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Clarion Review

Romance

Trust: A New Beginning
Cristiane Serruya
CreateSpace
978-1-4802-3629-5
Three Stars (out of Five)

Trust is the story of Sophia, a twenty-five-year-old Brazilian widow who tries to alleviate her loneliness in the United Kingdom. She meets two men, a mild-mannered steel industry tycoon and an overbearing, powerful banker. These suitors have nothing in common. Ethan is a sophisticated gentleman, while Alistair is an exciting challenge. Educated and refined, Sophia is more compatible with Ethan on an intellectual level, yet she is magnetically drawn to Alistair, a troubled man with a cruel streak and a need to punish women.

The first installment of an intended series, *Trust* plunges a grief-stricken Sophia back into the process of living, subjecting her to pain and pleasure, sadness and elation. The love scenes are explicit and written well, and they reveal character rather than just physicality. Serruya writes, “She seemed so vulnerable, huddled on the seat. Unable to resist, he rested his palm against her cheek. She pressed her face onto his hand. Alistair froze at the intimate movement, at the gesture of trust, of her seeking comfort from him.”

While this volatile romantic situation is wired for the novel’s success, a meandering delivery drags the narrative down. There is also a good deal of rambling dialogue that takes off in directions that contribute nothing to the plot. Instead of carefully edited scenes, readers are presented with extensive description of the settings and prolonged conversations that slow the story’s pace and do little to enhance character development and action. As well, some erotic interludes could be shortened without losing impact.

Trust is a nearly five-hundred-page novel without a definitive resolution. The final pages allude to the next installment of the series, and interested readers will have no choice but to read the next book to find out what happens. While this may be a smart marketing maneuver, many readers will likely wish that Serruya had tied up a few loose ends in this story before moving on to the next.

Cristiane Serruya lives in Rio de Janeiro, and she infuses Sophia's personality with an authentic cultural flair. The author's studies in Europe have given her writing a realistic appeal in descriptive passages, which can only be attained through familiarity with the subject matter.

This novel is a mainstream romance that will draw readers of eclectic general fiction. It crosses genre boundaries and breaks genre rules to stand on its own. Those who appreciate a drawn-out escapade will enjoy the work of this promising writer.

Julia Ann Charpentier