



# Alone

*Marissa Farrar*

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Caught in a violent and abusive relationship, Serenity thinks there is no escape. Then she meets a stranger, Sebastian, who shows her the possibility of a different future.

Only Sebastian has a dark secret; he is a vampire.

As Serenity's life takes a terrifying turn, she finds herself drawn into a world she never knew existed; one of murder, love, and immortality. She is forced to confront her own weaknesses to save both her own life and that of the vampire she has come to love. But in the end all that matters is; can she find the strength to be Alone ?

## Alone Details

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Author : Marissa Farrar

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# From Reader Review Alone for online ebook

## Tracy Fenton says

I am taking part in a 2017 Book Reading Challenge and one of the categories is to read a book outside of my comfort zone - and a Vampire PNR is certainly outside mine! I did enjoy the book and thought it was well written, engaging and entertaining, and I even admit to having a little crush on Sebastian the Vampire. I am glad I read the book and think fans of Paranormal Romance will love this series.

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## Milena says

I got this e-book for free after seeing the link on a facebook book club page. Save your time and don't even bother. Even vampire fans wouldn't be able to stomach this cheesy romance with quite a few bonus smut scenes that come out of nowhere.

Serenity has been abused by every man in her life, starting with her stepfather and ending with her husband of ten years, who she accidentally kills during a fight. Sebastian is a very old, hot, white vampire, who sees Serenity one day and follows her home, saving her from her husband's abuse. I guess the author decided to do away with the part where vampires have to be invited into someone's home, but whatever. While her husband is in the hospital, Serenity thinks about and meets Sebastian a couple of times, feeling completely captivated by him even though they exchange five words.

This novel was very disturbing to me, not only because of the abuse Serenity describes, but for other reasons as well. Since the intended audience is more adult, I didn't think I'd have to deal with insta-love and insubstantial romance or silly villains. I was wrong.

One thing that bothered is the recurrent theme of Serenity's inability to have children. She talks about having had miscarriages and how her body doesn't seem to let her have children. At one point, the third-person narrator tells us that "her life had no meaning. Incapable of nurturing a child inside her, what was the point in her existence? Her body killed her babies, as though she was poisonous, toxic. She hated herself."

Miscarriages are very sad and all, but I hate how the narration propagates the idea that a woman's life only has value if she has the ability to become pregnant and have babies. I understand that having children is something many people strongly desire, but Serenity feels like it's her only purpose. She could've made a career or gotten pets and hobbies, but no. Her mind is focused on a baby (even though she is highly aware of the abusive, detrimental environment/situation she's in).

Also, this book has lots of subtly shaming in it. When Serenity talks about her mother being a hippie, she says that her mother was the kind of hippie "that liked to interpret free love as being a slut." Because women are not allowed to enjoy themselves or make use of their bodies as they wish as long as they're being safe.

The story goes on and, SURPRISE!, Serenity realizes that she's in love with Sebastian, although they've only actually talked like, five times, and about nothing really (well, they talked about Sebastian doing away with her dead husband's body, so I guess that's something important?). The odd thing about this is that Serenity is aware that she doesn't know anything about Sebastian. But she finds a way to justify loving him without knowing anything about him at all, by making a very odd analogy. For Serenity, love isn't about knowing someone well, but how they make you feel. And she rationalizes that by saying "she loved each and every

one of her unborn babies. They never had the chance to have a favorite food, color or song, but she didn't love them any less." I get that she's trying to make sense of her feelings, but it's totally absurd to me, because I've never imagined comparing the love you feel for your unborn/dead children and a mysterious, creepy man you literally just met.

After Serenity kills their husband and Sebastian makes the body disappear, they don't get together because Sebastian's maker, a vampire named Madeline, is supposedly in love with him and wants him to be with her and nobody else, though Sebastian makes it clear time and again that he despises Madeline. The vampire eventually gives him an ultimatum: either he gets with her or she'll kill Serenity. Since he loves her so much, Sebastian explains to Serenity that he has to leave her alone to ensure her safety. Serenity doesn't like the idea, because she loves Sebastian so bad and wants to be with him. She says that he should Madeline kill her, because if she "can't be with [him], [she has] nothing else to live for."

Serenity is totally crazy. Here are some very disturbing lines she says:

"I will not stand by and watch you leave me for her!" (even though they're not together)

"Sebastian dressed too well to be lying in coffins."

"Why did you even speak to me if you knew we'd never be together?"

"I assume you're going to provide the stationary?" (when Madeline forces her to write a break up letter to Sebastian).

The narration is inconsistent. The author switches points of view often and randomly. First it's just Serenity, then we see snippets of Sebastian. All of sudden, Madeline gets her own passages and then even Officer Bentley, this police officer that eventually develops a crush on Serenity (for no fucking reason). And there are inconsistencies with the aspects of vampirism the author chooses to use. When Madeline first tells Serenity about Sebastian being a vampire, she points out, among other things, that he never eats. Later in the story, Serenity asks Sebastian what vampires need to survive. He responds: "The same as any human: food, air, shelter." So which one is it? Do they need food or not?

Apparently there are two sequels to this story. I won't bother with them.

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## Shellie (Layers of Thought) says

The original review with more elements is posted on Layers of Thought.

*A romantic and emotional journey of an abused woman and her path towards healing - all within a vampire urban fantasy.*

**Synopsis:** Set in a present day Los Angeles, a young woman named Serenity is in a difficult and very abusive marriage. Her self esteem is poor and she questions whether she deserves her nightly beatings and emotional abuse from her creepy and jobless husband.

When she stumbles upon a very compelling and gorgeous stranger named Sebastian, all her feelings

rearrange. As she begins to question her relationship with her husband, his abuse, and herself - the inevitable relationship develops. When Serenity realizes Sebastian is something other than human there is the inevitable conflict, some evil meddling, and ensuing drama.

**Thoughts:** This is a romantic, mildly horrific, urban fantasy – with some important real life aspects and concerns. Some are based upon domestic violence and the inevitable emotional journey into the experiences of an abused woman. Additionally there is the internal conflict which one can only imagine a monster must feel when needing to kill to exist. With much angst within the pages one sees into the emotional travails; caring and empathizing with some characters while loathing others. Marissa Farrar does a fine job of showing the reader her character's complexities in a easy and readable and page-turning manner.

My only very small quibble around the book is that although the book was set in the US with the main character being American, the language is distinctly from the UK and British in nature, creating a mild internal conflict for me. I would say that some American readers may have a slight lag in the reading flow with a few small bits of the language. Thinking it would not be a detriment for most, especially if you like the Brits, I give this romantic and redemptive vampire novel a 4 stars. It was grand!

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### **Kami Dodson-Perry says**

This is the first book I have read by Marissa Farrar.

Even though the story was good I still felt this story was lacking.

The story is about Serenity and Sebastian. Serenity has been abused since the age of 14. She really has no knowledge of life before all the abuse. Her step-father then her husband of 10 years.

Serenity is terrified to leave her husband. She has nothing, no money, no family, nothing to help her get away. Her fear of him finding her and making her hurt even more than the average day keeps her with him.

But there is a major problem. Her husband does not work and stays at home writing his "novel" yeah right. Serenity gets fired for being MIA at work after passing out in the restroom from the pain in her back that her husband caused the night before. Unable to take the humility of telling her boss the truth she is fired. Now scared of what she will face when she gets home to her husband she decides to wonder the streets a little while. Then she has a panic attack and meets Sebastian who comes to her rescue.

Everything changes for Serenity.

Throughout the story you feel so sad about this character and for all the abuse she has had in her life. You understand her bipolar ways of being afraid to leave but knowing that she must leave her husband. At the same time you think she is so stupid for staying there but you realize she knows that if she runs her husband will find her and kill her. Serenity has never known happiness, never known real love, and you just find yourself hoping that Sebastian will swoop in and help her. And he does in a way. Then there is Sebastian and his past. Sad and alone both of them needing love. I felt the ending of the story lacked that happy feeling.

This is a series but I am not sure if I will get the next one in the series.

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## **Book Monitor says**

It has been a long time since I have read a vampire novel but I am so glad I read this one.

Serenity is the wife of an abusive husband. The book begins with her losing her job and on the same day she meets Sebastian, who is different from anyone she has known, at this early stage she is not really aware of just how different. From this point the story twists and turns and her life changes dramatically.

This was a compelling read. It has moments of darkness and the picture portrayed of abusive relationships really rings true to life. There are also moments of hope and Serenity is not just a victim of poor choices and bad relationships but a person who discovers she has a lot of internal strengths and her capacity for loving and caring has not been obliterated by the years of aggression and constant denigration, just deeply hidden. This is a love story but it is as much about the meaning of humanity, self respect and self forgiveness as it is about romantic love.

Don't get me wrong, this is not a deep, worthy or heavy book, it is a really good story, well told, easy to read and with characters that feel real, even within the context of some of them being vampires.

The ending sets up the next in the trilogy but this doesn't detract from the book as a whole, even though I usually dislike books that don't finish, this one does at least end in a place that feels appropriate.

I am looking forward to reading the next one in the series.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I am so glad I did and have no qualms about recommending this for purchase. I will be buying others in this series.

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## **Andrea says**

Brilliant read - can't wait for the next one of the author!!!!

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## **Ingrid Hall says**

WRITING AS LUNA BALLANTYNE <https://lunaballantyne.wordpress.com>

Thumbs up from Luna:

The opening chapter is thought-provoking if somewhat unsettling.

The book is a quick, easy read that you can pick up just about anywhere.

Serenity is likeable in spite of the fact that I wanted to reach into the pages and give her a damned good shake.

The whole vampire thing is strangely entertaining even though the plot is seriously under-developed and flawed.

Thumbs down from Luna:

The majority of my positive comments come with negative caveats.

The opening chapter is thought-provoking, but I felt that the domestic violence theme was over-played and inappropriate for what is meant to be a relatively light romance novel. There were times when instead of wanting to read on, I felt so uncomfortable that I wanted to stop reading.

In spite of the above comment, the book overall is too easy to read. Fluff springs to mind.

While Serenity is likeable, and I was kind of rooting for her, she is so unbelievably needy. Yes, I know this is because of the domestic abuse sub-plot, but whatever happened to strong heroines?

Sebastian the vampire is just too nice. He is a vampire for fucks sake. I kept waiting for him to say "Please"

before making any kills...

Madeline is too pantomime villain for my taste.

In summary...

I have no doubt that there is a whole army of young(ish) readers just waiting to devour Farrar's books about the broken and needy Serenity and her fluffy, good-looking vampire. I prefer my men...and my vampires to be deadlier.

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## **Jennifer D says**

It's hard to write a review for this book because of the sensitive nature of some of the issues brought forth.

First and foremost, let me say that abusive relationships whether physical or mental are so utterly wrong and disgusting I really don't know where to begin. The fact that a person could do that to another and for the most part, get away with it is disturbing. The worst part is seeing the women in these relationships all downtrodden or acting as though nothing is wrong, when clearly something is. Or protecting the ones that claim they love them. It's all about mind games and keeping those women under their thumbs.

To all those women that have survived and gotten out of abusive relationships, I commend you. Your courage is unlike anything I will ever know.

So, onto the book... with all the above being said, I couldn't stand Serenity during the first half of the book. I think for a "romance" book; the abusive relationship lasted too long. I would have liked to see Serenity fight more in the beginning of the book, but in the end, regardless of when it happened, I'm glad she found her backbone.

Sebastian the god knows how old vampire is the reason for Serenity's new found want of freedom. And this is where it gets out of hand. Literally within 3 days, they're both head over heels in love with each other. I mean really... Even Twilight didn't work its mojo magic that quickly.

Here's the rest of the book in a nutshell

"I love you, I love you, I love you"

"I love you too, I wanna be like you"

"No, I won't turn you into a monster!"

"But I want to be like you!"

"I'm leaving"

Yep, that just happened.

SO... if a speedy and more adult version of Twilight is your cup of tea, then by all means read away. You'll probably enjoy it. As for me, I enjoy my books to be a little more realistic in the romance department. Seriously, all this took place in a week.

Also, it's acetaminophen in the states not paracetamol. I actually had to look that up while reading because I didn't have a clue what the hell that was!

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### **Lyn Mckenzie says**

I read this book in a few hours because I COULD NOT put it down, it was a compulsion to keep turning the pages, I had to know what was going to happen next!!! This book brought up a lot of issues that mean a lot to me and thousands of other women all around the world. The pain, humiliation and degradation can not beat the strong woman inside and this book portrayed this brilliantly. I loved Serenity's character and how much she grows in this book, everyone deserves their white Knight. The end of the book made me sad and I really nearly cried at it which shows what an amazing author marissa farrar truly is. If I could give the rating more stars I would. Everyone had to read this, its utterly awesome

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### **Samantha \*\*ParaNormal Romance Party\*\* says**

1st line in the book---> "The day Serenity Hathaway came to view as the lowest point in her life, also turned out to be the day everything changed."

Review:

**\*\*3.5 Stars\*\***

Alone was a very different story from the ones I usually read. I had no idea what to expect. The first thing that came to me was surprise. I never expected that the theme would be about the heroine's struggle with Domestic Violence and how she was able to live through it.

Serenity Hathaway is miserable. She has been married for 10 years and living a nightmare. Everyday she must wonder what mood her husband is in. Hoping that its a good or else it will be hell for her. She gets fired and is too afraid to tell her husband, fearing the worst. As she flees into the streets she runs into a mysterious man. That little encounter is able to give her the strength to go home but tell her husband about her job at a later time.

Sebastian is a Vampire and has been for over 200 years. He sees a women running through the streets as if the hounds from hell were on her. As he sees her face he can see such desperation and fear, that he feels a connection to her. Knowing what she is going through first hand. As Sebastian continues to meet with Serenity her learns of her living hell. As the story progresses, so does their feelings, but everything takes a turn for the worst when there is a murder and Sebastian's maker comes to town. Serenity must struggle to break her fear in order to survive.

First thing that I have to say that I liked this read. It was a difficult theme but I think the Author did a great



job. I will be honest though, I am so used to reading the heroines being such strong characters that I was a little uncomfortable at first. I wanted Serenity to wake up, but like all women in that situation its hard. I don't want to give too many things away but one thing that I prefer is after reading so much pain and suffering that the characters go through, I'm happy to know that they got their HEA. Alone is more of a to be continued. I felt so incomplete but that's just my opinion!! There are some very complex characters, Sebastian is a tortured hero fighting his own demons while trying to come to terms with his feelings. The plot is fast paced, there is a little action and thrill. I am looking forward to Buried, I have my fingers crossed that Serenity and Sebastian get the HEA soon!!!

final verdict!!  
\*\*3.5 STARS\*\*

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### **Glynis says**

Superb read, highly recommended for a Twilight fort grown ups.

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### **Noelle says**

First can I say thank you to the author who provided me with the audible version of this book in exchange for an honest review. Secondly can I say that I think from now on I will stick to kindle versions or real books as I struggled with the narrator as well as the pace. I am a fast reader and really did not like having to "read" at a different pace than I am used to.

That said...I loved this book!! Not my usual genre at all. Don't get me wrong, I love a good vampire story...Twilight was one of my favourite book series/films...but when buying a book, I tend to stick with mystery, thrillers etc. However, this story was really good. The subject of domestic violence was tackled and well written/believable. Serenity's vulnerability and fear was captured perfectly as well as Jackson's abusive nature. A lot of people write about domestic violence but do not understand the essence of being a victim or the fear evoked by the perpetrator. The author did this well.

This was a story of being a victim but rising above the fear, finding your inner strength and learning what true love is all about. It was a journey for Serenity and one for Sebastian as well. From the moment their paths crossed the connection was made and I was gripped.

Another character I loved was Madeline. As I was listening to the book I could picture her from the author's description. She is evil to the core and I worried whether Serenity would be able to match her. What I also enjoyed about the book was that it was not riddled with many characters so you did not get lost throughout. You get an understanding of the key players in the book without throwing in characters for the sake of it.

Would I recommend this book to others? Absolutely!! In fact I have downloaded /bought a few other Serenity books as I am curious what the future holds...and if you read this book, you will see what I mean!

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## **Abigail says**

(Crossposted from Bittersweet Book Blog)

**What I Liked:** Alone deals with the difficult and harsh reality of a violent marriage. Even though it made me uncomfortable at times, I appreciated the realistic storytelling of domestic violence. Since I've had experience with that myself, it felt realistic. Sometimes it seems melodramatic when Jackson is abusing her, but that kind of situation IS melodramatic when you're living in. I think she captured the thoughts going on in Serenity's head perfectly.

The writing was clear and descriptive. The story moves evenly and Marissa has a knack for pacing. I enjoyed the chapters that switched to Sebastian's point of view. It was a refreshing change, and it was interesting to get his perspective. I liked Sebastian quite a bit, in fact, especially as the story progressed. The dynamic between him and Madeline was entertaining. For being undead, they brought a lot of life to the story. The mythology of vampires was also unique.

**Not So Much:** For the first half of the book, Serenity struck me as a very unlikeable character. I wanted to like her, but I couldn't. She didn't have much emotional depth, and she was extremely weak, although I can understand why. But I had a hard time understanding her reactions. I was especially thrown when she found out what Sebastian was, and she freaked out about it. With how much she had clung to him during the first part of the story, it didn't jive. If she was a younger girl, a teen, maybe I could understand. But she's supposed to be 28.

I hate Twilight comparisons, but I couldn't help but draw them with this one--the instant "I love you!" relationship between Serenity and Sebastian, the breathless descriptives, even the silver car that Sebastian drives (an Audi, not a Volvo). This is very much an adult Twilight. The fact that Serenity latches onto Sebastian so quickly, and all of her thoughts begin to revolve around him, strikes me as sad. But, as I said, at about the half point she starts to develop herself and the story takes off. It's just at that point I had lost a lot of interest.

**Verdict:** A decent read for me. I won't be continuing the series, partially because of my own burnout with vampire stories. But I would definitely read something else by Marissa not involving these characters; there's no doubt that she's a good storyteller. If you enjoy Twilight-style vampire romance, this is a solid choice.

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## **Vivien Smith says**

Wow I loved this book!

I won 'Alone' in a competition and I'm so glad I was the lucky one, it's the first book I have read from Marissa Farrar and it has introduced me another great author. I will defiantly be buying more from her catalogue. I already have books 2 & 3 in this series waiting and I can't wait to get going. I love Paranormal

Romance and this book had me hooked from the start, it is well written and I feel Marissa covered the subject of domestic violence in a believable way, I really felt for Serenity for all she had been through and continues to suffer at the hands of her husband Jackson. I wanted to slap him myself!

Serenity has had an unfortunate time with the men in her life, abusive Stepfather and a husband that continues the pattern that has become the norm for her. She just wants a life without the fear, terror and pain she lives with every day. She could leave Jackson, but he would find her and the thought of him punishing her is what stops her from running. The happy family life that Serenity always dreamed of is just that, a dream. Then whilst on her way home having just been fired from her job, she meets a stranger, someone who is nice to her, someone Serenity can't stop thinking about, Sebastian! Although she doesn't know it, Serenity's life is about to change, and just what that change will involve, she won't believe!

Sebastian made a promise to himself, don't get close to anyone, because having someone also means the chance of losing them and Sebastian doesn't want to go through that, not again. But when he meets Serenity that maybe a promise he won't be able to keep!

I do love a Vampire especially hot sexy ones and Sebastian certainly fits that description. So don't miss out, buy "Alone" and meet Sebastian for yourself!

I highly recommend this book if you like Paranormal you will love "The Serenity Series". I give it 5\*

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## The BookChick says

This was a hopelessly depressing *romance*... and I use the word *romance* in its loosest sense.

This story made me feel like an oppressive millstone has been placed around my neck by the time I reached the words, "**T-H-E-E-N-D.**" I'm sorry, but when I read a romance I want a "happily-ever-after-it-all-works-out-in-the-end" kind of story. I do not want to read a story that makes me want to step in front of a bus to end it all. That's really what you got with this story.

Serenity was a severely abused woman who hated her husband and hated her life. She vacillated between anger at being abused and guilt because she felt she caused the abuse. She had a 9 to 5 job but her husband stayed at home to pursue his career as a "writer." Later, she discovered that the only thing he really did write was several dozen instant messages filled with smut to women he was looking to hook up with. Regardless of how much she hated her husband she always acquiesced to his desires while subjugating her own. She "yes dear-ed" during every interaction with her husband...even while he was being physically and emotionally abusive towards her.

Serenity's go-nowhere inner monologue of "I'm going to leave..." chafed my nerves because I knew she would still be in the same place when I turned the page on my Kindle. I know that women deal with abusive situations like this, and worse, every day and they may have similar thought processes. I am not condemning them! In fact, I applaud any woman who can survive an abusive relationship and thrive afterwards. My problem was that there were pages and pages and pages of abuse.....in a *romance novel*.

I also found it odd and a little off-putting how Ms. Farrar kept switching points of view from the *character voice* to the *narrative voice*. In several places she would say something like, "Sebastian felt..." or "Sebastian thought..." However, in other places, she switched to the narrative voice and referred to him as "the

vampire...” and conveyed the story as if she was telling it as opposed to the character telling it. It was strange and it was confusing the first time I encountered it. Determine a POV and stick with it! The book was difficult enough to read without the added confusion.

I am not a perfect writer but I also do not write professionally. I am a little miffed when I see grammatical errors and incorrect word usage in a novel that I paid good money to read. Ms. Farrar used incorrect words in a couple of different places in the story —“thought” for “though” and “tried” for “try”. Where have all the good editors gone? I have read so many books from well-known publishers in the past few weeks that have a self-published feel to them because of all the glaring errors contained within.

There was a trailing conclusion to the story and the first chapter to the next book in the series to spur interest into purchasing the next book. Unfortunately, that strategy did not work for me since the first book left me feeling a bit despondent at the end.

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