

Starlet's Man: A Young Hollywood Love Story

Carla J. Hanna

CreateSpace (May 5, 2014)

Softcover \$15.95 (258pp)

978-1-4993-6847-5

The protagonist's inner turmoil will resonate with today's youth who find spiritual conflict in celebrity culture and the party lifestyle.

Teenage Manuel Biro hates acting. He loathes the fake, plastic Hollywood scene and longs for something more meaningful than the glamor, glitter, fast cars and faster women that are so prevalent in his hometown, Santa Monica. There is only one problem. Manny is desperately in love with his best friend, superstar actress Marie Michael. Carla J. Hanna's *Starlet's Man* showcases all of the action and angst from Manny's point of view.

Still reeling from a horrible breakup with his girlfriend Kate, Manny tries to make sense of his tangled emotions while reconciling his moral and religious beliefs with the fast-paced, sex-crazed culture that surrounds him. To complicate matters, Manny experiences new feelings for his workout buddy Beth, dodges unwanted media attention from his "friend" Alan, and attempts to shield his fourteen-year-old sister, Janet, from the harsh realities of the party lifestyle, all while hiding his true passion for Marie.

Although *Starlet's Man* is the fourth novel in the Starlet series, the events begin prior to book one, separate from the rest, which are told in memoir style from Marie's point of view. However, as much as experiencing things through Manny's eyes will likely thrill and delight those familiar with the Starlet stories, it is obvious, from the dramatic opening scene onward, that Manny's world has already been established, and newcomers will have a bit of catching up to do. Some questions, such as the mysteriously secret tragedy surrounding Manny and Kate's breakup are answered piecemeal through the dialogue, while others are not revealed at all in this volume.

Regardless of when Manny first enters the scene, in *Starlet's Man* or elsewhere in the series, he is sure to be a favorite. Manny struggles daily to be true to himself in a world that prizes image over substance. Hanna explores spirituality and Christianity in a relatable, non-preachy style that encourages self-reflection and honesty. Affectionately dubbed "Señor Self-Righteous" for what Janet calls his "unrealistic idealism," Manny is a conflicted seventeen-year-old, and his inner turmoil should resonate with today's youth. Other issues of particular relevance in American culture, such as the abuse of social media, the role of women in the film industry, and the casual drug culture are all explored in a refreshingly nonjudgmental, authentic voice.

Starlet's Man offers a realistic, behind-the-scenes alternative for teens and young adults interested in the celebrity lifestyle.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (Winter 2015)

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