

## **Sydney Ann Clary a.k.a. Lacey Dancer**

Why would a traditionally published author, published internationally with over thirty books in more than twenty languages and two lifetime achievement awards just to name a few accolades, choose to self-publish?

If your first answer is that she has lost her mind, my answer is NO!

You'll notice the capital letters. Film stars regularly finance and produce their movies and movies of other stars. Why can't authors choose to produce their books, leaving behind the traditional format for the freedom of writing what the author wants and when the author wants to write?

I haven't lost my mind. I've gained by creative freedom. Writing is more than a career for me. It always has been from the moment I ran out of books and decided, for my sanity's sake, to write a story while I waited for more books to arrive. A fluke involving another writer who had just started a writing club was my first brush with the machinery that is traditional publishing.

It was supposed to be hard to get an agent. That writer thought I had talent, although she didn't tell me that at the time, and she sent my story to her agent. I sold four books that year.

I discovered that interesting word genre. Darn it. I had to write a certain way. Because I had a 'male' name and only women wrote romances at that time, I had to have a pen name. Because I wrote faster than my home house would publish a single writer, my agent sent my extra stories to other houses. Each wanted a different pen name. Hence, I have multiple pen names.

Lacey Dancer was and is my favorite. It represents a moment in my life when I called a halt to the process of traditional publishing. I was worn out by the rules and requirements. I understood their business model and it does work for publishing in

general. It didn't work for me the writer. I wanted to create real people characters, dealing with real problems. Life is too interesting to be reduced to a fairy tale.

After a discussion with my agent, I decided to quit. I wasn't the first to make that decision. She had four of my books at the time, another Series that I knew none of houses for which I worked would even consider because one of the main characters was too old to fit the profile of what they believed sold.

Unknown to me, she sent those books to a new house, one which didn't have a profile or requirements. The house bought all four books. I loved working for Meteor and Kismet Publishing. The character that no one would have considered was very popular. Her name was Pippa and her author is Lacey Dancer.

When Meteor was sold to its biggest competitor, I decided for family reasons to retire from writing. I missed writing too much to stay retired. Computers, the internet, and social media arrived and opened doors to new ideas and ways to publish.

I love a challenge and I really like breaking new ground. Is it easy? Absolutely not. There are more questions than answers some days.

For me, this new world of publishing is tailor-made. I make my own rules, write my way, stories I like with characters that drive me nuts on a good day, and make me crazy on a busy day. I love what I do. I especially love the freedom of doing what I do my way.