



Buried Threads

Kaylin McFarren

Amanda Tomo Yoshida, Designer

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Kaylin McFarren has raised the bar for the erotic thriller with an action- and character-driven story.

Buried Threads, an erotic thriller, combines the action and adventure found in a Clive Cussler novel, the plotting and romance of Danielle Steel's books, and the erotic energy and supernatural elements of a work by Shayla Black. Equally plot and character driven, it has a superb balance of action, character reflection, and introspection.

While their romantic and working relationship appears to be strained, professional divers and treasure hunters Rachel Lyons and Chase Cohen are hired by a mysterious monk to travel to Japan and recover three ancient swords. Priceless, the swords are instrumental in stopping an ancient prophecy that foretells the destruction of Japan. To reach the swords, Rachel and Chase swim through hungry goblin sharks and flesh-eating eels to the underwater entrance of a secret temple. There, they face evil entities and Indiana Jones-like traps and obstacles, such as poison darts and deadly blades, poised to cut them to pieces. Thwarted at every turn, Rachel and Chase must stop apocalyptic forces from annihilating Japan.

Buried Threads, the follow-up novel to Kaylin McFarren's *Severed Threads*, contains enough backstory about the main characters, Rachel and Chase, that it is not necessary to have read the previous novel. Expert writing allows moments where the reader is given access to each major character's thoughts. These shifts in perspective and pace are done effortlessly, without the character going off in a direction extraneous to the gist of the story.

The novel is not formulaic. True, it has explicit sex scenes, but they are not gratuitous. The eroticism is enhanced by the variety of emotional relationships between the characters that engage in sexual congress throughout. Rachel's and Chase's loving connection is beautifully contrasted with the intense relationship of ritual and submission between Mariko, a geisha, and Kenji, a wealthy Japanese businessman with yakuza ties. McFarren writes, "Kenji was her danna, her master. The man who had agreed to pay twenty thousand dollars for each of her seasonal kimonos, provide her housing, and address all of her needs...She had resigned herself to her fate. There would be no looking back, no shameful regrets...not unless she was willing to negate their agreement and destroy the reputation she valued more than life itself."

Filled with vivid descriptions that jump off the page, *Buried Threads* makes Japan a character in the novel. With a Janus-like split personality, modern Japan is described as having elements of old Japan, like honor and tradition, wedded with the influences of Western society and high technology. McFarren writes, "It seemed the only product sold here was pleasure. In both directions were bars, hostess clubs, pachinko parlors, and Turkish-style baths. It was a postmodern red light district complete with air conditioning, piped-in music and automated doormen." Ironically, Rachel and Chase, who are American, must save this new hybrid Japan from old, malevolent magic with good magic.

McFarren, also the author of the novel *Flaherty's Crossing*, has raised the bar for the erotic thriller.

LEE GOODEN (December 12, 2013)

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