



## **Pulled Within**

*Marni Mann*

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# Pulled Within

*Marni Mann*

## **Pulled Within** Marni Mann

For five long years, I was the eye of a hurricane.

I watched as everything had been taken away from me. My job, my relationship, my best friend, and my home. Nothing was safe from the chaotic winds that surrounded me.

All I could manage to keep were my scars.

And the terrible secret that kept me in the storm.

Hart belonged to my past, to a sunnier day. He was determined to show me that happiness could be found on the other side of darkness, that all clouds eventually cleared.

But, with every step I took toward his calm, something—or someone—tried to pull me back within.

## **Pulled Within** Details

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Author : Marni Mann

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## From Reader Review Pulled Within for online ebook

### Heather says

\*I received an arc of this book from the author in exchange for my honest review\*

I read *Pulled Beneath* and this book is a wonderful sequel. I personally think to read them together is perfect. However, it can be read as a stand alone and still be great.

Rae Ryan is a girl that has struggled. As I read this book I felt like I was suffering with Rae. She's been heartbroken and left behind. Then, Rae's ex boyfriend, Hart Booker, shows up back in her life. One day, years ago, he just up and left her. Now he wants to love her, take care of her and make up for hurting her so badly. It takes a lot for Rae to let him back in. She needs to be honest with him about some of the terrible things that have happened in the past. But Hart is persistent. If anyone can make Rae whole again...it's Hart.

Marni Mann has a beautiful way of writing. Her characters seem like they could be people I know. They're realistic in what they feel and go through. This is my second book by Ms. Mann and I can't wait to read more!

5 'I'm pulled' Stars!

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### Allie Burke says

I loved *Pulled Beneath*, but *Seductive Shadows* is my favorite Marni-book, which is shelved as erotica, so I went through some withdrawals jumping from that to New Adult (not that I'm complaining; Mann does New Adult correctly).

I found the author again who has achieved favoritism amongst my already favorite authors in this book. It was beautiful. Mann writes books that guarantee darkness, that guarantee survival, gorgeous storytelling, and great sex, and *Pulled Within* delivers. It is brilliant because no one reads *Pulled Beneath* and wants to read about evil-ish Rae (at least I didn't) and then you pick up this book and you definitely want to read about Rae. Mann reverted to that tortured soul I found in Charlie in *Seductive Shadows* - the survivor - and made it happen freshly with a twist that I never saw coming. Her lyrical style pulls you in like a slow burn, and her damaged characters break you down. Rae makes you cry, tears you to pieces, and gives you something else that I can't describe other than if I said

In darkness I look for the stars

With every book, Mann achieves this magical air in realistic fiction: it's like she knows you and is all like

I'm gonna write a book for that one person

She's a literary sorcerer as far as I'm concerned. I've always wanted to write a book wherein the protagonist fell in love with the reader. I haven't done it yet, but reading a Marni-book is kinda like that, and probably as close as I'm ever gonna get.

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## **gillian (Tattooed Book Review) says**

**This review and more at [www.tattooedbookreview.com](http://www.tattooedbookreview.com).**

” *‘When you’re in my house, I only want you wearing my clothes.’*

*‘Even your boxers?’*

*‘If I tell you to, yes. Nothing of yours... Not even panties.’ He bent his head, running his nose across my shoulder and to the opening of the shirt. ‘I want my scent on you- always.’ “*

Once again, Marni Mann has stunned me. Each time I read one of her books time stops and the world around me disappears and for those few hours I’m there with her characters, living their tragedies and triumphs and feeling deeply their loss, love, happiness and healing. There’s something intangible about the way Mann connects a reader to her characters. When I read their stories, I feel as if I’m reading my own, though obviously I’m not. Perhaps it’s the way she makes each character so human, so real, flawed, relatable and presented honestly, without judgement and with empathy. Reading *Pulled Within*, I didn’t feel sorry *for* Rae when things seemed impossibly bleak or happy *for* her when moments of healing occurred, I simply felt what she felt, a true connection to the story and the character.

Rae’s story is difficult and tragic and Mann pulls no punches. Her portrait of abuse, trauma, and addiction is stark, gritty, and detailed; there is no sugar coating the truth of what occurs at the hands of an abuser or how bleak the lives are of those living with addiction. And yet in all this darkness, she weaves a story of hope, healing, and second chance love. The result is a perfectly balanced story that is at once tragic and uplifting and has a sexy, sensual edge.

I adored Rae and Hart together. When she’s at incredibly dark place, he comes in and rescues her. It’s not all white knight and now everything is perfect but he’s there for her, offering her safety, delicious sex, and ultimately himself. Their chemistry is scorching but the romance is a slow burn; Rae is slow to trust Hart with her secrets and her pain.

The story is not only about Rae and Hart, however. It’s also about the people that surround their lives, past and present, some good, some bad. It’s about family, blood and otherwise, finding home and the potential for happiness, and moving forward from a damaged past in to a hopefully brighter future. It has mystery and intrigue and bits and pieces of the full story are revealed slowly, keeping the reader glued to the pages. *Pulled Within* is captivating, honest, sexy, dark, tragic, and ultimately hopeful. It’s everything I could have wanted and more, and I loved it.

*“We were the calm after a beautiful storm that I never wanted to end.”*

(Note: *Pulled Within* part of a series but can be read as a stand-alone, though I highly recommend reading *Pulled Beneath* as well, because it’s fantastic.)

\*I received a complimentary copy of the book for the purpose of honest review.

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## **Lustful Literature says**

### **\*\* BETH'S 4 STAR REVIEW \*\***

Pulled Within is a story about heartache but also about a second chance at love and a chance at healing. We first meet Rae in Pulled Beneath and she now finds herself with no boyfriend, no job and her best friend is on the missing list almost 2 months, they are about to be evicted from his apartment if she doesn't come up with the money and she is counting down the days to a date every year she never looks forward to, a day that reminds her of a tragic loss that has left her scarred inside and out.

After Brady has finally come back and is now in rehab, Rae finds herself homeless and having to go outside of Bar Harbour to find a job. She decides to crash at Brady's friends place where she plans to only stay long enough to get enough saved to get her own place and try to get her life back on track. It seems though she can never seem to escape her past, reliving the nightmares from her teens and running back into Hart, the ex-boyfriend who just disappeared one night and never said good bye to her. They both soon realize that feelings are still there but Rae was burned once by him and is not ready to open her heart just yet and trust him.

I really enjoyed this story, it really pulled me in right from the start. From there very first page you could tell that what Rae is dealing with is not something that is going to be easy for her to heal from. There is something tragic from her past and you can tell it has truly broken her. As you read through the story and experience the flashbacks she has in the form of dreams, you can tell that this has something that had severely affected her and still 5 years later she has not dealt with any of it. It slowly builds the story of her past leaving you to continually speculate what has happened to her as you see little bits more and more throughout the story. Rae is so alone, she is estranged from her mother, and the only true family she has is Brady and his dad Shane. That is until Hart comes back into her life and ends up convincing her to come stay with him until she can get her own place. Hart regrets how he left with his parents and never looked back and he wants to right his wrongs. He loves her and he can see she is hurting and wants to help heal her. I really loved these two together, I loved the chemistry they had and at times scenes between these two were very hot and sexy. I loved that he was a bit of an Alpha with her in the bedroom but he was also loving and caring and respected her boundaries and that she needed space and time.

Overall I really enjoyed this story, it was a great story of heartbreak that gave hope of healing and a second chance at love. The one thing I wish is that we could have seen more of Saint and Drew and seen more of their story intertwine Rae and Hart's. Hoping there is a third book that will tie up some of the loose ends I feel that are left with all of these characters at the end of this book

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## RoloPoloBookBlog says

Source: ARC from author

My Rating: 5/5 stars

My Review:

Every once in a while, every single one of us likes to sit down and have ourselves a little pity party. You know the kind I'm talking about: all hang dog sad with a pint of ice cream, your favorite pjs and, a good ugly cry book or movie. Yeah, you've been there. Next time you go there, pick up Marni Mann's *Pulled Within* and you'll get a serious dose of "my life so doesn't suck that hard!" ?

Rae originally shows up in *Pulled Beneath*, the first book in the Bar Harbor series and she is not really someone worth your sympathy or concern. She is sad and angry and frequently an enabler to her best friend, Brady. Rae's only real redeeming quality is that no matter the circumstances she is there for Brady. Even if she can barely care for herself, Rae is there for Brady and that is how *Pulled Within* begins, Rae being there to rescue her best friend. Brady has finally hit rock bottom and with no one else to call (because who calls their parents in a situation like this?), he calls Rae to come save him from himself. Though she is not in a good position to do so, Rae rescues Brady and even in his pathetic state he sees how very bad Rae looks.

Though she has tried desperately to hold it together Rae is out of work with no prospects in sight, she is within days of being evicted and, a critical and crippling anniversary is looming. With everything going to Hell quickly, Rae isn't sure she has anything left to drag herself out of the awful this time around. But, what choice does she have? With Brady finally making an effort to clean up his act, Rae summons all her resolve and courage and goes on the hunt for a place to stay and a job so she can get back on her feet. What Rae doesn't expect is the return of Hart Booker, the one man who has the power to derail her plans to get her life back on track, break her completely and, watch as she finally succumbs to the abyss that is her world.

Hart Booker is wealthy, successful, intelligent, stunningly gorgeous and, willing to do anything to reclaim his place in Rae Ryan's world. The woman he sees before him is sad, broken, damn near defeated and, nothing like the girl he abandoned without a word years ago. Though the abandonment wasn't entirely his doing, Hart knows he has a lot to make up for and he is more than willing to do so. Without doubt, Hart is still head over heels in love with Rae and he knows that if she will just give him a chance – even the smallest of chances - he can bring some light back into her darkened world. Hart has a lot to catch up on and if he is ever going to call Rae his own he is going to have to break down her walls and understand what has brought her to the dark and lonely place she seems to constantly be in.

The return of Hart rocks Rae's world and once she understands the how and why of his abandonment it becomes a bit easier to allow him back into her world. The road to an HEA for Hart and Rae is rocky, twisting and turning and one that will force Rae to face the demons of her past. Hart is rock-solid and he wants to help Rae but even he is taken aback by the circumstances that have led to Rae's current state. Hart offers a safe place to live, a secure job and, lots of love but the hurdles are high and the drama is as intense as the sexual tension between the two.

The Bottom Line: *Pulled Within* absolutely pulled me in from the very beginning and didn't let go until the very last page. After book one, I was bound and determined to hang on to my intense dislike of Rae but Marni Mann has put together one hell of a story and totally changed my mind. Rae Ryan is a survivor and

given the serious amount of sh\*t she has faced in her life, it is a wonder she is still standing and able to get out of bed every day. Though she certainly engages in some destructive behavior, Rae wants to be better, wants to feel better and, most importantly wants to live a happy and fulfilled life. Even at her lowest moments Rae digs deep and finds the courage and the energy to keep moving forward and I found it increasingly difficult to dislike a character with that level of determination. Once Hart comes back into Rae's life, everything changes and you slowly begin to see Rae become the person she wants to be. Though the road to an HEA certainly isn't easy (I'm not sure Marni Mann is ever going to allow her characters an easy road!) it is worth it and Rae and Hart certainly fight for it. The intensity in Rae is balanced by the lighter side of Hart and even though this read is laced with sadness there is always that ray of hope right underneath the surface. Once again, Mann has given the reader solid characters with real and believable stories – characters that can absolutely be found in the real world. Everything in this read is a perfect balance with no single (the sex, the drama, etc.) overshadowing another. In all, another excellent read from Marni Mann and one I highly recommend!

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## TeriLyn says

*\*\*Pulled Within* generously provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.\*\*

### 5 Beautifully Scarred Stars

Certain authors I expect certain elements present in their stories. While I've not a clue what to expect in terms of plot awareness of what to expect in terms of writing and feeling I retain certain ideas about what I'll read. One such author is Marni Mann. I can't ever guess her plot lines but I always feel deeply when I read her stories. I've once said a Mann story is an unstoppable force, *Pulled Within* proves to be no exception.

Mann delves into the dark and damaged souls of her characters in an effort to exorcise demons. In doing so she delves into the dark and damaged souls of her readers. The writing lends itself to keeping readers in the dark of the secrets lurking beneath the words. We're in the point of view of the heroine and such is brilliance as we're stuck with the same limited knowledge of her story as the hero.

What has happened to this girl who so easily comforts those around her but can't comfort her own demons? Our, Rae, needs both the strength within her and the strength of someone else the war waged within her. Moving through life as fluidly as the words on the pages furthers the reader's belief the darkness will find light. The innate courage of her character astounded me. She's been hurt deeply and her trust in the few she allows inside comes from bravery. No one writes a beautifully damaged female main character quite like Mann. Rae becomes accustomed to hardship, sacrifice, and the most upsetting of tragedies yet still a charming, giving, gifted woman lurks in the shadows of the darkness surrounding her. She feels everything deeply from the relationships she's lost to the ones she works hard to maintain. Thanks to the smart, concise, haunting words of Marni Mann we feel deeply about Rae too.

The hero presented in *Pulled Within* gave me something quite different than I've experienced before in a novel by this author. He's a hero whose darkness doesn't run near as deep as the heroine. One classified as a knight in shining armor. Hart made mistakes of his own admittance. He's a character moving forward. He's understanding and compassionate. He's strong and protective. He's quite charming even though he's

simplistic.

The dichotomy between the darkness of Rae and lightness of Hart provides an interesting in Rae's story of redemption. It's a twist I wasn't expecting yet one that worked for me in the best of ways. By the end of story I felt proud of these characters for different reasons but I really felt joy for Rae, for her situation, and for her conclusive self-worth.

Marni Mann makes you believe no matter how deep the scar healing is possible. Step into the darkness of this author's words; relish the demons living inside her characters. This New Adult journey evokes emotion through haunting prose effectively wrapping themselves around our hearts and minds; writing so smart yet easy to read. She makes the dull bright. She convinces the reader to believe in her stories, her characters, and somehow in ourselves no matter what our own darkness may be. It's an amazing gift to receive as a reader coinciding with another amazing story in *Pulled Within*. I'm so very fortunate to have been introduced into Marni's worlds and forever grateful for the stories she writes and the absolute privilege that I'm able to read them.

Favorite Quotes:

*"I didn't just hear his words when he spoke; I felt them push through my jacket and tickle the skin around my navel. Had I closed my eyes, I'd have seen his lips in that exact spot. His tongue, too. My back arching from the syllables he breathed over my flesh."*

*"Our paths had diverged, and though we'd ended up with very different lives, we were both in Bar Harbor once again. That was a strange thought."*

*"Our relationship wasn't about my scars. It was about caring for him in a way I hadn't been able to care for others in my life when they'd really needed me to."*

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## **Angie Elle says**

*This book was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.*

### **2.5 stars**

*Pulled Within* is the story of a scarred young woman, Rae Ryan, who was trying desperately to get her life on track.

Rae was my favorite character in this story. Like all of us, she has things in her past that have scarred her. Unfortunately, she hasn't been able to move on. I really liked that this story starts with Rae at rock bottom. We get to see her start to put the pieces of her life together, and we witness a strength in her that she didn't know she had. Rae has been merely existing for a while, and when she's finally forced to live again, I feel like she really seizes the opportunity...at first.

Rae got a new job and was making good money; she had a prime opportunity to get her life in order by herself. It was the appearance of the hero in this story, Hart Booker, where I felt this book began to go downhill. I couldn't buy his reasons for leaving her all those years ago, and his excuse for never bothering to



call was incredibly flimsy. And there was no groveling scene. I am not necessarily a huge fan of groveling scenes; I don't generally need them, but I needed one in this book. It would have made it a lot easier to believe when Rae gave up the new life she was creating when he crooked his finger. To top that off, things happened later in the story that made me doubt his level of commitment to her, and again, his reasons fell flat. I wasn't a huge fan of the hero in this one.

Brady, on the other hand, Rae's troubled best friend, was a character I really liked. Brady was a broken man who was also trying to get his life together, and unbeknownst to him, he was the catalyst that forced Rae into getting her life together. It was obvious he genuinely cared for her and wanted what was best for her. Once Brady's life got on track, he was a great support system for Rae.

There was a lot of family drama in this one, and I thought it was well written and interesting. It was obvious how the events of her past had shaped the woman Rae had become.

Saint's appearance in this book and the way he treated Rae were a huge disappointment to me. She was mean to Drew in the last book, and I get that, but Saint knew parts of Rae's past, and for him to be so mean to her put his character in a bad light for me. When I finished the first book, Saint was left with an aura of mystery to him that I really enjoyed. At the end of this one, I no longer liked him.

While I did have some issues with this book, I did really like Rae's character. I just think a hero with more of a backbone would have been a better fit for her and the story overall. At this point, I am undecided on whether or not I'll be reading more of this series.

*This review was originally posted at Badass Book Reviews.*

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## **Donna ~ The Romance Cover says**

Pulled Within (Bar Harbor #2) by Marni Mann  
5 stars!!

“Everyone has a chance to heal. Some people choose to stay in the past and let their scars define them. Others choose to let it be nothing more than a mark on their body. That's what I've done. It doesn't define me. It sure as f\*\*k doesn't determine where I'm going.”

It seems years ago when I stumbled across my first Marni Mann book. I read it, devoured it and have been a huge fan ever since. Marni is one of these authors that are still little known, yet her books and writing deserve so much more attention, these are books that deserve to be read. After reading *Pulled Within* I have to say this is Marni Mann's best book yet. The development in her writing is exponential, this story is raw and gritty, it is emotional and beautiful, you live and breathe the story, you feel the pain, the angst, the romance, you cannot help but be blanketed in this story, and it takes you over, from your head to your toes and everything in between including your heart.

“Back and forth.”

This is the second book in the Bar Harbor series and this time it is the story of Rae and Hart. You may remember Rae from *Pulled Beneath*, she was the girl that worked for Saint, she was scarred and he eventually sacked her for causing trouble, so not the most lovable of characters. However, I was always intrigued, what was her history, why was she the way she was, just what happened to her to shape her into the person she was today. You knew that it wasn't going to be pretty but it would sure be interesting and that is definitely what Marni Mann delivered.

“Back and forth.”

Rae's life has gone to hell, she has been fired from her job, her best friend has gone AWOL and hasn't been in touch for months, she is struggling to keep a roof over her head and her ex-boyfriend is flaunting the love of his life all over town, which Rae feels just drives the pain and hurt even deeper. She has come to a pivotal moment in her life, she needs work and she needs it quick to save herself from eviction, as it is her best friend's apartment she feels that she has to do all she can to keep it so that when he does finally return he will still have his home. Rae is struggling and she finds herself having to travel and work a job that she is not entirely comfortable with, but needs must and times are desperate.

“Back and forth.”

It is while working that Rae meets Hart Booker, she is initially taken aback, her past is staring her right in the face. Hart and Rae have history, he was her high school boyfriend, she thought what they had was special and real, but one night Hart just disappeared, leaving her heart broken and devastated. This was not a part of her past that she particularly wanted to re-visit. Hart however had other ideas, his leaving was not his choice and now that he had reconnected with Rae there was no way he was going to let her slip through his grasp again. For him, just seeing her had reignited past feelings and emotions, ones that he thought he would never feel again. This was just the beginning, this was their second chance and he was taking it with both hands. Now he just needed to get Rae onside.

“We were the calm after a beautiful storm that I never wanted to end.”

This is definitely a book about not letting your scars define you, you may hide behind them, but the real you is always there just waiting to come out to the forefront. You just need that faith and belief in yourself to live, to love and be loved. Rae has a lot of baggage with regards to her family life, how her scar came to be

and her current set of circumstances. Hart is settled, he is doing well for himself, and they could not be any more polar opposite. They say that opposites attract and that is certainly the case with these two, it is obvious that they were destined to be together, but can Rae move on from her past and look to the future, or will her scars and inner demons drag her down and out?

“I was raining and he was catching me in his hands. Hands I loved, to replace the memory of the ones I didn’t.”

This is one emotional, lyrical piece of writing; you will be “Pulled Within” this story. Like an emotional vortex you will be sucked in and only spat out right at the end. You will bear emotional scars, you will feel like you have been put through the wringer but you will admire the quality and intricacies of the story. Being drip fed pertinent points leaves you trying to figure out everything yet accomplishing nothing until Marni wraps it up nice and pretty for you.

“Back and forth.”

This can be read as a standalone but I highly recommend that if you haven’t read *Pulled Beneath* that you pick it up and give it a read, it truly is a brilliant story. *Pulled Within* does surpass it though, with every book Marni Mann writes she just gets better and better, her confidence shines through and you cannot help but be entranced with her unique story telling ability. It is like a drug, so engaging, so addictive that she has become a 1click author for me. She has me hooked, line and sinker.

“Scars and rain. We were more similar than I’d thought.”

[www.theromancecover.com](http://www.theromancecover.com)

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## Casey says

Review originally posted at [Ramblings From This Chick](#)

I really loved the first book in Marni Mann's Bar Harbor series, and was excited to get the next book from her. I will admit that when I found out it was about Rae though that I was a bit worried about how I would like it. She wasn't my favorite character in *Pulled Beneath*, and I was prepared to have to really work to like her in this one. But that didn't end up being the case at all. She really won me over, and it was good to see a

different side to her. There was so much more beneath the surface with her that I never could have guessed, and I was glad that I gave this book a shot.

Rae hasn't had an easy life. She has lost pretty much everyone and everything that she has ever cared about. With her best friend Brady off to rehab, she is evicted from the apartment they shared when she can no longer cover the rent by herself. Looking for any way to make money, she looks for a new job at a casino since she got fired from her last job working for her ex. While working at the casino, she runs into the boy who broke her heart years before. At first Rae wants nothing to do with him after he left her without saying goodbye years ago, but Hart is determined to win her over. When Rae needs help more than ever before, Hart will do whatever it takes to show her that he will be there for her. But can Rae move forward and get over her past? Will she allow Hart in again after he hurt her so long ago?

I really liked Hart. He was sweet and patient, and he was a really caring guy. He looked out for Rae and would do anything he could for her. He was a good guy that seemed really genuine, and he didn't seem to get caught up in what others thought. All of that being said, I really didn't understand why he never just called and told Rae what had happened and why he left all those years ago. It just didn't make sense to me that this guy could be the same one that would do something like that. He was supposed to really love Rae then and now, but it just didn't make sense that he would leave her without a single word. Rae had been through so much. She was tough on the outside, but it was really just a facade. I liked getting to see what had forced her to become the person she was, even if it was ugly and horrible for her to have gone through everything that she did. It really explained so much of her behavior and why she did the things she did in the first book as well as this one. I loved how fiercely loyal she was though. Her friendship with Brady really made me change my opinion about Rae. She was such a great friend and would have done absolutely anything for Brady and his dad Shane. I loved her with Hart and I thought that they had amazing chemistry and a great romantic relationship, but her friendship with Brady was what really won me over.

Overall, I really thought that this was a great second installment. I knew once I started this one that I was going to enjoy it and that I was going to see Rae in a completely different light. I think that Marni Mann did an excellent job taking this character that the reader really didn't like in the first book, and then showed us all the reasons that Rae was able to redeem herself and become this heroine that you could root for. She deserved a happy ending after everything that she had been through, and I was glad that her journey played out the way it did. I will say that I love Brady, and I can't wait to get more of him. He is flawed and has made a ton of mistakes and bad choices, but I honestly can't wait to really get to know him better. I look forward to reading more from Marni Mann in the future and will be anxiously waiting for more in this series.

\*\*ARC Provided by The Novel Tease\*\*

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## **Jamie White says**

NOTE: I was given a free copy of this book with no expectation of a favorable review.

WARNING: This book is not for readers under 18.

Let me just start by saying this: I love Marni Mann's work. She has a lyrical and emotional writing style that really speaks to me as a music fan. This book was no exception. The second in her Bar Harbor series, it focuses on a young girl who is dealing with a painful secret from her past.

Along the way, she comes face to face with another painful reminder of the past while also dealing with a

friend's addiction, a recent break up, and the need for new job/home. Through it all, the protagonist (Rae), displays a combination of weakness and strength that makes you want her to succeed.

I can't say too much more without spoiling the story, but I really enjoyed a twist Mann through in just when I thought I had a certain story thread figured out. I'll be looking forward to seeing what's next in this series. I recommend this book for fans of dark fiction and erotic literature.

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## **Autumn says**

Pulled Within is solid proof that Marni Mann is only getting better!

Full review on Agents of Romance -

<http://www.agentsofromance.com/events...>

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## **Jennifer says**

*\* A review copy was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review \**

**Amazon Link**---->>Pulled Within (The Bar Harbor Series Book 2)

**~~ 4 Healing Stars ~~**

Pulled Within is the second book in Marni Mann's series, but can be read as a standalone. This book was truly its own story. I was shocked at how little some of the other characters from the first book weren't in this book.

I enjoyed this book and the author's writing style. She knows how to create an engaging storyline that keeps your attention all the way through. I think the only thing that I didn't like was that to me this seemed more like Brady's story of healing than it was Rae's. I thought Brady's storyline took up too much space. I understand that Rae and Brady were BFF's, but I would've liked the healing to be more about Rae and her past. I thought it took too long for her past to be revealed, so it made the healing part of her story a little rushed. I did like that we got bits of her past through flashbacks. Normally I think flashbacks are risky, but in this story they worked. I was also happy to see that Rae and Hart didn't take too long to reconnect. I liked watching their relationship unfold throughout most of the book. I truly felt their feelings were genuine.

We met Rae in book 1 Pulled Beneath. She was only in that book every now and then, we don't really get to know Rae until this book when everything is revealed. Rae is a troubled person and a broken soul who is determined to help everyone in her life and fix their issues, without really looking at herself and her issues. Rae had a tragic event happen to her and her family when she was younger and her life has revolved around 12/17. She just reminds herself that she needs to get through that day. So besides this tragic event she was dating Hart (in high school) and he disappears without so much as a word, leaving Rae hurt and confused. But now 5 years later Hart is back in Bar Harbor and determined to get Rae back. I really liked Hart...he was the right mix of Alpha male and sweet and tender. Although I did find his reason for leaving in the past kind of weak and uneventful. I was kind of expecting something a little bigger. I did like that even though

Hart knew Rae was hurting inside, he never gave up on her and didn't push her. He just helped her through the tough times until all was revealed Rae was truly on a self-destructive path until she reconnected with Hart and he helped get her on the right track.

I would recommend this book to everyone who is looking for that second chance romance and a book about learning to heal yourself, so that you can put the past behind you.

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## Sam says

Well...I cannot believe I didn't love this book.

I love the author. (I don't know the author, I just mean as a reader of her books.) I stumbled across her *Memoirs Aren't Fairytales: A Story of Addiction* once upon an Amazon freebie and it was one of those books that kept me from sleeping and made me a reader for life. Regrettably I did not review that book (not here anyway...I might have gushed about it on Amazon) and in order to do so now, I would have to reread it, which I haven't had time to do, but I was just...blown away. There's not even another way to put it. And I am not easily blown away. I loved Marni's writing. Despite that though, this is actually only the second book of hers I've read. I have most of her books, but I keep saving them for when I know I need a win. This one, however, I got as a review copy so I was on a time limit (which I think I missed by a day or so--whoops). I didn't read the first *Bar Harbor* book yet; I read the prologue, and I suspect I will like that one much more. I started this one after reading the prologue of the other book and just in that first impression chapter, I sensed right away I would not like Rae's story as much. It felt different. Also, Rae struck me initially as a character I might have a hard time loving. (I'm so picky about my heroines. Seriously picky. I actually ended up almost/kinda liking Rae, until the end when I just stopped caring about everything.)

Now, before I dig in, I will say that this is a *very* difficult thing to write about and the handling of such a storyline...it is not possible to please everyone, and in *most* cases, the handling of it *absolutely* will not please **me**. I can be somewhat harsh and have a zero-tolerance policy for people who behave in certain ways under these circumstances, and most authors/characters (and people, for that matter) are much more forgiving than I am. So the things that bothered me will not necessarily bother you. I actually usually avoid realistic fiction that deals with childhood sexual abuse as a central storyline specifically for this reason. I am not unbiased.

Anyway. There are several reasons this book didn't really work for me, and the first and most relevant reason is that it's a romance that, in my opinion, should *not* have been a romance. I don't mean because I didn't connect with the couple (although I didn't; I will get to that in a minute) but because the MC, Rae, is *so* fucked up. She is *so* unhealthy, and the *last* thing someone in her condition needs is a romantic entanglement. What I would have liked to see instead was the rest of the story--Rae's story. Rae learning how to heal herself and moving on to become a healthy, functioning person who might then be ready for a romantic relationship. I'll assume (since I haven't read the first book) that maybe Brady was such a central part of this story because he was in the first book, and since I don't know, I won't speak to that, but what I feel personally would have made A LOT more sense would have been Brady, instead of being super fucked up and working out his own issues, *being* Rae's best friend, the person who was there for her when she needed someone as she worked her own issues out. Not Rae being "rescued" by some dude from her past.

And on that note...I did not care at all about Hart. He had one or two five-star moments where I wanted to cheer him on (in (view spoiler)) but for the most part...no. I never connected to him, and I did try. It wasn't until I was about halfway through the book that I finally admitted to myself that I just was *not* feeling the couple, and maybe that wasn't going to change. I suspect part of the problem is that I did not get to experience the moment when Rae and Hart first met, and when he randomly resurfaced so many years later, he was just sort of perplexed, like, "You mad, bro?" He wasn't *sorry* for completely abandoning her without another word ever, he had no actual reason for why he never even bothered to contact her again, and yet, I'm expected to believe he was so caught up on her that all these years later he came back to Bar Harbor hoping he would get her back in his life? I didn't. At all. I felt like he trivialized his role/responsibility for the pain that he caused her, and then he just made it worse. The--very brief, very bullshit--story of his ex-girlfriend and all that she put his family through. Hart, for some reason, not standing up for Rae to his super-bitch mother (who NEVER liked Rae, and yet he's sure she's only behaving so rudely toward Rae because of his ex, and he's sure she'll come around! Just be patient, Rae. Just accept her abuse and hide and...fuck no. What is wrong with you? You are an adult man). I'm *told* he wanted them to end up back together, but it didn't feel that way to me at all. It felt like he happened to be back in town for work so he looked up an old girlfriend, and then *jumped* head-first into a relationship for no reason that I could pick up on. Because she was there? The worst part for me was how completely different Rae was--she was *not* even remotely close to being anything like she had been when they were in a relationship, so them just picking their relationship back up made no sense to me. She was basically a completely different person.

I should also note I'm not much of a second-chance love story gal either (unless it's a part one and part two thing). I have a hard time catching up to couples whose love I never got to witness firsthand. I don't just believe them when they're like, "Oh, no, we were in love before, so it's cool." So it always feels like they're moving too fast for me.

"What bothers me about your relationship is that I can't touch your face...and he knows why that is. That I see pain in your eyes and I don't know what caused it, but he does. He has the answers to all my questions, and it doesn't feel like you're getting any closer to telling me what they are."

Rae's back story. Oh, my God. It took WAY too long to trickle out. It takes almost the whole entire book before you finally get the whole story of how she got her scar, and I really hated the trickle. Since it was told piece by piece, there was no tension for me, only impatience. If the story had been told all/mostly at once maybe there would have been some shock, some...impact, but since it trickled out piece by piece over the *entire* length of the book, I had no reaction whatsoever to any of it. (Either I was annoyed that the chapter ended after one question was answered without answering anything else, or I was annoyed because the book was almost over and I still didn't know what the hell the back story was. Honestly, if this book would have been written by anyone but Marni Mann, I probably would have DNFd out of irritation instead of finishing it. I actually just DNFd a book at about 60% last week because the heroine was doing exactly what Rae was doing and wouldn't let me/the reader in.) Even when the "big" scene finally happened, I *still* didn't know how she got the damn scar. That came after, but...it lost all its impact for me. By the time I knew everything, I was tired of waiting and then annoyed that it hadn't been anything surprising. Why take that long to reveal it when it was probably what you expected for at least half the book anyway? If you're making me wait until the very end of the book to know what happened, I better get a twist!

The book was a touch too long. As I mentioned, I feel this book would have been just fine without the romance storyline, but at times it was also unnecessarily detailed. Now, personally, I'm a detail minimalist. I

don't need a lot of detail in books, but I acknowledge this is a personal preference. For me, it made it drag from time to time when I would have preferred just move along with the story and get some answers. For instance, I don't need to be walked through every time Rae rolls a joint and smokes it. I get the gist.

Family was such a loaded word and it could have meant many things. I wondered how he'd ever understand how dark and chaotic it was for me.

The ending disappointed me. I felt that it cheapened Rae's entire journey. So ideal. Too tidy. I felt the gritty emotional realism was sold out for a sunny ending. The most perfect way this seriously imperfect situation could ever be tied up—(view spoiler)

No. THIS IS NOT HOW THIS WORKS.

Maybe in the most perfect scenario you could possibly dream up where all the people involved come together to support Rae's healing, but it was made very clear that was not the case here...and yet this story got the "perfect" little ending, and I hated that. That's not how these situations shake out. Someone who employs denial as a defense mechanism does not suddenly snap out of it after X amount of years and say, "Okay, yeah, now I can suddenly accept that (view spoiler)" without doing some SERIOUS work on herself, which she clearly had not, or we would have noticed that in her previous scenes.

Sometimes toxic people have to be cut out of your life, regardless of how damaged you are—no, *because* of how damaged you are. Surviving this kind of experience makes you stronger, and when you're stronger, you can move on with your life without people who caused your pain. Portrayed realistically, (view spoiler) but by that point, it was too much. I checked out as soon as the mom started her bullshit.

And what the everloving fuck was with all of the *intentional* unprotected/irresponsible sex? This is the most disturbed I have ever been in a book where the couple didn't use protection. Because *usually* it just isn't thought of/considered, it is not a *conscious* decision to stop using birth control (with a partner you've been with for less than a month). And Rae is not an emotionally healthy person; she is NOT healthy enough to become someone's mother. No way. In no universe should you risk getting pregnant right now. AT ALL. And, I hate to be the one to tell both of you adults this, but unprotected sex is how you get pregnant! Now you know. STOP.

So...this has the look of a rather bad review, but it really isn't; I did like the book, I do like Marni's writing, and I would recommend this one--as long as you don't have a sexual abuse trigger, don't mind second-chance love stories, and you have the patience for a drawn out back story reveal. It's a good story, Rae's a good character...it just missed the mark for me.

Plus it's Marni Mann, so a 3-ish for her books would be like a 4-4.5 for most other books. ;)

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## AnnCleire says

Blog Tour on my blog September 19th 2014

Review + Excerpt

<http://pleaseanotherbook.tumblr.com/p...>



Ringrazio immensamente Marni Mann e The Novel Tease per avermi concesso la straordinaria opportunità di partecipare al blog tour e di leggere il libro in anteprima in cambio della mia onesta opinione. Un grazie speciale alla Mann per regalare a noi lettori storie tanto belle.

“Pulled Within” è il secondo volume della serie “Bar Harbor” della meravigliosa Marni Mann, una scrittrice straordinaria, capace di scrivere storie sconvolgenti, inimmaginabili e bellissime. Anche in questo caso ha svolto un lavoro magistrale, per una storia difficile e complessa, che lascia di stucco. Quando le admin del blog “The Novel Tease” mi hanno proposto di partecipare al blog tour non mi sono proprio potuta tirare indietro, non quando adoro immensamente lo stile narrativo della Mann. Ed eccomi ad apprezzare il suo ennesimo libro.

Che cosa succede quando una persona che dovrebbe amarti incondizionatamente e proteggerti dal dolore è la responsabile delle tue cicatrici?

Tutto è cambiato per Rae Ryan quando Drew Stevens è arrivato a Bar Harbor. Saint, l'uomo a cui tiene veramente, non vuole più saperne di lei e i loro dissapori finiscono per costarle il lavoro. Con il suo migliore amico, Brady, alle prese con i propri problemi, Rae si ritrova completamente sola.

Il suo mondo si trasforma di nuovo dopo un incontro con Hart, il suo primo amore che è recentemente tornato in città. Nonostante il dolore che prova per il fatto che l'abbia abbandonata, i ricordi del tempo trascorso insieme le ricordano di giorni più sereni. Un tempo dove non aveva le sue cicatrici. Ma non è più quella ragazza spensierata – è indurita, spezzata. È spinta dentro.

Mentre Rae inizia ad aprire il suo cuore e a lasciare andare le sue emozioni a guarire, nota quel terribilmente familiare e arrugginito vecchio pickup al bar locale. Il suo incubo dal passato è tornato – e lei non può trovarsi nella posizione vulnerabile di sentire la pena che lui è capace di infliggere...

La Mann ha la capacità incredibile di scrivere delle storie assolutamente strazianti ma che ti lasciano, a fine lettura, incredibilmente sollevato, empowered, in un certo qual modo. È difficile trovare una scrittrice che unisca una trama convincente e uno stile impeccabile, ma fidatevi quando vi dico che Marni Mann sa quello di cui scrive. E non importa se sei sempre ad un passo dalle lacrime o se le vicende dei protagonisti ti lasciano con il cuore spezzato, sai sempre che ne vale la pena. In questo secondo volume leggiamo la storia di Rae, la ex compagna di Saint, una ragazza che si pone al mondo in maniera scontrosa e imprevedibile, ma che nasconde una fragilità immensa. Dopo che Saint l'ha licenziata si ritrova ad arrabattarsi come può per sopravvivere ma è difficile in un paese che vive di turismo e di lavoro stagionale, quando l'estate è ormai agli sgoccioli. Più l'autunno si avvicina più Rae è costretta ad allontanarsi da Bar Harbor. Rae è una di quelle ragazze che non si dà per vinta, che anche nel colmo della tempesta cerca di sopravvivere. E deve solo raggiungere intatta il 17 dicembre. Non importa se nel frattempo non mangia e non dorme, quella data significa tutto, girare la boa di quel maledetto giorno di dicembre le riporterà un po' di serenità. E la solitudine, le inizia a pesare come un macigno.

Ma dal passato, ecco che rispunta Hart, il ragazzo che le ha spezzato il cuore, scomparendo nel nulla, ma che in realtà non ha mai dimenticato. Ormai Hart è un uomo, fatto e finito, e anche lui ha la sua dose di cicatrici raccolte sul campo. Quelle maledette cicatrici che Rae si porta sul viso. Quelle cicatrici che fanno la differenza tra il perdersi e il salvarsi, tra uscire allo scoperto o nascondersi sotto la sabbia, tra il camminare a testa alta, orgogliosi o rannicchiarsi in posizione fetale e dondolarsi avanti e indietro. Ed è questo che fa la differenza in una storia che non ha nulla di facile, che si frange contro le esigenze di una vita che mette i bastoni tra le ruote.

Non si tratta solo della romance, che pure è intensa e appassionante, non si tratta solo delle scene più

erotiche, che pure ti lasciano con quel senso di soddisfazione e un sorrisetto compiaciuto, non si tratta del perdono e della rinascita, si tratta di raggiungere la consapevolezza che la colpa non è tua, che non ti puoi dilaniare il corpo e la mente per qualcosa di così terribile. Il passato è una macchia oscura che rischia di inghiottire tutto al suo passaggio. Ma si deve andare avanti, Rae ha tante persone che la amano, a dispetto dei pregiudizi e delle mancanze di chi le sta intorno.

È sempre Rae che racconta la sua storia in prima persona e ho molto apprezzato questa scelta, perché se Hart è estremamente importante nella crescita e nella liberazione della ragazza, pure è lei la vera protagonista, sono le sue scelte e le sue vicende a fare la differenza. È lei che detiene le redini della storia e ne modella il ritmo. Rae con il suo sarcasmo e il suo fisico statuaria. Rae con la sua intelligenza vivace e i suoi moti irrequieti.

Non ci sono moltissimi personaggi secondari, ma quelli che ci sono contano tantissimo. A partire proprio da Brady, il migliore amico di Rae di cui veniamo a scoprire molti dettagli e che avevamo conosciuto già in "Pulled Beneath" e che io ho adorato dal primo momento. E poi soprattutto Shane il padre di Brady, che ha fatto da padre anche a Rae. Di una tenerezza unica, di un sostegno vero, di una gentilezza estrema, la descrizione della casa, mi ha lasciato commossa.

L'ambientazione è sempre quella di Bar Harbor il paesino sull'oceano, in Maine del primo libro, che affascina con i suoi spazi ampi, la pioggia, le tempeste, l'aria aggressiva di gente che pensa agli affari propri.

Il particolare da non dimenticare? Una felpa con cappuccio.

"Pulled Within" è un libro eccezionale, intenso, passionale, struggente, che tra alti e bassi, tocca con delicatezza temi importanti, regalandoci una protagonista forte, un uomo da invidiarle e una trama impeccabile. La Mann intesse con le sue parole una vicenda crudele, per regalarci ancora una volta la speranza della liberazione. Per vedere la luce, bisogna conoscere il buio. Io intanto aspetto buona buona il terzo volume della serie. So che sarà spettacolare.

Buona lettura guys!

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## **Charlotte Lynn says**

I read the first book in the Bar Harbor series and was extremely anxious for the second one to come out. But, with almost any series, you never know if the following books will hold true to the first books. *Pulled Within* not only lives up to *Pulled Beneath*, it surpasses it. I could not put it down. Rae tugged at my heart and won me over. I had to know what was causing her night mares and what had happened to her brother. Her happy ending was a must happen for me to be happy.

*Pulled Within* is raw and full of emotion. I had tears, I smiled, and I even giggled a little. I am not sure that a book has ever hit me with so many emotions and then left me wanting so much more in all my years of reading. Marni Mann is absolutely amazing. This series is definitely at the top of my recommend list and my must read list. Anyone who misses these books will be sorry and will be missing out on some great reading.

I do have to mention that this is definitely an adult book. There is explicit language, sexual abuse, drug use, and disturbing situations.

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