

## FREE FALL



Austin, TX | 2020 © Alicia Kae Miller

In 2009, my immediate family and I spent three all-consuming days taking in the sights, sounds, and sins of Sin City. While all of this was rousing, the most epic part took place 14,000 feet in the air just outside of the Las Vegas city limits.

We had gathered in celebration of my birthday at the most central and entertaining location for guests arriving from California, Florida, and Washington. Consistently on the trail of a new adventure, I wanted to fly into my fifth decade, so we did. I say we since two family members joined on the mission to somersault out of a sardine can and into the atmosphere.

While the minute-long free fall was epic, once my guide pulled the ripcord, I remembered what I

forgot; I have debilitating motion sickness. Needless to say, while memorable, the rest of the dive was not my favorite part. Oh, but those first sixty seconds, they were sheer bliss.

## *Liberation.*

Although harnessed to a professional diver, I felt more freedom in that one minute than I have ever felt in my life, until now. As an entrepreneur (oh, how I love to say that I am the founder of my own company), I once again feel what I felt in that moment – l'émancipation.

This sensory moment prompts me to think about that new job feeling.

Since I thrive in the unknown and love placing bets on an unsure gamble, much to my mom's vexation, I was an unabashed "18-month tops" job hopper until 2006. One of the reasons I moved around so much during my previous career is that, like my father, I am a self-starter. I bore effortlessly and do not require, nor enjoy, a great deal of hand-holding.

## *Standing in your power.*

From my experience, leaders who allow me to solo jump intuitively know my strengths and do not hesitate to tandem dive with me by pointing out and nurturing areas for growth.

Similar to the decision to jump out of an aircraft, placing a career bet comes with high risk.

As I embrace the Empathy Uprise free fall, unlike my 2009 skydive, thanks to enlightenment from those, who have come before, I am acutely aware that I will encounter motion sickness from time to time. I stand grounded in my power thanks to leading leaders (and my parents) who see my audacity as a strength and allow me to be who I am.

Until we meet again, be generous with each other. When I say “other,” I also mean that side of you that cries out for freedom. Yes, that one too. ❤️

Yours in Solidarity, -akm

*November 25, 2020*

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