

# **Kori D. Miller**

Author \* Essayist \* Storyteller

## **Where were you born?**

I was born in Omaha, NE. In 1997, I relocated to Miami, FL for two years, and then to Denver, CO for another two years. My former career demanded almost 100% travel. I've traveled across the US, and to date, there are roughly 11 states I haven't set foot in, if memory serves correctly. I've also traveled internationally. My motto: Have passport? Will travel!

## **When did you start writing?**

As a 6-year-old, I remember pretending to write. I'd scribble on a paper and act like I was writing beautiful cursive words. The first story I recall writing and illustrating was about a dog that chased cars. One day, the dog chased a semi. It didn't end well. After that story, I started writing plays for my friends and dabbled in poetry.

## **What was your early inspiration?**

My mother used to read Dr. Seuss' Sneetches to me. In fact, that book, and all the stories in it, are among my favorites. I don't write like Dr. Seuss, but his ideas helped formulate some of my personal views about people and what we're capable of accomplishing.

## **Did you study writing in college?**

English was one of my undergraduate minors. After completing my undergraduate Psychology requirements, I chose to add graduate-level coursework in Educational Psychology to my schedule, and not add more English classes. My original plan was to pursue a career in law. I knew I'd always write. Writing a book didn't become a goal until later.

## **What other books have you written?**

I've written a few books. I just haven't published them. I'm gearing up to release my second book, *Deadly Sins: A Dezeray Jackson Mini-Series*, in February 2014. It's launching as an e-book first.

## **How has your life affected your writing voice?**

My writing voice has matured. I see this more now as I revisit Dezeray Jackson. The first novel I wrote featured Dezeray. I completed the draft in 2005. I set it aside. Once in a while, I'd look at

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the draft, but things about it frustrated me. This year, two authors gave me another perspective. (Neither know each other. The only two things they shared in common were being a guest on Back Porch Writer and being women.) One of the authors decided to write and release a book of short stories involving her character. The other author talked about how she got inside the head of her MG protagonist. Without realizing it, these two women sparked a series of ideas in my mind, and I hit the ground running. I started writing short mysteries starring adult Dez, and another set with her as a middle grade student. Doing this has given me more insights into my character -- who she is, and why she is the way she is.

### **What's your writing style?**

I like tight dialogue and short narratives. I want the story to move at a quick clip and not a leisurely pace. That's what I enjoy reading in my down time. In college, I challenged myself to write an entire story in dialogue for a creative writing course. At some point, I might try my hand at writing a screenplay.

### **What made you decide to self-publish?**

I like a challenge. In 2011, I had no clue how to do it, but I wanted to learn. I selected several essays I'd written (and published, in some cases) to include in *My Life in Black and White: A Book of Experiences*. The biggest obstacle was figuring out how to format everything.

### **When you self-publish, do you do it all yourself?**

No! I hire graphic artists to create the covers. If I could show you an example of the dog and the semi, you'd understand why. My drawing hasn't improved much. I have volunteers read my drafts and give feedback. Some of these people are fellow writers (They're pretty good editors, too). And, I ask Paladin St. Clair to do intermediate and last edits. There are other aspects I'd be happy to hire out, but haven't -- yet.

### **Why don't you publish traditionally?**

I like self-publishing because of the amount of control I have over my projects, but I'm also interested in finding an agent/traditional publisher. I'm querying two children's books: *Splash!* and *Dante*. I've received some great rejection letters. What does that mean? It means that they weren't form letters. That's been encouraging. I haven't found the right agent, but I'm not giving up. I plan to pursue traditional publishing for my MG novels: *The Coyote Wars* and *Archer Jaxson and The Compass Wars*. Both of these are in various stages of readiness, so I'm not querying them now. To me, it's not an either/or scenario. It's all about the project.