



# Fallen from Grace

*Laura Leone*

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## Fallen from Grace Laura Leone

While trying to save her spiraling career, Sara Diamond befriends her new next door neighbor, Ryan Kinsmore. A soft-spoken younger man with charm and good looks, Ryan leads a mysterious double life which becomes increasingly hard for him to conceal from Sara as their intimacy grows.

## Fallen from Grace Details

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# From Reader Review Fallen from Grace for online ebook

## Regina says

Ignore the cover of this book. The various covers are all equally horrible and do not give the reader any indication what this book is about. Ignore the title, nobody in this book fell from grace, so again the title tells the reader nothing. Despite the title and the cover, this book is a solid contemporary romance novel. If you like witty dialogue, a slow building romance which develops out of a friendship and books that touch on social issues in an intelligent way, then you will enjoy Fallen From Grace.

I started this book on Friday afternoon around 3:00 pm and finished by 2:00 am -- reading in stolen moments from my family. It pulled me in and I did not want to put it down. I laughed, I stressed, I was happy this book effected me at all levels.

Fallen From Grace deals intelligently with past sexual abuse, family problems and sexual orientation issues and never ever does it glamorize prostitution -- which surprised me. The book is sexy and romantic and fun, but fairly intelligent. I highly recommend it for readers who enjoy contemporary romance novels.

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## Tammy Walton Grant says

### (LANGUAGE WARNING, I'M GOING ON A RANT)

Oh, it's lonely here in I-didn't-like-this-land.

I've been reading nothing but raves about this book for more than a year, so I was looking forward to reading it. I'm not going to say anything about the story, it's been done to death, other than to say I liked the story itself right up until I just. could. not. read. any. more.

I liked Ryan very much; I felt his background and situation was portrayed realistically and not melodramatically. If I lived next door to him I'd have fallen for him like a rock as well. My problem, AND IT WAS A HUGE ONE, was with Sara. It must just be me; I found only one other review that even mentioned it. My response to her was almost immediate and completely visceral; my update says it all:

[http://www.goodreads.com/user\\_status/...](http://www.goodreads.com/user_status/...)

It started when Ryan told her what he did for a living. First of all, she didn't understand what he meant by "escort". Colour me skeptical, but what female DOESN'T know what that word means? Then she freaks out (ok, that I understand) but then turns it around so it's about how he's betrayed *her*. HUH??? Then she's mad because she babysat his dog while he was out fucking other women.

"I don't think details are a good idea, Sara." There was a difference between honesty and stupidity, after all.

"No, I want to know," she said, some more anger creeping in now. "How many women were you sleeping with on your trip last week while I was here, walking your dog, and feeding your

fish, and taking your cat to your vet, and - "

I'm sorry, how about NONE OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS.

Sheesh. You've lived next door to the guy for a couple of months, hung out together as friends. You thought he was gay, for crissake. You hid how much you wanted to jump his bones because you thought he didn't like you.

Now you can't understand how it's a job, how he feels trapped, how he tried to get out once before but couldn't. How he feels like he owes his life to his "boss", how he has no skills to do anything else. So you say things like this:

"Why won't you quit this life?"

The plaintive question was out of her mouth before she even knew she was thinking it, let alone contemplating saying it out loud.

He sighed and rested his forehead against the broom for a moment. "I tried. I can't. That's why I've been avoiding you ever since you asked about it. Because this..." He made a vague gesture indicating the two of them, "...this will only hurt you. And I don't want to hurt you."

"Too late now."

He met her eyes. "I'm sorry."

"What do you mean you tried? How? What happened?" When he didn't reply, she said querulously, "Try *harder*."

Again, I'm struggling to understand how this is ANY OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS. What gives you the right to demand to know why he has or hasn't done anything? And how has this hurt YOU, when you made it clear that you were disgusted and hid from him for days after he told you?

Sara is also a bit uptight sexually, and about comes unglued when her sister tells her she's gay. Ryan knows before she does (he's a bit more observant than Sara is) and her response to him is to make a rude noise and say "Well, obvious to a *sex professional*, maybe, but I had no idea."

Ryan straps a set on at that point and tells her exactly what he was up to the day before -- in great detail. "I screwed one woman while her lesbian lover watched. Then I did a three-way with them." ( *HAH! Point to Ryan. Take that, Sara, you bitch.* ) Sara can't even respond, she has to "wait for her revulsion to subside".

After avoiding him for three days she demands, "where have you been?" when he isn't around when she decides she needs to talk to him. When he tells her he was working, she rolls her eyes and says something snide. Another day she says, "I've spent all evening waiting for you to come home." She frowned at him. "You can't keep doing that. You have to give me your cell phone number." Then she gets bitchy when he tells her his cell phone belongs to his boss.

Ryan has his pocket picked by a street kid, and tells Sara about him. She immediately takes over, researching how they could take care of him, where he could go, including contacting an outreach organization run by an ex-prostitute. When Ryan is surprised, she says, "Some people actually get out of the sex trade and do something worthwhile with their lives, Ryan."

Wow. You're all heart, lady.

She goes on to tell Ryan that she's made an appointment for him at the shelter. Ryan, again surprised ("You made an *appointment* for me?") says he has to work. Uh-oh.

He could tell from her expression that it was very much the *wrong* thing to say. "God forbid," Sara said, "that saving Adam's life should interfere with your Wednesday afternoon trick."

:O

She goes on to lecture him, telling him he couldn't know anything about it because places like that didn't exist when he was a street kid (which was, um, probably early 90s, so I'm betting that they DID) and how the worker took all that time out of her busy day to make the appointment,

"and do you think I'm so naive that you can't trust my judgment or do you think you could take an hour out of your busy day of well-paid sex to keep this appointment for Adam's sake?"

He lowered his head, embarrassed and confused. "I'm sorry. I just..."

"Right now, you're thinking like a street boy - and like a prostitute, I guess", she said gently. "But I happen to know that when you put that attitude aside, you're an intelligent and sensible adult."

Really. And did you pat his head and offer him a cookie after that?

Fuck. Me.

Is it just me???? Am I the only person who thought this woman was a complete bag, who didn't think Ryan was good enough for her unless he quit the life?

UGH.

All right. At this point in the book I'm thinking I hate this woman so much I can't believe he still wants anything to do with her. And the LAST thing I want to do is read about Ryan having sex with her. Just based on her character I know an ultimatum is coming. And I freaking hate those more than anything in the world.

So I bailed at 63%.

Someone, please help me. Please tell me Sara has a split personality and this person I absolutely DETESTED disappears after they have sex and a more understanding, less self-absorbed Sara takes over? That she quits with the bitchy, derogatory remarks and becomes a more supportive friend/lover? That there is no more preaching and heavy-handed tactics to make Ryan feel even more worthless, that Ryan finds the strength to leave the life and help others ON HIS OWN, and not because some shelter worker and his girlfriend ganged up on him, or because the woman he loved gave him an ultimatum? Pretty please?

Story gets 4 stars

Heroine deducts -200 stars (setting a personal record for detesting a fictional character)

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### **D.G. says**

Horrible cover notwithstanding, this is one of the best contemporary romances I've read in a long time. With a topic like this, you expect the book to be somewhat sordid but nothing farther from the truth. The story was romantic, tender and real enough that I was able to understand the circumstances of a person in the life. How the author was able to balance a real love story and a background of prostitution, rape and abuse is beyond me but she did a great job at it.

The relationship between the hero and heroine was really beautiful. Love came first and expressions of lust second, which I think it was really appropriate given the hero's profession. This is a romance in the true sense of the word so there's a lot of internal dialogue about their relationship and feelings, balanced in such a way that there are not overwrought declarations or maudlin dialogue.

The author did an amazing job unfolding the details of Ryan's life and his reasons for staying in the life. I really cannot fault him for thinking he couldn't get out. Given where he came from and what he had to endure, his reasons made perfect sense. I was also glad that the author took some time to illustrate why people in his situation are so distrustful of The Man. You may think that a lot of these situations can be solved by involving the establishment without realizing that sometimes the laws of the land have helped create these problems in the first place. It was good to see a different perspective.

The heroine was really a good fit for Ryan. We don't get to know much about her past except about the problems with her career. I cannot imagine what it must be to lose a job you love but as you can imagine, her issues were not as dire as Ryan's so they didn't grab me as much.

I usually don't talk about the secondary characters in reviews but the ones in this book were really great; enough that they illustrated something about the hero and heroine but not so many that they took over the book.

So please, if you are looking for a great romantic story and don't mind the tough theme, please pick this one up. Even with that cover (what were they thinking?) it's a book you wouldn't want to pass up.

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### **Auntee says**

[ a male escort/prostitute? (hide spoiler)]

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## Allie says

I really struggled to get through this book - I hate to give up on books so it was hard to keep reading because there was nothing I found redeeming about the two main characters. I found Ryan to be weak (and I understand he'd had a hard youth but so do a lot of people and he was weak) and Sara to be a domineering harridan... she was barely better than Ryan's madam in that she treated him as poorly as the madam did. He had to do things her way or it was the high way for poor, weak Ryan. Sara knew full well what Ryan did for a living before she became physically involved with him yet she kept laying down the law. Of course he's going to have been inside someone else the same day he's had sex with her because he's a high priced (let's not forget that) prostitute.

Had he not been so easy to manipulate and had he not been greedy and spent all his (massive) income he would have been able to get out of the business he despised years before but he didn't because he had to live like a king and drive a fast car and buy expensive clothing. Yet he felt that he wasn't good enough for a good and 'intelligent' woman like Sara. For a smart woman Sara had to spoon feed what a prostitute does. And then, on the night he almost gets raped again, she has to break into his home (after he's repeatedly told her to leave him alone and not ask him about what happened) and proceeds to seduce the poor prostitute into sex. What a pleasant woman. Then the huge over-reaction to her sister's homosexuality did nothing to redeem what an awful character she was. UGH. And she was soooooo rude to the sister and so self centred. Glad that's over. Read this last week and have already forgotten the names of half the people in the book.

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## Steelwhisper says

This was indeed a refreshing experience!

For once the fact that the MC is a male prostitute wasn't in any way fetishised or glamourised, which is what I hated so much about *Damaged Goods*. The female punters, while treated without slut-shaming them, were nevertheless also not in any way put on some positive pedestal. Instead the fact that they are punters and an essential part of the problem was fully acknowledged.

So, instead of such cheap digs at alleged "gurrpowr" (which is nothing but female sexist piggery) we get shown a reasonably credible reaction and journey of a normal, moderately liberal woman towards loving a male prostitute.

How it played out also was so much more logical and realistic than the already mentioned *"Damaged Goods"* and light was never made of prostitution. Why no 5\*? Well the sex scenes were a bit too bland and standoffish.

I liked it. Quite a bit in fact.

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## Autumn says

*"DN" AAR.*

Laura Leone dedicates this book to her editor at Five Star who agreed that "romance readers want a good story more than they want a safe one."

Fallen From Grace is a fast-moving, compelling read, albeit one that might not appeal to more traditional romance readers.

Sara Diamond is the published author of a discontinued medieval mystery series who is aggressively pursuing a fresh start. Despite a barrage of concerned chastisement from her father and sister, she impulsively sells her San Francisco condo to take a second-floor apartment in an eccentric, old Victorian situated in one of that city's less posh neighborhoods. There are two features that recommend her otherwise questionable living quarters to her worried relatives: the large balcony overlooking Glen Canyon Park, and the hunky but very nice neighbor who shares it.

Ryan Kinsmore is ostensibly a male model, but actually makes his living as a paid escort - with all that that implies. He leads two very separate lives by living where he does - the only connection his employer is allowed to his personal life is the cell phone that he always carries. He finds himself seeking out more and more time with Sara, whose friendliness and simple sincerity beckon like an oasis in the midst of an emotional wasteland. He knows that she is as drawn to him as he is to her, and while he cannot make himself avoid her, neither is he heartless enough to encourage feelings between them that can only lead to disaster.

Given the subject matter of this book, I was pleasantly surprised at how it speaks so well to the evolution of emotional intimacy. The beauty of the love story between Ryan and Sara, as well as Sara's conflicted relationship with someone close who has just announced (view spoiler), is what it tells us about real love. That it protects, rather than harms. That it nurtures, rather than manipulates. That it accepts, not because that is the easy course, but because it is the only course possible when it comes to those we love unconditionally. And the very nature of Ryan's work serves to throw into bold relief the physical intimacies between Ryan and Sara, where ravenous desire meets more tender emotions, where a man who has been taught total control allows himself the "free-fall that any other guy in love wants." These scenes perfectly capture the synchronization of lovers who succumb to complete mutual immersion, both in the bedroom and out.

Leone's characters are richly drawn and fully human, and she displays extraordinary skill in showing how Ryan and Sara, both individually and together, work through the complexities of their situation in a believable way. Sara can't imagine what Ryan sees in someone as physically ordinary as she is, never realizing that, while she came to love the gentle soul beneath his beautiful exterior, he started by loving her soul and worked his way outward. It's not surprising that Ryan would come to yearn for Sara and what she represents, with her loving family and the vast array of friends she attracts, her intelligence and her wry humor. Nor is it surprising that Sara understands the impossible choices Ryan had to make even while insisting he no longer has to make them. Even the villain of the piece is not totally black and white; there are sufficient gray areas to leave the reader wondering about the minute possibility of redeeming qualities in this individual's past. I dearly loved Sara's sister and father, who fret and fuss about her choices but are always a solid presence lending their support; the gentle bickering between Sara and Miriam is as real as their shared amusement over their father's quirks. And, finally, there's Adam, a homeless, teenaged pickpocket who inadvertently opens the possibility for his own salvation by stealing from Ryan.

I loved the many nuances of this story, those subtle details embedded so faultlessly that you almost overlook



them. One scene that captured my fancy has Sara preparing to go out while Ryan is updating her on how he spent his day. While she's listening and asking questions, she's also absent-mindedly searching for her purse, then her keys, never noticing that Ryan has not only correctly interpreted her distraction, but knows her habits well enough to locate the missing items and stuff them into her hands without a pause in their conversation. It's a scene so ordinary that any couple can immediately relate. But it's also the kind of detail that convinces cynical readers like me, more than a thousand protestations of love ever could, that Sara and Ryan meld together in a way that is enduring, that plays out in hundreds of such day-to-day scenes stretching into infinity.

I applaud the willingness of small publishers, to question conventional wisdom (which can be so unerringly wrong) and take a risk. And, being an optimist. I have every hope that their risk will be rewarded; truth will out, as they say, and the simple truth is that Laura Leone is a writer who can craft an interesting and emotionally compelling love story that resonates on many levels.

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### **UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says**

This is an amazing story, and not at all what I thought it would be. For whatever reason – and I can't recall how or where I came by this idea, I was expecting another run-of-the-mill erotic read. Well, I was wrong, and not just a little wrong, but completely wrong.

*Fallen from Grace* is a contemporary romance novel, and one of the best I've read in a long while. This isn't a light, carefree story but even though it does show some of the harsher sides of reality, it's not dark or depressing. In fact, given the subject matter, it's pretty inspiring. In addition to a great story, the characters are wonderful people who are not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, but they are the kind of people I'd like to have as friends and neighbors, because they're honest, good and caring people, men and women who struggle to make the best of their lives.

The very nature of this story is controversial, but Laura Leone did a fabulous job tackling the issues that Ryan and Sara had to face in this book, without copping out and ignoring the harsher aspects of life on the streets for a teen age boy. Minor spoiler - (view spoiler) She didn't glamorize the life, nor did she try to make excuses for Ryan's choices. What she *did* do, though, was prove why we mere mortals have no business casting judgments on each other because without having all the facts, we can't possibly understand why someone like Ryan would make the choices he did, and Ms. Leone did so without being preachy! No small accomplishment, that.

So, the bottom line? If you're looking for a thought provoking contemporary romance that isn't shaped from the same cookie-cutter that so many in this category are, I'd strongly suggest giving *Fallen from Grace* a try. I bet you'll be as pleasantly surprised as I was.

A big hug and *thank you* to my friend, Autumn, for this wonderful birthday present. This story will stay with me always!

4.5/5

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## **KarenH says**

This book is absolutely amazing, but be forewarned... it will not fit into the perfect, orderly, sunshine and roses fairy-tale world that many of us read to escape to. In fact, it steps way out of the box. It is shocking, it is heart-wrenching, and it will take you to a very dark side of real life that you might not know much about and are probably better off for it. Yet despite all that - or because of it - the sweetest love story takes root from the very beginning of the story, grabs your heart and soul, and doesn't let go until long after you've finished reading the last page. Ryan is a true hero in every sense of the word, and I can't imagine anyone not rooting for him and Sara to find the HEA they so desperately seek and so rightly deserve. If you have a Kindle or Kindle-on-PC, please do yourself a favor and download this book as soon as you can.

5+ stars...

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## **Rhonda says**

4.5 stars

I devoured this book in a couple of days, I was so caught up in this story, that when I wasn't reading it, I was thinking about it. It was a really emotional journey. Sadly the things that go on in this story happen every day. I loved the characters and their story, especially Ryan. He broke my heart over and over. As for Sara, kudos to her for making Ryan see his self worth.

Sara Diamond is 33 years old, and has just been dropped by her publisher. Now unemployed and trying to downsize her expenses, she sells her condo and moves into an apartment, against the advice of her younger sister Miriam. Upon moving day Sara meets her new sexy neighbor, Ryan Kinsmore. There is an instant attraction between Ryan and Sara, but they keep that tamped down becoming fast friends. The two of them spend a great deal of time together, doing things friends would do, and Ryan really steps up and offers a lot of support and encouragement to Sara that her family hasn't in regard to the decisions she has made. As time goes by, Sara and Ryan have a difficult time putting their attraction aside, as they are now falling in love.

Ryan has secrets that he never wanted Sara to know about, never intending for their relationship to move beyond friendship. As their attraction ignites one night, Ryan feels he can't move forward with Sara unless he tells her his secrets, at which time he bares his soul to her. Ryan opens up to Sara in a way he never has with anyone.

Kevin is a prostitute, he ran away from home in Oklahoma at the age of 14. After his mother died, he was left in the custody of his father. Kevin's father became physically abusive to the point he had to run for his life. Trying to get as far away as he can, he lands on the mean streets of California. At 14, Kevin becomes a street kid doing what he needs to do to survive, until one night he was brutalized and left to die. Kevin was saved by a woman named Catherine, which he would later discover runs an "escort" service. Catherine later takes Kevin "under her wing" so to speak, and grooms him to be the perfect date, able to mingle and be accepted in any social setting. Kevin has accepted this way of life for himself because he has no other skills, and doesn't think he's smart enough or capable of doing anything else. That is until his new neighbor moves in.

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## Miss Kim says

This book surprised me how quickly I was drawn into the story. I had selected it after a few recommendations from GR friends, and it sounded different. Sara is a 35 yr old novelist, who's making some changes in her life and starting over. She's sold her lux condo, and taken apartment in a large home converted to a few apartment units. Shortly after moving in, she discovers shares her balcony with a beautiful young man. Ryan is 26, and tells her is a model, and she's not surprised. There is a strong attraction, that both try to suppress for different reason. Sara feels she is way too old for him and he's out of her league. Ryan feels he's not good enough for anyone, let alone Sara, whom he likes very much.

Ryan is hiding a *very large* secret. He was a street kid just trying to survive every day, when he was brutally beaten raped at 16. He was saved by a woman who ends up taking him in, and changing his life forever. This woman runs a high priced male escort service and is only to happy show Kevin (his street name) every thing she knows about culture, manners, pleasing women. She's groomed him to become one of her most popular 'boys'.

Ryan and Sara begin a close friendship and share a lot of things together. Ryan finally reveals his occupation and Sara is dumbfounded. She continues to show compassion for him and still wants to remain friends, to his relief. However she is very clear that they can never be any thing more than friends for as long as he is a prostitute. Over time, Ryan reveals more and more about his past and his experiences, and she accepts it. Ryan still feels inferior to her, and never worth her love. Ryan is a sweet beta hero that you just cannot help but to love, and Sara is a very strong and loving person. I liked them both a lot. The epilogue was very detailed and as I finished the book, I felt like there were not questions I had that she had not answered. This is a very emotional story, and I thought the author did a beautiful job with!

Content warning: there are frank discussions about prostitution, rape, and what people had to 'do' to survive on the streets. There is also an attempted rape scene.

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## Julianna says

Reviewed for THC Reviews

"4.5 stars" "..... romance readers want a good story more than they want a safe one." This is a portion of the dedication in this book, and I can honestly say that while this story is anything but safe, it is indeed exceptionally good. I've read so many romances over the years that it is extremely difficult to find one that I can truly call unique, but *Fallen From Grace* turns traditional romance on it's proverbial ear, with nary a cliché to be found. It has an older heroine (by nine years) with a younger hero, a multi-cultural relationship between a heroine who is Jewish and a hero who was raised Catholic, a heroine who essentially rescues the hero, and most surprising of all a hero who is a prostitute (yes, you read that right;-)). While all these elements might make this sound like the oddest of stories, in fact, everything worked together to create a very fascinating and compelling novel that was a pleasure to read. Ryan and Sara developed a very strong bond of friendship long before becoming lovers, which I found to be incredibly beautiful. They exhibited a depth of trust in one another that is a rare treasure. Ryan initially hid his real profession from Sara, but I was shocked at how quickly even that was revealed. Aside from that one thing, they always communicated with

stark, naked honesty, never really holding anything back from each other which I found utterly refreshing. They share many scenes together that are laced with emotion and sexual tension, and when they finally do make love, those scenes were so incredibly sweet and sensuous, they made my heart do flip-flops. All in all, I thought they were a perfectly matched couple.

I never would have thought that a prostitute would make a good hero, and while Ryan was certainly not the typical romance hero, he was a very appealing one in spite of his profession. He was an extremely complex character especially in an emotional sense, but it was easy to see why Sara fell in love with him. Outwardly he had to project a certain toughness to survive and he definitely had a strong, courageous spirit that was his saving grace through all the horrible things that happened to him over the years. Inwardly though, he is a deeply wounded individual who sees himself as not good for or at anything but sex. There were a few times that Ryan was relating things to Sara from his past or things that he had to do for survival, where he seemed almost dispassionate, and he exhibited the same attitude towards sex with his clients as well. This bothered me at first until I realized that for him, these things had become “normal.” It was Sara who shook up his life and showed him the kind, compassionate, intelligent man he truly was. When Ryan finally took his life in hand and confronted his pimp, it was a very poignant moment and I was cheering him on all the way. I also loved that Ryan took in homeless, abused and neglected animals, and demonstrated the patience of Job with all of them, especially his psychotic bird. He later also befriended a homeless teen who had lifted his wallet. No one may have rescued Ryan (until Sara), but it didn't stop him from spreading kindness in the world by rescuing others. The amount of growth that Ryan went through from the beginning of the story to the end was phenomenal. He was probably the most atypical hero I've ever read, but one that has definitely made a lasting impression on me.

With Ryan being a little “softer” than most romance heroes, one might think that he would need a spitfire heroine to balance him out, but that was not the case at all. Sara had plenty of spunk, but at the same time was one of the most gentle, nurturing and understanding heroines I've ever read. Every time I thought that Ryan had disclosed one sordid thing too many, Sara always responded with grace and dignity. At times, it took her a while to process some of the bombs that Ryan dropped, but she always came back still loving him unconditionally. She also sometimes had angry reactions which I thought were very realistically rendered and understandable, especially when Ryan seemed unable to give up “the life.” I also really appreciated that she stuck to her guns, telling Ryan that they couldn't have a “real” relationship until he got out of the business. Sara was a highly intelligent woman who was also very intuitive of Ryan's needs and feelings, and in the end it was her pluckiness and determination that won the day. Even though Sara was the “rescuer” in this story, theirs was not a one-sided relationship. Sara had some difficulties of her own to face with a writing career on the skids and some unexpected family issues to deal with, and Ryan was always there offering his advice and a shoulder to cry on. He was a loving, supportive, understanding friend who was every bit as intuitive of her needs as she was of his. Even though Ryan struggled mightily with his past, he recognized the precious gem that he had in Sara, and that she was his for the taking whenever he was ready to meet her one and only demand.

Although this book belongs to Ryan and Sara, primarily Ryan in fact, there were a few notable supporting characters. Sara's father added some humor in his scenes, while Sara's sister challenged her notion of traditional romance in yet another way and gave Sara an additional opportunity to show her big heart and unconditional love. I thought both presented the picture of a loving, close-knit family. Adam, the homeless teenager, added a lot of depth to Ryan's character by allowing him to show how loving and caring he really is and how much he was willing to do to save someone else from the same fate he experienced. Ryan's pimp, Catherine, is not someone I trusted even from the beginning, but I thought that the author's portrayal of her was excellent. I understood exactly why Ryan felt indebted to her, and initially wondered if she possibly had a good side. I couldn't have been more mistaken though, as her true nature becomes abundantly clear in the

end, at which point I felt nothing but loathing for her just like Ryan.

While I absolutely loved the plot of *Fallen From Grace*, I thought that the writing could have been a little smoother and more even in places. There were some fairly significant time jumps between chapters which at times made the narrative a little choppy. Also, while there were plenty of chapters that had a great balance between descriptive prose and dialog, there were also large blocks or even whole chapters of wall-to-wall dialog that were a little exhausting for an introvert like me to read. In my opinion, they could have been pared down a bit in favor of more character introspection especially from Sara. Sensitive readers should know that this book contains a fair bit of strong language and some very frank discussion of various forms of child abuse, the sex trade, and homosexuality as well as one scene of physical and sexual abuse that plays out in real time. Overall though, this was a wonderful novel that told a powerful story of redemption and the depths of unconditional love at its finest. For the last hundred pages or so, I could barely put it down. Readers who prefer “safe” romances should probably think twice before reading *Fallen From Grace*, but for readers who are looking for something really unique and don't mind challenging the notions of conventional romance, I highly recommend it. I only wish that more authors would write stories like this and more publishers would take a chance on them. In my opinion, *Fallen From Grace* is a little known gem of a book by an apparently not very well-known author which deserves more attention from romance readers than it seems to have gotten. It took me quite a while to track down a library copy of it borrow, but I will definitely be looking for a copy for my keeper shelf and will also be open to checking out other works by Laura Leone. It appears that she is a multi-talented writer who has not only penned several romances, but has also authored or contributed to a number of traditional fantasy, urban fantasy and non-fiction books under her real name of Laura Resnick.

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### **Adrienne says**

Oh I loved this romance which wasn't at all how I'd anticipated it to be.

Kevin is an ex street kid who after a harrowing incident is taken under the wing of Catherine, eventually he earns the title of escort and with his beautiful manners, suave appearance and quite discretion commands a high price for his time. Ryan is the charming considerate guy, lover of animals, the perfect neighbour for Sara. Sara and Ryan fall in love but Kevin is a problem, he stands between Ryan and Sara like a brick wall.

Incase you hadn't realized Kevin and Ryan are the same person. This book was sad and beautiful all at the same time, we find out how Ryan became Kevin and how Kevin and Ryan are two separate men who eventually come together as Ryan. Whilst we never go to work with Kevin apart from one scene at the beginning of the book we understand exactly what Kevins job involves and how Saras love for him gives Ryan the courage to eventually re~evaluate his life and move Kevin on.

Whilst Ryans back story is harrowing it's an important part of the story to help the reader understand why Kevin does what he does.

A beautiful story about the power of love, acceptance and trust.

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### **Linda says**

One word review:

**wow**

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## **Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says**

Made our Badass Hidden Gem list..

<http://badassbookreviews.com/badass-h...>

First, I hate this cover. It seems cheap and not very appealing at first glance. It doesn't do the book justice and that is a shame. So, to help this book along, I am going to put a guy on the cover much more suited for the story. I think the very beautiful (Rest In Peace) Matthias Streitwieser is perfect for the cover.

### **Ok, now onto the story**

First, a few formalities to get out of the way. This book is not light and fluffy. You have a bunch of issues that are brought up in this book. For example, in this book you have male prostitution, rape, alcoholism, and abandonment. If you want a light, fluffy book, this is not for you. The above-mentioned issues are handled very well and are not just put in the story as filler.

### **Now really, about the story**

Ryan-

Oh my god, I love Ryan. He's the prostitute. You learn that he is a prostitute (escort) in the very beginning (prologue) so it isn't a spoiler. He's a prostitute because he doesn't know any better. As a teenager, he was beaten, battered, abused, and manipulated (Catherine is the manipulator, basically his "pimp"). He doesn't believe he can do better. You learn so much about him, and how he has one of the most enduring, loving personalities that I've ever read about.

Ryan has a menagerie of animals that he's saved from the street. He spoils his dog Macy and loves his psycho bird and super shy cat without ever questioning the work involved with caring for these lost souls. I think since Ryan couldn't save himself from his past, he tries to save others. I also believe he was lonely. Even though he's with countless women as a high paid, high class prostitute, he never really is with anyone. It is all an act. With his animals, he can be himself.

Sara-

Sara is Ryan's new neighbor. She is the insecure writer who was just canned due to decreased sales on her novel. She is older than Ryan and is intimidated by Ryan's youth and good looks. Even though she is intimidated, Ryan and Sara hit it off immediately. The author wrote their initial get-togethers as very intimate but also very innocent. They were two people looking for friendship discovering that they could easily talk to each other. It was clear they were also very physically attracted to each other. Sara was a nice character, she

wasn't a passive, pitiful creature, and she wasn't a raging bitch.

Once Sara finds out about Ryan's "job", she isn't very eager to get into a relationship with Ryan. However, Ryan and Sara are clearly in love with each other and so Sara has to figure out how to handle Ryan's career choice with her growing feelings for him.

Ryan knows that Sara isn't happy with his "job" but he feels obligated to Catherine (his pimp who supposedly saved him from the streets) and doesn't think he can be anything else but a high class escort. Ryan and Sara need to work through these issues, and they do it helping others, which in turn, help themselves.

### **Overall**

I'm not a fan of contemporary romance but I absolutely loved this book. LOVED it. Did I mention I loved it?

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