

From Broken to Brave: LaTonya Kolawole-Cruse Transforms Pain into Purpose in Her New Memoir

After surviving years of abuse and loss, Rockford author LaTonya Kolawole-Cruse shares her powerful story of resilience and rebirth in *The Woman I Fought to Become*.



Rockford, Illinois Nov 13, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - From Silence to Strength: LaTonya Kolawole-Cruse Finds Healing Through Writing and Purpose Through Her New Book

There were nights I sat in silence, afraid to breathe too loud. Nights where the only sound in the room was my heartbeat—fast, shaky, and full of questions I didn't have the courage to say out loud.

I learned how to smile through pain. How to cook dinner with tears streaming down my face. How to make sure my children never saw the full weight of the storm I was carrying.

For years, I lived in an abusive relationship that stripped away everything I thought I was — my voice, my confidence, my safety, and my joy. I stayed because I thought love meant endurance. Because I believed that if I just tried harder, it would get better. But love isn't supposed to hurt.

"Surviving isn't the same as living," LaTonya says softly. "One day, I realized I wasn't living at all. I was just trying to exist."

Finding My Voice Through the Pain

When I finally got out, I didn't recognize myself. I was a mother, a woman, a survivor—but I didn't know who I was beyond that pain.

There were no cheers when I escaped. No clean break. Just silence. And in that silence, I started writing.

Every tear, every memory, every piece of the girl I used to be—I wrote it all down. Writing became my oxygen. My lifeline. My way back to myself.

Those pages became my truth. And those truths became my book—*The Woman I Fought to Become: Beaten, Bruised, but Never Broken*.

"I didn't write to impress anyone," she says. "I wrote because I needed to survive."

The book isn't just a story — it's a pulse. It's the sound of a woman coming back to life after being silenced for too long.

The Birth of 'LaTonya Rises Strong'

After finishing the book, I felt something inside me shift. I realized my story wasn't just meant to stay on paper—it was meant to reach people. To find the woman sitting in silence, the one questioning her worth, the one who still believes love means pain.

That's when I created *LaTonya Rises Strong*, my blog—a space built on truth, healing, and hope. A place for anyone who's ever felt unseen, unheard, or unloved to know that they matter.

"If my story can reach just one person — one woman who needs a hand to lift her out of the dark—then every tear I cried will have meant something," LaTonya says softly. "I want her to know she's not alone. She can rise too."

Turning Pain into Purpose

As I kept writing, I began to realize something—every story, every scar, every lesson had prepared me for something bigger.

That realization gave birth to HeartBridge Healthcare Services LLC — a vision still in its preparation phase, but one rooted in compassion and second chances.

HeartBridge is more than a business. It's the next chapter of my healing—a way to help others rebuild their lives just as I rebuilt mine. It's for the mothers trying to start over, the survivors learning to believe again, and the people society has forgotten.

“HeartBridge is where pain meets purpose,” LaTonya says. “It's how I'm turning everything I went through into something that gives others hope.”

The Woman I Fought to Become

Today, I'm still rising — one heartbeat, one word, and one dream at a time. Some days, the weight still finds me. But now I carry it differently.

Because now, I know that even the most broken stories can become blueprints for someone else's survival.

“My story isn't over,” she says. “It's still being written — one tear, one prayer, one heartbeat at a time.”

About the Author

LaTonya Kolawole-Cruse is a Rockford, Illinois-based author, blogger, and founder in preparation of HeartBridge Healthcare Services LLC. Through her writing, she transforms pain into purpose—using her words to heal, connect, and inspire. Her blog, LaTonya Rises Strong, is a reflection of hope, resilience, and rebirth.

About the Book

The Woman I Fought to Become: Beaten, Bruised but Never Broken is a powerful memoir by LaTonya Kolawole-Cruse, capturing her journey through abuse, loss, and the courageous act of rebuilding her life. Available now on Amazon: <https://a.co/d/ecTipDU>

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