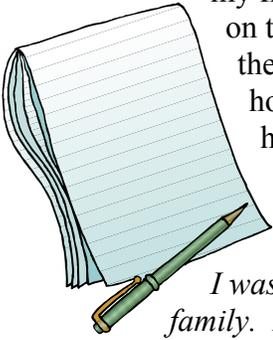


I grew up in a small, Southern town (we didn't have a McDonald's until I was about 10) and I did a lot of reading up in my treehouse during those years. Not that it was that much of a "treehouse" because it was just a big piece of wood up in a dogwood tree, but my friends and I had a great time sitting up there and spying on the neighbors. Then when I was in high school I moved to the big city --- Miami. Miami was very different than my hometown, but I learned to love it just as much and now, that's the city I call home.



- **What kind of student were you?**

I was always a very good student and education was extremely important in my family. In fact, if I brought home an A my father would sometimes ask me why not an A+!

- **What were your favorite things to do when you were young?**

When I was young I loved to read, swim, ride my bike (I would do this for hours with my friends) and roller skate.

- **What books were favorites as a child?**

*I loved to read Nancy Drew mysteries, Archie comic books and one of my favorite books (which they made me read in school) was *A Wrinkle in Time*.*

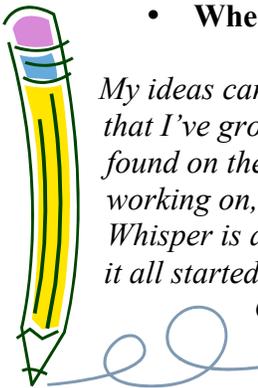


- **What advice do you have for aspiring young readers and writers?**

Read as much as you can and read all types of books. You never know what will become a new favorite and every book can teach you something.

- **Where do you get your ideas?**

*My ideas can come from anywhere. Sometimes, like with *The Red Umbrella*, it's a story that I've grown up hearing. Other times, it comes from something I heard about or found on the internet. It can even start with a painting, which is how the book I'm working on, *A Thunderous Whisper* (due out in 2011/2012), came to be. *A Thunderous Whisper* is about two kids caught in Hitler's bombing of the Basque city of Guernica and it all started because I wanted to know more about Pablo Picasso's painting called *Guernica*.*



- **Do you write everyday? If so, for how long?**

No, I try to write three to four days a week, but it gets hard between juggling my life as a full-time mom and part-time attorney.

- **Have you ever thrown a manuscript away?**

I don't throw away any manuscripts but they certainly get "put away". Sometimes a character or scene from a manuscript I've buried in my desk pops up in something new--- it's like getting a visit from an old friend.

- **Favorite or least favorite vegetable?**

Favorite veggie has to be potatoes (hello—French fries, potato chips, hash browns, mashed, baked, au gratin I can go on and on).