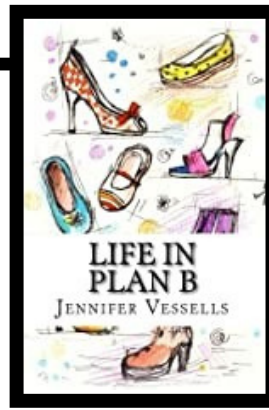


# ARTIST'S CORNER: JEN VESSELLS



*By: Heather G. Sowald*

Jennifer Vessells is a published author and soccer player, balancing the various aspects of her life. She indulges in these interests while also meeting the demands of being a wife, mother of three, and maintaining an active corporate business practice.

Jen began writing short stories when she was around 6 years old. She enjoys the process of creating and then writing out the story arcs with the satisfaction of having a complete tale at the end. She has kept all her writings through the years, including some Shel Silverstein-type poetry she wrote as a teenager.

Jen also began playing soccer in a Cincinnati recreational league at age 5. She excelled at the sport, playing soccer first for the University of Florida, and then at the University of Cincinnati. She played defense and forward on these women's college soccer teams, which led to her meeting her husband, Mike, a player on the men's soccer team. She originally planned to play professionally until the women's



professional league folded, leading her then to OSU Law School (J.D. 2009). She has continued to play soccer in local rec leagues, and she and her husband also coach their children's soccer teams.

Jen worked as an attorney for several years, beginning at Baker Hostetler LLP. After a few years, she chose to stay home to work on her first novel.

She had begun, while in college, to outline the plot of her first novel. During her sabbatical from practice, Jen put in at least five hours a day finishing the outline, writing, and subsequently editing her novel. She completed the book 15 months into her sabbatical and self-published it in 2014. She admits that during the actual writing process, the storyline did, at times, change directions from the original outline. She and a law colleague worked together to edit the final product, and she licensed the book's cover art from a website. The best part for her was the satisfaction of completing and producing the published novel. Her work, "Life in Plan B," centers around family and romantic relationships and is set in Columbus.

Once published, she immediately began working on outlining her second novel's story. Jen relates that this next book, "The Road to El Durango," has a heavier focus on female friendships and drama. However, life intervened, and while she has completed the story's outline, she has only just begun writing the novel. Shortly after publishing "Life in Plan B," Jen and

her husband welcomed their first child, Avery, and thereafter, returned to practice in the Opinion Section of the A.G.'s office. During her tenure at the A.G.'s office, her son, Austin, and her daughter, Harper, were born.

Jen returned to private practice in 2019 as a lawyer at Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter, handling commercial contract and mergers and acquisitions matters. With her return to private practice, her husband subsequently left the business world to become the family's homemaker.

The process of creating the characters and their stories, writing, and editing the text has taught Jen to be flexible with her expectations. Her imagination is firing every day thinking about the stories she wants to explore and tell, if only she had more time to spend on them as she balances the other demands in her life. Jen's future goals are to finish her second novel, write a sequel to her first book, and explore authoring children's books as well.



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