

*Iris Bolling*



## THE HEART SERIES

A COLLECTION OF ROMANCE NOVELS

BY IRIS BOLLING

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Love, mystery, politics and suspense. By themselves, they each could be the plot line for a story. But for Iris Bolling they are merely ingredients, critical components that she brings together in her work. Iris wants her readers to become lost in her writing because of its realness. She believes readers want stories that they can relate to, with characters they love, hate and want to make a part of their lives.

The Heart series is Iris' first foray into writing, though she has been a fan of the romance genre for some time. An avid reader, Iris was drawn into writing by the dearth of quality TV programming and a story idea in her head that just wouldn't go away.

*The Heart Series follows the journey of Assistant District Attorney J.D. Harrison from the streets of Richmond, Virginia, to President of the United States of America. His struggle with women, justice and politicians will have you laughing, crying and cheering.*

*Once You've Touched the Heart (March 2008)*

*The Heart of Him (Fall 2008)*

*Look Into My Heart (Summer 2009)*

*A Heart Divided (TBA)*

*A Lost Heart (TBA)*

*When Two Hearts Collide (TBA)*

## Questions & Answers

1). Who or what inspired you to begin writing?

*The lack of quality entertainment on television is what prompted me to begin writing. I was on vacation for a week. It was one that I planned to work on cleaning my house. During the entire week, there was absolutely nothing on television worth watching. I mentioned to my son that there was no creativity or imagination in programs on television any more. His response was, we should write a story and submit it to someone for airing. Of course, we both laughed it off. But the next few days brought the same unimaginative, meaningless programs. So I turned the television off, went to my computer and began telling a story that was mulling around in my head. The first night I churned out three scenes to a story. I read it and was so excited that I wrote three more before I went to bed that morning. The next day I called a trusted friend and asked her to come by to critic it. I nervously worked in my kitchen while she sat in my office reading. When she finished, we sat in the living room and discussed the storyline. She enjoyed what she read, but had a few questions. Her questions made me wonder what motivated the characters in the story to react in the manners they did. She stated as a reader, you want to love and hate characters. I went back to the computer and tried again. This time I spent more time on developing the characters. When I looked up to take a breath, the first novel was complete and several others had taken shape.*

*I have always been an avid romance reader and knew what I enjoyed. Therefore, I wrote my novels based on that. Judith McNaught and Jude Deverux were my favorite authors at the time. Then I read a book called Savvy Sisters, by Brenda Jackson. Since that time, I have read everything I could find by her because her stories were so engaging. When I completed the Brenda Jackson novels, I began reading Rochelle Alers and a little of Beverly Jenkins. It is their level of perfection in capturing a person's imagination that I would like to accomplish.*

2). Talk about the setting(s) of your novels in terms of atmosphere and surrounding. What do you try to create?

*My stories are usually set in Richmond, Virginia and play out across the state. They are not told from the urban street life perspective, but from the professional working man's perspective. Most of my stories show how all spectrums of life cross paths at some point. Most of the characters are just going about their everyday life, but are not limited to a mundane outlook. I attempt to open minds of ways to move from one level of life into the next level, without limitations. While reading one of my novels, I hope someone will say, "There is a wide range of opportunities out there if I dare to dream." In essence, I want to create the single thought of entrepreneurship. I also want to show people that good guys do not always finish last.*

3.). Character development and focus are truly important in fiction writing. Talk about some of the characters in your book(s). Who are the main characters?

*You will find an array of characters in my novels. One common thread in each is intelligence. Whether they are on the right side of the law or not, these are intelligent men and women who have excelled in their professions of choice. Very few allow their circumstances to limit them in living their lives as they chose. In every book I write there will be Professionals who are not afraid to take chances in life. Every story will involve social issues, which I hope create a sense of understanding and tolerance in some areas and a glimmer of hope to escape in others.*

*In the novel "Once You've Touched the Heart", the main character is J.D. Harrison. He is a man from a simple existence that is marked for greatness. His father was a police officer and his mother worked for the local school system. He is a man of considerable intelligence, compassion, and family*

*dedication. But above all else, he is a man of integrity. He finds himself propelled into the world of politics, which consistently pits him against his own moral authority.*

*Then there is Tracy Washington. She is from a very humbling background. That very beginning propels her to become a success in the business world. It is her personal life that seemed to be taken out of her own hands. The very shy reclusive woman has no idea how much power she has over each of the very influential men surrounding her. Her only thought is to be as rich as Oprah, so that she will never have to return to her loveless home life.*

4.). Do you have a particular style in your writing? What is it and how did you develop it?

*I usually write in third person. I have no idea how I developed it. It was just what came out. I can tell you this, when a story hits my mind, it does not leave until it is complete. When I sit down to write the story it plays out as scenes in my mind. This gives me the characters, their surroundings and their temperament. Sometimes I would sit down and tell the story to someone. This gives me a barometer on the feasibility of the storyline.*

*I can also say I do have triggers. A picture, a place or music can set a story in motion for me.*

5). There are lots of would-be best sellers out there. What do you think makes your work different and what would someone get out of spending time with one of your books?

*My novels will open your mind to possibilities in life you may not have considered. Be it professional or personal, at least that's what I hope. I want to entertain a few people as well as give them options. A compliment to me would be "I read one of your novels and decided to follow through on an idea I had about a business venture," or "I read your novel and took a chance on finding true love," or "It was good to have a place to escape to after a hard day at work."*

6). Who do you look up to?

**GOD.**

*I am impressed with educators of all kinds, from teachers to philosophers. I am encouraged by Barack Obama. Anyone that has accomplished a dream inspires me.*

7). If you had to give advice to another author, what would it be?

*Believe in yourself. Never allow someone else to stomp on your dream, regardless of how difficult it may seem. Keeping your dream alive, keeps you striving towards it.*

8). When you read, what do you read?

*I always enjoy a good romance novel, written by just about anyone. Brenda Jackson can never write enough books for me. Some of my favorite novels are, PG County by Connie Briscoe, Brothers and Sisters, by BeBe Campbell-Moore, Black Lace, by Beverly Jenkins, Welcome to Leo's, by Brenda Jackson, Rochelle Alers, Donna Hill and Francis Ray. However, my interest does not stop there. I read the "Left Behind Series" by Tim LaHay and Jerry B. Jenkins. Dreams from My Father, by Barack Obama and A is for Attitude, by Patricia Russell-Mccloud. Just to name a few.*

# Behind the Scenes with Iris Bolling

Iris Bolling was born in Richmond, Virginia, has a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management. Iris started her climb up the corporate ladder with the banking industry. From there she began what has become a 25-year career with the Commonwealth of Virginia, providing management, training, and professional development consultation for the state workforce.



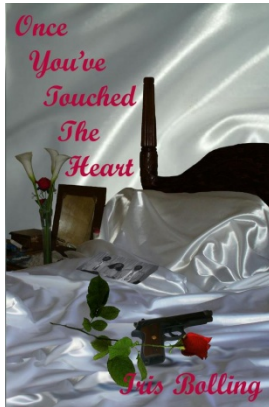
In an effort to combine the areas in her life she enjoys the most, education, politics and romance, she penned her first manuscript, ***Once You've Touched the Heart***, which was release in March 2008. She has now completed her second novel, ***The Heart of Him*** and her third, ***Look Into My Heart***.

Her passions are reading (especially romance novels), writing, sports and politics. An active proponent of state and federal educational issues, she continues to encourage young adults to pursue their education. She also volunteers with her local registrar's office, promoting voter registration in the African-American community.

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## *Once You've Touched The Heart*



If your mind is what you want stimulated, and your heart is what you want captured, *Once You've Touched The Heart* is where you need to go.

*Once You've Touched The Heart* is an intriguing love story with characters that you will love and those you will love to hate throughout. The first book of The Heart Series is a first love, suspenseful, page-turner that will hold the interest of men and women alike.

Tracy Washington, a young woman from humble beginnings is given an opportunity of a lifetime. Her street-smart brother sends her to a historically black college, which is the perfect educational opportunity and an escape from her self-absorbed mother. She takes full advantage and after graduation starts her own business. While in college she meets J.D. Harrison, her roommate and now business partner's brother, and her life is never the same.

J.D. Harrison is destined to be an undeniable force in politics, however, his strong sense of integrity and belief in a fair and just system places him in a constant struggle between right and wrong. When he meets nineteen-year-old Tracy, sparks fly, but her age prevents him from showing his feelings. Then fate steps in. The street-smart brother, Al Day is now a case for the prosecutor. You guessed it, J.D. Harrison. In an effort to protect his sister, Al makes a deal with J.D., who now finds himself connected by a commitment and by the heart to Tracy.

Life would be great if others would accept the love they have. However, Carolyn Roth, the ex-girlfriend of J.D., has her own dreams of becoming the first lady of Virginia. She believes J.D. is the man that can make that happen and she stops at nothing to make her dream a reality.

Between vengeful women, criminals and other interesting characters, J.D.'s life becomes a living nightmare for the couple. J.D. is shot in the courtroom and Tracy is brutally beaten, but the two hold on to their love.

To protect Tracy, J.D. changes his career and begins the life that those around him knew he was destined for and puts his hat in the political arena as Attorney General. Together J.D. and Tracy rejuvenate the Democratic Party as they pursue the most powerful address in the world - 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C...

Enjoy the beginning of the Heart Series with J.D. and Tracy in  
*Once You've Touched The Heart*.

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Reviewed: Dec 31, 2008

**Once You've Touched The Heart by Iris Bolling**

Siri Enterprises, 2008

387 Pages, Paperback, \$12.95

ISBN: 0980106605

Genre: Fiction

RAW Rating: 4.5 (out of 5)

When Jeffrey “JD” Harrison first met Tracy Washington, she was the college roommate of his younger sister. The effect she had on him was unsettling, but he considered her too young. Years later, they are reunited as JD takes a case, as the District Attorney, that involves her brother. This time he takes the role as Tracy’s protector and eventually, her lover. JD is a womanizer and Tracy has no experience in love, but, despite several odds, they manage to build a relationship that most folks only dream of.

I found it hard to believe this is the first effort by Bolling. ONCE YOU’VE TOUCHED THE HEART is very well-written with attention to detail. That may have been the only flaw with the novel since the minute details made for a lengthy book. Nevertheless, the characters are three-dimensional, the plot is well-developed and the action is non-stop. Readers may pick this one up thinking it is your average romance, but it is so much more. Bolling is following with a sequel, which I will be adding to my book pile.

Reviewed by Paula Henderson, RAWSISTAZ.com

*---Paula Henderson is an IT Quality Assurance Manager with a book addiction. She is the mother of three children and resides in Little Rock, Arkansas.*

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2009

## **Book Review: Once You've Touched The Heart**

Once You've Touched The Heart

Author: Iris Bolling

Rating: 4

November 12, 2008

For the romantics at heart

Once You've Touched The Heart is truly a modern day romance novel. This Novel is filled with a lot of drama, suspense and of course passionate love making. When you first start to read this book it gives the introduction to the characters and their current personal life situation, however after that, you are forever glued to the pages. I was continuously trying to figure out who was causing the next drama for Tracy and JD.

This book not only invites you with words that embrace you immediately, but it gives you that real life experience of what many relationships go through daily with their trials and tribulations. Tracy and JD had a strong love that they were not willing to let anyone interfere with by any means necessary. This book will inspire you to find that special someone in your life or continue loving that special someone that you already have. This book gave me a truly euphoric feeling all the way until the last page. I was intensely focused on the book like it was a soap opera. I personally will state this is a must read book to all, especially if you love romance novels. I am ready to continue the journey and passion with Ashley and James with the next saga, "THE HEART OF HIM".

Reviewed by:

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## *What they are saying about Once You've Touched The Heart*

➡ J.C. Nedrick – Richmond, Va.

This is a page turner from first to last page, leaving me very eager to get my hands on the next book (The heart of him). I laughed, cried and cheered with every incident involving this couple and all of the obstacles placed before them. I felt I was actually a part of the story in and on the scene of everything. This is definitely (do not disturb) good reading.

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➡ Victoria Wells, Philadelphia, Pa.

Debut author Iris Bolling's novel, *Once You've Touched The Heart* is a beautiful love story between Jeffrey Harrison & Tracy Washington. Ms. Bolling has penned an engaging romance with a political twist as a back drop. From the moment the two meet it's clear they're a match made in heaven. However, there are several obstacles that threaten to shatter their happiness. I'm talking everything from attempted murder, to vindictive ex-girlfriends, a brutal attack, and deep family secrets that could destroy everything they've built as a couple as well as Jeffrey's political career. I must say that after reading this author's first novel, my heart was definitely touched!

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➡ Catherine K. Rocco – Brooklyn, NY

I really enjoyed this book! Normally this genre would not appeal to me (I prefer nonfiction and never read modern romance novels) but this book really takes off right from the first page and never stops going. I actually became anxious to see what would happen next and became quite involved with the characters. A great book to take on a trip or, vacation it's easy to read without being simple or dull. The trouble with reading some of it on my morning commute was that my trip wasn't long enough! It had romance, action, more than a little sex and at one point made me cry. I am looking forward to the sequel!

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➡ By Loretta R. Wells, Author and CEO, Nu Cherte Publishing – Richmond. Va

Iris Bolling did a smashing job with her debut novel, "*Once You've Touched the Heart*". Set in Virginia, it's the story of Tracy Washington and JD Harrison filled with plots to destroy the love they have for each other. With Carolyn Roth as the nemesis, she worked her crafty ways to keep them apart along with several other characters that fit into the political mix. Nonetheless, Iris wrote a well-told story that kept me hooked from start to finish.



## *The Heart of Him*



The Heart series continues as Ashley Harrison sets her sights on James Brooks and sparks began to fly.

This heartwarming story will have you laughing, cheering and wondering when someone will back-hand the Senator's daughter, stomp the brother and kill the ex- boyfriend, just to put them all out of their misery.

Just as "forever after" is within James and Ashley's grasp the past comes back to haunt them threatening serious damage to a political campaign, an innocent child and Ashley's life.

James Brooks, the campaign manager for Attorney General hopeful JD Harrison finds himself reluctantly falling for Ashley Harrison, sister to the candidate. As the two become more attracted to each other, their past love interests emerge and threaten to destroy what appears to be a sex-driven relationship.

James has hidden his family ties from Ashley and his friends for reasons of his own. Making her a permanent part of his life means, he will have to face the family he was exiled from and certain demons that hardened his heart.

Ashley finds herself in love with a man that she believes is out of her league. She finds herself constantly trying to peel away the shield he has erected around his heart. Unfortunately, an ex-lover takes her attention away occasionally with his obsession with her.

James and Ashley's life becomes a rolling snowball picking up speed when it finally crashes. The impact not only affects their loved ones, but the political campaign that may produce the first African-American President of the United States.



## *What they are saying about The Heart of Him*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2009

### **Book Review: The Heart of Him**

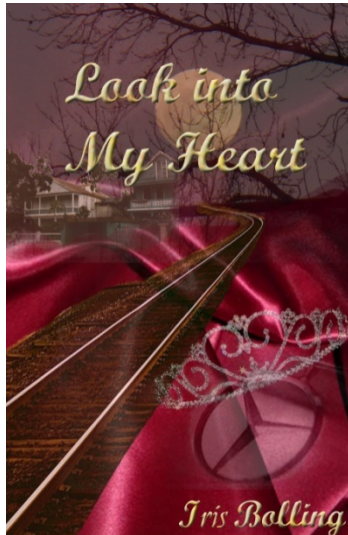
The Heart of Him  
Author: Iris Bolling  
Rating: 4  
February 1, 2009

#### His Heart in Her Hands

Finally the saga continues with best friends Ashley and Tracy but this time the drama is mostly with Ashley. Yes JD's little sister is trying to find not only the love of her life but that one MAN to replace the father figure THAT JD USED TO GIVE HER.....AND YES SHE HAS FOUND HIM WITH MR. BROOKS....

YOU REALLY WILL LOVE THE CONTINUATION OF THIS SOAP OPERA from the first book (Once You've Touched The Heart). This book started off with drama and ended up with drama that most soap opera have. Great Job Iris once again I was trying to stay tuned to see what the next day would bring for Ashley. I was left wanting more of this book and the unique style you bring to your readers.

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The Heart series continues as Cynthia Thornton gets her chance at love in **Look Into My Heart.**

*Life has a strange way of giving you what you ask for. Just ask Cynthia Thornton as the saga of the Harrison family and friends continue. The one person you're not sure how to take will have you hoping she has found the love she is so desperately seeking when Prince LaVere' Ashro enters her life.*

*Prince Ashro wants a wife that will stand beside him to reorganize his country. The only problem is the woman he has chosen is independent, out-spoken and not to the liking of the royal family. Finally a man who can treat her like the princess she is—or is he?*

To add to her problems, here's a question. What could Al "Turk" Day, a convicted imprisoned felon and Cynthia Thornton, a beautiful rich socialite have in common? The same person wants both of them dead—  
The question is --Why?

Socialite Cynthia Thornton has it all, beauty, money and status. The only thing missing in her life is love. It took her going through a few men before she realized she was looking in all the wrong places and for the wrong things.

After a brief affair with Governor Gavin Roberts of Virginia, who marries someone else, she decides on a life of celibacy until Mr. Right comes along. Finding love isn't easy and for a while she simply feels it doesn't exist, at least not for her. Until... Prince LaVere' Ashro comes into her life.

LaVere' places the world and his country at her feet. All the material things in life are at her disposal. Finally, she has a man that can treat her as the princess she is—or is he?

Just as life seems to come together, a hidden agenda unfolds. Someone wants her dead. Now, the life she envisioned with Prince LaVere' is threatened and her heart is lost forever—or is it?



## *What they are saying about Look Into My Heart*

Drama...suspense...intrigue...to-die-for-hot-as-all-get-out hero... They're all present in Iris Bolling's latest offering. Bolling has a knack for pulling you into this dynamic world of danger, lust, and politics and make you care about each and every character she deftly brings life to in her enthralling "Heart Series." *Look Into My Heart* doesn't disappoint and kicks the series up several notches. The writing is vibrant and the story is enthralling. If you haven't checked out the series, you don't know what you're missing! These books will win your heart! And *Look Into My Heart* is the must-read book of the summer.

**Gwyneth Bolton**  
**Sexy romance with urban flair...**

<http://www.gwynethbolton.com>

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5.0 out of 5 stars **The Heart Series, Part 3**, July 13, 2009

By **Cathy D. Atchison** (Glenn Dale, MD USA)

Look Into My Heart is the 3rd installment of Iris Bolling's Heart Series. It is the love story of Cynthia and Samuel. Here we have another story that is fraught with danger and intrigue. I enjoyed getting to know more about Cynthia, who is a character in both of the previous books. She has not been a very likable person, but truly grows and redeems herself in this book. Samuel is captivating, strong, and sexy. But more than anything else, he brings out the best in Cynthia. Ms. Bolling, once again, keeps you on the edge of your seat with the plot twists and turns. There are plenty of new characters introduced that I would like to read more about. Kudos, Ms. Bolling, for another homerun. Keep them coming!!

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5.0 out of 5 stars **Another Great One!**, July 9, 2009

By **Victoria Wells**

I was anxiously anticipating the third book in the Heart Series. Well...it was definitely worth the wait! I don't know where to begin from fear of giving away the story. In this story the reader learns a great deal about Cynthia Thornton and why she comes across as downright snobbish (that's putting it mildly.) In addition, a new cast of characters is introduced to continue the saga of romance, politics and government corruption. Iris Bolling has done it again! She's crafted a wonderfully, entertaining story that will keep you turning page after page. Look Into My Heart is a must read

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5.0 out of 5 stars **Cynthia: On the throne!**, July 12, 2009  
By [Loretta Walls "NCPCEO"](#) (Richmond, VA USA)

Cynthia Antoinette Thornton: If you don't know who she really is, you most certainly will find out!!!

Look Into My Heart is the third novel in the Heart Series by Author Iris Bolling. The novel picks up immediately where The Heart of Him left off, with Cynthia recovering from her sudden 'fall' before Prince LaVere Ashro of Emure. All she wants is love...but someone wants her dead. She has it all as a wealthy socialite but what her loyal friends, Roz, Tracy and Ashley have is far more valuable: a family. After having a brief affair with the Governor, Gavin Roberts (who marries Carolyn Roth), she places herself on lockdown until the right man arrives.

Little did she know what she'd have to endure to make that happen!

Although Cynthia's whirlwind relationship with Prince LaVere is making world news, it's not rubbing everyone the right way. From her closest male confidant, Brian to the unknown Samuel Lassiter, when her life is placed on the line, it becomes personal for everyone involved, even Attorney General JD Harrison.

Bolling does not waste time hitting the reader with the facts and taking them down pieces of memory lane. She places the reader right in the heart of the situation, as if they could watch it all in disguise. Make no mistake, many things are revealed in this third installment, as Cynthia has to endure test after test against the odds that seemingly throw themselves in her life.

Overall, Bolling's talent and writing experience continues to soar in the Heart Series. It is a pleasure to be so enthralled in such a world of political realm and not feel dastardly afterwards. Kudos to Iris Bolling for elevating the literary industry!

Loretta R. Walls  
Author of "A Fantasy of Love"  
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