



# Shades

*Jaime Reese*

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## **Shades** Jaime Reese

Killian Marks is a third-generation hitman. After hunting monsters for over twenty years, he lives under no illusions of happily ever afters and fairy tales. Until he meets a man who threatens to disarm him, by giving him hope for a future and showing him there's more to life than just death.

For Nick, living in shadows is second nature. He's all too familiar with the dark side of humanity and knows how delicate life can be. Each new day is a gift, even though it means doing it alone. But he'll risk his survival for the one man who awakens something deep within and leaves him yearning for more.

Nick wants to solve the mystery behind the dark, brooding man, while Killian craves the life and light emanating from Nick. They soon discover they have more in common than either could have anticipated. With both their lives and hearts at stake, they must confront the ghost from Nick's past intent on tying up a loose end. Only then will they truly find peace, and discover the shades of life in between.

## **Shades Details**

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Author : Jaime Reese

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## **From Reader Review Shades for online ebook**

### **Meags says**

#### **4.5 Stars**

For me, Jaime Reese is six for six. I actually think she may be the only author, of whom I've read everything readily available, that I've consistently enjoyed so much and rated so damn high. That makes her an indisputable favourite author of mine and I'm endlessly eager to see what she'll deliver up next.

Truth be told, her stories and her fantastic characters just do it for me. I easily fall into these worlds and feel at a loss when the final pages are turned. My experience here was no different.

I'd compare Shades to the likes of M/M classics such as Warrior's Cross and Zero at the Bone, so if either of those did it for you, you should be right as rain here.

Honestly, there's not much I can add to the many great reviews out there, so I'll call it a day and simply say I loved it.

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### **Kindle Alexander says**

This is a well-written, exciting read that is different in a great way. I loved this book. It totally got me out of my book funk. Highly recommended.

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### **Sabrina The Trash Queen says**

I JUST LOVE A HITMAN.  
OR A BOOK ABOUT A HITMAN.

So when I end up finding A BOOK ABOUT A HITMAN THAT FALL IN LOVE AND THE PERSON THEY FALL IN LOVE WITH HAVE A DARK MYSTERIOUS PAST, I'm definitely reading it.

I adore every character from this book.  
I absolutely loved the story. And how there was a lot of action and fights scene. It surprised me because I honestly wasn't expecting to be reading that. I thought it would be a back story. AND I REALLY LIKED THAT IT WASN'T.

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### **Nazanin says**

#### **3.75 Dark-Angel Stars**

Killian is a hitman and he has quite a reputation in the underworld. But still, he is a man with wants, needs, and desires. He knows Nick for almost six months but not really knows him and yet, Nick consumed all of Killian's mind and body. They both like each other but something stood between them. Killian doesn't want to bring Nick into his life and put him in danger, unaware that Nick has his own demons. He lives in shadows and lives day to day. All his thought is to survive another day.

Both characters were likable, even the secondary one. Killian was the one who played the bad boy character but Nick was the one who was in charge/in control, most of the time. I, like Killian, was in awe of Nick's control and strength. I liked his resilience too. These two were perfect for each other. It was slow-paced and that was my only problem. Told in dual POV, 3rd person. It's a standalone novel and well-written with a good plot. All in all, I liked it and hope you enjoy it as well!

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## Deborah says

The first thing that caught my attention was the cover. It's striking.

I'm fussy when it comes to covers and I'll often either read or avoid a book based on the cover alone. As a rule I'm not a huge fan of covers like this since the face on the front is the one I picture while reading and it's not often I either like it or it works with the book.

But this one is spot on. The cover is intriguing and it's Killian.

The beginning of this book has a Warrior's Cross feel to it which I liked since I loved that book. But here instead of Julian we have Killian and Cameron is replaced by Nick.

Killian is the hitman who finds himself attracted and intrigued by Nick, a waiter. He finds himself returning to the restaurant time and time again just to see Nick. Before Nick Killian had never really considered a happy future for himself but now he wonders...could he possibly have it all?

Nick is more than he appears and it turns out Killian isn't the only one keeping secrets.

I enjoyed this book and both the main characters plus Dex and Ramon. Killian in particular is a complex and interesting man.

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## Jewel says

4.5 Stars

When Jaime Reese showed me the picture she was going to use for the cover of this book, my reaction was *"he looks...dangerous."* And he does, doesn't he? He looks intense and like he's seen and done stuff that you and I can only imagine. The cover definitely fits the character, Killian Marks, but don't let that intense stare fool you. Killian has layers. He's not as cold-hearted as even he believes. **Killian Marks wasn't at all what I expected and I loved him.** He could be ruthless, yes, but he had plenty of limits and a tangible moral

standard.

Nick, a waiter who has been waiting on "Ian" for months, now, has secrets of his own, too. **Nick's seen the darker sides of life** and has still managed not be all that cynical. Nick just wants to live his life in peace, but there's danger in relaxing his guard, and he's reluctant to bring anyone else into his troubles.

**Neither MC was just what they showed the world.** Killian, though a third generation hitman, had a lot of his mother in him, and Nick, well, there was much more to him than what met the eye at first. He's a good man that ended up in a bad situation and he's trying to live his life the best he can manage.

**Shades is about all the shades of gray that we encounter in life.** No one is just what they do for a living and in everything there are shades of morality. Shades of good. Shades of bad. It's about balance, and it's about learning that you can find happiness even if you think you don't deserve it.

I enjoyed the story immensely. It's a bit of a departure from the author's other books, but then again, not really. **It's still a story about second chances at life** - it's only the particular subject that is a bit darker. The story, though, didn't feel as heavy or as angsty or as dark as it could have been. I would not have minded if it had been a touch darker, truth be told. However, **Jaime Reese managed to strike a balance that didn't get mired in darkness** while still telling a story about a hitman finding love.

The suspense plot really grabbed my interest and kept it. The romance was never overshadowed by the suspense and while slow-burn, still felt in focus. **Nick and Killian were meant to be. Every step of the way, their dedication to one another showed,** and their - hard fought - HEA was swoon-worthy!

**Shades is another winner.**

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*ARC of **Shades** was generously provided by the author, in exchange for an honest review.*

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~☆~Dœni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

I survived. Barely.

**Shades is an edge-of-your-seat kind of book that, despite the suspense and violence, never loses sight of the romance.**

(It's also Jaime Reese's first standalone novel, and I hope not her last! I read an ARC of this book, and it was publication ready; no editing errors in sight.)

This is a story about a hitman with a conscience who sets his own rules and the one man who makes him want more.

When Nick, who works as a server at an Italian restaurant, asks Killian his name, Killian tells Nick to call him Ian. It's a half-truth, but, as Nick points out to Ian: *You unknowingly revealed your biggest truth.*

And the truth is Ian is tired of killing, tired of lying, tired of living half a life.

But Nick has something he's hiding too, something that could put Ian, and their relationship, at risk.

The first half of the book is slower paced but by no means boring. The men get to know one another and form an immediate connection. Despite the age difference (thirteen years), they have much in common: neither lived an ordinary life, and both are willing to sacrifice everything to keep what they found.

***This is what life is about. Living, not survival. Connections. Not just breathing and getting through each day.***

As Ian learns the full extent of Nick's secret, he's determined to put an end to Nick's nightmares. Nick doesn't need saving, but he can't bear to leave the man he loves.

The main secondary character in the story, Nick's "cleaner" and friend, Dex, provides much needed comic relief. Dex is a smartass who loves to get under Ian's skin. He can't fight worth shit, but he's loyal and smart.

Most authors can't balance action and romance; either the former is an afterthought or the latter fades into the background. But Jaime Reese nailed it.

This book is as much about running TO as it is about running from. The UST was like a live wire and absolutely delicious. Ian was just waiting for that one little word from Nick: YES (it's Ian's favorite word).

The steam is not abundant and somewhat muted (sensual rather than graphic). All the scenes but two fade to black, much to my eternal frustration. Nick and Ian are just so incredibly hot together, I wanted to see them give in to pure, unbridled lust. And they do. Just not on page.

Despite this, I never doubted the men's passion and love. I could see it in every touch, every kiss, every whisper.

Ian and Nick are connected through the eternal dance of fate. I actually saw the reveal coming as soon as Nick had a flashback to his childhood and hiding in his abusive uncle's closet. I think most readers will figure it out before Ian and Nick do, but I don't think that in any way takes away from the suspense of the story. It's just a slice of the plot.

Nick, ever calm and collected, is the light to Ian's darkness. Ian has been alone for so long, he's lost hope that anyone could ever really understand him and accept him as he is, not just bits and pieces, but his soul.

***Nick accepted him, as is. With all this darkness and shades in between.***

The last few chapters were terrifying. I couldn't read quickly enough, because WOW. The anticipation of danger, the waiting for something or someone to strike, about killed me.

The ending wasn't entirely what I expected, and that's a good thing.

Never fear, though, because Ian and Nick find their paradise, and Nick says YES again and again.

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## **R \* A Reader Obsessed \* says**

### **4 Stars**

I know there's a bit of divisiveness when it comes to this story but if you've read and liked Reese's The Men of Halfway House series, I would hedge my bets that you'll like this too. It doesn't hurt at all that this is basically the love child of Warrior's Cross and Zero at the Bone, which will either clinch your decision to read this book or avoid it all together.

I think with any assassin trope with a heart of gold, it is always a bit of a stretch for realistic progression. Killian has been doing this for years, basically bred and trained to take after his father, and he does it with utmost precision and skill. Killian doesn't sugarcoat what he's done to make a living, but he does have a conscience and a set of rules that he follows when accepting contracts. The only kink in Killian's impenetrable armor is when he falls for equally mysterious waiter Nick, who doesn't shy away from his intimidating nature and suspicious shady circumstances. Killian doesn't think anything will come of it because.... well, he's a murderer. However, when Nick's past catches up to him, Killian can't *not* help him and thus, both quickly become embroiled in more danger than they bargained for.

Why this was a win for me is because Reese consistently writes her stories with plenty of swoon and emotions. All her protagonists have a moral compass despite their situation. They certainly have an endearing vulnerability and always plenty of baggage and turmoil. When they find that person who's their soulmate it just clicks, and of course they'd do anything for the other to see them happy and safe.

So yes, this was a bit far fetched. However, Reese never shorts the reader on the writing nor does she fail on delivering the smex and the sweeping romance that always comes with a very satisfying happily ever after. Again, consistency is key and this is signature Reese!

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## **Ele says**

Oh man. I need a box of shame for this one.

I went into it knowing that I had to suspend disbelief and I was actually enjoying myself up until 50%. But then things took a completely ridiculous turn, soap opera material (for real, it's Days of Our Lives), and the resolution was even more eye-rolling. Add ALL the cheese and the never ending internal monologues (which has always been a problem for me with this author) and yeah, you can say it didn't work. Dunno, maybe I have read a lot of kick-ass assassin/mafia stories lately and this one paled in comparison.

2.75 stars rounded up because I liked the first half.

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## **Susan says**

I reaaaaaally wanted to like this. I'm a big fan of Jaime Reese, but unfortunately this didn't quite work for me.

This is really a case of 'it's not the book, it's me', because I wasn't all that interested to begin with when I first read the blurb. Hitmen and underground characters used to be my thing, but they're not anymore. I thought I'd try it anyway. But I guess I got exactly what I expected, and it just wasn't the book for me.

Killian is a contract killer. But of course he only kills bad guys, not the good guys. Killian is 45 and getting ready to retire from the business. He has a retirement plan ready, so when he's done, he can just walk away. But something is holding him back. It could be the handsome waiter of the restaurant Killian has been frequenting for the last 6 months.

Nick is a waiter now, but he used to be someone else. Since he has to be able to run at a moment's notice, he can't get involved with anyone. Not even the dangerous looking man who is becoming his friend. No matter how big his attraction is.

But when Nick needs to run again, it's Killian who is there to help....

There's nothing really wrong with this book. I know almost all of my friends will love it. But for me it felt like I'd read it all before. The hitman who only kills bad guys, who is standoffish and aloof, but not around his one true love. No, he thaws at the sight of the pretty man. Then we get some action scenes, some romance scenes and then some action scenes sprinkled with some hurt/comfort. It 's just that I've read it all before.

I think I'm getting jaded.

So, don't pay attention to this review, it just wasn't my kind of book.

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## Wendy says

When I found out Jaime Reese was gonna release a new story, I was over the moon happy. I am a huge HUGE fan of her writing and The Men of Halfway House is one of my favorite MM series. So to say I was **excited** to read this one would be an understatement.

The first thing I loved about this book, was the **cover**. Just looking at it, I knew it was gonna be my kind of book, because we all know how much I love them **bad boys**. This dark, dangerous, rugged, yet handsome man looking at me...**hell yeah** ...sign me up :P

And I was right !!

Killian pushed all my buttons. Once I got to know him, I really fell in love with this dangerous **hitman**. Just like Nick ;) Nick is a **waiter** and he has some heavy **secrets** of his own. He has been Killian's waiter for a while now, and something about Nick gets to him. suffice to say, this works both ways..



Both men are not really who they seem to be.

I loved how we slowly got to know more and more. It really kept me on the edge of my seat wanting more. I couldn't put it down, once I started I had to finish it... Which is the reason I am now a walking zombie...

I already knew this was gonna be a different kind of story, than the The Halfway House series, because Jaime said so.... It has a lot more **mystery/ suspense**, but it definitely wasn't any less good ...it was pretty **awesome !!**

*My reviews are posted on DirtyBooksObsession*

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### Shin Mon Thway says

I guess I'm in the minority here because I thought I'm going to be head over heels with this book but turned out it was only an ok read for me. ? First, it took me 10 days to finish this book because I really got bored in the middle. Too damn slow-paced, that chase and run which would have been amazing if it were way shorter got boring and winded still after 60% and nothing is happening. ? Also, the big issue of these two, Petrov is chasing Nick's arse then why didn't Ian kill the man? The problem solved! Ian is the world's deadliest assassin who can kill and hunt down anyone but not Petrov? Please!!! ??? And then everything got settled after they had a talk like adults and did a negotiation? Again, why didn't they do it in the first place? ? I guess I was just not in the mood for this book. It was well-written, the characters were strong and interesting but the storyline isn't just there for me. Something was just missing. The epilogue was sweet though.

3 assassins always retire in private tropical islands stars  
??????

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### Wynne Katherine says

I have finished reading the damn book.

Please note that this is going to be a lazy review cause it's one of those days where I'm fucking lazy.

This book wasn't exactly remarkable in it's plotting, but what made me enjoy this one so much is the writing. Most of the time, the writer came up with amazing writing skill like this :

*Everything about this evening was far beyond what he could have imagined. This was a grand gesture, but it was based on the tiniest of comments. A wistful dream he had voiced during a dark and rainy night, assuming it would never happen. But Ian had made it possible. All because it had been Nick's wish.*

Which quite literally soothes my soul cause duh. Beautiful phrases.

But then, there are also times where the writing doesn't work. All these sentences below are used when they were literally fighting for their life. I mean sure, if you are both just sitting around and fondling balls and kissing, then I don't mind such descriptive and flowery words. But I mean, when you were literally fighting bad guys left and right, who got the time to be mellowy and romantic?

Maybe they do, but I sure as hell don't cause as much as I like to complain about life, I still kinda really fucking love being alive.

Anyways, so here are the examples :

*"The rush of blood and thump of his heart throbbed in his ears, muting everything but the sound of his name spoken from the voice his soul immediately recognized and craved with enough passion to invoke a tidal wave of emotions to flood his system."*

*"Ian neared, leaving nothing but bodies in his wake, like an angel of death, dispensing judgment and fury, with whispers of smoke and sparks of fire escaping from his weapons of choice.*

*His dark angel. Dressed in black, walking through plumes of smoke in the room filled with the stink of gunpowder."*

Not to mention, the actions scenes need more work I think. Cause I have a hard time paying attention to what is going on while trying to waddle through all that flowery words and sentences. I guess here is a good example to know when to cut down on the beautiful and lovely dovey descriptive sentences and when to amplify on that.

Plus, for some reason, this book just cannot fully suck me into the story. Which is odd, seeing that the writing is more than average.

But it is what it is.

Oh, and the ending though. Lmao. After all that build up for almost the entire book, somehow you can end the conflict with **just a conversation**. Sounds very bizarre to me. But I mean, oh well.

Overall, a good read. I enjoyed it.

**Blog : Bloggity bloggity blog**

**Youtube : Apparently, I have a youtube channel... TAADAAH!**

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**Randi ♥ LoveSawyer.com says**

I think this is a great example of when bad covers happen to good books. To be honest, I have no idea how I ended up with this book. Cover aside, the synopsis isn't something I would typically be interested in. Hitmen are violent and I rarely enjoy reading about violence. But one day the book showed up on my Kindle then I got an email with a blog tour schedule and I was on it. Silly me, I must have signed up for the wrong book!

Anyway, all that aside the book was awesome!

We start off getting to know Killian. He's cold and stand-offish and intimidating. But, the author did a good job on humanizing him quickly. There's a big heart hiding behind his mask.

Then we meet Nick. Nick was awesome, we could be best friends. We see things the same way why would you ask someone to roll their sleeve up when they can take off their whole shirt? I love meeting characters who are similar to me!

The book had a lot of action, drama, and suspense. I don't read this stuff enough to say whether it was good, but I enjoyed it and I think that's the important part. I needed to know what would happen next. Even though there was a lot of suspense and violence, the author never lost sight of the romance.

Now for the good parts...

The sex, Oh. My. Goodness. Actually, lets back up. Their first kiss was flippin' hot. Maybe even my favorite first kiss. I want to get that tangled up over a kiss again. It was sweet and desperate, and passionate. That one kiss conveyed so many emotions the characters didn't know how to express.

Ok, now the sex! \*fans\* A while ago I talked about the perils of trying to slam my kindle vs. a physical book. This book brought light to the matter of fanning yourself with a paperback vs. fanning yourself with a kindle. It was that hot and Kindles do not make good fans.

It was tastefully written, there was nothing explicitly graphic. But, oh my goodness the author conveyed all the important parts. The grunts and growls, the sound of slapping flesh that tells you everything you need to know about what they're doing.

Thanks to this book, I've also added sex on a boat to my sexy bucket list.

Overall, Shades was a well written and engaging romantic suspense title. I'd recommend it to anyone looking for a lengthy read that will have you captivated from the first page.

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### **Ariana says**

DNF @ 70%

I just virtually lost the will power to carry on.

The writing style of this author and me simply don't gel. Everything is too much, too perfect, too over the top. And that includes the plot which took a somewhat ridiculous turn at 59%. I skimmed through to 70% but nothing (not even the sex) really helped to redeem the book. Not talking about overdone feelings and all that cloying sweetness which feels totally unreal.

Also not keen on frequent repetition of certain phrases and expressions. ("He didn't like that word. He didn't want to push him." etc.)

Nope, this is not for me, sorry. This felt too Mills and Boon.

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