



## Stripped Clean

*Ellis Carrington*

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## **Stripped Clean** Ellis Carrington

Carlos O'Shea is stuck. He knocked up a girl in college after a night of too much drinking and then married her to be honorable. With little money, fewer options, and no degree, he winds up cleaning the floors in a small town gentlemen's club and thinking desperate thoughts about the handsome owner that'll lead to nothing but trouble.

Greg Moorehouse only invested in a nudie bar to help his best buddy out of a financial crisis. Now his drug-dealing ex-boyfriend, his reverend father, and a parade of surgically-enhanced DDs are driving him insane. But what's really stripped him of all good sense is his growing obsession with his married employee, Carlos.

They circle each other in a push-pull of misunderstandings and growing attraction. Carlos needs to get his boss out of his head, and Greg can't abide cheaters and married men. So what are a strip club owner and the guy who cleans going to do with their undeniable desires?

*Be advised: Contains explicit love-making between two hot-blooded men, angsty dark moments, and cupcake-baking exotic dancers.*

## **Stripped Clean Details**

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Author : Ellis Carrington

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## From Reader Review Stripped Clean for online ebook

### Susan65 says

I was really unsure if I was going to enjoy this book at first but that concern was put to rest quite quickly. I loved the sexual tension between Carlos and Greg. Nothing was acted on because Carlos was married, and faithful...and Greg didn't mess with married men, or cheaters.

What's not known at first is that Carlos had one night of drunken sex with a girl who then became pregnant. Even knowing he was gay and that he would be consigned to a loveless, sexless marriage, Carlos did what he thought was right and married the mother of his child. Sadly, she miscarries after the marriage, but by then they are stuck together because of a mortgage, and life just went down hill from there.

Greg doesn't do cheaters because his ex cheated on him. His ex is still a douche and in his life because Greg is best friends with his brother, who is also his business partner. Cheater Sam wants Greg back, but Sam is also a drug addict. Not a pleasant situation.

The attraction between Carlos and Greg is difficult to read at times because I just didn't see how either of them were willing to bend their rules. Fortunately, a third party does that for them (view spoiler) and they finally have a chance together...after they get over their many other issues.

When they finally work out all the issues between them they have great chemistry. But it takes a little while, and the sides issues chewed up a lot of their time. I would have liked to see Greg meet his brother David. It kinda felt like he was thrown in there but it never went anywhere. I still recommend, it's a pretty good story about perseverance and overcoming major obstacles without stepping on your morals or values.

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### Riley Hart says

I was lucky enough to get to beta read this book. I loved the relationship between Carlos and Greg. It was a joy watching it grow from friendship and attraction to something more. This book is sexy, sweet, and angsty-three of my all time favorite things.

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### Dena says

I hate to give a negative review but this was one of the most depressing books I've ever read. Every single aspect of these guys lives was negative.

MC 1: First boyfriend (as teenager) is killed running from MC's Dad when he discovered them fooling around. MC Sleeps with friend once and she gets pregnant so he marries her. These are the only two people he's ever been with. He joins the military and is outed in bootcamp so he hurts himself for medical discharge. His wife loses the baby. They are trapped in a mortgage they can't afford but somehow she refuses to work and is in college. He is trying to make money the best way he can and supposedly the only job he can find is as a janitor at a strip club. He finds out his wife is pregnant with someone else's child. His father was abusive and the last thing he said to him before he died was I hate you (which he now regrets) and on and on and on

and this was just one MC--the other one is just as messed up. Not to make light of it but I was ready to slit my own wrist just from reading it. This was a good idea that just when too wrong for me--I don't mind angst but really? With all of the drama somehow everything is perfect in the last 10 pages of the book? I didn't believe it.

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### **Sharon says**

This is about two guys with so many obstacles between them you wonder if they will ever be able to work through them. Stripped Clean has a HEA so you know they do, but the journey there is what this book is about. You can read the book blurb to get a rundown of all the baggage they have to deal with.

What I think the author does best is convey that feeling of falling in love with all the awkwardness, double guessing what the other person is thinking and worrying if you are reading things into it. I was able to remember those butterflies in the stomach as you waited for that first kiss from your crush. Gives you all kinds of warm and fuzzies.

Greg does well for his self financially, is comfortable with his sexuality and experienced. His last relationship ended badly because of his partner's drug use. And to make matters worse his ex-lover is the brother of Greg's best friend. Greg also has serious anger and trust issues when it comes to his father and it has affected his relationships. But he is a good guy trying to do the best he can and help others. Carlos fell in love with a boy as a teenager, but never got to truly explore his sexuality. Then he ended up in a sexless and loveless marriage and has ignored his needs because he wouldn't ever cheat on his wife. He is also a good, honest man struggling to do the best he can and it is heartbreaking how he denies his own happiness in order to do right by others.

Both men are drawn to one another from the moment they meet, but unaware that the other is also attracted to them. I enjoyed how they dance around each other for a good part of the book. There are so many reasons for them not to act on their feelings, least of which is the whole employer/employee relationship. When they finally do it is hot! It isn't happy ever after for them just yet. There are some angsty moments as they try to navigate their feelings for each other and their own emotional baggage.

These are two real life characters overcoming self-doubt and learning to trust and love again.  
<http://www.loveromancepassion.com/rev...>

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### **JustJen "Miss Conduct" says**

Review written for The Blog of Sid Love.

This story takes a bit of set up to get going. Greg meets Carlos right away, but then things happen that lead up to Greg becoming part owner in the Club where Carlos works. There is immediate attraction, but a few things get in their way.

Carlos is a pretty down-on-his-luck guy. From the loss of his first boyfriend, the issues with his father, his discharge from the military, marriage that is basically being held together by mutual debt, all of which lead

to his current occupation at the Club.

Then, we have Greg, who has also dealt with some crap along the way. He has daddy issues as well and is recently getting over his last relationship with his now drug-addicted ex, who also happens to be his best friend and now Club co-owner. Due to reasons surrounding the way his father left, and how his last relationship ended, he is strictly against cheating, especially with a married man. So, he fights his strong attraction to Carlos for the most part, but allows their friendship to grow.

Needless to say, things do not get resolved with Carlos and his wife for some time, so there is quite a bit of sexual tension between Carlos and Greg as they work together and help each other out with stuff. The extenuating circumstances that led to Carlos getting married in the first place also end up being what pushes him to finally break free. Like I said, it takes a while for them to have the opportunity to act on their feelings, and even after they do, they still have some issues to work through.

When they finally do take that step, it is worth the wait. They have great chemistry which has been building for quite some time. There were a few things that come up that never seemed to get resolved, and I wouldn't mind seeing another story with them as they build their new relationship. If you like a story that takes things slowly while waiting for the opportunity and situation to be right before things happen, give this enjoyable story a try.

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## **Talk Supe says**

Braine's Talk Supe review

The sex scenes, it was intimate but not overly graphic which is why STRIPPED CLEAN is such a great M/M cherry popper. Men in romance novels are rough and raw with all their Alphaness coming out in the bedroom and that insatiable need to mark and claim. Outside looking in, I imagined M/M to be testosterone charged and that's too much for me to handle. STRIPPED CLEAN wasn't like that at all. Color me ignorant because men can be soft and vulnerable if they want to and I saw all of those glorious loving emotions exchanged between Greg and Carlos. The intimate scenes are so emotionally honest I can't help but feel the glow of their love for each other.

So my M/M cherry's been popped and I thank Ellis Carrington for taking such good care of me! It was painless and no blood was drawn so obviously I'll be coming back for more. I'm still out of my element here and I'm content to stick to the more timid ones before I go exploring the more adventurous types. ECarrington's works will be my go-to because I know I'm in good hands and I really love her writing voice. Now if you're an M/M virgin and are thinking of getting your feet wet, check out STRIPPED CLEAN, it's lubricated with lots of heart so you won't have a problem sliding in to the story (bad pun, I know).

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## **Shirley Frances says**

Carlos is at a place in his life where he is feeling unhappy. His luck is not the best either, but thankfully he finds some semblance of steadiness in his new job, even if it's just as a janitor at a strip club. He is attracted to the owner and but he's denied himself the pleasure of another man for so long, that he can't make himself

to act on his feelings.

Gregg is a reluctant business partner at the strip club, but at least trying to make the best of it lets him interact and lust after Carlos. Although instantly attracted to Carlos, he knows that he is married but not the circumstances of said marriage. He stays await and doesn't act on his lustful thoughts.

Carlos and Gregg do form a sort of friendship while keeping their attraction at bay. Hell, the sexual tension between these two could cut glass. I have to say that although I wanted to smack them upside the head to just get on with it, I enjoyed the give and take and their whiplash-inducing ramblings – I want. I can't. I wish. I won't. I could. I should. It sure made for an entertaining read!

I won't go into much detail since a lot of things happen in this story that slowly but surely bring these two together. I liked that despite Carlos and Gregg kept their attraction to themselves, their connection grew throughout the story. I enjoyed their interactions, their struggles with their feelings and them finally getting together.

Hell yeah, I did! When the moment finally came I found myself grinning from ear to ear and tapping the hell out of my tablet to get to it once and for all. It wasn't only hot to see their passion finally unleashed, but the emotions that came into play made it even more enjoyable.

All in all, a fantastic, enjoyable read with all the elements I love – emotions, great characters, different concept and great man love.

I received this title in exchange of my honest opinion.

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## **Mary says**

Carlos is in a bad place, he and his wife are through, she's sleeping around on him, they're never in their house at the same time, and in short order she's out the door. Greg is trying to be a good guy, running a club he hates to help out a friend and the only good thing about the whole experience is meeting Carlos. The story is told so realistically, no part of the two men finding each other and moving toward love is easy. And so the payoff at the end, we feel deeply because we know how hard won it is.

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## **Becky Condit says**

**Please leave comments on my 4 1/2 sweet pea review at <http://mrsconditreadsbooks.com/index....>**

*"Wherever... you are is home."*

There is no insta-love in this book but there is an immediate attraction between Greg and Carlos. Carlos is working at a job that many would consider beneath him, as the janitor at a strip club. Greg is part owner of the club and when he starts trying to make allowances for Carlos to get him a better paying job he gets called on it by his partner.

Carlos carries a lot of baggage as does Greg. Carlos has good intentions and is trying to improve himself and

his situation but his feeling of getting what he deserves keeps getting in his way. Greg tries to be the tough guy in a non-aggressive way. When one of the strippers has to be fired because it appears she is involved with drugs it causes both men to face their demons and want to give her a second chance. A minor character in the plot may be the villain but how to deal with Greg's partner's family? It's all very complicated.

We pretty much know from the start that Carlos and Greg will get their HEA but it's going to be a rough ride to get there. However, the final ending for some of the other characters is not a given and I was on the edge of my chair waiting to see how things would turn out for someone who deserved a bad ending and someone who didn't deserve one but was caught up in circumstances that were leading there.

Ms Carrington does a wonderful job of drawing us into the world of a strip club without making it seem smarmy or low class. These are people who are sex workers but it's a job, right? Some parts of the story seemed to drag a little too long but overall it's an excellent book. Families get brought into the story and there are many characters to enjoy. I really enjoyed Stripped Clean.

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## **Mare SLiTsReaD Reviews says**

This review was posted on: [www.facebook.com/slitsread](http://www.facebook.com/slitsread)

3.5 I am healed and breathing stars

I enjoyed this book. It was truly a great mix of angst, sweet, hott.

An elect group of characters, all a lil broken, all a little lost, and all a lil beautiful in their own ways

The 2 MC's

Carlos:

Lost, confused, in denial, living a life he doesn't want. He has a huge heart. Lots of love and DAMN lots of insecurities!

Greg:

Angry, afraid of commitment, lost and confused by out and proud.

The climb to the HEA was actually so good that this book kept me going. The angst, the strife, the miscommunication, the fears, the laughter and the tears.

The ending of this book just sums up 250 pages worth that I recommend to anyone to read!

*"They were together, and wherever they were headed that was how it was going to stay. Stripped clean of the barriers that had been between them, the stupid misunderstandings. the dark parts of themselves had*

*been brought into the light so they could heal. Together they'd heal their broken places and come out stronger."*

Mare~Slitsread

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### **Silkeeeeeereads says**

I just couldn't connect. I couldn't connect with the story or the characters. I didn't feel any chemistry between the characters. This is not a sweet read, it's a rough, depressing story about two men that needed to clean up their lives and hearts to be able to have some sort of a relationship in the future. I wish I was able to care about them, but I didn't. Sorry.

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### **Lexxie (un)Conventional Bookworms says**

\*I received a free ARC of Stripped Clean from Enchantress of Books Blogtours in exchange of an honest review\*

My review will be posted on December 3rd 2013 as part of the blogtour.

All I can say right now is that I really loved this story! Stripped Clean is well written, with wonderful characters.

This and all my other reviews are originally posted on my blog **(un)Conventional Bookviews**

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### **??? Michaëlle ♡?? says**

3.8 Stars

Another pleasant, accidental surprise read. Both of these guys are complete messes, but they were endearing and I couldn't help rooting for them.

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### **Macky says**

Wow! What a great read that was. I'm sat here now wondering why the hell I've not picked this up before because there was so much in it ticking my own personal boxes that I can feel a bit of a gush coming on. Warning: You may want to duck and cover!

I am a self confessed, obsessive, fanatical, to the point where I won't read anything else, m/m reader and I admit that since I discovered the genre almost three years ago, I've read *hundreds* of amazing (and not so amazing) books and found some awesome authors who I now auto buy without question. This last few



months in particular I've been wowed by some fabulous writers, brand new to me, who have added themselves to that auto-buy list and on the strength of 'Stripped Clean,' Ellis Carrington has just joined them.

This book oozed the one ingredient that for me personally, makes a really great gay romance unputdownable and that's Palpable Sexual Tension! If an author gets that and the chemistry absolutely right between their MC's then I'm a fan for life and I've got to say, the ST and chemistry between Greg and Carlos had me so entranced I practically tingled all the way through the book.

From the moment they encounter each other in the first pages, you start to feel it. The air thick with the unresolved passion they generate whenever the two of them are on page. Neither of them act on it because they're both still carrying pretty heavy baggage that prohibits them from taking it further, but OMG was I in my element! There's no jumping into bed within the first chapter with *these* guys. They slow dance around each other, fantasising but never really doing anything except for 'accidental' touches and lingering looks and that suited me just fine, almost to the point where I was sort of hoping they never would do the deed because the anticipation was delicious!

*' He pulled the towel from Carlos's hands. Still-damp fingers brushed Greg's and when he tugged the dishcloth Carlos came closer. Their chests bumped. "I'm off tonight. I'll stay and help clean." His breath got shallow.*

*"Oh." Carlos licked his lips. "Okay."*

*Greg was vaguely aware that he'd spent a little too long staring at the dark lines swirling in the man's brown eyes and the fullness of his lips. His pulse was weirdly climbing in speed and intensity to the synth beats of David Guettas "Titanium" being piped in from the back deck..... '*

And that's only when they're washing dishes!

There's quite a few subplots to contend with throughout the story and of course there's a lot of angst generated because of them. Sometimes I get put off if there's too much going on, but with Greg and Carlos I got so invested in their story that I couldn't put it down. Dramatic? Yes, it was at times but not to the point where it felt too kitchen Sink. I think it's the way it's written that takes it away from that territory, because I admit I've rolled my eyes at far less in other stories. I felt really connected to this story in a way that stopped me from over analysing, so I just went with the flow and lost myself in it.

What I was really impressed with was the fact that once they took their relationship to the next level, it didn't suddenly morph into a perfect partnership. There were still misunderstandings and bridges to cross before they got their HEA and at times towards the finish, it got quite bumpy but it was really satisfying. The love scenes were sexy and sensual but again didn't always work out the way you would expect and that made it more realistic too.

Both have major daddy issues and messy relationships working against them and their growing attraction. For Carlos it's a forced marriage, that was never going to work because of his sexual preference and is failing even more because of a personal tragedy. Then Greg is still hurting from a bad relationship with his best friend Ricky's half brother Sammy, whose constant cheating and drug use broke them apart, plus it's Sammy's irresponsible actions that result in Greg being asked to invest in the club with Ricky, making it even more unavoidable for him to be around Carlos. Cue more spark!

I thought it was romantic, angsty, hot, sweet, tender and ultimately emotionally fulfilling. All topped off with

a fabulous ending that wasn't easily won but was just about perfect for the ups and downs it took to get there.

The fact I didn't want to put it down and all that tingly will they/won't they action has pushed it to a 5 star read in my eyes. So go on, treat yourselves and don't leave it until you're kicking yourself like me for not reading this gem sooner. I loved it!

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## Sara says

There is not one thing I did not like about this book. Not one. It was told seamlessly, it was sexy, it was touching it was believable and I just really enjoyed myself with it. I think this might be one hell of a jumbled review... \*sigh\* let's get to it.

Greg and Carlos meet under less than perfect circumstances. Upon their first touch, yes touch, both men feel a charge that is undeniable aside from the roles they now play.

***Hi Greg, this is your imagination. He's your employee and he's married.***

***Greg didn't fuck around with cheaters. Too damn bad though. The man was hot.***

Yeah, so there is that, two handsome and ready men attracted to each other but they are out of reach for relationship status. Greg is newly out of a relationship turned bad and is helping his best friend run a strip club, a gentlemen's club to be exact. Carlos is doing what he can to survive and finally get on with his life and takes a job as a janitor of said club. Boss/employee relationships are off the menu for the boys...what a shame. I guess it's a good thing that they can flirt like hell with each other and drive each other crazy with sexual frustration right.

***When he did try to sleep, his dreams were full of Greg. Greg who he couldn't shouldn't, want because...Because the man was his boss. Because officially, he and Lacey were still married.***

This was told with a nice slow burn. There was no other way to tell it, you could not throw these two at each other and make it work. I was happy we got both POV's from the MC's so I knew where their heads were even though there were times I wanted to scream at them. Maybe I did? Well, at Greg at least, not that I didn't like him, I really did I just wanted him to get over...well himself and kiss the damn boy!

Amongst the maddening foreplay or sexual tension, this was a really was a well told romance between two real men in real life situations. I could see this happening, there was nothing to buy into, no realism to suspend, I just had to sit back and let the boys tell me their story. There was not a case of insta love, in this book but one of insta lust and frustration that at one point had me yelling "Would one of you please toss the other against the wall and make out already" and then I got...

***“I’m awake now, Greg.”***

Oh, atta boy Carlos. RAWR. I did a literal fist bump at that point. Did I mention the frustration in this? It was done so well that even going back over my notes I get worked up over it. The boys wanted each other so much but they had to figure out who they were, wanted to be and who they could be as an individual before they could take the leap beyond, co-worker, beyond the friendship and beyond the teasing.

***He could make all the excuses in the world, but he wanted the way Carlos touched him to be something more than a dream.***

The immediate attraction was obvious, the want was steamy and I would have loved to be a fly on the wall during the laundry session. These boys, wow, they have some deep issues to work through. Not just the things that are keeping them apart but they both have haunting pasts that aren’t letting them be who they want, who they need to be. Once the walls fall down, once they jump over that first hurdle we get the lines that had me doing a dance in my chair.

***“I want us to have something straight. I don’t want you going anywhere. Not after you call me and tease the shit out of me like that, ya hear?”***

***“Loud and clear.” Carlos groaned, thinking of the things he just said.***

***“Lemme ask you: if I were there tonight, would you be coming home with me?”***

***“Yeah.” He didn’t think before he answered.***

***“Do me a favor then and hang tight.”***

Stripped Clean is a book that does just that. It takes all the barriers, all the masks, all the stereotypes, guilt and fears and strips them away to get down to the real that we all want. That person that would lay down their life, give up and give in just to be with you. I got that with Carlos and Greg. I still feel that with them having finished this book two weeks ago. Like I said, there was not one thing I did not like about this book. It was comfortable, it was an easy read; it was angsty, sexy, heartbreaking and fun. All the check marks I need for a romance.

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