

Author: Shonette Charles
Category: Contemporary Fiction
Print ISBN: 978-0996456807
Publisher: Seamare Press
Formats: Paperback and ebook
Available at [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), iTunes,
and other book retailers.

Media Kit

[Author Bio](#)

[Book Bio](#)

[Testimonials](#)

[Review Excerpts](#)

[Book Excerpt](#)

[Interview Questions](#)

[Articles for Reprint](#)

[Downloadable Author & Book Photos](#)

[Contact Author](#)



Author Bio

Shonette Charles

Shonette Charles is the author of the novel, *NAIL IT: Breaking into the Black Elite* and the blog—*Pearls, Poise & Protocol*. Follow Shonette on Facebook or Twitter @shonettecharles.

Shonette Charles is the author of the novel, *NAIL IT: Breaking into the Black Elite*, and the blog—*Pearls, Poise & Protocol*. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Jack and Jill of America, Inc., and The Links, Incorporated. Connect with her on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Shonette Charles is the author of the novel, *NAIL IT: Breaking into the Black Elite*, and online blog—*Pearls, Poise & Protocol*. An active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Jack and Jill of America, Inc., and The Links, Incorporated, Shonette holds degrees from Harvard University and the University of Michigan. She is a former freelance writer and editor and currently resides in Raleigh, North Carolina with her family. Shonette enjoys reading, dancing, and drinking cocktails in her spare time. Visit her online at www.shonettecharles.com, and connect with her on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Shonette Charles is the author of the novel, *NAIL IT: Breaking into the Black Elite*. The book explores the world of exclusive social clubs and black fraternities and sororities. “Shonette Charles does a fantastic job of bringing this undocumented world to life,” said one Readers’ Favorite 5-stars reviewer. She also writes the online blog—*Pearls, Poise & Protocol*—which gives you the tools to be your best in any social situation.

Originally from Dallas, Texas, Shonette currently resides in Raleigh, North Carolina with her family. She received her B.A. degree from Harvard University and an MBA from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan. Shonette is a former freelance writer and editor but has also worked in finance and project management.

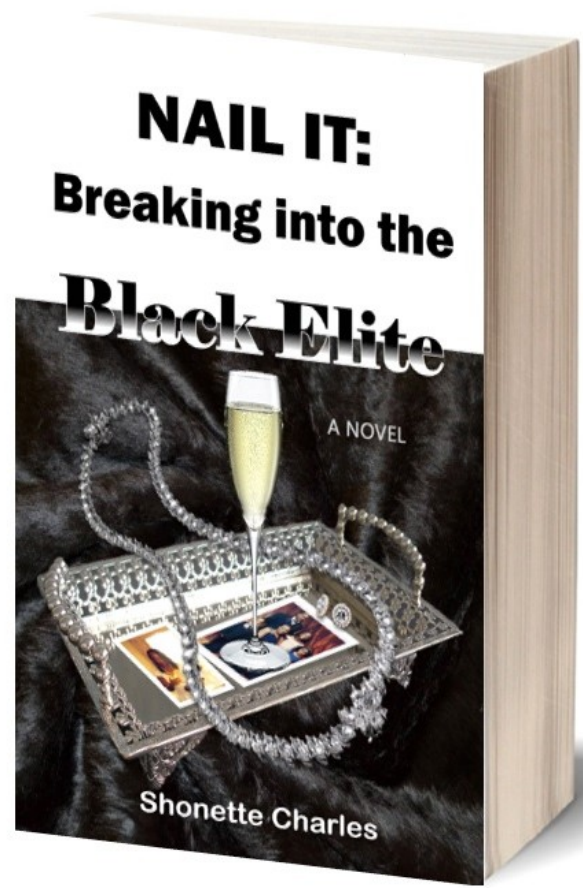
Before becoming an author, Shonette considered herself a “professional community volunteer” and enjoyed using her business expertise to help non-profit organizations achieve their goals. She has served as president and on the board of directors of many community and civic organizations. In addition, she is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Jack and Jill of America, Inc. and The Links, Incorporated.

When Shonette isn’t writing or spending time with her family, she enjoys reading, dancing, and traveling in her spare time. Visit her online at www.shonettecharles.com, and connect with her on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Book Bio

Black, educated, and on the rise, Sahara and Noah Kyle move to North Carolina ready to break into the area's black bourgeoisie social circle. This is a world governed by black socialites and movers and shakers, who hold membership in the Sphinx, Darlings, The Shield, Belles & Beaus, The Coalition, and the black fraternities and sororities. Being in the right circle could position the Kyles for even greater affluence, but being shut out could be the death knell for more than their social life.

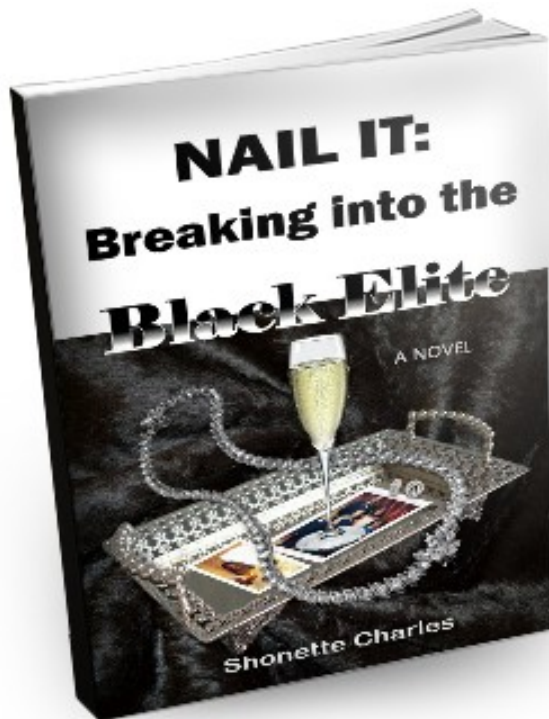
Noah appears to quickly catch his stride, but Sahara struggles navigating this world of pearls, poise, and protocol. The sky's the limit, but will secrets, lies, and double crossings keep them on the outside of this powerful network looking in? Or, when it comes to entering the world of the black elite, do they have what it takes to NAIL IT?



Author: Shonette Charles
Category: Contemporary Fiction
Print ISBN: 978-0996456807
Publisher: Seamare Press
Formats: Paperback and ebook
Available at [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), iTunes,
and other book retailers.

Will secrets, lies, and double crossings keep the Kyles on the outside of the powerful, social network looking in? Or, when it comes to entering the world of the black elite, do they have what it takes to NAIL IT?

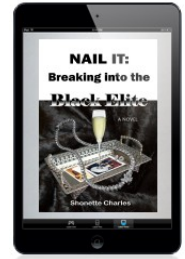
After moving to North Carolina, Noah Kyle appears to quickly catch his stride in a social circle governed by black socialites and movers and shakers. But Sahara struggles navigating this world of pearls, poise, and protocol. The sky's the limit, but will secrets, lies, and double crossings keep them on the outside of this powerful network looking in? Or, when it comes to entering the world of the black elite, do they have what it takes to NAIL IT?



Features and Themes

- African-American social clubs
- Black sororities and fraternities
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Art of Social Mobility
- The New South

Review Excerpts



well
written

“Shonette Charles does a fantastic job of bringing this undocumented world to life.” - **K.T. Bowes**

magnificent
ending

Readers will enjoy
its sophistication,
pace and glamour.

“The characters of Noah and Sahara have been realistically sketched and the story reveals much about the lifestyle of elite black society....The author keeps up the fluidity and pace of the plot from beginning to end, making it an engaging story.” - **M. Madhavan**

unique
plot

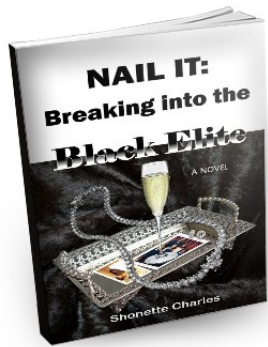
“An interesting tale about a complex social set up made up exclusively of elite black circles....” - **F. Nassozi**

exciting
venture

“The story of the Divine 9 and Black elite groups has seldom been told from the inside detailing not only the celebration (e.g. Step Shows, etc) but the service these groups provide to communities in need. I found it fascinating that Mrs. Charles was able to combine a tale detailing the culture, practices, and values of these groups with a suspenseful story.” **Amazon Reviewer**

“It is a spot on glimpse into the lives of Black socialites.” **Amazon Reviewer**

“Excellent view to networking and the world that exists behind the curtain....”
Amazon Reviewer



Book Excerpt

Chapter 2: Sahara

After waving goodbye one last time to their Fells Point row home as they drove away, the Kyle family now was hunkered down in Noah's brand new BMW 535i with toys, books, snacks, and two iPads. It was a beautiful, Saturday afternoon in the middle of May and too nice to spend the afternoon cooped up in the car. But, here they were facing a six hour drive from Baltimore, Maryland to Fairchester, North Carolina.

Noah thought it was best if they trailed the moving truck in his car. That sounded like a good idea, until they were actually on I-95. With cars zipping by, the large Penske moving truck lumbering down the highway was moving much too slowly for Noah, who was itching to really drive his new car. They hadn't even gotten past Baltimore-Washington Airport before the BMW was roaring down I-95, and the moving truck was eating its dust.

Sahara was ready to get comfortable, when she felt something hard by her foot and reached down. It was a black box. Just as she was about to open it and see what was inside, Noah said, "Hey! Don't open that."

"What is it? Is it yours?" asked Sahara, still preparing to open the box.

"I *said* don't open it." Noah tried to take the box out of her hand. He was serious.

"What's in it?" She asked again. Why was he being so secretive?

“Nothing. Just let me have it.” Noah held out his hand.

Sahara didn’t know what was in the box, but whatever it was, she doubted that it was worth an argument. She handed the box to Noah, and he quickly tucked it under his seat safe from her grasp.

Whatever. They were going to be in this car entirely too long to fret over that box. Sahara put her hand on the sleek car door, raised the seat button a little, and pushed the backrest button back.

After their house hunting trip, Noah decided that they needed new cars to go along with their new house. Based on the price that they paid for the house, Sahara wasn’t sure how he had come to that conclusion. But, he went ahead and bought his red BMW a couple of weeks ago. Sahara told him that she thought they should hold on to her seven-year old Camry, which was currently attached to a tow dolly behind the moving truck, until after they were settled in Fairchester.

Sahara snuggled a little deeper into her seat. She was finally getting a chance to relax after getting up early to make sure that the row home would be spotless for the renters moving in on Monday. She had to admit, this car was nice.

As she slowly lifted her heavy eyelids, Sahara realized that she had fallen asleep. They were now parked in front of her mother’s house in the working class Washington, D.C. neighborhood of Brookland. Dark clouds that brought with them the crackle and boom of a spring thunderstorm had replaced the sunny day. The usually busy street was filled with adults and children trying to take cover inside or hurry along as quickly as they could while keeping an eye on the sky. Still a little groggy, Sahara looked at Noah, who was getting the children out of the car.

“Wake up, sleepy head. I promised your mom that we would stop by before we drove down to North Carolina. But we are only going to stay for a minute.” Noah quickly added with raised eyebrows and a small grin. If they let her mother really get to talking, they would be here for hours.

Sahara got out of the car and closed the passenger door behind her. Feeling the electricity in the air, she hurried to the front door as she heard the double beeps from the BMW announcing that the alarm was set.

“Grandma!” the kids yelled when Sahara’s mother opened the door.

Seemingly overdressed for a Saturday afternoon in the house, Sahara’s mother wore a short-sleeved pink silk blouse and white linen pants. She quickly scooped three year-old Clarissa and one year-old Trevor into her arms, filled their foreheads with kisses, and took them towards the kitchen.

Noah and Sahara followed them, and Sahara’s eyes took in all the familiar sights of her childhood home. The silver antique tea set on the bureau from India in the small foyer. The matted and elegantly framed grade school photos that lined the walls. The red and black Persian rug lying on the floor. The robin’s egg blue, high-backed tufted sofa that sat tall and proud like a peacock in the elegantly decorated but small sitting room.

As a child, Sahara always felt a little uncomfortable inviting over friends. One minute you were on the litter-strewn streets of Northeast Washington, D.C. with Chinese takeout restaurants and liquor stores on every other corner. The next minute, you crossed over the threshold and were magically transported across town to a home in upscale

Chevy Chase with fine furnishings and antique accessories. It was always hard to explain to anyone why their house was so *fancy*.

Sahara walked into the kitchen and saw Clarissa and Trevor enjoying cookies and juice at the kitchen table. Since Baltimore had an Ikea, it was easy to supply her mother with stylish child-friendly plates. Otherwise, she would have them dining on Lennox china.

“Honey bunnies, do you have enough cookies? I want you to stay here for a minute, while I talk to your mother,” said Sahara’s mother.

Following the unspoken directions, Sahara watched as her mother’s happy face slowly turned its gaze from her grandchildren and then directed Sahara to the hallway that led to the bedroom. Sahara crossed the room and wondered why her mother needed to speak to her. Being called into the gold palace meant that this was serious.

Walking down the hallway, everything was as Sahara remembered—in its place. The paintings were perfectly aligned. Not a smudge on the walls. Not a speck of dust on the floors. Everything was perfect.

Sahara noticed a small black address book on her mother’s dresser when she entered the ornately decorated gold bedroom. “Mother, what’s going on?” Sahara asked as she turned to face her mother, who was wearing pearls on a Saturday afternoon. Typical.

“I just want to give you this,” Sahara’s mother said as she took a small slip of paper out of the little black book and held it out to her daughter.

Sahara looked down at the paper and saw her father’s name and a telephone number elegantly written in her mother’s handwriting.

Sahara scowled, slightly amused. It was fitting that when it came to her father the transmission of information felt like a seedy transaction.

“He knows you will be close,” said Sahara’s mother with downcast eyes, as if slightly ashamed of her part in the matter.

“Well, we will be close—but not that close,” Sahara added. “I doubt there will be any reason for our paths to cross.”

“I know that you deserved more, but he has always provided for you. Keep it...just in case. You never know.” She pressed the slip of paper into Sahara’s hand.

All of a sudden, their little tete-a-tete was interrupted by Noah’s voice. “Mom, where are the paper towels?”

Sahara watched as her mother checked herself in the dresser mirror. As if she’d slipped on a mask, the tension of the conversation quickly drained from her mother’s face, and she became a happy, cheerful grandmother again. She walked out the room saying, “I’m coming, Noah!” leaving Sahara alone to deal with the emotions of the exchange and the information.

With her mind racing, Sahara sat on the bed. She had tucked away the skeletons associated with her father a long time ago. Even Noah only knew the sanitized version that her mother developed of Sahara’s paternal background.

Red flags and danger signs flashed in Sahara’s mind, when First Southern Bank seriously started recruiting Noah. But, the compensation package the bank offered was too good to pass up. Plus, Noah wanted to be closer to his family in Charlotte. He didn’t know that the move would put her closer to hers, as well.

“Sahara, we have to hit the road!” Noah shouted from the front part of the house.

Sahara could hear her mother saying, “Oh, so soon, Noah? I only got to spend a minute with my honey bunnies!” Sahara slowly stood up from the bed and left her mother’s inner sanctum with the slip of paper hidden in her hand.

After they said their goodbyes, the Kyle Family was on their way. Outside the sky was still dark. The friction of the unstable atmosphere was almost palpable. Inside the car, Sahara’s agitation was just as great.

She flipped through a magazine but only saw letters, no words, on the pages. Her father. Her father. Her ABSENT father. Her mother’s words echoed in her ears, “He has always provided for you.” Money, that’s it. And, money is only good for one thing—paying the bills.

It didn’t help when she was a little girl and had bad dreams at night. It couldn’t cheer for her when her name was called at her high school graduation. For that matter, money couldn’t walk her down the aisle when she married Noah. Wonderful Noah...who loved being Clarissa and Trevor’s father, and his actions showed it.

Sahara fidgeted in her seat and continued to flip through the pages of the magazine as she longed for the relaxation that enveloped her before they stopped at her mother’s house. Giving up, she began to look through photos on her cell phone. Noah and Clarissa standing by the Baltimore Library sign on their way to the Annual Preschool Princess Tea. Clarissa had worn her favorite Princess and the Frog dress, and Noah had bought her a new tiara and a little wrist corsage. Noah and Clarissa dancing together. A close-up of Clarissa looking up at Noah and smiling. Noah and Clarissa eating cookies at the refreshment table. In

every picture, Clarissa looked like she was on cloud nine—and Noah did too. Noah was a good man. A good father.

Thinking about her husband, her children, and being reminded of their life together was just what Sahara needed to settle her spirit. She looked out the window. The storm clouds had moved on, and the sun's rays had broken through the darkness.

As they passed an old tobacco plant next to the freeway, Sahara realized they were in Richmond. She lowered her seat just a tad, stretched her legs, and pointed her toes. Ahhhh, that felt better.

"Babe, you need to save your settings in the memory. Just push that button right there. No, the other one," Noah said interrupting his phone conversation.

Pointing out every feature in his new car, he was absolutely like a kid in a candy store. If he hadn't been talking to Phillip Bell on the Bluetooth, he probably would have launched into a lecture on how easy it was to save the settings and a ton of other features.

"Mommy, Mommy! I can't see the movie!" said Clarissa as she passed the iPad to her mother.

Sahara quickly exited out of the CareerBuilder notification that had popped up on the screen so that the kids could watch "The Little Mermaid" unobstructed in the backseat. A job in Fairchester, fitting her selected criteria, must have posted on CareerBuilder. As Sahara handed the iPad to Clarissa, who was immediately back to being engrossed in the movie, she felt a little guilty.

In addition to getting ready for their move, when they got back from the Ross BBSA conference, Sahara also put out feelers and quietly looked for a job in Fairchester and Research Triangle Park. Noah had not

been happy when she mentioned possibly returning to work. He said that he already made enough money for her to stay at home with the kids—and that was without the big salary increase from First Southern. There was no need for her to work.

Noah touched his finger to his ear and disconnected the Bluetooth. Sahara saw him grimace and grip the steering wheel a little tighter. “How is Phillip?” she asked.

“Oh, he’s cool,” Noah said, as they took the on-ramp for I-85. “He mentioned that he and Reggie are going to this great golf course outside Atlanta in July.”

“Isn’t Atlanta only a five hour drive from Fairchester?” Sahara asked. “You should drive down. Or fly. You can probably get a cheap ticket on Southwest.”

“They’ll be there for a Belles & Beaus conference,” Noah said curtly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Sahara knew that she had stepped in it.

“Like I was telling you before, when we get to Fairchester, I’m going to transfer my fraternity membership to the Theta Iota Kappa chapter there. You should try to get involved in some of these exclusive groups. When we were at the BBSA Conference, that is all those guys were talking about—these groups and the conferences. EJ and Joseph Davis hung out while their wives were at the Sphinx National Conference. Michael went with his wife to a Darlings’ conclave and ran into Craig Lawrence from the Class of ’04 whose wife is also a member. That’s how Michael got that job at HBO. Apparently, he stayed in touch with Craig and got the hookup. Phillip and Reggie talked about

how these Belles & Beaus conferences roll out the red carpet for the dads.

“I remember going to those Belles & Beaus activities with my cousin, Donald. That’s what I want for Clarissa and Trevor. We just need to get in the right circle with the right people.”

Interview Questions

1

What inspired you to write this book?

2

Is there a message in your novel that you want readers to grasp?

3

How much of the book is realistic?

4

Are experiences based on someone you know or events in your own life?

5

What traits and other tidbits do you share with the characters in your book?

6

What was the hardest part of writing this book?

7

What did you enjoy most about writing this book?

8

What made you decide to self publish?

9

Are there any specific authors whose writing styles or subject matter inspired you?

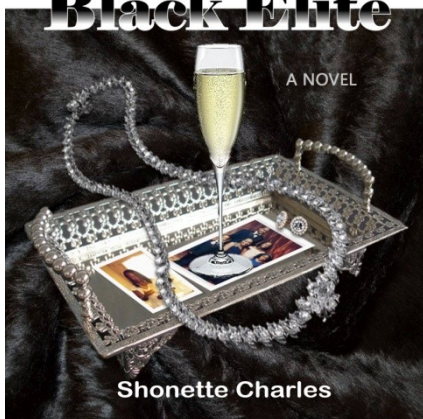
10

What projects are you working on at the present?

ARTICLES FOR REPRINT:



NAIL IT: Breaking into the Black Elite



Reprints: Please name the source website and its URL and link back to the original.

1. [6 Ways to Get Your Daily Confidence Boost](#)
2. [10 Networking Questions to Flip the Script and Help You Get Ahead](#)
3. [Does the New South Really Exist? \(on The Burton Wire\)](#)
4. [How to be the Perfect Wedding Guest!](#)
5. [Break the Ice! Learn How to Maximize Your Marketable Skills](#)
6. [A Mother's Love](#)
7. [3 Traits that Leaders on the Road to Success Have](#)
8. [Hit the Mark on Making Introductions](#)
9. [6 Pointers to be a Champion at Interviewing](#)
10. [Redefine, Redesign, Reinvent Yourself From Drab To Fab!](#)

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTOS

I appreciate requests for photographs for press use. Email and let us know where you post your article so we can link to it.

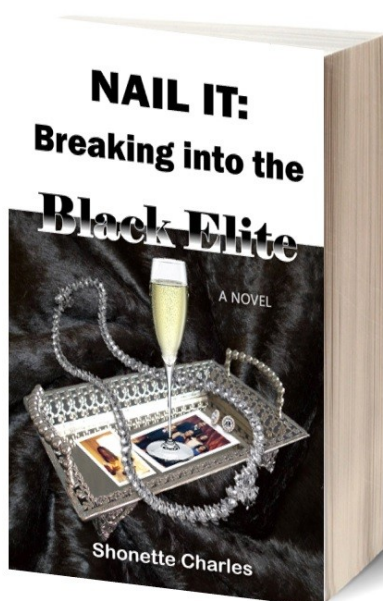
-Thank you.



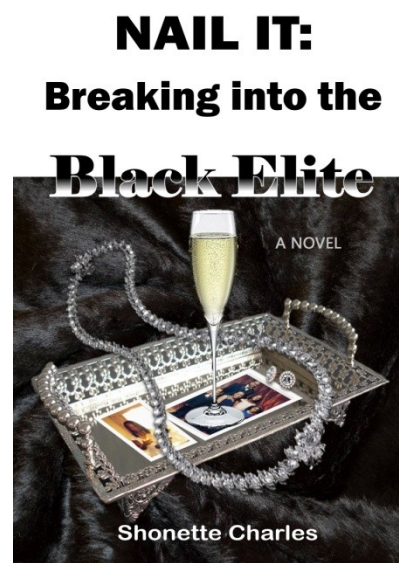
[Download](#)



[Download](#)



[Download](#)



[Download](#)



Connect with Shonette Charles

Email: Shonette@ShonetteCharles.com

Phone: 919-632-0165

Website: ShonetteCharles.com

Facebook: facebook.com/authorshonettecharles

Twitter: [@shonettecharles](https://twitter.com/shonettecharles)

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/shonettecharles

