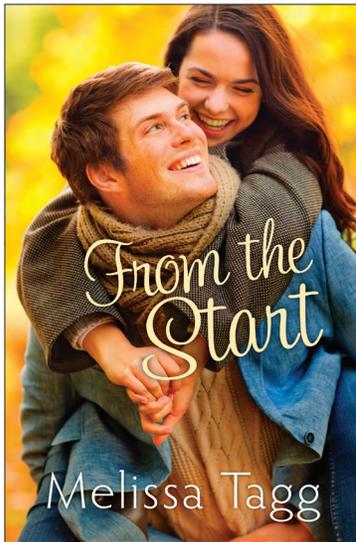


**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH MELISSA TAGG**



**From the Start**

by Melissa Tagg

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**1. What's the premise for *From the Start*?**

Kate Walker is a romantic-movie scriptwriter who isn't sure which is worse—the fact that no one wants to buy her latest script or the reality that she stopped believing in true love and happily ever after (and thus, her own stories) long ago.

Colton Greene is a quarterback whose whole world is football and the woman he thinks he's going to marry. When both are ripped from his life on the same day, he's left without a game plan for his future.

In a last-ditch effort to hold on to his career, Colton agrees to release a sports memoir. Only problem? He needs a writer. Kate Walker fits the bill . . . even if she's not too up on her football knowledge. The unexpected project gives them both a chance to jumpstart their lives, but old wounds and new dreams turn what should be a quick project into a complicated tangle.

**2. What kind of research did you have to do for this book?**

Oh my goodness, I had so many moments with this book when I said out loud, “Melissa, seriously, what were you thinking?” Because at the outset, my football knowledge was so basic I'm not even sure it counted as “knowledge.” Thankfully, I have some very football-savvy friends. And thanks to YouTube, I was able to watch some game replays. I may have also used the football angle as an excuse to rewatch *Friday Night Lights*.

**3. Your romantic comedies have been compared to classic movies. Did your love of classic movies make its way into this story?**

Yes! Somehow that obsession tends to creep into all my stories, but it's a bit more obvious in this one. My main character, Kate, is named after Katherine Hepburn. And there's a key scene later in the story in which Kate and Colton watch the very first classic movie I remember watching: *Bringing Up Baby*.

**4. You've said *From the Start* is the hardest story you've written. How so?**

I think the reason *From the Start* was so hard to write is that I prodded much deeper into my own emotions in this story than I have in the past. There are big pieces of me in all the stories I write, but *From the Start* probed some of my more vulnerable places. My heroine, especially, embodies some of my own insecurities. She struggles to feel like she's doing something important with her life. She wishes she were as brave as the characters she writes. She has trouble admitting what she wants and how she feels, even to the people closest to her. All of which is very...me.

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**5. What message do you hope readers take away from *From the Start*?**

In *From the Start*, both Kate and Colton have a very clear picture in their heads of what their lives should look like. And every decision they make in the first half of the book is an effort to make those pictures in their heads a reality. But they both learn, slooowly and at times not so smoothly, that God might be weaving together a completely different picture. That he uses change and circumstance, reshapes broken dreams and heals wounds—that he’s been there, at work, from the start. And there’s great peace and confidence in that truth.

**6. *From the Start* is the beginning of your new WALKER FAMILY series. Can you give us a peek at what’s next?**

I’m so excited about this series. It takes place in my home state, and I just love the pretend people that make up my pretend town of Maple Valley. The second book in the series is called *Like Never Before*, and it combines my love of small-town newspapers and my fascination with Charles Lindbergh.