

Secrets Revealed

Francis Dane

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Secrets Revealed is a steamy romance novel in which two people fall in love despite their brokenness.

Francis Dane's erotic romance novel *Secrets Revealed* is about the tormented attraction between a young woman and her boss.

Ashley, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a wealthy investment banker from Texas, is a beautiful, talented dancer who's headed for Julliard. Her life seems perfect. But then her mother is diagnosed with cancer and dies, changing everything. Six years later, Ashley has given up her dream of becoming a dancer; she moves to New York City anyway, though, and becomes the personal assistant for Marcus, a demanding, stern insurance agency CEO.

Despite his tough and standoffish appearance, Marcus is attracted to Ashley. While they struggle to remain professional with each other, they both feel a growing physical and emotional attraction. A work crisis forces them to take a business trip to Germany. After spending time together, they realize that they can no longer pretend they have no feelings for each other. As their relationship becomes stronger and passion grows, parts of themselves that they thought forever lost are restored.

In this idealized love story, both Ashley and Marcus sense the dangers that come with being involved with one another. Marcus surrenders to his feelings first; his choice provides space for him to grow and change from a womanizer who is trying to fill an internal void into a balanced and happy partner. Likewise, insecure, scarred Ashley discovers she is worthy of being loved.

The novel moves with speed, jumping between Ashley and Marcus's perspectives, sometimes within the space of a few paragraphs. These sudden changes—though they show the couple's individual thoughts on the same situations in parallel to one another, revealing that their actions differ from their feelings toward one another—muddle the story, though, and confuse its progression.

As Ashley and Marcus work through mundane moments in the office and in Germany, their chemistry is said to grow. Still, their first physical interaction with one another is subdued: they hold hands while falling asleep together. The book becomes much more explicit as it progresses, indulging in repetitive sex scenes that overemphasize the couple's sensual bond. More compelling and individualized are the book's descriptions of Munich, as well as of German foods and traditions, which make for a pleasant setting to the story.

A relationship grows against the romantic backdrop of a trip abroad in *Secrets Revealed*, Francis Dane's steamy romance novel in which two people fall in love despite their brokenness.

ANNA MARIA COLIVICCHI (December 9, 2021)

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