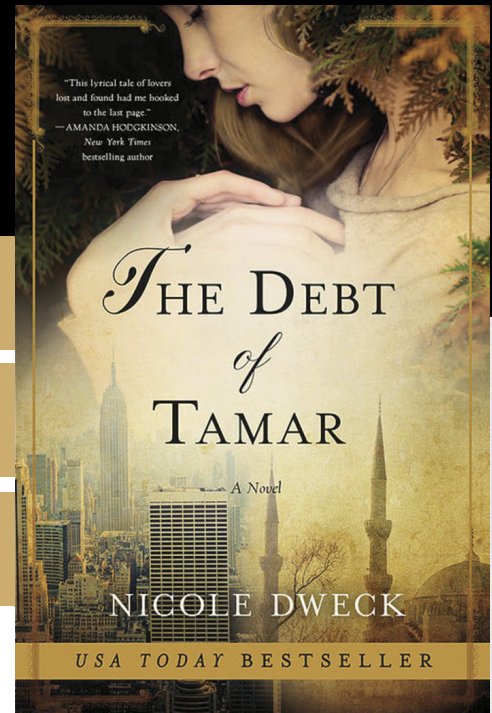


Self-Published Writer Nicole Dweck Is Now a Best Selling Author



Nicole Dweck

I didn't know what to expect when I hit the "self-publish" button three years ago, launching my literary baby out into the world and out of my control. It was an odd feeling, saying goodbye to one baby just as my husband and I were readying ourselves to welcome in another. In just a few short weeks, my son would be born. And yet, I had this other "baby" that I had lived with and nurtured over the past few years—*The Debt of Tamar*—an historical novel, a love story and action-packed adventure chronicling the formation of the Sephardic community throughout Middle Eastern lands.



Nicole standing outside Barnes & Noble on the Upper West Side, right before her sold-out book signing event

I was nine months pregnant and in full nesting mode. The apartment had been cleaned and every closet organized more thoroughly than any Pesach prep I could remember in my lifetime. Baby clothes were all pre-washed in organic, infant-friendly detergents and folded neatly on escalating shelves labeled newborn, 3-6 months, 9-12 months, and beyond.

My son would emerge from the chaos of birth to the tidy peace and serenity that was our upper east side apartment. It seems silly looking back on it now, but at the time, tidying up and readying my home for my newborn was an instinct I could not shake!

I couldn't wait to become a mother. I had been waiting for this all my life, and now my due date was just around the corner. I was as ready as I would ever be. And yet, I knew I still had some unfinished business to attend to.

A little book I had written over the past several years, a story that had lived inside me and was itching to be told, was now complete.

I think it's fair to say that I never set out to write a book. I simply began doing what I loved to do in my free time, and that was to write, to tell stories, but in the end I had a book. I was never particularly goal-oriented with the process. On the contrary, it was the journey of

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writing—that journey towards self actualization and personal discovery—that interested me most. But now that it was complete, I wasn't sure what to do next. Should I shove it under my mattress for my grandchildren to find, or send it out into the world and risk being ridiculed far and wide? Would even a single person want to read my book, let alone enjoy reading it? Who did I think I was? In the days before I made the decision to self-publish my novel, I felt elated and scared, anxious and eager, all at once. I knew that like everything else in my life at that time, there could be no loose ends. It was now or never. With the encouragement and support of my family, I went ahead and self-published my novel through Amazon publishing services. Then, I *waited*. Our son, Jacob, was born and I spent many beautiful weeks at home cradling and cooing to him.

All the while, news of my novel began spreading throughout the community, and in true SY fashion, it was welcomed with all the hospitality for which our people have always been known. I took several months off to care for our baby—the best months of my life—and all throughout, I was receiving congratulatory emails from strangers, friends and acquaintances who



Nicole's very happy family

had all ordered the book on Amazon, read and enjoyed it. Starting with Kelly Massry, five star reviews began rolling in; I won a Writer's Digest Fiction Award, and I began receiving dozens of invitations to speak at book clubs in Brooklyn, Deal, Manhattan, even Aventura. I was truly astounded by the reception I received. With a bit of online marketing and the support of the community, or what I consider to be my extended family—my book went on to sell over 10,000 copies before becoming an iTunes, B&N.com, Amazon.com, and *USA Today* Bestselling title.

It was not long before editors at traditional publishing houses began contacting me about the possibility of acquiring the rights to my historical novel, *The Debt of Tamar*. Ultimately, I signed a contract with Macmillan Publishing. After nearly a year of editing and revising, *The Debt of Tamar* has now been re-launched and is available at independent bookstores, Amazon.com, and Barnes & Noble locations nationwide.

Nearly three years since the start of my journey, I can now say I am a traditionally published, bestselling author!

I know I couldn't have done it without the support of my husband and family, but also the encouragement of the community. While we have always been known as a merchant people, no one should underestimate the beauty of our community when it comes to supporting community members, particularly young adults in the arts, literature, and music. I have been welcomed in more ways than I could have ever imagined.

Now, as I shuffle through my apartment once again, tidying up and readying myself to welcome a second child into the world, I remind myself what a beautiful thing family is, not just the families we create on our own, but the greater family we have created together, through the generations and through the years. I know that whatever our children decide to do, whether they become businessmen, doctors, artists or social workers, they will be bolstered by the loving embrace I have experienced in my own life.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.☐



Nicole with her family