



Shadowboxer

Cari Quinn

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She's in for the fight of her life...with the man who only wants to be her lover.

Fighter Mia Anderson has faced the dark side of life and survived. But just getting by is no longer enough. To fund her new life with her baby sister, she's determined to beat the reigning king of the male fighters in New York's underground MMA circuit, Tray "Fox" Knox.

Tray refuses to fight a woman, until he learns Mia's tougher than anyone he has ever known. He soon realizes he wants more from her than blows and blood, and he's willing to hit below the belt to get it. He'll fight her, but if he wins, she spends the night in his bed. All night long, his rules. No tapping out.

Mia agrees, certain that he'll lose. What she doesn't realize is that Tray loves to fight dirty...and that this match may end up being the most important one of their lives.

Warning: Please be advised this book contains content some may find triggering (past sexual trauma) and also contains graphic sex and language.

Shadowboxer Details

Date : Published February 4th 2014 by Rainbow Rage Publishing

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Author : Cari Quinn

Format : Paperback 360 pages

Genre : Romance, New Adult, Sports and Games, Sports, Contemporary, Warfare, Fighters,
Contemporary Romance

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From Reader Review Shadowboxer for online ebook

Kim Bailey says

3.5 Stars

I liked it ... even if it did make me feel old.

Overall, this story is well done. There is some originality with the main character being a female MMA fighter - I really enjoyed that angle of the story, the idea that she was fighting a physical and an emotional battle was really well thought out. I especially liked that she could keep up with the men & was anxious to fight one.

There is a lot of detail to this story; physical trauma, emotional trauma, secrecy and lies, family love, family hate, more family drama, self-loathing, abuse, anxiety attacks, lots of steamy sex, sexual hang ups, some kink, and a set up for more drama **Are you exhausted yet? I am.** Even with it being a well written book, I just felt like it was too much.

It was hard to connect to the characters. Perhaps they got lost in all the excess ... OR ... Perhaps it's because they are just so darn young & I, *apparently* am not. There were numerous references that were added to showcase how young these people are ... well let's just say that I felt every one of my 40 years stacking up against me; which I then held in contempt against the characters - I'm an envious old bitch, what can I say!

The next book is On the Ropes and sounds promising ... so I will probably just suck up my feelings & read it.

Christie«SHBBlogger» says

****DNF: Can't fully review. I only got about 30% in. I needed a mini-rant though****

This has to be a record for the fastest I've ever given up on a book. But when it's glaringly obvious that a book isn't for you, it's pointless to continue. I didn't like the heroine. I love strong and independent girls, but she wasn't straddling the line between strong and independent and a hardcore bitch. She was miles past that line. I had sympathies for her and her situation, but first off...

1)She gives oral sex in the back of the bar for money?!?!)

The first time a man offered me money, I was shocked. But that guy had interpreted my desire to pleasure him as part of a menu of services rather than my pathetic attempt at control, and I hadn't refused the cash. How could I?

2) First time having sex...(After he catches her trying to give a stranger a BJ in the alley)

Thick wavy strands tumbled down around us, cloaking me in her darkness, and I pressed my lips to hers, warming them with her name while we fumbled through what had to be the clumsiest, coldest fuck in the history of sex.

I sucked in a breath ripe with the scent of garbage turning rancid in the cans along the back fence. Too loud laughter burst out from inside every now and then, competing with the really crappy techno rock.

Not hot. Not sexy. Not anything. Ew. Just Ew.

Cari Quinn says

SHADOWBOXER is available now on Amazon and Barnes and Noble!

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00I8S3FCG>

Barnes and Noble: <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/shado...>

Check out the great book trailer for SHADOWBOXER, done by The Book Chick Trailers!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpinY...>

Patricia says

Question for all of you out there. Have you ever read a book that you just couldn't put down. The book that will make you stay up all night and just to see what happens to the characters. There have been a few books that I have risked book hangover for and I am adding another one to the list.

I bought SHADOWBOXER by Cari Quinn. I was hearing so much about it on a facebook page I am a part of . I was warned once I start it I would not put it down. They were correct on that one.

What can I say about this book. I was warned by a lot of people that it was dark . I didn't realize how dark it was. Mia has seen such a dark life. She has been through so much in her life. She becomes a MMA fighter to help ease the pain from her past . Wanting to help her younger sister and her to disappear from the darkness. Enters Tray the fox another MMA the man she wants to fight to win the title so she can just leave . They meet one night at the bar where she works and thing proceed from there. She is smitten with the hot man in

front of her but they are dealing with the darkness in their lives.

Will they survive the past to try and have a future .

This book was tearing from my heart strings from the very beginning of the story. To have that much pain and darkness just tore at my heart. Cari brought the characters to life with such a rawness and a passion. Cari wrote Mia with such a intensity that made you feel for her and wanted to help her out of the darkness. She captured the struggle that Mia has just trying to be normal , or normal in her eyes . Tray is the alpha that is actually has a heart and his own brand of darkness that he is keeping under control also. These two characters will claw and fight their way into your hearts .

Cari has said that writing the character of Mia, helped heal her in so many different ways and Mia gave Cari her sense of hope back.

I will tell you I was nervous about reading this book but so happy I did. I want everyone who likes very dark characters who have to fight their way to normal. Oh yeah they have some great sex scenes in there also. So give this book a try and see what you think . I suspect you will not be disappointed

Flavs is Mrs David Gandy♥~♥' says

This book I received an ARC Copy.

I enjoyed the book, but it took me a while to get into the story because it was a bit slow. I couldn't connect with the main character Mia. I liked the fact that she was a fighter and strong emotional and physically, but she seemed a bit distant to me. It's like she couldn't make up her mind about stuff. And the same was said about Tray.

One thing I also didn't like about Mia was the fact that she finally found someone that wants to be with her and she fought him at every turn.

I mean there is only so many times you can play hard to get. But he stuck with her.

The sex scenes were really Hot!! Which I say makes up a little bit for the no-connection.

I liked it, but didn't love it.

Tessa Bailey says

I had the honor of reading this book before its February 2014 release date because Cari Quinn is a fellow author of mine and a friend. She asked me for my honest opinion and here it is:

This is one of those books that will stay with me. It gripped me the entire time and it was worth every anxious second spent between reading sessions. I laughed while I read it, but while reading the very same page, I could just as easily be sighing dreamily or gasping at the very authentic world of fighting Cari Quinn writes. It's an honest and raw book, but written in a beautiful way that built me up right along with the

characters by the time it was over. I loved it so much.

We have Tray and Mia, two characters who share nothing in common beside the fact that they both participate in unsanctioned MMA fights for cash in the seedy, underground fight scene in Brooklyn. I fell in love with Tray on the double and Mia's weakness for him made me feel like we took that headlong journey into falling for Tray together. Their courtship is hot, folks. White knuckles on your e-reader hot. But there is emotion behind every time these two come together. It's never empty or purely physical. So much is happening under the surface and as the story unravels, you'll be racing through it to find out what happens next.

Fabulous book - I sincerely hope there is more to come in this series with some of the secondary characters.

I might even harass Cari until I get them.

Arabella ~?AB?~ says

4.5 Knock Out Stars

Lana ✨Dirty Girl Romance✨ says

4.5 Hard Hitting Stars

Pretty enough shell, empty insides. Now my shell wasn't so pretty anymore, yet I still used it to accomplish what I needed to.

I've had this on my TBR forever, but have been putting off reading it due to mixed reviews. I finally decided to bite the bullet, and am kicking myself for not reading it sooner. I LOVED IT. I can see how this may not be for everyone, but I loved everything about it; the writing style, the story, the characters, **EVERYTHING**

Gritty. Emotional. A little dark. And entirely enthralling.
Shadowboxer takes the reader beneath the bustling city of New York,

into the dark corner of underground MMA fighting.

But here's the kicker, both the hero **AND** the heroine are fighters.

Mia Anderson is used to doing whatever it takes to support herself and her younger sister. She lives in the shadow of her devastating past and uses the physical pain to drown out the memories. She fights and she's not afraid of taking punches. But she wants out of the underground MMA circuit, and her ticket out is to fight the reigning champion of the male fighters, Tray "Fox" Knox.

I bruised faces and occasionally broke bones for a living, but I'd never left a woman feeling

bad about herself. My dignified Long Island upbringing hadn't left me even though I now lived in a walkup in Brooklyn.

While Mia was the girl from the wrong side of the tracks, Tray seemingly has it all...he just doesn't want it. Going against the grain and everything his rich parents wanted for him, he turned to underground fighting to beat his demons. But he draws the line at fighting a woman. Mia is desperate, and as infuriating as the sexy fighter is, she's determined to ignore the sexual chemistry that instantly ignites between them and convince him to change his mind.

Guys like you, you think you know everything. You've got the world by a string, and it only ever unwinds the way you want it to. That's not how it is for the rest of us. We have to fight for what we want. We have to bleed.

Mia is a character that's difficult to understand at first. The book is a bit of a slow build, but it really takes off after the 30% mark. The more you find out about her past, the clearer her actions and thoughts become. My heart absolutely broke for her and what she had to go through. As much as I wanted to hate her for her treatment of Tray at times, I just couldn't help but feel for her. Sure some of her methods of survival weren't exactly orthodox, but I thought that Cari Quinn did a phenomenal job of painting a picture of a truly broken woman with an extra tough shell.

As for Tray? I fell in love with him from the first few pages. He was this perfect combination of a dirty talking badass

and a man that falls for the last woman he would expect to capture his heart.

My lungs seized up and I couldn't haul in enough oxygen. She surrounded me, drenching me in everything she was...that had somehow become all I wanted.

I was completely enraptured by this story. It wasn't a light read, though I wouldn't exactly call it dark. It was somewhere in the middle, but incredibly entertaining.

While Fox gives into his attraction and feelings for Mia, Mia fights her feelings as long as she can. Her past has always paved her future, and her past was not a light one.

I wore my scars on my body because the internal ones had scabbed over and gone numb. If all I was destined to feel was pain, at least it was mine. This wasn't real. It couldn't be. Stuff like this didn't happen to girls like me.

I devoured this book from beginning to finish. Cari Quinn throws in some unexpected twists and turns, and all of it packed a hell of a punch. I couldn't get enough. By the end of the book I was so invested in the couples relationship, I simply didn't want it to end.

I am absolutely dying for the next book in this series. Mia's sister and the baddest of the bad boys, Giovanni? I'm practically salivating for it.

If you enjoy MMA books that are different from anything you've read lately, emotional, gritty, and

STEAMY AS FUCK, I can't recommend this enough! I know I'm the odd one out within all the mixed reviews, but I really encourage readers to give this a shot. Who knows? You just may love it as much as I did!

For more reviews visit

Amanda says

New Adult Tropes: 20

“Welcome to this century. Women can do everything men can. Including fight.”

Where to start with *Shadowboxer*? This book includes so many topics: verbal abuse, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, kidnapping, death of (more than one) family member, prostitution, underground fighting, estranged parents, protecting a younger family member, money troubles, a rich guy feeling sorry for himself, trust issues, slutshaming, misogyny... **are you exhausted yet?** We'll take it from the start.

Mia is a female underground fighter. She's in it for the money she desperately needs so that she and her younger sister Carly can move away from the city. In the beginning, Mia went into prostitution (oral sex only), but then went into the fighting scene, but is also working at a bar. For months she's been training to set up a fight with the famous underground fighter Tray "Fox" Knox so she can get the money she needs. Tray is the golden boy that got tired of living good life with the money his parents gave him. Tray dropped out of college and went into the underground fighting scene. When a chance meeting have them cross paths, Tray is immediately drawn to Mia in ways he doesn't understand. Mia on the other hand, wants nothing but a fight from Tray. What follows is a long push and pull of Mia wanting Tray, hooking up, and then pushing him away. It goes on for more than half of the book, with little else to add into the plot.

Basically, there's no plot. It's all Mia and her trust issues (which aren't brought up until somewhere around the 40%-60% mark) and Tray's endless longing for Mia. This is supposedly a MMA fighter story, but there's almost no fighting going on, only a few mentions of their workouts. There are two big fights looming in the future at the beginning, but neither of them happens. In the end, it's all about their lust for each other. So let's take a look at our main characters. Introducing Mia:

I wasn't some quivery female caught in the storm of my emotions.

Mia is the heroine with an disdain toward anything female or feminine (which kinda changes once she lets Tray into her life). She's a fighter that can (apparently) take on any fighter, male or female. She comes from a troubled childhood filled with parents dying, and on top of that, she was kidnapped and sexually abused for several months. You'd think this would play a bigger role in this story, but it doesn't (apart from when Tray makes it all about himself). It's brought to light somewhere in the middle of the story, and Mia has two (I think) panic attacks due to memories from her time in captivity. Other than that, it isn't that big a deal, or it

doesn't come off as it when in her POV. **Once again, New Adult uses sexual abuse as a plot device, and in this case, a backdrop for the romance.** It's difficult to care for Mia; she's mean and her (as above mentioned) disdain for female and femininity is cringe worthy.

Now, here's *the best of* Tray "Fox" Knox:

My knowledge of the thought processes of females was practically nonexistent.

I'd kill for her in reality, maybe because no one else ever had.

"I can deal with Sandra Bullock," I muttered, grateful that Slater wasn't around to hear me turn in my man card.

If it's hard to care or like Mia, it's even harder to give a single fuck about Tray. He's the kind of guy that is all *don't need my parents or their money, fuck them* while still having them pay for his Ivy League college, his apartment, and his new car. Please tell me more about how hard your life is. To be fair, he does come from a family where his father abused (verbally and physically, from what I gather), his mother. And Tray has a policy that a real man **never** hits a woman. **A policy that obviously doesn't apply to his mother, since Tray doesn't really do anything to help his own mother to get out of an abusive relationship.** He does however feel the need to protect a female stranger that appears to have been in a fight (Mia) from the second he lays eyes on her. Good guy, right?

Moving on. When he finds out that Mia was kidnapped and sexually abused and later prostituted herself, he somehow makes it all about himself.

How could I be ready to listen to her talk about being hurt? How could I ever let her put her mouth on me and not think she was imagining a money transaction afterward?

Add in the usual, *Mia's not like other girls, deserves better than an alley fuck*, and the usual "my girl is a special snowflake" mentality, you have Tray. (I'd mention the secondary characters, but they were all flat and boring, they're barely worth mentioning.)

Moving on to the fighting aspect. **It's ridiculous.** Throughout the book, there's the theme that Mia is the best fighter ever. Tray describes her as tiny, but fit. She's feet shorter than him, and he outweighs her greatly. Yet, she thinks she can take him in a fight. How? No clue. Look, I agree with the initial quote: women can do anything men can, but there are limits. Biologically, men are (generally) stronger, taller, heavier. **A trained male fighter will 99% of the time win over a female fighter.** That's biology, nothing you can do about it. The last 1% is all about luck and coincidence. Nothing in the story indicates that Mia is delusional otherwise, but this is both delusional, and frankly, a bit suicidal. I believe this story would've done better (on the fighting aspect) if it had focused on the difference between male and female sports, especially society's view on it.

Going back to Mia's past abuse and prostitution. There's a huge gap about how her life after she escaped her kidnapper/abuser and the present. Why did she enter prostitution? How did she do it? How old was she? How did she reason? Because she had a job (bartender), how bad was it for that she felt the need to prostitute herself? Or was she of the mentality that prostitution is just another job? It's never explained. There's also little time over for dealing with her past abuse, both in the past and in the present. As it is, it reads like it is Tray's magical dick that somehow saves her, which is an angle one should never take in fiction. It is insulting to victims of sexual abuse to keep up this mentality that a man (or woman) can cure you from the trauma by sex. It should be with professional help and support from trusted and loved ones.

Last, apart from all mentioned above, the writing is very amateurish. Tray for example, has two different sides: the one we see in his POV and the one from Mia's. They are at times almost two different people, who speaks and thinks differently. Add in awkward and painful metaphors such as this one:

By the time Mia emerged in her sports bra and a pair of tiny bike shorts that made her ass look like a pair of puffed-up marshmallows suspended on two sexy sticks, I was considering a number of sexual harassment suits.

To sum up this book: poor execution and no sensitivity when it comes to sensitive topics.

Ari Reavis says

First off... the 2 big fights I was waiting for in the book DID NOT happen, which kind of ruined it a bit for me. Granted the fights didn't happen because of the romance in the book, but I was disappointed, nonetheless. The rest of the book was ok. Tray helped Mia get over some past traumas and for the most part he was an upstanding guy. Mia got on my nerves at times with the push and shove that were her feelings. Her sister added a nice element to the book. Maybe she'll get her own story.

Cristina says

[when she was 14 she was kidnaped, held hostage and raped for months until she escaped and killed her kidnaper. (hide spoiler)]

Claire Robinson says

I have to be honest and say that this is the first Cari Quinn book I have read and not absolutely loved.

Granted this book is darker and grittier than the previous books that I have read, which for me wasn't the issue. My whole problem is with the fact that I pretty much disliked every one of the main characters.

It is understandable that Mia would have a few emotional issues, and struggle on the social skills front after what she suffered when she was in her early teens, and I did for that reason feel sorry for her. But the constant repeat cycle with Tray of "no we can't" and then just going ahead doing it, then treating him like shit afterwards really started getting old at about 50%.

Tray ticks all the boxes with regards to being a character I would normally fall a little in love with, but again I just found the constant internal monologue about how he felt slighted by his rich daddy (even though he was provided with, and used an allowance, an apartment, and was offered finance to pay for his education, by said Daddy) again just got on my nerves...

There writing in parts is absolutely beautiful, and although this book wasn't 100% for me, highlights why I love this authors writing –

She was bruised in too many places. Her body was a tapestry of fading wounds and scars, yet she also

had patches of smooth, unblemished skin without a freckle to mar the perfection.

The premise was excellent, and the sex as per all of Cari's previous books is hot and extremely well written. I just couldn't get past my total dislike for the main components of the book.

I want to thank Cari for providing me with an ARC for this book, in exchange for the above honest review. I am just sorry I couldn't be more positive on this occasion.

Taryn Elliott says

I had the supreme pleasure of reading this one early since Cari's my writing partner. Even in the midst of my own crazy schedule I sat up with this book until 4am. I truly couldn't put it down. Mia and Fox will *own* you by the end of this story.

No lie.

Every heartbreaking struggle, every impact from a punch, every drop of blood--all of it leads to an exceptional love story that suits the characters down to the bone. But it's not an easy love story, but I promise you it's worth the read.

This is a world of violence and poverty, laughter and love, honesty and the lies we tell ourselves to get through the day. This book hurtles through emotions like you're in the ring at a MMA fight. They both are sizing up the opponent, trying to break them down to their essential parts, and then trying to figure out how to pin them.

(And oh, did they pin each other. Whew! There is some supreme steam between these pages.)

But when they broke down each other's defenses they found something raw and beautiful.

Mia, a woman with a strong, disciplined body and a broken spirit.

Fox, the golden boy who's excelled at everything he's tried, but never allowed himself to actually believe in anything.

Together they are magic and pain and then finally...simply love.

Add it to your shelves people. You're going to want to read it in February. Then you'll be bugging her for more.

Dianne says

3.25 stars. This was a nice read but it wasn't a favorite. It took me a while to get into the story because it was kind of slow. Mia was a difficult character for me to connect with. I loved how strong she was, physically and emotionally, but I couldn't endear stand her way of thinking most of the time. She seemed to flip flop her

thoughts various times in the book and that irritated me. Tray was the same exact way. He was strong too, physically and mentally, but he was also fickle. I get that the author was trying to show that they were the same type of person by having a fighter's mentality, but sometimes I just didn't know who's POV I was reading. It seemed all the same to me. I think that is part of the reason this book dragged out for me. Shadowboxer became one of those I like it but I'm not in love with its type of book. I hope the series improves with the next book.

SueBee★bring me an alpha!★ says

FREE on Amazon US today (4/30/2015)

BLURB:

She's in for the fight of her life...with the man who only wants to be her lover.

*Fighter **Mia Anderson** has faced the dark side of life and survived. But just getting by is no longer enough. To fund her new life with her baby sister, she's determined to beat the reigning king of the male fighters in New York's underground MMA circuit, **Tray "Fox" Knox**.*

Tray refuses to fight a woman, until he learns Mia's tougher than anyone he has ever known. He soon realizes he wants more from her than blows and blood, and he's willing to hit below the belt to get it. He'll fight her, but if he wins, she spends the night in his bed. All night long, his rules. No tapping out.

Mia agrees, certain that he'll lose. What she doesn't realize is that Tray loves to fight dirty...and that this match may end up being the most important one of their lives.

<http://www.amazon.com/Shadowboxer-Tap...>

FREEBIES are often good for MORE than one day, I have gathered all my FREEBIES on a special shelf:

Kindle-freebies (currently over 400 books)

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/list...>
