

Author Spotlight: Dessa Blackthorn

Mountain Home author draws on her own dreams to weave a web of romance and intrigue in her series

BY NIKI DE SOTO

Author Dessa Blackthorn is a very busy lady – when she isn't coming up with the next book in her Deadly Dreams series, about talented photographer Christine Marlow, she's putting in long hours at her award-winning Mountain Home tattoo shop, Tattooz by Sassy, located in the Harp's shopping center. So, how exactly does one go from artful tattoos to crafting novels?

"I've been an artist my whole life, one way or another," said Blackthorn. "I started tattooing before I ever wrote the first draft of *Burning Desires*. I've always liked creative writing, and writing in my dream journals. The tattooing, well, I was actually talked into that by another tattoo artist. I was air brushing motorcycles in Hawaii, and there was a tattoo artist who saw my work and mentored me. But, I've always loved to write. It's been a passion most of my life. Stephen King has been my role model. His mind is just amazingly twisted, and I've always loved a lot of his stuff. I read a while ago that a lot of his material comes from dreams, and I have kept dream journals for years. And all the dreams that are in these books are my actual dreams, I just insert specific characters from the stories into them."

The books are a healthy mix of romance, mystery and the paranormal, that draw the reader in for a thrilling ride. Blackthorn's protagonist finds herself having strange visions and dreams while on vacation in the Ozarks, and the narrative follows her through a budding romance with a local rancher and the frightening path of a stalker who doesn't have the best of intentions in mind.

"There's a lot of me in Christine," said Blackthorn. "Back when I first wrote *Burning Desires*, back in 1991, I wrote it more as a romance novel. It filled a void in my life at the time, but I put the original manuscript away. Then, three years ago, I pulled it out and re-wrote it in a more paranormal style. It took me about three months to rewrite it."

Little by little, word is getting out about the Deadly Dreams series and people are buying them. "I have a small fan base sitting on the edge of their seats,

waiting for book three, *Deadly Dreams: Hide and Seek*, which

is coming out this month. In the third book, I killed a main character. Have your Kleenex handy, when you go to read the last chapter or two in that book. It ripped my heart out to do it, but it was the only thing to do, to be true to the story."

The Deadly Dreams series can be purchased at Amazon.com and you can find out more about Dessa and her tattoo shop at www.tattoozbysassy.com.

