



Seductive Shadows

Marni Mann

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The deal offers security.

The money promises financial freedom.

Sometimes, the things that sound too good to be true are.

My past is haunted by darkness, full of shadows. The mansion promises fantasy and pleasure, the closest things to dawn I know.

Once I sign my life over, it's too late. My future quickly becomes darker than my past.

Here, there is danger...and secrets.

One of them is Cameron Hardy.

Like me, he's an artist. Like me, he has scars.

He could be my sunrise.

Or the reason the sun never rises again.

Seductive Shadows Details

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Author : Marni Mann

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From Reader Review Seductive Shadows for online ebook

Jen says

"It's always darkest before the dawn."

Charlie is a young girl who has had a tough life. She's grown up with an alcoholic whore of a mother, watching in the shadows at night as her mother brought home random men, had sex with them in the living room and listened to as she begged them for their love each night. She also has had to endure years of verbal abuse from her mother ranting about how her life has not been everything it should have been. She also had to live with the memories of losing her best friend in a car accident.

Charlie works full time now in order to pay all of the bills and take care of her mother. In her spare time she takes a class when she can afford it. Art is her passion and what she's good at. She uses it as a way to escape and deal with the demons in her head. Her professor sees the talent that she exudes and encourages her to paint more.

Charlie also has another way of dealing with her feelings, sex. It's something she's grown up with and she uses it as an escape. She also knows she can get the attention an even for a short time the love that she hasn't had.

"I could get lost in the sex; I could escape, even if it was for just a brief period of time. I could forget."

One night she is approached by a stranger with an invitation to audition for a job, a job for sex. If she passes and decides to take that job she could make more money in one night than she would in a month at her current job. When she arrives at the "Mansion" she feels like she is safe, cared for and like she belongs here. Where else could you have sex, enjoy it and no one judge you. The clients of the Mansion are the most influential, prestigious members of New England's society. To keep anonymity everyone is required to wear a mask and not use real names. This is when "Cee" is born. She sees this as an opportunity to get out of poverty and have time to focus on art so she takes it.

During the day she was Charlie, the talented, budding art student.

"I glanced around the room at my fellow schoolmates. My eyes couldn't travel through their skin; nor could they pierce the murkiness of their souls to reveal the secrets that lived beneath. Yet I knew they all had a bit of darkness inside of them. Everyone did. But could my classmates transform into a different character every evening, dress in a costume to fit that fantasy, and let a complete stranger have sex with them?"

"Could they live two separate lives as I was doing?"

But at night, she got to become Cee and live out not only some of her sexual fantasies, but those she was with.

Everything is going great until she meets Cameron. She's paired up with Cameron in art class and instantly is attracted to him.

...it was his eyes. They were an icy, baby blue that popped against his light caramel skin. His hair was buzzed short, each strand the same length, and it spread down his cheeks, around his chin and top lip. He was sexy... and not in a subtle way.“

Slowly their relationship grows and he makes her want more, but she knows there can never be more with him while she is currently working at the Mansion. If she is going to be with him she wants to be with him and no one else. She begins to question how he could accept her or want more with her once he finds out what she's been doing for money.

Soon circumstances arise and Charlie decides she wants to leave the Mansion, but that's easier said than done. I can't say more without giving the ending away. You will have to read the story for yourself.

This book sucked me in and kept me on my toes with little twists and turns that left me thinking..."I did not see that coming!" and "I want more!"

Marni Mann is a great author and I love her writing style. I need book two now. Is there a book two??? I sure hope so. The ending was a little bit cliffy. If there is not a second book it could end this way and it would be okay, but I'd really like to know what happens next!

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

Reviewed on: <http://totallybookedblog.com/2013/09/...>

So, you know one of those books where you have absolutely no idea how you feel about it after reading and you're still thinking about it for a while after?! Well this one is just that book for me. I was intrigued throughout and I needed to know what was going to happen. At times I rolled my eyes at others I felt so emotional my heart was pounding. To be honest I'm still not sure how I feel so bear with me.

The premise is one we've read about in a lot of books, in fact it's a really fabulous mix of a lot of the books I've enjoyed. Despite this I felt it was quite unique too and quite artistic in parts as the writing was brilliant.

The story was quite slow to begin with; it was setting the scene for what was to come yet in some way I think the focus was placed too much on the sexual nature of our heroine.

“Sex held me at night, kept me from dwelling in the pain, from remembering and regretting. It was the only time I didn't feel alone.....”

I completely appreciate that we needed to understand the part sex played in her life as it was part of her traumatised psyche. However, it became too much for me which made me irritated with her story at times rather than have her gaining my sympathy. I'm not sure I really connected with her. She was fascinating, but

I didn't quite get her. At times she was just a little bit too odd for my liking, though I appreciated that she was a tortured soul. I just didn't learn what I needed about her in order to fully understand her, I think. I loved that she was an artist, and after all, it takes eccentricity and a tortured soul to create a master piece no?! So in that respect the Author was spot on.

But wow, once it got going it was un-put-down-able! It was intense, raw and dark and I was enthralled; swept away by some class writing.

Our heroine Charlie is extremely passionate. She comes from an abusive home where sex was the order of the day as in her Mum and every Tom, Dick and Harry in their tiny flat. It's the only thing Charlie knew, and by watching her Mum's behaviour, Charlie soon starts to equate sex with love and self-worth. Her existence is heavily weighted by her past and she almost lives in her own little world in the shadows of life.

When Charlie is given a proposition, which comes about under extremely bizarre and mysterious circumstances, she sees an escape, a legitimate reason for her behaviour. She almost sees it as an affirmation and a release of responsibility.

The mansion of intrigue and menace fascinated me, I thought it was a real exciting concept and twist in the story and once we got more and more involved I was left gobsmacked. Charlie's journey of self-discovery and 'secrets revealed' are all instigated by the acceptance of a fateful proposition. A journey that will shock and devastate her and make her realise and question everything.

“The music reminded me of a haunted house. But the loudest sounds of all were those in my mind. Questions swirled with each step: would I be working in this mansion... where was he taking me...what job was I going to be offered...would I accept it...and why was I dressed like this? I was anxious to find out the answers...”

Then we have Cameron, the gorgeous sexy bad arse painter who comes with his own mysterious circumstances surrounding him. The scenes with Charlie and him are highly charged and sensual. I wanted more of Cameron in this story, I felt we weren't given enough of 'him' as well as them together before all hell broke loose so it was difficult to get the complete connection and the development of their relationship.

Hmmm...sat here thinking about it, I wonder if I have talked myself into a higher rating? Gah!!! I just don't know how I feel, but maybe that's part of the overall appeal? Who knows...?

If I had to describe Seductive Shadows in 5 words it'd be: Compelling, Dark, Erotic, Emotional & Unique!!

3.5-4.0 Stars

ARC supplied by author in exchange for an honest review

SheReadsALot says

A Hearts On Fire Review

3.75 STARS--Marni Mann's "Seductive Shadows" is the first book her erotic *Shadows* series. The writing starts off well, with raw, erotic prose, angst and pain a good sense of emotional abuse with main protagonist 23 year old Charlie Williams. She doesn't know who her father is, neither does her alcoholic, cancer stricken mother, Lilly. She's been emotionally abused her entire life by her monster of a mother, the only happiness,

sense of family/friendship via her best friend Emma, has been ripped away due to a horrible accident five years ago and she's numb. One of the ways she chooses to express herself is through painting, the other...through sex. And Charlie has a lot of sex because that temporary feeling gives her a semblance of feeling.

The story is told in first POV from Charlie's perspective. This quote definitely defines a lot of who Charlie is:

"I feel you color. It's extremely red, and quite loud. You're a desirous one, Charlie, and incredibly sexual."

But Charlie read like three different people in one damaged package: Charlie B.E. (Before Emma - the almost happy girl we meet in flashbacks), Charlie A.E. (After Emma's death) and Cee, the sexpot. We meet Charlie A.E. who has a seriously great fuck buddy in Dallas, tattooed and carries a torch for Charlie but Charlie can't reciprocate feelings unless it is having sex. Charlie's broke, in debt thanks to Lilly and struggling to go to college part time and balance a full time job. One night, a lady walks into Charlie's life and offers a chance out of her desperation, she'd have sell her body for a few nights each week for a lot of money.

At this point, it felt a little Alice in Wonderland-ish. I questioned who this "recruiter" was and how she knew so much about Charlie but Charlie did not. Charlie gets to be Cee for those nights. Cee is the seductress that she recognized in herself for awhile. Charlie is easily aroused, masturbates a lot (this I applaud because I don't come across a lot of M/F where female masturbation is given such a healthy perspective) and figures Cee might as well get paid for what she did for free. How does Charlie define her choice of work?

"I wasn't a prostitute. I was an artist who used her fingers to paint a fantasy and her body fulfilled it. The muse, or the canvas, but always the artist. And when I was desired by men was when I felt the most creative."

Charlie has a lot of sex, male or female, she does not discriminate. She covers her hurt with this. At this point, I got where she was coming from. The sex was so far from being emotional or romantic in any sense. It was full erotica. But the author introduces a fellow art student/ famous local artist, Cameron. Charlie does not introduce Cee to him. Cee is doesn't make love, she fucks, she owns her pleasure and makes sure to give it back to her partner.

"When Cee was reborn every night, I was able to rest Charlie's pain, her fear, and loneliness. I could shut off her brain. But it wasn't just the sex I was after. It wasn't just the love and the holding and the attention and feeling of being wanted. It was being able to become someone else."

Cee is given to everyone else but Cameron. With Cameron she was Charlie A.E., her personal self, something she tried to avoid most days unless she shared through her painting. There's something that connects them, could be that he too is a damaged soul. What was refreshing was that Cameron, Charlie's love interest was **not** a **depraved, anti-social, alpha hero**, not another FSOG knockoff, thank goodness. I wish we were able to switch to his POV because I'm so curious about him.

The story became more romantic as the story progressed, secrets are revealed, friendships formed and tentative love has been discovered. Charlie learns more about herself than she thought she would, there's a sense of a thriller vibe in the latter half of the story and the story does end with a soft cliffhanger. Why did I describe the cliffhanger as soft? I expected more of a punch from the 'powers that be', they loomed but they did not make their presence necessarily known. I liked the story a lot. I plan on following up because I really came to care about Charlie and hope for her happiness.

Here's what gave me pause:

-No protection...I cringed when no mention of condoms were mentioned. I'm all for Charlie being sexually liberated but in this day and age, sleeping with all of those people, no condom came up, bareback the entire time? I was disappointed and nervous for her safety. She's a sex worker! It should have been automatic.

-The F/F, no warning. Although it was brief, a little warning would have been appreciated.

- Wetness/Dampness - Charlie was wet so much, I almost wanted to get her a bucket. At the scene where she stated she was dry...I believed it. This girl spent most of the book eternally damp.

- *They/Them/The Mansion* - Who are they? Why do they have so much pull? They have been mentioned to be mega-badasses but they didn't *do* much, other than research the hell out of Charlie's life.

- The Romance(?)- I got used to the lack of emotion from Charlie when it came to sex that when the romance angle started late in the game (the latter half of the book), I actually did not want the romance. Me, a romance reader probably for life, actually cringed. Because I didn't believe Charlie to be that girl or who she chose as her love. (Alright, I'm a little in love with tattooed-sleeve Dallas and thought he'd be a great choice for Charlie) Charlie and Cameron...eh, maybe if I squint my eyes, turn to the side, I may buy them falling for each other. But love? I will need to see how the next book plays out before I fully stand behind their relationship.

Yes, they are damaged artists who appear to fancy one another. But I wanted to smack the both of them at 96%. Lives are on the line (allegedly) and this is what you choose to do? Maybe that's where the "new adult" tie in comes in. I hesitate to describe this as new adult because Charlie might be young but she's experience so much from such a young age, she's an adult in my eyes. The sex scenes weren't as graphic as I expected for a number of scenes so maybe that can fall in the "new adult" tag.

The story is written well, interesting characters are introduced and I was left intrigued.

I would recommend to fans of romantica who like beta heroes and damaged souls.

Lana ✨Dirty Girl Romance✨ says

4 Left me speechless Stars

"You always told me that I lived my life in the shadows. Well, I'm not there anymore. I'm not even reaching for them anymore. I'm running from them now."

I don't even know where to start with this book. Truly. I'm fucking speechless, though not in a bad way. This book was something else. It was unlike anything I have ever read before, and I have read some dark and fucked-up books. It's not exactly what I was expecting, but fuck me sideways if I will be forgetting it any time soon. All that aside, if you're expecting a romance novel, boy are you in for a rude awakening. I'd say this was more of an introduction. An introduction to Charlie, to Cameron, and to the catalyst to the story.

Meet Charlie. She is unlike any heroine you've read about before. Virgin?! HA! Forget about it! The woman has the sex drive of a cat in heat. No joke. Everything turns her on. I'm pretty sure a stiff wind would get her going.

If from my description you're thinking that she's some vapid, two dimensional character, you would be very wrong. There is a reason that Charlie is the way she is. She was a dark and complex heroine, though it does take a bit of time to really begin seeing below her surface. Charlie is dealing with an alcoholic and terminally ill mother and no small financial problems. Until the answer to her problems walks into the door of her work and offers her a very intriguing way out.

The Mansion

But it comes with some rules

You do not talk about The Mansion.

You DO NOT talk about The Mansion.

You're constantly monitored.

Based on your cycle, you will get a whole week off, but get compensated during that time.

Oh and then there was the teeny tiny little detail about the audition: having to do a little something with the recruiter...who happens to be a chick.

And if you're thinking what I think you're thinking...

This may seem a bit extreme to most, but for Charlie it was the answer to everything.

The Mansion and everything about it is shrouded in mystery. But when that mystery begins to get unraveled. Holy.Shit. Your head will spin

It took me a while to get into the story. It was extremely descriptive, which I don't typically mind. But in the case here it got to be almost too much. The hero doesn't enter the picture until about 30% into the book, and their relationship takes even longer to develop. This was not a love story. It didn't read that way, and it didn't feel that way until pretty much the last few chapters.

Beautifully written, Seductive Shadows is a dark and provocative story about the journey of a woman struggling with hiding in the shadows and a dark and turbulent past, learning how to find her dawn, forgiveness, and redemption.

Now if you'll excuse me, I'm off to give myself a much needed mental health break before diving into Seductive Secrets. And I thank you

ARC courtesy of publisher in exchange for an honest review

For more reviews visit

Bark says

I'm a sucker for dark, gloomy novels and tormented characters. Combine that with a little deviant sexual

behavior and you've got my attention. Keeping it? Well, that's the problem . . .

Seductive Shadows is part erotica, part personal journey and part thriller with a smidge of romance thrown in there too. Charlie had a painful childhood. She grew up too fast, witnessed too much and now has a screwed up view on relationships and sex. I'm not going to go into everything but will just say that the author did a great job developing Charlie and I sympathized and understood her choices.

Charlie is a struggling to make a better life for herself. She's a part-time art student, paying her own way and working her butt off to pay off her mother's enormous debt. One night she is approached by a recruiter who offers her a job she's unable to resist. She knows upfront she's going to get paid (a shit ton) in exchange for sex. She's told she can leave whenever she wants and that she will be safe and protected and welcomed into a "family". For a girl like Charlie this is a dream come true. She self-medicates with sex anyway and enjoys the attention, the release, the power and the anonymity of it all.

“Just because I was hired to provide pleasure, didn't mean I couldn't enjoy every moment of passion and every uninhibited deviant thought. I craved sex and attention. I needed it. I was turned on by the cameras that would point toward my bed, the lust that would be whispered in my ears, and playing out the fantasy that I would compose. The challenge would make my release so much sexier.”

But, alas, nothing ever goes Charlie's way for long. Soon after she takes on this sexy new job, she meets Cameron, a talented artist she admires and lusts after. He treats her with respect and appreciates her art and she starts falling a little in love. Here's where the complications come in and boy are there some whoppers thrown at you in the last few chapters. Charlie is in a very dangerous and desperate situation because, shocker, the mysterious recruiter wasn't exactly telling the truth . . .

This book is a hard one to review. As erotica it's pretty good, it's sensual, slightly dirty (but not squicky) and a wee bit dangerous which is how I like my erotic books. As a personal journey type of story it works too, Charlie has a lot of crap to leave behind and still finds the will to make a better life for herself. That's admirable. As a romance it doesn't work for me but that's only because we never get to know much about Cameron besides what Charlie feels for him. But it is Charlie's story so I can't fault the book for that. But as a thriller? Hell. No.

The best and worst thing about Charlie's story is the fact that her inner torment, her longing for a real family and her grief were so well painted. Her pain was so intense that at times it felt suffocating. That poor girl needed a break from the doom and gloom and so did I. There was very little joy or levity in the dialogue and story and I had to keep stopping because it was depressing the hell out of me. I usually dig this heavier stuff (Chase In Shadow, anyone?) but for some reason, either my bitchy, burned out mood (nah that can't be it!) or the fact that I could only connect with Charlie and felt disconnected from everyone else, this book just wouldn't go down easy. And then the WTF reveal arrives along with the unfinished ending and I was stunned in a really bad way. I actually clicked my next button at least ten times thinking something was wrong with my reader. Nope. Nothing wrong with my reader. The book was simply over and done, leaving some very important bits left swinging in the wind with no resolution (or not enough for me, at least). There is a sequel coming so I guess that's the reason. Had I know that earlier I probably would've DNF'd this because it feels incomplete and this one was such a struggle to finish that I can't see myself rushing to buy book #2.

T.M. Frazier says

I just realized that I rated this a while back but never left a review. How is that possible? Charlie is an awesome character and the author pulls you in during the first chapter when she is describing Charlies take on the world around her. She finds sensuality in everything around her from page 1 and that draws you in. Then you stay in because you want, no you NEED to know about her childhood and her abusive mother, and you want to know about her casual relationships vs her serious ones, then you want to know about the mysterious mansion and how she is going to react to the crazy and sexy things requested of her there. Then at the end BOOM a twist you never saw coming. FIVE STARS ALL FREAKING DAY LONG

[~Ami~]♥Sexy Dexy♥ says

My feelings are a bit **mixed** with this book.

Charlie is **struggling** financially when caring for her sick alcoholic mother and being an art student. She is a very **sexual** person so when she gets offered work at the 'mansion' she jumps at the opportunity.

You need to feel your emotions and not bury them in sex

I liked the storyline, it was very **original** and Charlie was a **strong heroine** that knows what she likes. My main problem was I had no clue at first who the main hero was. There was the **Doctor**, **'Jay'**, **Cameron** and **Dallas**. None of them really stood out to me.

You pulled me out of the shadows

My suspicions with the Doctor were spot on with a *'I knew it'* moment. I then had an *'eww yuck'* bit that made me cringe. Followed by a *'uh oh things are gonna get messy'* moment.

The book ended with a few issues left open. If you are looking for a **sexy** and **original** book, this would be a great choice.

ARC provided by the Author

Literati Literature Lovers says

When I read the synopsis for Seductive Shadows, I was intrigued. A story about a young girl who loves art and finds love with a mysterious guy with blue eyes, (seriously she had me at baby blue eyes ;)); I must say

this book did not disappoint. This story delves deeper into the main character's emotional and inner struggles and is much more than just another erotic book. It's thought provoking, and at times a little heavy. Marni has a true talent for story telling, that I am sure of. As a reader, you always try to guess what the secret is, or what's going to happen next, but with this one, I was wrong every time! Just when I thought she had me, Marni threw a curve ball that made my jaw drop.

Charlie hasn't had it easy, at all. Her mom doesn't care about her and she doesn't have anyone else. Her escape from her tough reality is her art, and she's great at it. Everyone at school can see her potential, which makes her wonder what her future might be in the field. Everything seems to be going smoothly, but something is missing in her life. Charlie is beautiful, she knows this, but she isn't one for relationships. She has the love of a boy that would fall at her feet but it's not enough. The opportunity to express herself and open her mind, body, and soul to others comes up and she takes it knowing very well that it's not the best decision, but she needs the money. Her mom is sick, she has no problems with her sexuality...it seems like a done deal. Things start to change when she finally opens her eyes and sees things much clearer thanks to Cameron, her male counterpart, who makes her question everything. Cameron brings out her need (and want) for more out of life, making her believe that her world can be bright again. It's never easy, and Charlie's past comes crawling back right when she's ready to move on, and the only person that can help her is the last person she would've ever imagined.

Like I said, this book isn't just your typical read. It's mysterious and thrilling! Seductive Shadows is a provocative story of a girl's journey to self discovery. As the synopsis states, this is definitely a book for mature audiences, but if you like to read books that have more complex issues then get ready for a hell of a ride. ;)

Kelli C ~ Jack Sawyer's Heart says

hmmmm...this book is all kinds of crazy hot! Reading book 1 and 2 in a box set...will review fully at completion of the tale!

Britney says

This book was not what I expected at all. It is not a romantic. It is not heartwarming. It is not sweet in any way. It IS disturbing. It IS enticing. It IS inspirational in a way. This is a coming-of-age story about an emotionally damaged girl who makes some bad decisions and has to find her way to discover her true self and learn to forgive both herself and others.

I will be honest; it took me a little while to really feel like I was going to like this book. It captured my attention from the beginning, but I was not sure if I was going to like where it was going. As it turned out, I really liked it! The main character, Charlie, is damaged. She's been broken and has tried to put the pieces of herself back together, and in reality, she is still very fractured. As the book evolves, Charlie really grows and comes into her own. Once she started seeing there was more to her life, that she could be more, I really fell in love with the story.

This book is dark. Very dark. There is no pretty bow or sweet love story. There is a love story that unfolds, but the central focus is Charlie. If you are squeamish about sex or prostitution this is probably not the book for you; however, if you like a book about a girl that is completely lost and alone who struggles to overcome adversity and fights for a future I think you will love this book. I look forward to more of these characters.

TeriLyn says

5++ brilliant stars! I absolutely loved Seductive Shadows. Ms. Mann's writing is as haunting as it is beautiful. This story is dark, mysterious, and alluring. Every sentence I read I always felt a sense of loss or brokenness. It was very powerful reading.

Charlie's life will captivate you in a haunting way. You always feel her pain even through her pleasure, whether that pleasure is art or sex. She's broken, living a nightmare, and we live it right along with her because of this author's amazing storytelling. I liked that we don't see all her pain as flashbacks, there is so much happening in her life in the present and I felt that. She feels guilty and broken; damaged beyond repair. In direct contrast to her life, she beholds a sense of innocence and naivety. I just wanted to reach out and hug her. I wanted to see the dark pieces of art she created. Professor Freeman tells her that she'll captivate her audience because of the irony of her light appearance versus the dark reflections of her art. And as the reader, you feel that irony too. Cameron, the Professor, the Doctor, and Dallas show her true love, albeit in different ways, and help her believe she is capable of loving herself. All four of those men are crucial to her self discovery and I believe a bit discovery within themselves. Cameron finally gives her a sense of home and belonging. His art is a representation of himself and in that she finds a kindred spirit. The progression of their relationship is slow and sweet. Again, in direct contrast with the life she is living. The nuances in the story between light and dark are ever present.

Charlie is propositioned to become part of a dark family where she will live behind a mask and fulfill her desires. The parts of the story where we are in the mansion are the most cryptic. Everyone wears a mask. As the reader, you'll want to know what are they hiding in this place? What are they escaping from in their lives? And what will they need to escape from here? The descriptions of the gothic castle paint a very vivid picture and make you want to take a walk inside. The allure of the mansion is it's dangerous mystery within it's beauty. I always felt that sense of danger when Charlie was inside even though I had no idea what the danger could be. Mansion secrets become revealed and their twisted and crazy. I expected danger, I never expected what the danger actually was.

I highly recommend this book. If you like dark stories then you will not regret reading this. It's engrossing, extremely well written, and beautifully haunting. I cannot wait to read book 2. Bravo Ms. Mann, I loved it!

J Too Many Books Too Little Time says

Solid 4 Stars!!!

This was dark, different, deep, emotional, sensual, intriguing, erotic.....I don't even know how to go about describing it. It wasn't anything like what I was expecting yet I found that I couldn't stop reading. There was such a mystery surrounding the story. More layers revealed as the story went on. I had no idea what was going to happen, how everyone was involved or how it would end.

Seductive Shadows is Charlie's story. Her story of self-discovery. Of learning to let go of a past that haunts and affects her everyday. Of learning to love herself despite not ever feeling loved. A story of losing your "home" only to find a new one. Of letting go of old friends and finding new ones.

Charlie is an art student. She takes care of her sick mom, goes to school during the day and works nights. She struggles to get by. She doesn't form relationships easy and has spent the majority of her life alone. A proposition to work at the "mansion" is an opportunity she can't pass up. But what is the mansion really? Who is behind the mansion?

Outside the mansion, her art is coming to life. She meets Cameron in her art class and for the first time in her life she wants more. Cameron and Charlie connect through their art. But Charlie refuses to give herself to Cameron until she can give herself to him completely. Which means telling him about her past and her time at the mansion. But can she willingly leave the mansion? What will happen if she tries? A connection from her past is revealed....a connection that might save Charlie and help her get the future she desires.

Falling In Fall Book Blog says

ARC was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review. For Jodie Rae's full review, visit <http://fallinginfall.blogspot.com>

“It’s always darkest before the dawn.”

Wow. 5+ leaves!! You would have a whole tree made upon how many leaves I loved this book!! One of my new favorite reads of the year!!!!!!

I LOVED LOVED THIS BOOK!!! I loved Charlie and Cameron. This story is mysterious, trilling, erotic, story of Charlie's journey to self discovery.

The story is about Charlie and how she uses sex and painting to escape her life. All throughout the book I kept asking myself, "what is going on with Charlie?" "Why does she act the way she does?" We slowly get to into her past involving her mother and the tragic event that changed her life. She had some serious demons to battle, but I loved that it didn't let them totally overcome her; despite the darkness that she has been through, she didn't let it stop her from being with the man she wanted.

Growing up it was just Charlie and her mom, Lilly. Lilly wasn't the most caring and affectionate mother. When Lilly gets cancer and it is left to Charlie to take care of everything, even Lilly. Charlie is going to college and working full time at a hotel to make ends meet. Soon, she is recruited by a woman to work at a house of ill-repute. Charlie takes the job because it pays well and she gets to have tons of sex. Speaking of sex, the sex isn't just the focus of this story, it helps reveal Charlie's story. Charlie has used sex as a way for her to stop dwelling, remembering, and regretting her past. Charlie craved attention and love and I think that's why she turned to sex because it helped fill the void in her heart.

Charlie meets Cameron and he brings light to her dark life. He was so gentle, sweet, and patient. The only complaint I have about this book is I wish we could have got to know more about Cameron. I thought Cameron and Charlie's relationship was rushed. That being said, I hope there is a sequel to this book. I would love to see more interaction between them as they grow in their relationship. That being said- I was Facebooking the author Marni (who is just a sweetheart) and she said that the sequel is in talks... very early stages! This makes me soooo happy!!

Since I'm a bookaholic I can usually guess what will happen, but not in this book....not even close. I loved how the author kept surprising the reader and kept us guessing. I had a roller-coaster of emotions throughout the book. I cried my eyes out during a couple of events and then was stark raving mad and angry at other moments. I honestly haven't read something in a long time that made me feel so much emotion!

I recommend this book to anyone looking for a dark, complex erotica story! This story will stay on your mind for days to come!!

Tamara Hook Me Up Book Blog says

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"It's always darkest before the dawn."

Charlie is searching for her dawn. She lives in the shadows of darkness after enduring a life of neglect and abuse at the hands of her mother. With no real friends or family (apart from her dying mother) she desperately craves love and a sense of home. All she has is her art and it is through her art that she finds a way to express herself. Her other preferred method of release is sex and when she is offered a position at the mansion she decides that she can't pass it by.

"I could get lost in the sex; I could escape, even if it was for just a brief period of time. I could forget."

Charlie wants to block out her pain, her feelings of abandonment and her feelings of worthlessness. The sex she experiences at the mansion allows her to do this; it allows her to hide behind a mask and leave Charlie behind. She becomes Cee at the mansion.

"I stayed mostly in Emma's shadow because I was afraid to stand in the light. But Cee stretched out of those shadows. She wanted the attention, consumed it.."

The people she works with at the mansion provide her with the sense of belonging and family that she is looking for. They are pretty much all she has until she meets Cameron, an artist that she meets through her art class. They are instantly attracted and drawn to each other; two scarred souls looking for the same thing. He doesn't make any demands on her but he pushes her and helps her on her path to self-discovery.

"I realised at that moment that, in Cameron, I had found a home."

Their relationship grows slowly and she starts questioning her choices in life and whether she still wants the same things in life. She realises she wants more but comes face to face with the harsh reality of just what her past choices mean for her now. The sinister side of the mansion is exposed and Charlie must find a way to leave it all behind and move forward in her life.

This book snuck up on me. I knew nothing about it before I read it and from the cover I thought it was going to be erotic fiction. It was so much more than that; in fact it wasn't even really erotic. There was sex in it but this was not the main feature of the book. This story was about the theme of masks - the masks we hide behind when we are trying to leave ourselves behind and forget the pain of life. It is about the paths we take when we are trying to forget; the ways we try to escape. It is a story of self discovery and I loved the journey that Charlie went on.

Marni Mann weaved all these themes into a beautifully written story that spoke to me on a deeper level. It touched me and made me think about the ways I try to escape and hide in my own life. The characters were well developed and the story was peeled back layer by layer. I couldn't predict where the story would go and was stunned when the truth of the mansion came out. If you enjoy a story with flawed characters searching for more out of life you will like this one.

Donna ~ The Romance Cover says

Seductive Shadows by Marni Mann

4 stars!!!

No-one warned me this was a cliffie!!! Not a biggie but I was not ready for the book to finish, I was totally engrossed!! The first quarter of the book, is really setting the scene, but as soon as the "Mansion" comes into play the book speeds up and then it is wham bam!!

Charlie is in her early twenties and has had a rough life, her mother is currently terminally ill and confined to bed so Charlie is the bread winner and responsible for paying all the bills despite still being at University. She can only afford one class a semester as her other time is spent working and looking after her mother. She is a brilliant artist and her professor at University encourages her to be the best that she can be. Her mother has always been a single mum, she did not know who Charlie's father was, she was an alcoholic and a bit of a whore, Charlie's life growing up was far from pretty. This was compounded when she lost her best friend. She has hardly any friends and lives quite a solitary life. You could not help but feel sorry for her. Her self esteem was non existent.

One night whilst working at the hotel, Charlie receives a proposition about earning more money in a week than she does in a month at the "Mansion"...seeing this as a way out of poverty Charlie goes to the interview and decides to take the job. This is where Charlie's life changes...but you will have to read if it is for better or worse!!

The style of writing in this book is addictive, you are pulled into Charlie's life and at times actually feel that you are living it with her, it is dark, extremely sad, emotional and at times intoxicating. The drama and story that Marni pulls you through is written in such detail that you feel everything! Slowly but surely, layer by layer Charlie's story is revealed with flashbacks from past to present. You understood why Charlie was the way she was. In the beginning I wondered where this self loathing had come from, but once you see the glimpses into her childhood all becomes crystal clear.

All Charlie wanted was to be loved, to live and to belong, she had a deep ridden sense of guilt that ate at her even though she had nothing to be guilty for. She needed to forgive herself before she could move on and this was very hard for Charlie to do. She used to have conversations with the Doctor and he summed it up beautifully:-

"you need something more in your life. Something more than just this. You need to feel your emotions and not bury them in sex. You need to forgive yourself. You need to cry. You need to let go, and then you may forgive those that have wronged you. There will be a day when you will understand that forgiveness is about you and no one else."

Charlie does use sex to forget. There is quite a fair bit of it in this book, so is definitely for adult audiences and those that like this kind of read. It is not gratuitous or over the top and is required for the story.

This book made me cry, a fair bit as well...just when you think that Charlie is getting her life back on track something always happens to cause the bumps and life throws a curve ball. It is at this point where I totally lost it, the twists and turns were OMG moments and it all just pulled me further in and then I got to the end and I was OMG No No No No No. I need to know what happens.....

I can't wait for the next instalment, I have been well and truly sucked in and I need to know what happens to Charlie going forward. As soon as that book is out, I am there Iclick at the ready.

Amazing book, loved it loved it loved it!!

www.theromancecover.com
