



## Skin

*Lydia Michaels*

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When Finnegan McCullough gets a flat tire he bumps into a woman he's never seen before. After a stern lecture on trespassing, he offers her a ride and a friendship takes shape. Mallory Fenton is unlike any girl he's ever met. She's funny, sexy as hell, and sweet as pie, but she doesn't see herself that way.

After literally crashing into Finnegan McCullough, Mallory is a hot, tongue-tied,mess. A true lumberjack, he wears his flannel well and possesses the sexiest smile she's ever had thrown her way. Unfortunately, men like that don't look at girls like her. When Finn confesses his desire to be more than friends, Mallory is shocked. After years of being the 'fat girl' she knows better than to believe a man like Finn could ever find her attractive. But she's gotten under his skin and Finn is determined to show Mallory how beautiful she truly is.

A realistic and heartwarming romance that proves love and beauty come in all shapes and sizes.

## **Skin Details**

Date : Published August 22nd 2013 by Secret Cravings Publishing

ISBN :

Author : Lydia Michaels

Format : ebook 228 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, New Adult

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## From Reader Review Skin for online ebook

### sandy says

Ahhhhh! I WAS Mallory later in life. Thankfully I found my Finn :) This book was a breath if fresh air! I want to be a McCullough!

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### Amelie says

I'm appalled to realize I haven't reviewed this book yet. It's my favorite one most days! But I have to agree with maggieandteddy, the ending was a bit rushed. Although to be fair, this book can have a 100-page epilogue and I'll still be left wanting more. :)

I love it because it transported me to a different world - one that I very much want to be in as well. Now, a lot of you will roll your eyes at me, I'm sure. "Gimme a break, it's about a girl from Philadelphia who moved to a small mountain town!" There are no werewolves, wizards, or knights (even though the hero did act like a knight in flannel and logger pants (?)) But don't worry, the heroine did NOT act like a damsel in distress, although she was in distress). There's no magic. So I get that it may not sound so exciting. If you're into the otherworldly stuff, this book is not for you. Luckily for me, I'm not, and even just a few pages in, I had already sensed that this book is for me. In fact, I even felt like this book was written for me.

It's such a simple concept: an overweight single girl felt suffocated by her world. Everyone in her life has moved on (as they should) except for her. They're getting married, having babies. She, on the other hand, is getting fat-shamed by her doctor. She feels alone and helpless, and she couldn't turn to her friends and family, because no matter how much they love her, they'll never understand what she's going through. So what does our heroine (yes, she deserves to be called that) do? She channels all her self-loathing and self-pity into re-making herself.

So she relocates, and gives all of her attention to being healthier. Yes, her intentions are not entirely noble. She envisions going back to the city and watching her friends' stunned faces when they see her transformation. But tell me, what fat girl could not relate to that? Heck, what normal, red-blooded, *breathing* person could not relate to that?

\*Speaking of ... you know what else a lot of us could relate to? That scene where she was in her car outside of the bar psyching herself up before going inside. And the next scene where she's inside, all dolled up and feeling good about herself, and nobody notices her.

Okay, now I realize that I've practically written a novel yet I haven't even gotten to the good part. I'll rush through this ladies because my hands are cramping already, NOT because it's any less good. In fact, the romance part is top-notch. Finn is an excellent hero (yes, he deserves to be called that too). He's steady, devoted, loyal, and responsible. He also thinks those qualities make him less than, because they make him boring. Crazy guy. Doesn't he know that for a good woman - a woman who deserves him - those are the only things that matter? Besides, he's nowhere near boring. No, ma'am. You'll have to read the book to see for yourself exactly how un-boring he really is. I mean, he's a lumberjack, so he got ripped without spending an

insane amount of time at the gym. He knows what to do with his hands. He likes hanging out with the h. He thinks her thinking she's unattractive because she's fat is crazy talk, but he'll support her goals regardless. Examples: he'll go running with her, he'll bring her an apple to the movies so she won't feel bad about not getting to eat popcorn, he'll tell his own mother to back off when she's kinda pressuring his girl to eat more. What a guy, right? And maggieandteddy says she knows someone like him, so hurray! :)

Sorry for rambling on. Long story short: if you like a simple, honest story about a slightly insecure but definitely not annoying heroine and her hot, salt-of-the-earth hero who worships the ground she walks on, then get this book.

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### **Never Stop Reading or Dreaming says**

Update: alright after reading this for the 20th time I know I need to do a better review. Okay, first, Full disclosure I am Irish so I'm already partial to this book. That being said, oh god I loved these two characters. Finn is amazing. He takes all of her concerns she always had about herself and throws them away. The family dynamic here is EXACTLY like mine and the love these two share. Oh god. Everyone read this book!

I really really loved this. I think about this book all the time. I wish there was more on these two.

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### **sara j says**

first I give 4 stars to this book but rereading again I am giving this book 5 stars.....  
just because of Mallory Fenton  
...BC I see myself in her clearly....

I love this book to the core of my heart because of personal reasons....

the amazing part of this book is tat I love the character of Mallory Fenton because when I was reading this book and POV of Mallory Fenton,I was reading myself in her each and every word.....

Mallory fenton is heroine,30 years old and thinking of herself fat,not wanted all the time,just because society impose its opinion on her directly and indirectly...tagging her with the label of fat,which in our so called society opinion is so ugly,so embarrassing and awkward..... she knows deeply that being fat is not the real fault here,society is the problem here...her conscious and unconscious is so programmed by the society rule and regulations from begining that she can,t think of herself wanted,worthy....

and being myself overweight throughout life I was absorbing this book like I just picturing my life in front of my eyes while reading this book.... this book completely grab my attention from the beginning ....

I cried with Mallory ups and down picturing it as my ups and down.....

being fat in any society trigger self esteem issues that just the dilemma of all big girls out there..but in reality that is our society which impose us to think that being fat is ugly or something very very bad....

so society and minds of few negative people is the cause and problem, not being fat or being overweight or being big.....

in my opinion every natural shape is best as it requires some appreciation....that is in our minds,if we think them as beautiful ,we see them automatically beautiful....its all about our thinking...

and Finnegan macculough is one of the best person in Mallory Fenton life who makes her believe that she is the most beautiful girl for him in the world.....she is most wanted,cherished and adores by him,just not for her outside beauty,BC he see her internal beauty more....his eyes catches her purity,innocence, honesty,loyalty,not the things which are materialistic.....he sees real her not her body....

because his pure mind and heart see her inside beauty more than outside....when he thinks of her internal beauty, automatically his eyes catches her whole as beautiful...

and yeah that,s true.....weight is just a number.....don't,t waste your energies to think about opinions,imposition of other people frustrated minds..because they are frustrated,wasted that deosn,t mean we see ourselves negative.....

so all big beautiful girls out there,we are worthy beautiful and desirable as much as other people can....

Fuck off the so called society,fuck off frustrated negative people....

ONLY WE ROCKS.... think positive,stay positive.....

and Lydia Michaels once again you proved you are my best author to read...

so for me this book deserves unlimited stars.....

and it straightly goes to my favourite shelf.....

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### **Shannon Gorilla McGee Winston says**

I'm ignoring all the cliches in this book because it's pretty much the magic formula to make me so very happy. Overweight heroine: check! Nice guy, middle-class, blue-collar hero: check! Sweet and sexy times: check! Lots of insecurities about weight: check! A big, raucous family to base a series around: check! DING, DING, DING! We have a winner!!!!

I love Finn. \*sigh\*

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### **Rachel the Book Harlot says**

**2.5 stars**

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## **Lisa Cody says**

First, let me start by saying Lydia Michaels never fails to impress me, but I'll be honest, I didn't think I could like this book more than I did Sacred Waters, the first book in the McCullough Mountain series. Boy was I wrong!

Skin is fantastic! I savored every moment of the story, so much so that, while I could have easily finished the book in a day, I purposefully only read chunks at a time to draw it out as long as I could.

Mallory is EVERY woman. No matter your age or size, the reader will identify with her insecurities and her struggles to stop listening to her negative inner dialog. And Finn is just plain adorable. The devotion he feels toward his family and Mallory is only surpassed by his humility. He's just an all around, genuinely decent guy who happens to be drop dead gorgeous... a very rare combination in most romance novels.

Despite what the media would have us believe, life is not about being perfect. It's about finding, and reveling in the beauty that only comes from within. It's about finding your own unique strength in your perceived imperfections. Skin, at its essence, delivers that message in a wonderfully woven love story. Beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder, but it's far from only being skin deep.

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## **starsaga says**

### **3.5 stars, A sweet romance.,**

I enjoyed this book, Finn was the sweetest hero and I loved him, but I was not sympathetic to Mallory's personality. She was repeatedly negative about her body to the point where I did not get the feeling she could love anyone because she absolutely did not love herself. I kept hoping for some transition on her part, some growth where she would begin to see Finn as a real human being and not just as her boyfriend. But it was not to be and in the end she disappointed me by running away and not having the strength to stay and fight or even say anything. She just got in the car and ran, it was a great way to show that Finn was in love with her but I still did not see how and when she showed Finn that she was in love with him. I also think that the first book in this series spoiled me for a beautiful love story and this one just did not cut it.

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## **Tamara says**

Skin is a heartwarming look at beauty through the eyes of love. Have you ever met someone and thought they were okay looking and then you got to know them, and every time you met they became more and more attractive? I have. That is their true beauty shining through. Because beauty really isn't only Skin deep. One of the things I loved about this story, was that the hero, Finn, is beautiful all the way to his soul. I hate stereotypes, and there are as many stereotypes for "beautiful" people as there are for us "fat girls". I have known many women and men who were beautiful both inside and out, many "ugly" people who had beautiful skins, and even some people who's ugliness bleed from their souls to become visible to the naked eye. Skin does not perpetuate any of these stereotypes, the characters were real, human. I felt like I knew them. I grew up in Chicago, lots of big Irish families and the McCullough's made me feel right at home. There are a lot of underlying messages in Skin. But the one that resonated the most with me was that change

can only occur from the mind. You can change your outsides and never see it, if you still see yourself as flawed in your mind. Or you can accept your Skin and change your mindset.

What may surprise you about Skin is that while there are times you definitely need to have the tissues handy, you will also laugh and laugh through your tears (which I love).

I highly recommend this wonderful story of beauty and love.

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### **Emilie says**

I loved this book - it has so many great qualities about it. It definitely made me fall in love with the whole McCullough clan - I have since read the entire series and loved them all except for Sheilagh's story.

I especially loved the realness of self-image issues that Mallory deals with in this story. Some of her thoughts hit very close to home!

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### **Alex Carreras says**

Damn good! Just damn good!

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### **Janey says**

Finn you absolute star! a little misguided with always trying to do the right thing but your honesty with Malory was lovely. It took you a while and you were so patient but you finally got to show how beautiful inside and out Malory was. Yay for the bigger girl getting the hot guy!!

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### **Michelle [Helen Geek] says**

03/31/2014 --

**Overall Rating = 3.5 Stars**

**Book Cover / Book Blurb / Book Title = 4 / 4 / 5 = 4.5 Stars**

**Writer's Voice = 3 Stars**

**Character Development = 4 Stars**

**Story Appreciation = 3 Stars**

**Ending = 4 Stars**

**Worth the Chili = 3 Stars -- [\$4.99 on Amazon]**

**Smexy [HEAT] Rating = Mild to Moderate**

**201 pages**

Okay, I just couldn't stay away. I felt bad. I read the Surrender Trilogy by this author and my average rating for the 3 books was 2 Stars. I read Skin Deep and really liked it. I wanted to give another series a shot. So, I read Skin.

### **What did I like about this book?**

1 -- The cover is lovely. Don't you think so?

2 -- Finnegan is my kind of Hero. He is strong and kind. He's smart and loyal. He was a bit too accommodating, but no one is perfect. He has appointed himself as the caregiver of his family. I really liked him.

3 -- Loved all the family and am planning to read more in this series.

4 -- The author went to bat for fat girls every where. I liked and appreciated [being a fat girl myself] the concept. I'm not sure she pulled this one off like she wanted to [more on this later], but I love the attempt. Big girls can be just as beautiful and as sexy as those who are smaller in stature. Ms. Michaels tells this true. Loved that she went there in this one and gave us such a lovely man in Finn.

### **Now, what did I not like or thought could be better?**

1 -- Okay, I appreciate the "big is beautiful" theme, but give us a woman who isn't a head case. Mallory had no self esteem and the way she was always in her head about her body was over the top annoying. The fat thing was played up too much. She talked about Mallory's self image to a degree that was seriously unhealthy. I got tired of hearing about it. Finnegan had way more patience than I. I wanted to tell this girl to just get over herself. Get happy with yourself BITCH and shut the f#%k up!

2 -- Intimacy in this one was slow in coming. I don't have to have it in a book to be happy. But, don't drag it out forever and a day as if these two are virgins. Gah!

3 -- Erin. I could have done without this girl in the story. She really added nothing to it -- my opinion only.

4 -- I thought the ending a bit rushed. I think another 50 pages would have allowed the ending to land a bit softer and more well developed.

5 -- The price is a bit spendy. I paid it, but would recommend others wait for a price drop. It isn't a great read. It's good, but not great. There are better ones out there for less jingle.

I really did like this book. It was good, it just wasn't great. I'm ready for this author to just KNOCK one out. She has 5 Star capability. I think she has GREAT potential. I'll keep trying her cause I have faith in her talent. I. KNOW. SHE. CAN. DO. THIS. Just not with this one.

Happy Reading!!

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### **Iliada says**

#### **3.5 stars**

Lovely, *lovely* hero and nice heroine but her obsession with her weight grated on my nerves. I'm not very thin myself and I could understand how she felt up to a point but it was too much after the 50th time she mentioned how bad she looks.

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### **maggieandteddy says**

This was close to a 5 star book for me- up through 60% or so. I loved how Ms Michaels told Mallory's story- her weight issues and low self esteem. She moved to Center County to start over after finishing school in Philadelphia. Mallory meets Finn while on one of her daily runs. They become friends. Finn has a (bitchy) long-time girlfriend, Erin. Mallory is aware that she and Finn can only be friends- They tell each other that over and over. There is no cheating but there is a lot of back and forth - especially around 70-75% & I thought that I had re-read the same chapter. At about this time in the book- Finn's dad gives him some great advice about when you find the one-it not being easy & that she'd be worth it. Dad (finally) makes a brief appearance but I got it & so did Finn. Before I read this 2nd book-a friend posted an excerpt of an incident at the pub (the town's hangout for the young adults). It's where Mallory is insulted and Finn is there with her. He is so great and understanding. Mallory and Finn develop a great relationship... He seems too good to be true, right? Well, I don't think so. This story is very familiar to me. I'm lucky to know someone like Finn. Finn explains that looks haven't helped in his relationship- with someone that really connects with the real him. Mallory doesn't instantly solve the low self-image issues-- I love how hard she tries. Finn appreciates that also-- and he tells her!

The writing is much smoother than the first book. The ending/epilogue was a little rushed.

Over-all 4.5 stars. I recommend this book and the series.

I'm reading book 3 Chaste now.

**editing to 5 STARS!! Thanks Amelie--for making me remember this book >)**

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