



Sever

J.M. Miller

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One simple decision can end a future.

One simple persuasion can sever a life.

The moment Annisyn Kane slips her rake pick into the lock of a stranger's door, the straight life she's led the last few years is scratched out. In the past, the goal was never theft. It was to escape. From life. From death. To quiet the dreams that replayed an affliction she longed to forget. This night, though, was different. She was out of options.

The isolated house was supposed to be an easy target. In and out. No problems. But the simple job takes a twisted turn when Annisyn comes face to face with the only real love she ever had.

Five years ago, she could have persuaded Damian Mead to stay. She wasn't willing to be the end of his future, so she let him go. Before the emotions from their tangled past have a chance to spin between them, Annisyn discovers that their startling encounter is the least of the night's problems. There's someone else in the house, and the only thing on his mind is revenge.

recommended ages 17+ for mature content

Sever Details

Date : Published (first published January 17th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : J.M. Miller

Format : ebook

Genre : New Adult, Romance, Contemporary Romance, Suspense, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Sever for online ebook

The BookWhisperer says

After reading so many series it seems kind of surreal to have a story play it's course over one book. The thought of one story creating such a good story, and then concluding it so nice and tidy in the end was pleasant. Annisyn and Damian come from opposite sides of the tracks, but they are more similar than one would realize. Both of them have had a struggle in their separate lives; the turmoil so dark and controlling that they are living their lives for everyone else around them. I love how this story walks us right into the present, but then flashes back to tell us their history as we go. Creating this story in such a way that as we find more and more information not only do we fall in love simultaneously, but we also begin putting the pieces together revealing the writing on that wall that these characters are blinded too. Another emotional roller coaster that will produce sympathy in abundance. Sever offers a young love, but it is truly one that is the genuine article. I love stories like this that show even the best intentions are futile when it comes to matters of the heart. Damian and Annisyn's story is the prime example, and a wonderfully enjoyable journey through hard lives, and even harder decisions. ~BookWhisperer Reviewer Jax~

Jeraca says

I received this free eARC from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review.

I didn't really know what I was getting myself into when I requested this book. The cover was intriguing and the synopsis had enough pull to snare me in, but the overall story was pretty amazing.

This book is told in alternating chapters of Present and Past. Present happens in one night of events that spiral out of control. Past starts when Syn is 6 years old until she's 18 years old, and how that one decision when she was 6 changes her whole life and is the reason she makes all the decisions that she does.

I loved the initial meeting of Syn and Stripes. And then when she sees Stripes again her senior year? Priceless. These two characters have been through rough patches - not just through their personal life but also in the story about them together. Broken hearts, hard decisions. From playing football to picking a college, these two have been through it all.

I'm very glad I requested this book. I didn't realize what I was getting into, but I loved every page of the novel and flew through the story. I think a lot of readers will really enjoy it, even if the cover doesn't portray all that the story entails.

Rose says

Initial reaction: I liked this book far more than I thought I was going to, but it had a few issues that kept it from being more. Loved the attention to characterization and action/development of the story.

Full review:

Color me pleasantly surprised with reading J.M. Miller's "Sever". This is one of the few NA books I've read this year that I've picked up and compulsively read all the way until the end because the characterization stood out to me and the plot and writing flowed very well, for the most part. The story revolves around Syn (Annisyn), a young woman tasked with a job that involves her breaking into a house for one final job with a lot on the line. But she ends up breaking into the house of Damian - childhood friend and former lover - in a set of harrowing set of circumstances and coincidences.

I'll admit that this book grabbed me in the beginning with Syn's circumstances and strongly asserted voice. The book trades between the present and the past with smooth transitions that never feel too out of place or context with the rolling action of the book and development of the characters. I'll admit what kept me reading was watching how Damian and Syn ended up in the predicament they did, and much of it had to do with Damian's very problematic older brother. I really liked Damian and found it interesting that he starts off as an overweight kid who ends up being protected by Syn (a girl who plays football and can hold her own in a fight). Though Syn has a bit of tragic circumstances in her past (mother's boyfriend was abusive, mom was accused of murder but cleared of charges because of self-defense), at least the book makes her circumstances palpable and realistic - she never feels too over the top with her emotions or reactions in the scheme of what happens through this book. Same thing with Damian, though I felt like there were certain things about his background that weren't entirely explored (and part of that might've been because he wasn't the focal character of the book - but I understood enough to know him and identify with his character).

My problem with the book came from the purported villain in this book - Damian's older brother Seth. At best he was a cartoonish villain with some palpable motivations, but largely still unexplored and quickly thrown in for the sake of the conflict. At worst - he reinforces many problematic stereotypes and storylines I've personally found in New Adult fiction (i.e. the rapish/sexually assaulting bully villain that the hero has to fight in order to save the heroine). While the events of the ending did surprise me, I still felt like there was something rushed in the events concluding "Sever" compared to the strong establishment and beginning of the book. It broke some stereotypes in places, but managed to regress to other stereotypes as the book went on and ultimately concluded.

Miller has a strong command of showing rolling dialogue and attention to body language and emotion in the narrative, which was part of the reason I enjoyed this novel as much as I did. No doubt I'd love to read more from her in the future, even if there were points that I didn't like in this book as much I'd have hoped.

Overall score: 3.5/5 stars

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley, from the publisher.

✿kawehi.reviews says

? I received an ARC via Enticing Journey Book PR in exchange for an honest review. Thank you! ?

Sever balances an even mix of past and present flashbacks and events.

Ever heard of the saying, "One night can change everything?"

Yep, well, that's what happens for Annisyn "Syn" Kane when she finds herself broke and sh*# out of luck, and gets set up with a job to break into a house which leads her straight back into her heart.

You see...that "house" that Syn gets orchestrated to infiltrate happens to be that of her first and only love, Damien "Stripes" Mead.

"If my life had been different at six years old, if I hadn't picked up that knife, I would have never saved Damien on the tracks. It was the decision that everything was based on, the first time my life had really been severed."

Author J.M. Miller does a great job building a repertoire as we journey into Syn's life and delve into her background and beginnings, along with how she met, fell in love with, and ultimately severed ties with her Stripes.

Syn isn't like most girls, as she carries a switchblade every where she goes, can hold her ground in a fight, and has a haunted past filled with guilt, remorse, and death.

Childhood friendship and growing pains

Her relationship with Damien develops when they are children and Damien is a fat, chubby kid getting picked on and Syn is the one to save the day. They grow a friendship following that but sadly it is not long lived as Syn moves away shortly after.

Distance makes the heart grow fonder

Years later, they meet up again but Damien is no longer that overweight boy he once was and Syn begins to see him in a different light.

They pick up their budding relationship after that and soon it blooms into romance with Syn relying on Damien for support and guidance.

Bleeding heart

But, as luck would have it, tragedy, biases, misunderstandings, the future unknown, and insecurities pave their way into the build and soon Syn and Damien break up, terminating all contact between them.

Now flashback to present

Syn is coming to terms with being reunited with the boy who's heart she had broken five years ago, but soon a devious force is also inside on their reunion and isn't looking for a happy ending for these two love birds. They seek revenge and won't stop at nothing until the debt is paid....in blood..

So, my thoughts? I actually really liked this story. It was different from what I'm accustomed to.

I really could feel Syn's brokenness and her not feeling good enough and wanting more than what she could give to Damien.

She feels as if she will taint him and ultimately break him, with a clouded history such as hers, but genuinely what she fears is how he will break her...and devastate her...

"I never wanted to get close to anyone, but it happened with you. You made my nightmares disappear. Losing you because my biggest fear, and I thought I needed to face it like the rest, to save you from my

life, to save you from ruining your own.”

And yet she craves a sense of stability, to feel whole, and to be saved from the downward nothingness.

“He made me consider my own future when I was haunted by the past. He gave me hope when all I had was emptiness. He loved the person I was, the person I was meant to be. He was the one who had made me whole again. He had saved me too.”

Loved this gem of a story!♥

Alexandra says

I honestly didn't know what to expect from this book. I loved the cover, and the synopsis made me think this might be one of those dark and twisted reads I enjoy so much. Sever is not really that, but it's a good book nonetheless. It's a great story of how any action, no matter how insignificant, has a reaction that affects one or more people in the most unimaginable ways.

Annisyn aka 'Syn' and Damian aka 'Stripes' are the protagonists of this mysterious and suspenseful story. They met when they were two bratty middle school kids, had a bit of a short, secret friendship that ended when Syn moved away. Then, years later they meet again, only this time they are seniors in high school and their friendship becomes more than that. Their tumultuous love story ends abruptly when Syn again moves away. Their last meeting is totally unexpected and disturbing, and we are left wondering all throughout the book if third time's a charm . . .

What made me enjoy this book and finish it in one sitting was the way it was constructed. The weaving of present and past, the way each chapter left you wanting to know what happens next is so well done that it's impossible not to get captured in the story. I enjoyed reading about Syn, a jaded young girl, who isn't the perfect heroine we're all used to - she has an obscure past, one that she can't seem to shake and that affects her present actions and relationships. Stripes, is not your usual hero either - he's the former chubby kid who everyone picked on, who because of one little feisty girl realized he can be so much more.

I thought that the author did a good job at keeping the suspense level high from start to finish. It was predictable at parts, but I was also mislead to believe something that wasn't the truth, so kudos to that.

The protagonists had a lot of chemistry and that's always important for me, especially in this type of reads. Their attraction was vividly painted through one look or touch, I didn't feel it was pushed or fabricated.

All in all, Sever was a good book to start the year of, it has all the elements I love in a book - mystery, suspense and a bit of romance, and most importantly a heroine with a backbone. I cannot wait to read more books by this author.

***ARC received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

NiCoLeTa E. says

****ARC kindly provided via NetGalley for the exchange of an honest review****

Brit says

Advance Readers Copy (ARC) provided for my blog for an honest review from the author via blog tour

Title: Sever

Author: J.M Miller

Genre: Suspense

Age Group: New Adult

Date Read: Jan 18-20th 2015

Release Date: Jan 26th, 2015

Overall Rating: ★★★★★

So different, so unique I just loved it. Also loved the characters Annisyn Kane and Damian Mead, I wasn't expected to like this as much as I did but picking up a new book written by an author that you never read before is just unbelievable. J. M Miller is truly amazing on how she wrote this book, how she blends past/present together is just remarkable.

The way she captives you by her writing is just breathtaking, J.M Miller is an amazing author that has became one of my favorites. And can I say I'm totally in love with this cover, it just blows every cover to shame.

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

Liked this so much more than I was expecting, especially since I picked this up on a whim. So darn good and so easy to get lost into.

Love how it bounced back and forth from the past to the present and slowly unfolded, not only their relationship but the mystery of the past and the mystery of the present.

I definitely want to see if this author has anything else out there I might like.

Beebs says

This is a short intense read, the story is quite dark but it is lightened by the time Syn and Damien (Stripes) spend together. The book alternates between past and present showing how the relationship between them develops and how they got to this point.

Due to a very traumatic event in her childhood Syn is very wary of people and never truly lets anyone into her life. Every time she starts to make friends something happens causing her to sever all ties and leave them behind. Damien is one of those people, they meet as 12 year olds when Syn saves him from some bullies but Syn moves away shortly after and they don't see each other for several years. When they meet again they are 18 and fall hard for each other. Syn makes the decision to leave Damien because she feels that she will hold him back, Damien is devastated and wants to stay together but she makes it impossible.

They are 23 now and still very much in love, they have met up again in some very strange circumstances but that is the least of their worries. Someone is out to hurt them both and is willing to go to extreme measures to do it.

This is not something I would usually read but the blurb caught me and I decided to give it a go. I'm glad I did, I really enjoyed it. Only one little niggle, I would have liked a little more of Tanner's POV, I wanted to know what it was that prompted him to keep turning up in Syn's life.

***Received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review**

Caitlin Janke says

I received a copy through netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Sever is everything in the description and more. I love the way the story tells a before and now through out the book. It's a suspenseful love/hate story that makes you wonder how it's going to end, all the way to the end.

I loved the characters that J.M. Miller created. They all brought the plot together perfectly and had a realistic feel to them. You can feel how the secrets the main character keeps affects her. I loved everything about this book and how it feels totally resolved when you finish it.

Shealea says

I received a free digital copy of this book (via NetGalley) in exchange for an honest review. Thank you, J.M. Miller!

If I were to describe this novel in one word, I think the best-suited answer would be intricate. It fascinates me how detail-oriented Miller was in writing this story. Everything – every element, every character, every detail mentioned – had a purpose. The plot was an intricate web of events, where each thread spun had a significant bearing to the story. The characters were developed intricately, allowing them to appear complex and three-dimensional. It was really brilliant. (Okay, I'm pretty sure I used that word plenty of times in describing this book.) Really, the story was so – excuse my white girl – on point and well thought of. ~~Or maybe it's just my inexperience talking.~~ Whatever. When all the dots were finally connected by the end of the book, I was seriously blown away and left speechless.

Furthermore, Miller's writing style kept me engaged and craving for more all throughout the story. The story was told in both past (where Syn and Damian's relationship blossomed into love) and present (where Syn and Damian were at each other's throats) times. Specifically, a chapter of the current circumstances (where,

~~that alliteration though~~) is followed by a chapter from Damian and Syn's past and the pattern continues. In my opinion, that is a difficult feat to accomplish without creating a choppy, inconsistent flow. But Miller definitely nailed it. I found myself falling in love and bracing myself for the worst simultaneously. Certainly, while the dark undertone of the story chilled me to the bone, the love story of Syn and Damian had a firm, unyielding grip on my heart.

In summary, if you're looking for a book that will keep you at the edge of your sit (or in my case, the bed), I'd recommend Sever.

Actual rating: **3.5 stars**

* Read the full review on my blog!

Annika says

After all, a life could end without physical death. One simple decision can end a future. One simple persuasion can sever a life.

When Annisyn and Damien meet for the first time, they're only 12. Syn is a tomboy. Angry. An outsider, not good with rules or people. Damien is a fat kid, shy and insecure. Their friendship is short-lived and secret, but they don't know the impact they have on each other's lives.

When Annisyn and Damien meet for the second time, they're 18. Syn is resigned, damaged. Damien is a good kid. Their love is sweet and overwhelming, but it isn't enough.

When Annisyn and Damien meet for the third time, they're 23. And they're both waking from unconsciousness, heads aching and tied to the banister inside Damien's house. And they're not alone.

Intriguing, you think? Hell yeah, it was. This novel was so original.

Original set-up: We're thrown right into the story with Syn breaking into a house. She doesn't want to steal from the owner, but she's desperate. Had she known *who* that owner was, she wouldn't have come. Seeing the love of her life enter through the door, completely oblivious to her presence, Syn faces a longing she hasn't felt in years. And then suddenly, everything goes wrong.

Original heroine: Damaged characters aren't exactly a rare occurrence in the NA genre, but I've rarely read about one with a past like Syn's. She's still angry, detached. Lonely. She's a bad-ass, an ex-con, always carrying a knife, trained in self-defense, a pro with her pick set. And she's a freaking DJane.

Original narrative style: The author basically interwove two main story lines with each other by alternating between the present time and the past in every other chapter. As we witness Syn and Damien's struggle against the psycho culprit, more and more of their beautiful love story is being revealed.

Unfortunately, I didn't like it. This swapping between crime story and love story didn't work for me at all. I found it frustrating and extremely disrupting, to be honest. Every time I got into one of the two plots and something exciting happened, I got tossed back into the other one and struggled to get back into the right mindset for a different kind of story. I suppose the author intended to keep the suspense at a high level

throughout the book, and I have to admit it definitely worked, as I could hardly put it down, but it was annoying as hell. It also confused me from time to time when I would mix up events from past and present. I wish J.M. Miller had told Syn and Damien's story in chronological order. The time jumps took a lot from my enjoyment of this novel.

The two story lines by themselves were great, though.

The romance part was sweet. It made me really emotional, for some reason. I loved Damien right from the beginning, just as Syn, and they were fantastic together. The love story was genuine and believable.

The suspense part was gripping and it kept me guessing and hoping as the connected pasts between the characters became unraveled.

"How do you do this to me?" he asked suddenly.

"Do what?"

"Make me open my eyes and leap blindly at the same time."

Due to the book's short length, there was neither a lot of room for great character development, nor for particularly well-elaborated minor characters. I really would have liked a little more background story on Tanner. He held so much potential to become a fascinating and memorable side character, but he remained far too shallow. Pity.

All in all, I really did enjoy *Sever*. It was a quick and well-paced read with some twists and turns that kept me enthralled throughout the entire book. Fantastic writing.

Had it not been for the time jumps, I would have rated it at least 4 stars. But as I am someone who dislikes even short flashbacks in stories, I was particularly sensitive to all of that.

Other people might enjoy that way of narrating.

ARC provided by the author via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

ByoBook Club says

Many authors have a hard time going between the past and the present and making the story line work and make sense, well that was not the case here. The transition between Annisyn's past and present flowed easily and made sense.

We meet Annisyn while she is breaking into a stranger's house. She didn't want to be there, she didn't want to be walking through a house that held some significance to her former life, but alas that is where she is. No one was supposed to be home, she was supposed to get in and out. But that is not how things happened. All her life she felt she was not worthy of a future but now she is forced to face her past in order to make it out of the house.

Annisyn met Damian when they were kids. He was the chubby kid who got picked and she was the firecracker who stood up for him. She changed Damian's life when they were little and when they get older and she comes back to town they fall in love. He would have done anything for her, but she didn't want him to give anything up for her so she left. Now five years later, they must face old wounds and someone hell bent on revenge.

I enjoyed this book and because the present was fast paced, the pieces of the past were a nice interlude. You see how both Damian and Annisyn get to their present places through the retelling of their past. This was a story of love and heartbreak, of past fears and present dangers and threats that neither one saw coming. The story was moving and Damian was the perfect leading man. Annisyn was a tough cookie, she was a fighter but insecure in herself.

Over all it was a really well written story, it kept me thoroughly engaged. It ended in a way I didn't see coming but the unexpected is what I love the most.

~Jess

Hionia says

It was our love. It was strong and tender, brave and fearful, joyous and tortured. It was perfect.

A twelve-year-old girl named Annisyn "Syn" Kane was not like all the other girls in town. She was physically strong. She was mentally muscular. She was brave. She was daring to take risks. She didn't worry about clothes. She only had guy-friends. She played football. She was a *tomboy*.

A twelve-year-old boy named Damian Mead was not like all the other boys in town. He was chubby. He was insecure. He was lonely. He sought for some love and attention from his parents. He was made fun of. He was laughed at. He was called mean names.

One morning, Syn saved Damian from two bullies attacking him. That was enough for them to cross their paths and spend more time together.

Unfortunately, their friendship did not last long because Syn had to move to another town with her mother.

However, fate wanted them together because they met again at the age of eighteen, both grown-up, both different. But this time, they were far from friends.

Breaking up with Damian at the age of eighteen was a difficult decision to make for Syn but she certainly did have a reason to do that.

That was the basis of my reason. It wasn't just about my past, it was about his future. If I went with him, I would be his distraction. He would make decisions around me, around us. He would push possibilities aside, so I had to push him away.

After five depressing years, Syn comes face to face with the only real love she ever had. Their startling encounter, though, is not coincidental by any means. They both are targets of a person thirsting for revenge.

An interesting and original read narrated with flashback stories from the past and glimpses from the present. This love story has two chronological dimensions that change with each chapter keeping the reader on the edge of seat wondering what will happen next.

With the plot being authentic and genuine, reading this book was a special experience. The author managed to offer a great depth to the story in a small number of pages. The reader gets attached and connected to the book and its characters in no time at all.

Speaking of characters, I absolutely loved the two main ones in this story. They both share a love for music and DJ-ing is their favorite thing to do. As a couple, they were born for each other. I loved them together a lot! So, on the one hand, we have Damian. A sweet, smart, charming, caring and lovable Damian. ~~I honestly fell for him!~~ On the other hand, we have Syn, a female heroine that was written more than just properly. As a lot of you may know, female characters can become very annoying and whiny at times but Syn was different. I understood her motives and her choices. She was not like any heroine I've ever encountered before. She was very unique.

He made me consider my own future when I was haunted by the past. He gave me hope when all I had was emptiness. He loved the person I was, the person I was meant to be. He was the one who made me whole again. He had saved me too.

I enjoyed the writing even though, sometimes, I had to reread certain parts to understand what's happening. However, I cannot blame the author since during the time period I was reading this book I was really tired and I was not able to concentrate at all.

Long story short, I absolutely recommend you read this book. It was funny, it was interesting, it was fast-paced, it was absolutely fabulous!!!

➡ *An E-arc of this book was provided to me by the publishers via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!*

Monique says

I received a copy of this book through NetGalley

3.5 Stars

*One simple decision can end a future.
One simple persuasion can sever a life.*

This book is great if you are looking for a quick read with little hidden treasures.

Miller has worked the intricate dual timelines into the story really well and these perspectives helped give the characters a lot more depth than they may have had otherwise. I quite liked the two main characters a lot as they weren't picture perfect and while their issues don't emulate my life, they certainly are reflective of real people. I will say though that it did feel a little insta-lovey at one point given they haven't seen each other in a long time. The revenge plot line is intense at times and pushes the story along brilliantly and it's nice to have a proper resolution to the story in the end.
