Clarion Review

Erotica

The Fine Line
L.L. Miller
Xlibris
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Three Stars (out of Five)

The phrase “alternative lifestyle” often signifies sexual freedom, yet the options presented in erotic fiction occasionally incorporate sadomasochistic rituals that include bondage or violence as part of the so-called emancipation. *The Fine Line* is no exception. A lover shared with others in ritualistic sex play, another common scenario, allows a woman to experience her extended barriers under the supervision of her partner, as Carol does with Sam in this intriguing novel.

Since the Fifty Shades of Grey trilogy captured public acclaim, as well as criticism, for its boundary-pushing sexual enlightenment, countless writers have jumped on the bandwagon, along with their cuffs, whips, leather, and sex toys. L.L. Miller’s *The Fine Line* is a tame, pseudo-intellectual series of descriptions, rather than a run-of-the-mill erotic bombardment, incorporating a surprising cynicism and a subtle morality amidst the spanking and clumsy devices.

However, the story wanders off in too many directions, even reading like a travelogue at times, humorously out of sync with the erotic content. “In 1840, Napoleon’s body passed through the arch en route to his final resting place, Les Invalides, which we are going to see tomorrow on the morning tour.”

The back cover presents a professorial analysis of women’s rights, suggesting that sadomasochism may be a healthy exploration of one’s sexuality, but it does not discuss the dark side to this controversial activity, which is quite evident in the book. Strangely, the blurb is appropriate for nonfiction, perhaps from an academic standpoint, but not suited to an explicit, gritty work of fiction that tenuously holds to the backbone of a plot as Sam’s esoteric tastes emerge. Miller’s novel teeters on the erotica category line, where it is at risk of plummeting into the male-oriented action genre. This allows a degree of machismo to permeate its foggy depths.

“Sam was pretty much on his own, except for occasional girls who were more interested

in what they could get out of him than anything else. Our once-marital home became a revolving door of hookers, pole dancers, and any female he could pick up."

L.L. Miller is an attorney and a registered nurse from Massachusetts. *The Fine Line* is her debut novel. This book is not the positive journey or the uplifting discovery promised, but it deserves an unexceptional mark for sex-based entertainment. With a targeted marketing plan, the novel will appeal to the open-minded reader seeking diversion.

Julia Ann Charpentier