



## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH MELISSA TAGG

### 1. Tell us about *Made to Last*?

*Made to Last* is a romantic comedy about figuring out who we are underneath the trappings of success—or lack thereof—and in the process finding faith and love that's made to last. It's about a homebuilding TV show host/DIY guru who's trying to boost her ratings and save her show, even if it means pretending to be married to a man who's definitely not the fiancé who ran out on her. And shadowing her every move is a handsome reporter whose digging brings him a little too close to the truth—and to her.

### 2. What gave you the idea for *Made to Last*?

I love classic movies, and a few years ago I discovered the 1945 movie *Christmas in Connecticut* starring Barbara Stanwyck. I could not believe I hadn't seen it before. It's about a magazine writer who has basically created a fake identity for herself...and ends up needing to find a stand-in husband. The only problem is she ends up falling for someone who is not said stand-in husband. I took that basic "pretend marriage" spark and ran with it.

### 3. This book is a contemporary romance laced with humor and spunk. Is there a reason you write in this genre?

Well, I love to laugh, and frankly, I think romance can be one of the funniest things ever. There's just so much opportunity for funny encounters, witty banter, and awkward LOL moments. But I also really believe both humor and romance can pave the way to the truth. Laughter pulls us into a place of openness; romance tugs on our vulnerabilities. So for me, romantic comedy creates a great and natural space for exploring universal themes and spiritual truth.

### 4. What is the underlying spiritual theme of this story?

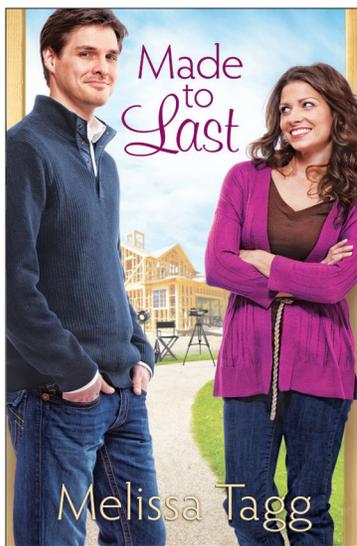
Both of my main characters struggle with basing their identity and worth in the wrong things. One finds her worth in her career. The other sees only his mistakes when he looks at himself. They both have to discover where their true identity is found. And I think that's something all of us have, at some point or another, struggled with—finding our worth in our achievements or careers or relationships. A lot of times, it's when those things are stripped away that we discover who we really are—cherished and valued by a loving God.

### 5. What kind of research did you do while writing this story?

Considering I know next to nothing about building a house and am about as un-DIYish as they come, I spent a lot of time on the *This Old House* website. I watched a bunch of HGTV shows (I know, such a sacrifice!) and spent time in hardware stores. I even bought a chainsaw... although my family hasn't allowed me to use it yet.

### 6. One of the characters in *Made to Last* is the main character's pretend husband. We get a few hints about his past in this story. Will we encounter him again?

The fake husband in this story was one of my absolute favorite characters to write, so I knew I had to continue his story. He's the main character in my next book—*Here to Stay*—releasing in May 2014.



#### **Made to Last**

by Melissa Tagg

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