

Patricia C. McKissack



Photo Courtesy of the Author

“**T**o me, reading is like breathing; both are essential to life.”

—Patricia C. McKissack

Patricia C. McKissack is the author of *The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural*, a Newbery Honor Book and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award. She frequently collaborates on books with her husband, Fredrick. They have three sons and four grandchildren, and live in St. Louis, Missouri.

A Note from the Author

“**L**ong before I became a writer, I was a listener and an observer. My relatives, who were dynamic and skilled storytellers, helped develop my listening and observation skills before I could read or write.

On hot summer evenings our family would sit on the porch and listen to my grandmother tell a hair-raising ghost story, or my mother would recite Dunbar poems or Bible stories. Sometimes we’d get a real treat when my grandfather would dramatize an episode from his childhood, told in the rich and colorful dialect of the Deep South. I can still hear him beginning a yarn, saying: ‘It was back in nineteen and twenty-seven. I disremember the exact day, but it was long ‘bout July, ‘cause the skeeters was bitin’ whole chunks outta my arms. . . .’

As a youngster I had no idea that my heritage would one day be the springboard for my writing career.

I grew up, went off to school, majored in English literature, acquired a teaching certificate, and married right after graduation.

(They said the marriage wouldn’t last six months. . . .) I knew then I wanted to be a writer. But the children came—one, and two and three together. Not much time for writing.

My sons grew out of diapers and into size eight shoes; I grew out of size eight jeans and into size twelve business suits. Then, after nine years of teaching junior high and senior high English and after earning a master’s degree in children’s literature, I changed careers and became a children’s book editor. Six years later I became a freelance writer. A year later my husband Fred joined me, and we’ve been writing together since then. On days when I get a rejection slip—oh yes, I still get them—I close up shop and work with my flowers or go antique shopping. Then it’s back to more writing and ‘yesterday’ deadlines.

I write because there’s a clear need for books written about the minority experience in America—fiction and nonfiction. I also write for the love of it!”

Praise for:

PORCH LIES

★ “Spellbinding. . . . A sparkling array . . . brimming with beguiling tricksters.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, Starred

★ “Draw[s] on African American oral tradition . . . with sly humor, creepy horror . . . and wild farce . . . great for sharing, on the porch or in the classroom.”

—*Booklist*, Starred

THE DARK-THIRTY

★ “A stellar collection.”

—*School Library Journal*, Starred

MIRANDY AND BROTHER WIND

“A captivating story, with a winning heroine.”

—*School Library Journal*

Book List

THE DARK-THIRTY

Illustrated by Brian Pinkney

Ages 10 up • Alfred A. Knopf

HC: 978-0-679-81863-2

(0-679-81863-4)

GLB: 978-0-679-91863-9

(0-679-91863-9)

PB: 978-0-679-89006-5

(0-679-89006-8)

• A Newbery Honor Book

• A Coretta Scott King

Author Award Winner

• An ALA Notable

Children’s Book

• A CBC-NCSS Notable

Trade Book

in the Field of Social Studies

• An IRA Teachers’ Choice

• An Illinois Rebecca Caudill

Young Readers Award Winner

PORCH LIES

Illustrated by André Carrilho

Ages 8–12

Schwartz & Wade Books

HC: 978-0-375-83619-0

(0-375-83619-5)

GLB: 978-0-375-93619-7

(0-375-93619-X)

MIRANDY AND BROTHER WIND

Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Ages 5–8 • Alfred A. Knopf

HC: 978-0-394-88765-4

(0-394-88765-4)

PB: 978-0-679-88333-3

(0-679-88333-9)

• A Caldecott Honor Book

• A Coretta Scott King

Illustrator Award Winner

A MILLION FISH OR LESS

Illustrated by Dena Schutzer

Ages 4–8 • Dragonfly Books

PB: 978-0-679-88086-8

(0-679-88086-0)

TO ESTABLISH JUSTICE

Written with Arlene Zarembka

Ages 5–7 • Random House

Ages 14–16 • Alfred A. Knopf

HC: 978-0-679-89308-0

(0-679-89308-3)

GLB: 978-0-679-99308-7

(0-679-99308-8)

MIAMI MAKES THE PLAY

Written with Frederick McKissack

Illustrated by Michael Chesworth

Ages 5–8 • Random House

PB: 978-0-307-26505-0

(0-307-26505-6)

MIAMI SEES IT THROUGH

Written with Frederick McKissack

Illustrated by Michael Chesworth

Ages 5–8 • Random House

PB: 978-0-307-26513-5

(0-307-26513-7)

MIAMI GETS IT STRAIGHT

Written with Frederick McKissack

Illustrated by Michael Chesworth

Ages 5–8 • Random House

PB: 978-0-307-26501-2

(0-307-26501-3)

