



## Hidden Scars

*A.M. Myers*

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Emma Harrington is an intelligent, confident, sweet and sassy woman.

Or she was...before him.

Emma sets out to rebuild her life and find the person she once was. A wrench is thrown into her plans when she meets Phoenix West, a sexy as hell, smooth-talking tattoo artist.

As soon as Nix meets Emma, he knows he's found something special. He can't deny their connection and despite her reluctance, Nix slowly works his way through her hidden scars and into her heart.

Just when Emma starts to breathe again, her fear resurfaces, threatening her hopes for the future.

Will she ever be free to live the life she truly wants? Or will her torturous past finally catch up to her?

## Hidden Scars Details

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Author : A.M. Myers

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary, Sociology, Abuse, Dark, Contemporary Romance

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# From Reader Review Hidden Scars for online ebook

## Wennie says

Warning: For mature audiences due to graphic material.

An advanced reader's copy was provided in exchange for an honest review.

### Summary

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Will she ever be free to live the life she truly wants? Or will her torturous past finally catch up to her?

### Review

Hidden Scars is A.M. Myers' first foray into published work and for her natal effort, she delivers a story that is hard to forget.

Myers' characters are real, flawed, and very relatable. She presents a very touchy subject matter in a sensitive manner.

The transitions of the first few chapters of the story made it a little difficult to follow at first, but once I got the hang of her style, it became clearer. I would have loved to see consistency with the transitions of the chapters, though -- as, towards the end, the chapters went from being focused on time, it became character driven.

There were slight issues with the story's progress that should have been caught by the editor.

With more research into the psyche of a battered woman and some assistance with the choreography of an action scene, I would give this story a 5-star rating.

I do applaud her for refraining from falling into the dark hole that I call the non-ending "internal monolog." Myers' told her story with a sound mix of character musing and action sequences.

For a first time author, this is a good solid effort, and well worth the 4-star rating.

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## ?\*? Alicia ?\*? says

### 4.5 Oh My Stars

This book contains triggers

*I was gifted this book from the Author for my honest review.* I was very sceptical upon starting it but boy was I wrong!!! This is a **Great** story and it was written so well that it had me in its clutches the whole way through. Emma was a strong sassy smart young woman who just happens to fall in love with the wrong guy, I like how this book showed how easy it is for a women to fall into the trap of emotional abuse and it does not make the woman stupid. Then she meets Nix well hello handsome!!!

This is a past present story of a young woman through her journey of an abusive relationship and how she

fights her way out, it was well written and I would happily read more from this author.

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### **Sandi says**

Hidden Scars is the story of Emma's efforts to heal from an abusive relationship. The book alternates between the past and present, allowing readers to witness her abuse and gain insight into her emotional state and her struggles to not only leave her abuser but to also survive, learn to thrive and find real love. Her love interest, Nix, is everything she needs but will she allow herself to have him? Can she find a way to let herself be loved and to love in return? Is her past really a thing of the past or is she haunted by more than mere memories? Is Nix Emma's lobster? I'm not telling.

The author has a very good grasp on how people come to be in abusive relationships and why it is hard for them to leave. She knows how hard it for survivors to not only trust others but to trust their own judgement when it comes to forming new relationships. She also understands exactly how abusers manipulate not only their victims and the people around them. She knows that abusers can fool their own family and coworkers, gaining sympathy from them. She portrays abuse and the struggle to overcome it in a very realistic way. Her understanding of these matters turns a good story into a great story.

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### **LLEP Book Blog says**

Amazing 5? read.

Author A.M. Myers has pulled me into this story and I don't know if I'll ever be the same. Hidden Scars is wonderfully written in a 'now and then' format explaining the ins and outs of what this young woman has dealt with and the title truly fits. This is definitely a book for a mature audience. I was on the edge of my chair through most of the book.

Emma Harrison is one of the most loveable characters that you truly want the best for. She trusts easily, she doesn't see the bad in people and she forgives when she probably shouldn't. She has these amazingly, over protective brothers, extended family, a job she loves, and she is meeting a man while rebuilding her life and getting rid of the ex.

Phoenix (Nix) knows right away that he's found something special in Emma. She had come into his shop for a tattoo. The connection between the two was instant. They both work their way past the reluctance with his constant insistence and he finds his way into her heart.

Just when things start to settle down, and they've started to move forward the threats and stalking from her ex make life for Emma and Nix unbearable and when they try to get it stopped, a strange twist happens. She's afraid to plan for the future. Why can't he just let her go?

**OMG I ABSOLUTELY LOVED THIS BOOK!!** Emma and Nix are incredible and the supporting characters were fabulous. Ryan was the **PERFECT** kind of **BAD!** The suspense and twists and turns and angst through the book kept me going and turning pages. Everyone was woven so well into the story. I'm really hoping the brothers get their own stories A.M. hint hint, lol. Thank you for a great read. Can't wait to read **MORE** from **YOU!**

~ Reviewed by Tara  
LLEP Review Team

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### **Louise Scholl says**

Absolutely a great book! From beginning to end I was hooked. The way the story is told from the then and now perspective was great. A must read!!

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### **Jenn says**

This was a story told in two parts: NOW & THEN. I really liked the two different story lines however, I wish in a way that they had been two separate stories all together. I really got into both story lines equally, but just as I got into one, it bounced me out and into the other. Both story lines start the heroine at the beginning of some type of relationship between the hero and the villain, so you are reading about two different relationships at once for the same woman.

I liked Emma's family and co-workers. I liked Nix a lot and for awhile, I really liked Ryan. I enjoyed the banter and flirtations that went on with the couples.

Over all, I thought it was a good read.

Thank you A.M Myers for the opportunity to read your story.

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### **Dottie says**

4.5 nail-biting stars!

When Jenn asked me if I'd like to review A.M. Myers' Hidden Scars, I read the synopsis and said it sounded interesting so, yes, I'd be happy to read it. I honestly thought it would be a sweet and maybe sexy story about a guy who works in a tattoo shop whom meets a girl and, although she's been through some stuff in her past, that they would build a relationship and hopefully, live HEA.

Well, I was wrong on a lot of points (although parts were accurate). This guy (Phoenix although his friends call him Nix) is a guy who works in a tattoo shop; this part is true. And the girl, Emma, well, yes, she has been through some stuff (to put it mildly). They do meet and when they do, they both feel an actual spark when their skin touches for the first time (and this is when he realizes this girl is worth pursuing). And they do begin to build a relationship and work toward their own HEA. That's where my assumptions that were correct ended and an entirely new story developed. It was rich. It was dynamic. It had me glued to my e-reader for hours; whenever I had an opportunity to pick it up to read it, I would. I basically ignored everything and everyone around me once I became engrossed in this book. I don't know whether I've ever given a brand-new author 4.5 stars before, but this one earned its marks. It took, hmm, maybe five pages to pull me in and after that, I was captivated with it until the very last page.

By the way, Nix is absolutely scrumptious! He was genuine, he was authentic, he was loving, he was protective, he was sexy, he was patient, he was creative, he was a healing force in Emma's life – and she needed it.

You see, Emma had left a guy who was absolutely not good to her. He did almost everything to her an abuser can do; he isolated her from her friends and family, he belittled her, he made her doubt herself and her self-worth. And it started slowly; it was very insidious – the same as can happen in real life. It hit me hard.

I don't usually get very personal about my life here. But I'm going to say a couple of things. I was in a relationship for almost 15 years that was pretty bad. My ex belittled me, made me doubt my sense of self-worth, controlled me and it was insidious too; you don't really realize it's just bad until you have gotten out and look back with the 20/20 clarity of hindsight. He never hit me – but he did everything else except for that. I had a friend who forced me to read a book about verbal abusers because she was sure I was about to become physically abused too. It was an eye-opener and I've never ceased to feel grateful to her for opening my eyes.

I'm telling you this because this book deals with an abusive relationship. It honestly has triggers and if you've been in a violent relationship, I'm not sure whether you would want to read this one or not. But let me tell you what it did for me – it was cathartic. It was validation of what we can go through in a relationship that is bad for us; even if we are intelligent, caring, loving people. It sneaks up on you and it's done in such a way that you doubt yourself over and over again. You look in the mirror and wonder where you've gone wrong. There are people who say (including to me), that we shouldn't acknowledge the fact that we were victims because that makes us into victims and keeps us there. (And frankly, I beg to differ, it's our abusers who made us into victims.) But if you don't acknowledge it, you can't begin to heal it. Living through it and getting out doesn't keep you in a victim role; it means you became a warrior and were strong enough to get through to the other side. It changes your victimization into victory. The victory of the human spirit living through adversity.

This book didn't feel scary to me. Instead, it made me feel like I wasn't alone. It also felt like there's hope in finding a man out in the world who is kind, loving, and someone I could possibly learn how to trust again (with) someday. So, for some, there will be triggers. To me, there was healing. And that's pretty special. Emma's family felt helpless as they watched her becoming less of the self that she used to be. They didn't know what to do. Emma had been conditioned enough by her (now) ex while they were together to blame herself rather than the man controlling her. Abusing her. Her brothers and her parents and her boss (whom is basically family) all tried to help and were rebuffed by Emma; she didn't realize she was even in an abusive situation until her girlfriend forced her (with the help of one of Emma's brothers) to read an article to help the reader decide whether he/she was being emotionally abused. She thought it was a cruel, useless joke at first. But once she read it, understanding began to dawn. Watching her "wake-up" felt very familiar to me as well.

This book is written in both the past and the present in often alternating chapters. There are some other readers whom objected to this. But here's my take on it; the "Then" chapters describe the time when she met and became involved with her ex, and the "Now" chapters are about the "after-the-fact" when she's gotten away from him and is attempting to rebuild her life. I think this is the only way this book could have been written. I think if you had to read the Then sections all at once, it would be too difficult emotionally to get through. The Now chapters were generally fairly delightful; when Nix meets Emma and decided she was a woman worth pursuing – these were chapters I enjoyed tremendously. I felt between these two parts, a type of balance was created. It's like you've got to go through the valleys to appreciate the hills. There were times when Emma began to realize it was safe to open up to Nix and explain some of what she'd survived, and it was profound...

(excerpt)

"You wanna talk about it?" I bite my lip as I pull away and stare up at him. The look he gives me in return makes me feel safe in spite of the story I am about to tell. "Mmm, I guess," I whisper as I shrug my shoulders. He waits patiently for me and after a few moments, I begin telling him about my dream. When I

finish, he mutters, “Jesus Christ,” with rage burning in his eyes. “I want to kill him for hurting you. I don’t know what else to say.” “There are no words.” Shrugging my shoulders, I roll onto my back and look up at the ceiling. “Do you know how easy it is to break a person?” I ask him and can feel the muscles grow tense next to me. “No.” His voice is raspy with barely concealed rage. “It’s easier than you think. When you love someone, they have the power to destroy you. It’s insidious and you never see it coming. All it takes is some careful maneuvering to make a person think that they are losing their mind.” “Baby, I don’t want to talk about this,” he growls, his body still tense underneath me. “No one does, that’s why people get away with it. Some people don’t even know what emotional abuse is, or it’s not taken seriously because the victim doesn’t have bruises as proof. I mean, look what Ryan [her ex] did to me. He didn’t scream at me all the time. Those times still stung but there were easier to dismiss than when he came to me in a loving manner and planted something in my head.”...

This is a book that at times is difficult to read, yes. But it’s a really great story. It’s about the human spirit overcoming and being victorious over evil. It’s about a woman who finds in inner strength and learns to rely on those people whom have always loved her plus being willing to open up her heart and take a chance on a really great guy as well as his family who welcome her into their hearts.

If you’ve never been abused, it will make those who are a bit easier to understand. Sitting in judgement of them does no one any good; you can’t begin to understand it until you realize this can happen to anyone. I’m a smart, strong, sassy, caring woman too. If I can let it seep into my life, it can happen to anyone. If you don’t “get it,” then I’m exceedingly happy for you and hope in a lot of ways you never do. But this book gives you an amazing window into the world of a woman who goes through it and lives to tell about it. For those of you whom have also experienced this type of situation, it can give you hope. It can give you some different insight. It can give you motivation to find an answer.

Even if you yourself have not experienced this, you might very well know someone who currently is or has experienced it in their past. Knowledge and patience and compassion toward the person affected by this will go a very long way to help the person feel like they’re not isolated because someone “gets it.” And that can mean everything to them.

In other words, I think everyone should read this book. And for you, whom are probably not so sure that this sounds like a good book, like at all, well, you’re wrong. This is a truly good book. The characters are (minus the bad guys) very likable. The love story within is particularly special. This is not just a depressing story. It is a strong story though and will catch your interest and keep it. You will want to see how this one plays out. It might sound like I’ve listed a bunch of spoilers here; but really, I haven’t. The way this story unfolds is not predictable in many ways and the way it’s resolved isn’t either. It’s simply a good story that will keep you on the edge of your seat at times and at other times, you’ll find yourself falling in love with Nix right along with Emma.

I truly did love this story. I think I would have also loved it without a personal connection to the story because I think we’ve all known people we’ve worried about and wondered if there was something you could do to help them. I think we all long for a “knight on a shiny charger swooping in to rescue to fair maiden” type of story from time to time. This is one of those. It’s just told in such a way that it feels pretty realistic.

I hope you decide to read this one. It’s simply a really good, entertaining, and nail-biting story that I think I will always remember.

Link to blog review: <https://raveandrantaboutaunch.wordpress.com/2017/07/11/review-of-the-kingdom-of-the-darkness/>

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**Bobbie Wood says**

I absolutely loved this book. The way the characters were developed really made me feel like I knew them and I grew to love them, even the secondary characters. (I can't wait to read the brothers stories.) Emma suffered through an abusive relationship that she found hard to escape from and harder still to press charges on when she did escape because he was a police officer. Her ex, Ryan, refuses to let her go, even a year later when it's obvious she doesn't want him back. When she meets the amazingly handsome, Phoenix, and starts to form a relationship it pushes Ryan over the edge. None of that deters Phoenix though. He is super sweet and totally dedicated to protecting this woman he has fallen in love with. He is the man every woman dreams of finding. This book has some parts that jump to the past and back to the present. Normally these jumps are irritating and sometimes I don't even finish because of it. But the way the author handled the jumps in time made it very easy to read and I actually looked forward to going back and getting glimpses of Emma's previous life. I enjoyed learning why she reacts the way she does in current time. This book is so worth reading and should be on everyone's TBR list! Looking forward to reading more of this family

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### **Emily says**

Emma Harrington thought she had met the man of her dreams but instead of building her up and loving her like she deserved, he broke her. A year later Emma is still trying to find normalcy but she has triggers that arise every so often and when she goes to get a tattoo she meets Phoenix West. Emma feels a connection to Nix but she is not wanting another man in her life again, the last one ruined her for all others.

Nix steps up to the plate with Emma, he realizes she is scared of what is building between them but he will be as patient as he needs to be as long as Emma is by his side. However, Emma's ex wants her back and is getting increasingly out of control. Will Nix be able to keep his word and protect Emma no matter what?

This was fantastic, I liked that Emma is working on herself. I would read these in order because I think it flows better. I read #2 first but it still worked. I loved Nix, he is just wow.

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### **Tosha Woods says**

#### **Amazing read**

I was gifted this book for an honest review.

This book was not what I was expecting at all. I may have not picked it on my own but I'm so glad I had the opportunity to read it! I even got caught up so quick in this book that I completely missed the fact that the story jumped back and forth from past to present. I was a bit confused at first but I liked the fact of reading Emma living her past instead of her describing it to someone else.

I'm sure Emma's story will hit home to a lot of men and women who have been in similar situations. This was very well written and had me crying and laughing throughout. I've already recommended to several friends.

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## **Kelly says**

\*\*\*\*I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Thank you\*\*\*\*

Hidden Scars is an intense dark romantic standalone story told by Emma present POV with flashback chapters.

I want to issue a trigger warning to individuals who have issues with physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Abuse is discussed throughout the book. While it was done with care and sensitivity, reading what had happened to Emma was sometimes it is hard. I suspected from the blurb that Emma has at least a crappy boyfriend or was abused. I didn't realize the details that would be shared. There were times I was felt panicked and had to stop reading. Even with the trigger issues there, this book was done well.

Emma was learning to be a strong woman again. When she meets Phoenix, Nix, she feels drawn to him. She's scared to trust him after her last relationship. When she is threatened again, Nix works to keep her safe. Slowly he earns her trust and love.

Nix is patient, protective, beautiful man. From the moment he met her, she consumed his thoughts. He seems to always know what to say and do for Emma. He is everything Emma needs to move forward in life.

The secondary characters were a big part of the book. Emma's brothers, Blaze, Moe, Daisy, Addy, Shadow and Chance gave the story a feel to richer adding to Emma and Nix's characters. The pacing was off in a spot or two, but overall was steady. I was feverishly reading when the exciting story came to the conclusion.

I liked the story and the ending. 4 stars

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## **Lindsay says**

3.5

There were parts of this book that were really good. But I also had some issues.

The good parts:

- Nix. I loved him. He was sweet and genuine and hot.
- Emma's brothers. They were so protective and awesome. I know we find out their HEA in the epilogue but I would love to see books for both of them.
- The steam between Nix and Emma. ;)
- The suspense story-line revolving around her ex.

Ok, now for what I had issue with. It was really only one thing:

- The alternating format of present and past.

In some books it works well. But in this one, for me, it didn't work. I get needing to know what happened to her in the past, but I kept feeling like I was spending too much time getting to know her ex-boyfriend. I also felt like it slowed the book down. Just as I would really get into the story of Emma and Nix, I'd be pulled out

and thrown back into her past with Ryan. Emma's story with Ryan basically started at the beginning, same as her story with Nix did, so I kept feeling like I was reading 2 separate stories when what I really wanted to read was Nix's story.

Overall, the modern-day story was actually pretty good, and worth reading. I think the author shows great promise and can't wait to see what she does in the future.

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## **Bloggers From Down Under says**

\*\*arc received for honest review\*\*

Emma was a young feisty women who fell for what she thought was the man of her dreams charming, handsome, a cop. She thought he was the one, he loved her and she loved him.

After moving in together things started to change, Ryan was changing and little did Emma realize that she was being mentally abused he was playing with her mind.

Emma believed her boyfriend then fiancés lies she blamed herself she thought it was her fault a little after the mental abuse started then things become physical where he would beat her or lock her in a room.

12 months later after she left Ryan his still there he wants her and will stop at nothing to get her back and he will stop at nothing to get her back.

“Everything I do is for you and it'd just never enough. You’re never happy.”

Emma decides to get a tattoo so she goes to uncles Moe’s nephew to get one.

She has never met him.

She sees him.

There's sparks.

She can't do relationships.

She's broken.

Nix really likes Emma he wants to know her, he knows she is damaged but he wants her, he needs her.

Nix tries to protect her from her ex but sometimes you can be outnumbered and out smarted.

Will Nix and Emma get the happy ever after or will Ryan come between them?

“He smiles at me and it's like sunshine for my soul.”

We liked the book it was a great story line but we really had trouble connecting for the simple fact each chapter went back and forth between past and present.... We would find ourselves starting to feel the

character and then you get to the next chapter and you would be in the present, we really struggled with the emotion side of it due to that fact, but it was a great story line!!

3.5 star

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### **Allyson Morris says**

This is the first book that I have read from this author and it so wasn't what I expected. The things that Emma went through and was still able to get up in the morning were amazing of course Nix helped with that plus her brothers. So good!

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### **Coco.V says**

FREE on Amazon today (11/06/2017)!

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