

# BIOGRAPHY – Clea McLemore

Clea translated from the Greek word Kleos, meaning Fame, Glory, Glory of the Father. Clea McLemore was born in Greenwood, MS. Her mother didn't believe cable television would be an asset to her children, so the local Public library became a place where their imaginations would soar, and their love of language begin. Television consisted of VHS cassette tapes, checked out with a Library card, that included titles such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Casablanca*, *Sabrina*, along with other epic classics.

At the age of 15, the lives of her family would become shaken upon the birth of her first daughter. The only coping mechanism found was to release the disappointment, the shame, and yet the utter blissfulness of it all by writing a poem called "My Freedom is Gone" which was included in Vicksburg High school's annual literature book *Vicksburg Voices*. Her name became a number as she was moved into the pool of the nearly 750,000 teen pregnancies that occur each year. This statistic gleamed true less than two years later when she birthed her second daughter two months shy of her seventeenth birthday. She was now among the 25% of teen moms to have a child within 24 months of their first baby.

After obtaining her GED and working on a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology Services; Clea connected herself with, WordSpeak, an engaging group of African American students with undeniable talent and poise displayed through Spoken word. During these years of growth as a young woman, mother, student and lover of language; poetry continued to serve as a needed therapy to release unspoken thoughts, experiences, and emotion. Upon her College graduation, tears flowed due to the tumultuous journey of completion. Clea had now become among the less than 2% of teenage mothers who graduate college by the age of 30. Now at the age of 32, with both children attending High school, she's continued on, dedicating her life to pursuing, *kleos*, the Fame and Glory that her name entails by writing her first collection of poems that span the course of over 15 years of her life, and the lives seen through her eyes from others.

Fame & Glory exhibits pieces familiar to those inspired by the great poets of our time. *If You Forget Me, Too* is a piece written in response to Pablo Neruda's *If You Forget Me* due to its craftiness and great use of imagery. In addition, one clearly sees trails of inspiration throughout the pages of this collection from poets such as Robert Frost, E.E. Cummings, Langston Hughes, and others that have inspired the author. This collection has been written for the warriors. For those that push on, to see more clearly, to live more fully regardless of hurdles or obstacles that surround them. Those that will not, cannot; accept anything less than God's Perfect plan and will for their lives.

McLemore holds a Bachelor's of Science from Mississippi State University in Information Technology Services along with a Certificate of Business Administration. She is currently an Information Technology Consultant, Small Business owner, Author, and volunteer for Expectant and Teenage mothers and at-risk-youth. She resides in Northern Mississippi with her family and small dog Roscoe.



**Clea McLemore, Photo Credit: Brittany Howard**

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