



Redefining Diva: Life Lessons from the Original Dreamgirl

Sheryl Lee Ralph

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Secrets about love, life, and Hollywood from the Tony Award-winning actress from the Broadway production of *Dreamgirls* in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the original Broadway show.

You may think that Sheryl Lee Ralph earned a legion of devoted fans and the title of Ultimate Diva by being a star of Broadway, film, and television, but Sheryl Lee believes a Diva is something far more special.

- A **Diva** loves the woman she sees in the mirror.
- A **Diva** owns her talent and her strength.
- A **Diva** knows the first step on the road to fame is respecting herself.

SHERYL LEE RALPH'S superstar performance as the original Deena in Broadway's groundbreaking musical *Dreamgirls* didn't happen overnight. First came a grueling Hollywood apprenticeship, where roles for young black women at the time were often offensive and demeaning. Sheryl Lee, however, held stubbornly to the values of her mother and grandmother: she wouldn't take any part she couldn't be proud of. Even after joining *Dreamgirls*—where she helped create a role that grew from her own life story—she would invest years of sweat and tears before the play finally opened to instant acclaim.

In these highly personal reflections, Sheryl Lee Ralph reveals her take on her supposed feuds with Diana Ross and Jennifer Holliday, on auditioning for Sidney Poitier, on why she exited so controversially from the TV series *Moesha*, and how she signed away her rights to *Dreamgirls* for a dollar. She uses her life story to illustrate her vision: black, white, or any other color of the rainbow, a true Diva is a person of strength, character, and a beauty that radiates from within. Not just a memoir, *Redefining Diva* will inspire every woman (and man) who reads it to examine the potential in their own life.

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