

Colleen Hoover: It's been a whirlwind - Best-selling author at library April 10

Written by BY TERRY MATHEWS, News-Telegram Arts Editor
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Best-selling author Colleen Hoover needs a nap. Seriously.

She wrote eight books in a little over two years. Her first book, "Slammed," hit the big time, attracting an agent, a publisher and Hollywood deals.

She was the subject of an ABC "Nightline" segment and The Associated Press came to her house for an interview.

In her spare time, Hoover was raising three boys.

Her new book, "Maybe Someday," dropped Tuesday, March 18. Her publicist says she plans to tour heavily to promote the book, including stops in Oakland, Calif., Portland, Ore., St. Louis, Mo. and Nashville, Tenn.

She will be at the Sulphur Springs Public Library on Thursday, April 10, signing copies of her books.

Hoover took a short break last week to answer some questions about her busy life and astounding success.

□ **News-Telegram:** You've had a great two years ... from self-published sensation to having an agent/deals/Hollywood calling ... Tell us about it.

Colleen Hoover: It has definitely been a whirlwind. I never expected anything to come of my first book, which is why I never even tried to get it published. The fact that it ended up hitting the *New York Times*' as a self-published book within five months of release still blows my mind.

Since then, everything has been happening so quickly that at times I'll just have to take a step back and think, "Is this really my life?"

I've had both of my series optioned for film by producers and have already had interest for "Maybe Someday." I think my favorite moment was when I was walking through Wal-Mart here in Sulphur Springs and I received an email on my phone. I opened it up and it was an email from actress Hilary Duff's mother, expressing their interest in acquiring the movie rights for my newest novel.

I just stopped and stared at my phone for a while in shock and thought, "This is so weird. I'm at Wal-Mart in my yoga pants and no make-up and I'm receiving emails from Hollywood."

But that's what I love about all of this. There's this whole side to my life that is extremely weird and surreal and mind-blowing to me, but still being surrounded by the people I grew up

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with and the friends who have known me all my life keeps me grounded.

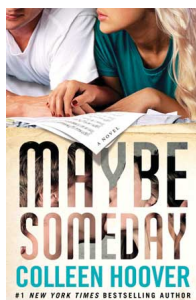
It's definitely something I'll never take for granted.

N-T: The publishing world is changing so rapidly and you were at the forefront of some major shifts. In a nutshell, what advice would you give aspiring authors?

CH: The publishing industry is in a constant, inevitable state of change, from the type of novels readers are interested in to how those novels are published. I think the most important thing for any aspiring writer is to be able to adapt to those changes. I try and make it a point to not only adapt to them, but to make the changes work in my advantage, such as with the inclusion of music in "Maybe Someday."

N-T: What does it mean to be making an appearance at the Sulphur Springs Public Library?

CH: I was born and raised in Hopkins County and my children still attend school here, so it's very surreal to be signing books at the same library my kids and I visit for fun. It's also very exciting that Griffin Peterson will be with me because I know a lot of people who have been wanting to meet him and see him perform. Most of my friends and family aren't able to attend the out of state signings, so being able to bring one to them will be great. I'm looking forward to it.



N-T: Tell us a little about the new book.

CH: "Maybe Someday" is a contemporary romance novel I began writing in early 2013. I have a huge passion for music and a lot of readers like to have playlists that go along with the books they're reading. I thought it would be interesting to take it a step further and actually have original songs created by the characters that readers would be able to listen to.

There are eight songs that the two main characters create together in the book and as each song is "written" by them, readers will be able to click a link within the ebook and listen to the song. If they are reading from the paperback, there is a QR code they can scan with their phones in order to be directed to the music.

"Maybe Someday" is one of the first books to incorporate an original soundtrack within the storyline, so we are excited to see how it's received. I think with the advancement in technology, we're going to see a lot of collaborations that will bridge gaps between art, reading and music.

N-T: You partnered with Griffin Peterson, a former "American Idol" contestant, to create music for the new book. Talk about how that came to be/worked/worked out.

CH: Griffin appeared on American Idol in January, 2013. The night his audition aired, my Facebook and Twitter were immediately flooded with emails from readers saying he looked just like how they envisioned my character, Holder, to appear.

Holder is the male lead in my best-selling book, "Hopeless."

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I noticed Griffin's Facebook page was also being flooded with people referring to him as "Holder," so I messaged him and explained that people thought he looked a lot like how I described one of my book characters. I was writing the companion novel to "Hopeless" so I asked if he would be willing to grace the cover of the book and he agreed. So now he's on the cover of "Losing Hope."

We kept in touch after that and even talked about the "Maybe Someday" project every now and then, although he wasn't a part of it at the time.

Weeks before the manuscript was due I ran into a legal roadblock with the music I had intended to use. I had to turn to a musician who could help out with such a last-minute deadline and he was the first person I asked. He was super excited about the project and very grateful to be a part of it. Even better, we agreed on pretty much everything along the way, so I couldn't have asked for a better experience.

N-T: What's it like to be on a huge book tour and meet fans from all over the country?

CH: Incredible. I still can't wrap my mind around the fact that I wrote a book, much less that people actually want me to sign it for them. Each signing I go to I'm always afraid no one will show up, but I'm always pleasantly surprised by the turnout. The support I've received and the enthusiasm of the readers will never get old.

□ **N-T:** What are you working on now?

CH: I just finished my seventh novel, "Ugly Love". It will release Aug. 5. Counting the novella I released, this makes the eighth book I've written in a matter of two and a half years, so right now I plan on taking a break. I have a lot of sleep to catch up on.

Watch a trailer for "Maybe Someday" at:

<http://youtu.be/VfOYj6iUDyc>

For more on Colleen Hoover, visit www.colleenhoover.com