



Our Little Secrets

Merry Farmer

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Michael West swore he would never fall in love again. So when the beautiful and wily Charlotte steps off the train looking for a new life he jumps at the business opportunity she presents. Engaged forty-five minutes after meeting, married the next day, Michael thinks he's found everything a respectable man should have. Except that Michael is as far from respectable as they come. They agreed not to ask questions about each other's pasts, but when the past seeps into their present Michael suspects his passionate new wife is not who she says she is. Too bad he's already fallen in love with her.

Charlotte Baldwin has a secret. She fled Philadelphia to escape the sins of her past but someone is following her. What better way to hide than by marrying Michael West, Cold Springs, Montana's enigmatic shopkeeper? A new name, a new life, and a passionate husband is exactly what she needs to leave her sins behind. But when it comes to keeping secrets Charlotte may have met her match in Michael. When a connection neither of them expects catches up with them, the shocking revelation means Charlotte may have run right into the arms of her enemy.

No sin stays a secret forever...

Our Little Secrets Details

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From Reader Review Our Little Secrets for online ebook

Sharon Buchbinder says

When I first began reading Merry Farmer's OUR LITTLE SECRETS, I was immediately engaged by her main characters, Charlotte Baldwin and Michael West. A young woman on the run from a mysterious past, Charlotte heads west, away from Philadelphia and someone who has been following her from St. Louis. She arrives in Cold Springs, Montana, amidst a bevy of husband-hunting painted ladies and does her best to divest herself of their bawdy company.

Michael, the owner of the general store in Cold Springs, is at the train station to receive a shipment of goods for his emporium. To his amusement, Charlotte small mistakes him for a porter. Enchanted by the dark haired beauty, Michael decides to show her the town. Before long, the woman who wants a new life and was not in search of a husband and the man who had no desire to marry are wedded in a civil ceremony in a business deal where each promised not to ask questions about the other's pasts.

Charlotte is introduced to the beauty of lovemaking and Michael is astonished at her virginity and her delight at her "wifely duties." Soon they are making love in the bed, on the sofa, on the stairs, anywhere they can grab a moment and each other. Neither ever expected their business deal to turn into a love affair. They are happy, have friends in the community, and the business is doing well.

Little by little, however, suspicion enters into the relationship, along with some bad dealings from their past. Ugly rumors abound and their relationship hits the rocks. Just as it seems things can't get worse, a dreadful person from their past arrives in town and delivers demands and ultimatums.

No spoilers from me! This book has action, adventure, romance, betrayals, and secrets within secrets. I very much enjoyed this Western romance. Mary Farmer's attention to detail in the sounds and smells of the era and the small town setting put me into the story. Her characters are three-dimensional and flawed in ways that were endearing. Her plot took me for a fun filled ride with enough twists and turns to keep me flipping the pages late at night. I highly recommend this book and give it 5 Shiny Sheriff Stars.

Lisa says

2.5-3 stars

It started off reaaaaaally well but it started to fizzle out during the end, mainly because Michael's being a spineless git I WAS ROOTING FOR YOU, MY DUDE,

Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says

3.5 stars

I would have liked this book a whole lot more if the Hero wasn't such a coward! He was a wimp for so much

of the book letting "people" walk on him, his friends, and his wife that I kept asking myself what the hell does Charlie see in that spineless jerk. Oh did I forget to say that he was a jerk for half the book too. He tells her that they are to ask no questions about the past, then he doubts her all the time and pushes her away every 5 minutes even after everything comes out he still pushes her away. I have no clue what she sees in him, but I loved Charlie. I will say that Michael gets his shit together in the end and comes through for Charlie growing a backbone and all. I also love Phineas Bell. The story line kept me interested even with a wimpy leading male, which says a lot since huge Cowards are one of my book pet peeves. I think I might read a few of the others in this series especially Phineas and Elliott's story!

Tin says

Disclosure: I received this review copy as part of the blog tour event. Thank you to Merry Farmer for the opportunity. Yes, this is an honest review.

* * *

This is a 3.5-star book for me.

* * *

Charlie has just arrived in Cold Springs, seeking a fresh start for herself and mistakenly thinks Michael West is a porter and asks him to get her luggage. She eventually realises that he's the owner of the town's convenience store and quickly apologises for her error. It's the beginning of a conversation that proceeded with an invitation to dinner and ended with a proposal for marriage. Merry Farmer's **Our Little Secrets** features a very different spin on two tropes: the mail-order bride, and the marriage of convenience.

...Was she really mad enough to marry a stranger in a frontier town?

Of course she could, she answered herself. Michael West presented her with the opportunity to start over with everything she wanted, a job, a home, and a purpose. It was more than her step-father had ever tempted her with.

- p. 42

Charlie really isn't a mail-order bride, but just happened to be in a train-full of them -- she is, however, like the women onboard the same train, desperate for a new beginning. *What's inside her carpet bag? Why is she running away from her step-father?*

She's a character with so many secrets, which is fine with Michael West, who also has secrets of his own. He also came from Philadelphia three years before, and the author did a good job of hinting at Michael's secrets: *who is Emily? Why did Michael leave Philadelphia?* While Michael has done well for himself and has succeeded in Cold Springs, his present life isn't free of trouble: there are the persistent rumours regarding his sexuality, and thugs his competitor hires to intimidate him. I appreciate the balance that Merry Farmer has brought to portraying life in the Historical West: it isn't perfect, but it is, sometimes, people's best option.

It's interesting to see how Charlie and Michael's relationship plays out, agreeing that the past isn't part of

their bargain and the compartmentalisation of past/present/future is curious -- and I read on, wondering if it was possible to live a life just in the "now" -- with no thought to the past or the future. It worked for a while, as our hero and heroine go through the honeymoon stage of their marriage -- when that's over, however, is a different story altogether.

..."Is there something you're not telling me?"

She forced a laugh. "There are lots of things I'm not telling you, remember?" She caught her breath and distracted him with, "Will you show me how to fill out the deposit slip?"
- p. 168

We cannot escape our past. We cannot hide our secrets forever. It was riveting seeing Charlie and Michael wrestle with truths that slowly emerged and they became confronted with questions that tested the promises they made to each other before they married and the affection and love that has grown since then.

Overall, I enjoyed reading Merry Farmer's **Our Little Secrets**. I did get confused by all the characters/people she introduces in Cold Springs, and wished she had taken some time to deepen each character's story, but it did serve to show the greater community (and life) that Charlie and Michael belong to. The author stayed true to her purpose and played up the "secrets" between Charlie and Michael very well, and she did a good job with all the surprises and twists that happen in the story.

The breakthrough character for me was Phin Bell, owner of the bank, and Michael's long-time friend. He left Philadelphia with Michael and has stayed his loyal friend throughout. His story, **Somebody to Love**, was published this April 2014.

Connie Taylor says

Ms. Farmer has again written a great story that keeps you reading until the very last page. From the time Charlie steps off the train and Michael, a complete stranger, proposes marriage 45 minutes later the action never stops. Each of them is hiding their past from each other and that is not hard to believe in that period of American history. Many people went west to start new lives and just abandoned their lives back east.

This book has love, adventure, steamy scenes, just to name a few. Each character is well developed and compliment each other nicely. I look forward to reading more of Merry Farmer's books.

Sally Wolf says

Charlotte got off the train in Cold Springs ready to start a new life. The first thing she does mistakenly think Michael West the owner of the General store is a porter and asks him to fetch her bag. Intrigued by this beautiful woman who despite getting off the train with the flock of women on the hunt for husbands Michael decides he needs to know more about her. During lunch, they strike up a crazy deal to get married. The only stipulation is they do not ask about each others' past. The only problem is more you try to run away from a checkered past it always has a way of catching up to you. Charlotte and Michael soon find out their pasts are

linked and it becomes a battle of who will forgive the other first if at all. This is a wonderful book about loss, forgiveness, greed, and secrets which should not have been kept between husband and wife. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who likes romance, westerns and a quick read which will leave you satisfied.

Dawn says

I really liked it. This was my first western romance and I was impressed. The book was not immensely "hick" for lack of better words, and the story was intriguing albeit a bit predictable. Both H & h have sordid pasts which they keep from one another. This only creates more problems. If they only were to open up to one another !

I genuinely liked all the characters and the story kept me rivited. The romance develops naturally and the H & h are well suited. I gave 1 star less due to the predictability of most of the outcome (but there were some surprises as well).

Sensuality level is steamy.

Alina C?t?r?u says

It's 1895 and Charlotte Baldwin, a runaway heiress, arrives in the frontier town of Cold Springs, Montana, hoping to find shelter from the man who is constantly following her and she wishes to start over as Charlie, a new identity that might keep her out of danger... or so she thought. Charlotte meets Michael West, the owner of the general store, a man who seems to live a quiet life – the kind of life Charlotte dreamed to have for so long.

<http://elitere.ro/our-little-secrets/>

<http://alinasbookishhideout.com/revie...>

Donna Porter says

This was a good western story. This is the first old time western I have read. It was a romance story and it had action and passion. It was a good story and it held my interest. It is a pretty long novel though. Well worth the time to read

Lanel says

Our Little Secrets was a very quick, easy read; it's free on the Kindle so that's pretty great too. The book was

a quick read but I'm not quite sure what I thought of the story. There was a lot going on but it all flowed nicely so it wasn't scattered. There were a number of characters but each were introduced well so you could follow along. The extent of the secrets really got to me, though. It irritates me when characters have so many secrets that cause so much conflict, to that extent this was overdone and drew the book out a little too much.

The plot flowed well and I have to admit I didn't expect the end. However, at the same time it was a little over dramatic and took the story down a slightly different path than expected (and almost how it felt like it should go. All in all, it was a good book and I'd recommend it.

FYI...the story is quite sexually explicit, I failed to read that in reviews and wasn't expecting it.

MG says

2 stars

In a word: Meh

I really liked the description of this book, and I have read a couple of Merry Farmer's novels before, but this one really fell flat for me. While the story line was moderately interesting, the main characters (especially the H --- Michael) didn't connect for me. Michael was described throughout as "odd" and/or "funny" looking. He also was smaller of stature than most others. I guess I like my historical western men brawny? It just didn't do it for me. The sex scene descriptions were steamy as is the case in the other books by Farmer that I've read, but I wasn't that into it because I couldn't get past the picture of Michael I had in my head. And then as the story unfolded, he was revealed as weak of character (he's in his late 30's yet wasn't brave enough to stand up to his father 8 years prior when he was clearly a grown man then?). It just didn't work for me.

Overall, I was pretty disappointed. I am not sure I am interested enough in the other characters in this book to try others in the series.

Plot --- 2.5/5

Main Characters ---- 2/5 (female mc - 3/5; male mc - 1/5)

Supporting Cast --- 2.5/5

Steam Level --- 2/5

Violence --- not graphic; none domestic

Language --- minimal

POV --- 3rd throughout

Shaly says

I had this book in my library for a while before getting around to reading it. The story line was actually pretty good, there were enough twists and turns to keep you turning the page. It was also a nice change to have a male who wasn't perfect in any sense of the word, he wasn't your typical six foot four muscular alpha 'I can kill you with my pinkie' hero. He was a regular joe. He did have some serious 'daddy issues' going on but I think he manned up when he was supposed to and defended Charlie at the most important and crucial moment of their lives.

Now many reviewers touched on the supposed incestual part of the book, me..not touching that with a ten foot pole since everyone has a different opinion on it. I will say this, it is entirely plausible that Michael and Charlie did not in fact know about each other as the story isn't really clear about the time line, only that eight years passed since Michael's tragedy, he disappeared, his fathered remarried shortly after then Charlie came into the picture as a step child. They never even met until she got off the train. By everyone's own admission the father never mention Michael b/c he doesn't care about his kid and so on...

Overall it really is a good and interesting read...just goes to show what happens when you keep secrets from the ones you love..

M.A Grace says

Warning: The sex scenes get a bit steamy so I wouldn't just hand it off to your child without flipping through it to be sure you are comfortable with them reading them.

Have you ever sunk into a story that has you begging for more and has you searching for answers from the first page? That is what I got with Our Little Secrets. The past haunts the present as two people try to move into the future. A quick marriage with no questions asked. A budding and growing love. And a past that refuses to stay under wraps. A great story that will keep you wanting to know more. With depth characters and a story line that is unique in its own but has all the strength to pull you in and not let you up for air. I'm not a fan of Western but this story may change that.

Lisa C. says

This book was lacking in too many ways to rate it any higher. Probably the single most annoying part was the secrets that were referred to time and time again that came out in little bits and pieces toward the end. It was like little kids playing the game, I've got a secret, but won't share. We understand you aren't sharing your secrets, stop telling us already!

It was different from the typical historical western romance in many ways, Phin, Michael was not a hot cowboy, Charlie wasn't the vivacious beauty, which is not a bad thing. It was the manner of writing that didn't do much for me. 'The characters were flat' is often overused, but fit this book too well. Poor or no descriptions of the characters, the town, the general store, didn't let the reader 'see' what the author was trying to convey.

Still not sure what Eric's role was other than to pop in and out of scenes for no apparent reason. Why we had to read about Michael folding their clothes every time they were in bed together is a mystery. I could go on, but you get the idea.

I may read a different book by the author to see if this is typical writing but I wouldn't recommend this.

Lynette Eakin says

Awful

For me I had a hard time finishing the book. Story line was unbelievable. I didn't like the characters. The story felt lacking in areas where new people would come in. The love scenes were explicit and I prefer some things left to the imagination. I read through hoping it would get better but it never did.
