

Love Starved

Kate Fierro

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Drama set against a vivid locale turns this love story into a satisfying, erotic tale.

Love Starved, by Kate Fierro, is a swirl of drama, miscommunication, and sexual tension. Fierro builds the story vividly against the backdrop of urban Minneapolis and Minnesota's wilder north shore. Her writing makes the characters lovable, believable, and totally sexy. Micah and Angel close their physical and emotional distance with page-turning passion.

Micah Geller is an unassuming tech-geek entrepreneur in Minneapolis. In a moment of weakness and longing, he lets himself get entangled with an escort called Angel, who promises to fulfill Micah's fantasy ideal of the perfect, loving date. When a friend of his sister sees them together, his cover story snowballs, and the whole thing starts to spin out of control. Then an accident puts Angel in the hospital, and his real name is revealed to be Aiden. Micah feels compelled to check up on him, and through Aiden's recovery, a complicated friendship blossoms between the two men.

Micah slowly unravels the mystery of Aiden and why he turned to prostitution, earning Aiden's trust and navigating a narrow line between friendship and something more. As the novel's climax unfolds, it becomes clear that only Micah, with his morally ambiguous history as a hacker, has the skills to save Aiden's reputation—maybe his life. *Love Starved* is lip-bitingly delightful, and hard to put down. It definitely doesn't hurt that the sex is well written and hot, with no awkwardly phrased moments to break the erotic reverie.

Possibly the only disappointing element of the book is its cover, because there is no reading this novel covertly in public.

Fierro's *Love Starved* is a romance simmering with the drama of blackmail, self-denial, life-threatening injuries, delicious sexual tension (and even more delicious sexual release), and the titillating promise of true love in the face of it all. Somehow, under Fierro's direction, it all works, and it is so, so satisfying.

EMERSON M. FULLER (Summer 2015)

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