lonely dolphin at the aquarium where she works, both of their lives are forever changed.

### 50-word:

Melanie's leukemia has returned. Like Kona, the lonely dolphin she has befriended, Melanie feels trapped. When the Charlie's Dream Foundation steps in and offers to fulfill her single wish, Melanie knows she must free Kona. But before she can save Kona's life, she must first fight to save her own.

### 100-word:

Melanie Parker's life finally feels normal. She has her first summer job at the aquarium and a cute new co-worker, Chase. It's the life of any normal teen. But when Melanie's leukemia returns, it all comes crashing down. Like Kona, the lonely dolphin she has befriended, Melanie feels trapped by fate—that is, until the Charlie's Dream Foundation steps in and offers to fulfill her single wish. Strengthened by her newfound friendship, Melanie resolves to fight to return her new friend to the wild. But before she can save Kona's life, Melanie must once again fight to save her own.



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## SUGGESTED MEDIA QUESTIONS

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1. This book has a strong cast of female characters, from Melanie's Grandmother Mimi to her two sisters, and Melanie and Chase's mothers. Are any of the characters inspired by strong women in your own lives?
2. Kona is such an expressive character in her own right. What kind of research did you have to do to learn about dolphin behavior? Did you spend any time with dolphins yourselves?
3. How long did it take you to research this book before you started writing? How did you split up the research responsibilities?
4. The setting plays a big role in this book. How did you decide to set the book in Arizona?
5. When you started writing this book, did you always know how this story would end, or did you figure it out as you went along?
6. What is your co-writing process like? Do you spent a lot of time talking through each section and collaborating? Did you storyboard the book before writing it and then divvy up the writing responsibilities?
7. Melanie is quite the activist. Do either of you do any animal advocacy in your own lives?
8. Do you think you will write another book featuring Melanie and Chase?
9. You are both accomplished writers of a range of different genres. Is there a specific format or genre each of you most prefer?
10. *KONA* will soon be a motion picture film as well—so tell us, is the movie as good as the book? Will either of you have a hand in writing or producing it?

