



# The Lost

*Cole McCade*

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# The Lost

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*Darkly haunting erotica with the taboo appeal of V.C. Andrews.*

There's something wrong with Leigh.

She's known it her whole life. She knows it every time she spreads her legs. Every time she begs for the pain, the pleasure, the heat of a hard man driving deep inside. She's a slave to her own twisted lusts--and it's eating her alive. She loves it. She craves it. Sex is her drug, and she's always chasing her next fix. But nothing can satisfy her addiction, not even the nameless men she uses and tosses aside. No one's ever given her what she truly needs.

Until Gabriel Hart.

Cold. Controlled. Impenetrable. Ex-Marine Gabriel Hart isn't the kind of man to come running when Leigh crooks her pretty little finger. She loathes him. She hungers for him. He's the only one who understands how broken she is, and just what it takes to satisfy the emptiness inside. But Gabriel won't settle for just one night. He wants to claim her, keep her, make her forever his. Together they are the lost, the ruined, the darkness at the heart of Crow City.

But Leigh has a darkness of her own. A predator stalking through her past--one she'll do anything to escape.

Even if it means running from the one man who could love her...and leaving behind something more precious to her than life itself.

### TRIGGER WARNING: 18+

This book contains material that may be triggering or deeply disturbing to some readers, including scenes discussing or detailing rape, physical and emotional abuse, and incest. Please focus on self-care and, if this book is triggering to you, do not be afraid to put it down and walk away, or skip certain chapters. Be good to yourselves. -C

## The Lost Details

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Author : Cole McCade

Format : ebook 411 pages

Genre : Dark, Romance, Did Not Finish, Sociology, Abuse, Adult Fiction, Erotica, Adult

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## From Reader Review The Lost for online ebook

### Nicola says

It's been a long time since I've pulled an almost all-nighter reading. Prepare yourself, because for amongst all that is a little unsettling, *The Lost* is an absorbing story which holds you captive and has characters with real depth. It's dark and, at times, uncomfortable but it's equally touching, and the journey you are taken on and the emotion it pulls from you is something else.

I'm going to be vague, I'm not going into much detail because doing so risks taking away something special; the not knowing. Not knowing where the story was heading, how and if Leigh and Gabriel can overcome their demons, individually and together, and not knowing if they are even *right* for one another. It wasn't entirely the story I was expecting; I knew it held taboo elements, but everything enveloping this was so much *more* than I could have anticipated.

It's a story that will stab at your heart. It's one of acceptance and so much more, and for someone who's not particularly a crier, there were tears; painful and joyful. Some parts don't make easy reading, but they are vital to the story and are written with compassion and consideration. But amongst the dark there are plentiful heat-filled moments along with those that will make you smile and those that will make your heart sigh, lifting you exactly when you need it and bringing the hope that you so crave.

This is a character-driven novel that will make you **feel** and its slightly longer length really gives readers the opportunity to get to know Leigh and Gabriel; understand them, accept, love and appreciate them for the damaged, lost, yet strong, passionate souls they are. Cole McCade is a talented author, I loved his contemporary romance, *A Second Chance at Paris*, but this just highlights how versatile in his craft he is.

*Copy received courtesy of the author for an honest and unbiased opinion. It was my absolute pleasure.*

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### Shanny says

\*\*\*\*\* 5 My little mouse stars\*\*\*\*\*

Best of the year for me. WOW amazing!

*"The wounded, the broken, the struggling, the hopeful ... the lost. We find beauty in poison, and we love the bitter taste."*

I'm gonna start with the writing, this is my first book by Cole McCade and I was blown away. His writing was beautiful and flawless, he has a way with words that made you feel everything. I don't remember the last time I highlighted a book as much as I did this one! Sometimes you read a book and you feel like it drags and it's slow,... this is NOT the case. The Lost was 415 pages and I promise you when I read the last page I was sad to see it end I could have easily read more. It was that good!

***"She wanted him to hurt, then love the pain away."***

Having said that this is not an easy read, it's dark, taboo, emotional, gritty and deals with subjects that are not easy to read about. So take the Trigger Warning seriously!

***"The wounded, the broken, the struggling, the hopeful ... the lost. We find beauty in poison, and we love the bitter taste."***

For the story, I am not gonna go in details of what happens. The blurb gives you enough of a taste to make you want to know more. The author did a great job of portraying these characters as real. Leigh and Gabriel were complex and damaged characters but together they healed each other.

***"Thank you. For making me feel like no matter how many times my wings break... one day, they might just grow back"***

My review will definitely not do this book justice so all I can say is **give this book a chance!**

***"Do you think lost people recognize each other, when they meet?" she whispered. "We did," he said, and kissed her.***

I would definitely recommend this book to fans of Pepper Winters.

Denise thank you for the rec!!

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**Mercedes says**

**4.5 stars**

***“Tonight she was a goddess of broken-down dreams, and didn’t want any mortal man to touch her.”***

This book is a slow burn. The writing is very detailed, kind of flowery, the author uses a lot of similes and metaphors. I feel like "flowery" has a bit of a negative connotation but that's not how I mean it, the writing is gorgeous; I highlighted so much of this book because I just fell in love with the way this author strung words together to make breathtaking and often heartbreakingly beautiful sentences.

I feel like the best way to describe the content of this book is heavy. It dives into some very serious subject matter and really looks at it, not just in passing, and this close examination can weigh heavy on your mind. This is definitely not a light and fluffy book.

***“But her body refused to listen—her tainted dirty defiled little body that needed sex like an addiction, that wanted to take her hate out on him with raking nails while he punished her with vicious thrusts and filled her until she split apart. She wanted his bruising touch reaching deep inside her, because unless it hurt it wasn’t real enough.”***

Leigh is lost. She's lost in the brutal touch of the men she seeks out; she's lost in her pursuit of anonymity, her pursuit of emotionless relationships, in her efforts to be invisible. As hard as she tries to be unattached and to fade into nothing, she can never really accomplish it, she's irreversibly tied to someone she tried to leave, whom she refuses to fully abandon.

***“She bent the bars of her cage, and sacrificed the most beautiful thing she’d ever made so she could run away. Maybe she doesn’t fly...but she won’t stay tied to earth, either.”***

When Gabriel and Leigh continue to find themselves together it's easy to hope that he'll fix her but Gabriel has his own demons. He doesn't want what Leigh offers him, he wants her to share her secrets with him and to trust him with all the vulnerable pieces of her. She slowly starts to open up to him but no one can fix what Leigh doesn't want fixed.

She remains obstinate in her pursuit of solitude until she changes everything by going after something she left long ago. This was a decision she needed to make but it led her into a horrible situation that she was trapped in.

***“That moment was when she realized that every woman is a broken goddess. Every last one.”***

***‘Why broken?’ Hart asked softly.***

***‘Because we’re all born in that cage, and we’ve been breaking our wings against the bars ever since.’”***

This book was definitely worth the read. It was kind of long but it was well done and Leigh's struggles were so well fought. She had this air of apathy but she had such capacity for feeling. Be sure to heed the warnings from the author.

***“She didn’t break, She never broke. Not anymore, and never again. Not for him. Not for anyone.”***

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## Denise says

5 "All that matters is that we're lost together" Stars

I have so much to say about this book, that I'm sure I'm going to be rambling throughout this review, so I apologize in advance. This was just an Amazing read for me. So let's start...

I can see why most of the reader's that read and reviewed this book did not like it or Clarissa, but I have to say she was fascinating, engrossing, and strong willed and I loved her journey.

Clarissa Leigh Van Zandt is living a life of promiscuity trying to fill a void within her-self, and roaming the city of Crow as a vagabond. Her darkness can only see light and relief through the one-night-stands she chooses and the pain they are willing to give in order to reach a euphoric contempt, and feel the love she is looking to feel deep within. Broken and lost is what Leigh is, but she is also unselfish and unyielding after her past made her and the future she now leads. So she escapes the life she never wanted only to leave behind the one thing in her life that was the only good to come out of it and live the life she always wanted, even though it may not be full of glamour.

**"I was afraid...of the inevitable monotony of it all."**

**"This wasn't love. She'd had love once, and she'd run away from it because it wasn't the kind of love she wanted. Wasn't the kind of she'd dreamed about in wordless whispers, formless ideas in the back of her mind. Just a deep tugging feeling, as if someone had tied a string to her heart and was always pulling, pulling, ever pulling her toward something she didn't know but would recognize when she saw it."**

Leigh has a friendship of sorts with an older bar owner named Gary, who helps her with some cash for the small work that she does around the bar and helps her with a place to crash and hide her belongings. Gary sends her to pick up his car from a garage where she meets Gabriel. (Leigh doesn't know his name at this time.) Gabriel is a broody, serious, good looking, ex-military man who served in the Afghan war. When they both meet the relationship between them is anything but civil. Leigh begins to hate the man, with the way he speaks to her even if those conversations are few and none she despises the man. And the way her body reacts to him was something she wasn't expecting, and didn't want, but neither were his looks and the icy stare that held the same pain she saw in her own reflection.

**"Gabriel. Like the archangel, fallen to earth. Leigh swallowed thickly and looked down. A name. And she never forgot names. Names gave people weight, life, substance. Meaning, when she wanted everything to be meaningless."**

Their relationship starts with truths concealed, and stories behind their pasts that haunt them still. The pains they both share are different in their own ways, but they can only achieve the same balance in normality through the pain they inflict and take. Leigh with her tainted body seeks sex as an addiction to feel anything in her life where her past was confined to do and feel what other told her to.

**"Her tainted dirty defiled little body that needed sex like an addiction, that wanted to take her hate out on him with raking nails while he punished her with vicious thrusts and filled her until she split apart... because unless it hurt it wasn't real enough."**

**“Do you think I’m disgusted by your sexuality, Leigh?”**

**“You act like you are. You treat me like you are.”**

**“No,” he repeated. His gaze fell to her lips. Something wild darkened in his eyes, roughened the edges of his voice. “You make me want to hurt you... Until you beg for more.”**

Gabriel has his own set of issues and demons that plague his life and we know more about them once the story sets its pace and grows more with both characters, but through it all, you must understand that these two people connect on a level because they have the same understanding in what it feels like to be in pain and knowing that life isn't always full of their expectations, or wants that reality hands out. The cards have been dealt for their life and it's up to them to up the game or fold.

The choices that Leigh makes might not always be the correct ones, but they are the right ones in the moments she makes them and the people she contemplates about. She gives her actions up freely without remorse, and sacrifice. It's the beauty in it that makes this story what it became. And makes Leigh that more heroic in her doings.

And in the end, the choice she made have might not been the right one, but she makes it on her own, with her consequence in order, the outcome is better than what she had dealt with before, but at least they are hers to call her own. Her mistakes, her choices, her rights, her victories, and her falls.

I completely loved every second of this story. Cole McCade, your words are so detailed that they painted the most beautiful images in my head while I was engrossed in this story. Thank you for making these perfectly broken, perfectly imperfect characters and their journey.

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### **Ellie says**

Wow! That was something else!

I'm quite shaken and impressed with this story, though I also had some issues with it. Will need some time before I decide on a rating and write a review.

I'm off the read the prequel, The Fallen, which gives us Gabriel Hart's story.

Here is the full review.

My first book by this author and I'm impressed with his writing and brave to tackle a very dark topic. Before I start this review, a few words of caution. This is a very dark read despite the HEA. It's triggery for a lot of things and though I recommend reading it, still you need to take heed of all the aujtors warnings at the beginning.

I loved how rich and evocative the writing is despite the rather bleak and desparate tone of the story. I rarely have a clear vision of the characters I'm reading about but here, Mr. McCade described them all in such a vivid way that I had a picture of them in my mind almost from the very beginning. Crow City was also strongly prensent in this story, not just a background to the events, but a force that shapes the characters in many ways. The whole story read very much like a movie too, with richly drawn atmosphere and very, very strong actors' play.

The whole story is told from Leigh's POV of view and being in her head was quite an adventure. There is some going back and forth in time but all the events are told as if happening now, right before our eyes and that made them even more disturbing. The abuse was really graphically presented and I admit that a particular scene was too much for me and I had the skim over some of it.

The suspense plot is also well drawn and some twists and secrets kept me guessing to the end.

I have to admit I have mix feelings about both Leigh and Gabriel. I don't think either of them is the good character in this story. On the surface he is like the knight in shining armour, albeit a little broken himself, who saves the little lost princess. In really neither of them is a princess or a noble knight. They are two people who have both suffered terrible things which have marked and changed them forever.

Some things in Leigh's character remained a mystery for me and I'm not sure how they fit with her character. I don't really know if it's author's failure to convince me they are an intrinsic part of her nature or it's my own inability to make sense of them but I really felt ambiguous about her at times. I liked her and sympathised with her but I also couldn't fully understand some of her decisions and actions.

Same goes for Gabriel. We see less of him and only from Leigh's perspective and I liked a lot about him but some of his actions also seemed questionable to me and left me feeling unsettled.

I have some other minor quibbles - there were repetitions and I have a major objection to a particular plot point involving Leigh and her son. Still, there are a lot of strong points in this story and despite or rather because of its difficult subject matter, I think it's a worthy read.

There is a lot of violence and abuse and emotional and physical hurt in this story but they are explored in depth without being romanticised or glorified. This book is not perfect, yet it's brave and real and made me think a lot of thoughts for days after I finished it. And that is not something I can say of many of the romances I read!

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## **The Hopeless Romantics Book Blog says**

Review: Surj 4.75 stars

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheHopelessR...>

TSU: <http://www.tsu.co/HopelessRomantics>

Blog: <http://thehopelessromanticsbookblog.b...>

Cole McCade's "The Lost" was a book that I hadn't heard of until I saw a blog post about it's release recently. In fact, I hadn't even heard of the author up until that point but if this is the quality I can expect from the mysterious writer, then I have to say, I will definitely be picking up more of his books. This really was a gem of a find that I couldn't recommend enough. Although not quite a dark read (as some of the reviews have said... not for me anyway), this sure as hell was a disturbing, twisted, fucked up, crazy read that had me on the edge of my seat, my heart in my mouth more times than I care to count and my nerves balancing precariously on an edge, waiting for that bombshell to send me into the mother of all free falls. Yes this book had all of those things and so much more.

***She was sick- but he was sick too.***

The story line for "The Lost" was pretty unique which meant that I had no idea as to the direction the plot would take. Add to that, the complex, intense and very troubled lead characters I was given and all I could do was hold on tight and prepare myself for what was going to be a very bumpy ride. Leigh and Gabriel were two people with tragic pasts. Two people with addictions. Two people who shared an emptiness... a void that consumed them, that ate away at them, ultimately taking them down a path of pain, hurt and destruction. These two characters shouldn't have fit, they shouldn't have found comfort in one another but they did and it was this that had the potential to be their ultimate ruin.

*If she was a little mouse, then he was a wildcat battling her around, toying with her before eating her, and she wished she didn't want the thrill of never knowing when his jaw would come down.*

It's so difficult to give you any more information about the story line with spoiling it but know that each of these characters will make you feel a whole host of emotions. Leigh in particular left my head in such a mess. She really was one hell of a fucked up woman and the more I got about her back story, the more my heart went out to her. I got why she had taken the path she was traveling on. That didn't necessarily make it right but it did help me to understand the car crash that was her life. All she needed was some form of control, some form of power in the choices she made and what she did gave her that... in a random, messed up kind of way.

*"We find beauty in poison, and we love the bitter taste."*

Gabriel's character equally carried around a past that still haunted him. Guilt for actions that were out of his control ate away at him, the scars he carried, a constant reminder of those he felt he'd let down. I loved Gabriel's character, even though there were times he confused the hell out of me. The way he was with Leigh though... so understanding, so compassionate and so none judgemental. He gave her exactly what she needed, even though it took her time to realise it.

[image error]"

These two together were such a beautiful head fuck (for want of a better word), They were good for each other but equally, there was almost a destructive side. I have to say, I am so so glad for this author's "afterwards" at the end of the story because this really did help explain a couple of things about each of the characters and their behaviour which had puzzled me somewhat... particularly Gabriel who appeared to contradict himself once or twice. Fear not though peeps, all becomes a little clearer in the authors after notes.

The subject matters covered in "The Lost" are definitely not those that will be read with ease or comfort. In fact quite the opposite. Prepare to feel uncomfortable, angry, frustrated and agitated. Prepare to feel unease, to put the book down and take a breather, to walk away and wonder what the hell you're reading. All I can do is implore you to carry on because all will become clearer the further you read on. I'm not saying it will get easier... definitely not because the last quarter of the book had my heart rate spike, my pulse thumping in my head. But what I am saying is that this book is absolutely worth finishing.

*One night the universe saw its own reflection and fell in love.*

If you're looking for a well written, intense, dirty, emotionally raw, provocative read, then this is definitely what you're looking for. Just put your big girl panties on before you dive in because trust me, you're going to need them.

I rated "The Lost" ❤️?❤️?❤️?❤️?❤️? (4.75).

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### **Sabrina says**

If you saw her on the street you would probably walk right past her. You'd likely even go out of your way to avoid making eye contact or getting too close to her. This girl with the dirty hair and sad eyes. No one sees her pain, or acknowledges the hurt that's as clear as day on her haunted face. All they see is a girl who isn't up to societies standards. You'd judge her just from a glimpse, and then you'd forget her. Too bad she can't forget herself. Her name is Leigh, and this is her story.

*The Lost* was not a pretty story. There is no fairytale ending or a prince charming coming to save the day. There's only Leigh, on her own trying to survive a cruel life, but with no idea why she's even trying. Her story is raw, and gritty, and it takes you to the dark depths of this life that we would rather pretend don't exist.

I found myself enthralled with this book and I hated each second I wasn't reading it because of real life interrupting me. Stupid real life. But when I was reading, I was completely involved in Leigh's story and felt like I was a part of her and on this path to destruction along with her. The author wrote this story in such vivid detail that it was impossible for me to not feel like I knew these characters better than I know myself.

The grip that this book had on my heart while reading, and even now after I've finished, was one of the reasons I'm in love with it. Leigh was a broken character and has a life most people wouldn't understand, yet she was easy to relate to and to connect with. Were the actions she took something people would accept? No. But when you read her story you truly get a sense of understanding as to why she would set herself on a destructive path.

I wish I could give it a full five stars, but the ending was just too abrupt for that. I needed more! At least just a little more to get a sense of closure before it was finished for good. But the bottom line is that this is a huge recommend from me, and a book that I absolutely loved. Though I will warn that this story is not for the faint of heart and any reader should take note of the trigger warnings.

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### **Claire Robinson says**

5 - "Do you think lost people recognize each other, when they meet?" Stars!

*The Lost* is without doubt the type of book I normally avoid, and you certainly won't find a ream of titles of this genre sitting on my TBR shelf. Not because it is badly written, but because it covers subject matter that as a reader I do not look to read about.

Dark, gritty, taboo, uncomfortable, and in equal parts heart-wrenchingly sad and gut-churningly brutal. But when a trusted friend and fellow reader recommends a book to me, on occasion I step out of my comfort zone. This was one of those times, and if I can impart anything in my review it would be to take heed of the trigger warning, the author had the forethought to add it for a reason, and it is there so that readers make good choices in their reading matter.

This isn't a fluffy, cuddly, cute romance, and as such should be read with the expectation that shit is going to be real, and all punches are delivered with the full force of the writers story telling skill.

There isn't a huge amount I can tell you about the story that unfolds around Leigh and Gabriel, both are battling demons, their pasts, and looking for the direction their futures are heading in. What I can say is this book keeps you on your toes, and just when you think it is safe to come out from behind the sofa, Cole provides another slap-in-the-face twist, just to make sure you are still paying attention.

#### **"What struck you hard enough to break you?"**

This isn't a book I would recommend lightly, or a light book to read, but it made me think, and it made me feel and there isn't a higher accolade that I can really give *The Lost* than that really.

ARC generously provided by the author, in exchange for the above honest review.

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#### **Allison ❤️?Will Never Conquer Her TBR❤️? says**

[ incest (hide spoiler)]

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#### **Jen says**

This was a very intense and well written read. It is not for everybody, and readers should take the author's warning very seriously before reading this book. There are very hard subjects and themes to deal with and I am positive it would trigger certain people. If you are into the darker reads, then this is one to pick up for sure. I am short on time right now but I feel this book deserves a more in depth review. Hopefully I will be able to come back and give it a review more worthy of this story.

I need to say that the author is a male author, and this is the first time I have read a male romance author's work. I have to admit that I really enjoyed it. I found this to be a whole lot grittier and edgier. I am not sure if that is because the author is male??? But it did work for me. I was fully engaged in the story. I will admit that Leigh and her decisions made me angry for pretty much the whole story. She made really stupid mistakes and I had a hard time feeling totally sorry for her. Does that mean I enjoyed what happened to her? Hell no...I just felt she made a lot of selfish decisions..

I could go on and on about this book as it is one that will definitely get you thinking...Thank you Steph for Buddy reading "The Lost" with me!!! I love being able to vent to one another when we become so involved with the characters we read about...LOL

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## **Selene says**

**4.5 stars**

Dark, gritty, and gut-wrenching story! This author was new to me, but this book delivered so much *more* than what I was expecting! There were tortured main lead characters, yes, but the passionate and captivating way in which the author presented these characters made me warm to them, imperfections and all.

*Small issues?* The author's writing style was an adjustment for me in the beginning. It was almost overly descriptive/ lyrical at times. Some of that wordiness made my mind wander briefly, but this story was the perfect blend of showing and telling.

The POV was singular and this story didn't focus all that much on romance. Leigh's journey in life was one carved from tremendous emotional pain, regret, and distortion that lead to much self-loathing. As a result, there was much promiscuity noted on her part, but there was also growth, progression, and understanding, too.

As much I loved this story, the pet name (view spoiler) given to Leigh by Gabrielle annoyed me, but most readers won't be bothered by that. There was significance behind the author's choice of those words, but pet names tend to irk me and there was no exception this time.

This book did NOT glorify the dark matters addressed in the story. In fact, the author's afterward was detailed and very clear about "fantasy versus reality" and how "our culture" views certain behaviors. (view spoiler)

Favorite **steamy** scene? It started with a pencil eraser, involved a teacher, and a desk.

Umm, yep!!

En-joyed!

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## **Nikki ? Navareus says**

[Leigh's spiral downwards, starts with her stepfather raping her repeatedly in

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## **Jamie ?? submits to books ?? says**

### **???? 4.5 Daddy's Little Girl Stars ????**

*"Dishes and dicks. That was what she'd traded her life for; dishes and dicks and still she was happier than she'd been with a minivan and an investment account. "*

Leigh is a lost and broken sole. After leaving a life of domestic "perfection" (or so everyone thinks) behind, she finds peace on the streets. Never getting attached to anything so feelings can never be felt, she lives with ghosts of the life she has escaped.

Her demons rule her presence with a force she can't overcome. Leigh doesn't feel worthy of any form of love, especially the love of her four year old son. Leaving Elijah was her ultimate heartbreak.

Life on the streets has been tough but better than the life she had. To battle her demons, she submits her body to men to give her the power she has never had.

Until she meets Gabriel.

Gabriel is just as lost as Leigh. He lives his life alone to battle his own demons as well.

Leigh and Gabriel are pushed together by his biggest demon, a drug addiction, from the pain of a war injury.

Not wanting to stick around, Leigh can't leave Gabriel to fight his battle alone. With her heart at risk, she stays and fights with him to overcome his darkness only she also starts fighting her darkness as well.

Two lost souls come together and create a dark beauty together.

### **"Tonight she was a goddess of broken down dreams."**

### **"I want to touch more than just your skin."**

Gabriel doesn't want to let Leigh go, but she can't stay. She has to go back and fight for the one person she can't let go of.

This story is so broken and sad but beautiful and heart grabbing.

I admit the first 50% of this book was too drawn out for me. This is the reason for my 4.5 ?'s. The build up was so slow, but I knew I had to keep pushing forward with this story. THANK GOD I DID.....AMAZING CONCLUSION!!

WARNING: This book as a lot going on that has some emotional triggers. It is a definite, stick this out kind of story!!

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### **Pam says**

2.5 *Lost Me* stars

***"Maybe we are lost, and some of us just don't want to be found."***

**The Lost** was lost on me. I just really disliked the heroine. I read the premise and felt a need to read the book, I wanted the darkness it offered, but it's hard to take in when I feel nothing for the main character. I continued on with the book because of all the other characters; but in the end I just could wrap my head around her selfishness and her reasonings. I loved the thought of lost souls, but 90% was mainly in the darkness of self-pity and then all of a sudden it was all wrapped up nice and tight in a pretty red bow. Threw me for a loop, lost in disbelief.

I can't say much about the story, because I do encourage you to give it a go and see for your self. This could be the dark story yo are looking for. Unfortunately for me, my dark meter and my sympathy meter are skewed, so not much care was given to her.

*Copy kindly provided by the author, via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.*

\*\*\*Quotes above are taken from the version of the book I received and may differ from published edition.

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### **Jasmine says**

**4 - 4.5 STARS!**

***"Maybe we are lost, and some of us just don't want to be found."***

When Allison and I stumbled across the sign up for this read, we both knew we just had to take a chance with this one. To say I'm surprised by how much I really enjoyed this read would be an understatement because I went in with close to zero expectations as I've never read anything from this author before. While this book screams dark from the cover itself to the blurb that makes you shudder a little, the story was so much more than the dark elements. Beneath all that dark layers is a treasure of one profound love story.

Leigh is a troubled woman who ran away from her home, her family and left everything behind, she craves for the pain during pleasure and she can't get enough of it. But after meeting Gabriel Hart, he was not just another of those men who would give her what she wanted when she offered. Gabriel is a war veteran who is suffering from pain, physically and mentally; he's just as broken as she is. Together these two realised that sometimes, you just need to be lost before you find yourselves again.

*"How do you know me so well?"*

*"Maybe I've always known you, and we were just waiting to be found."*

There are definitely some trigger elements in this book that will shun readers away (non-consent rape, lack of self-love) but I think if you can get past that, you'll find yourself mesmerized by these multi-layered characters. The author had such a way with words that left me a little breathless as I read them. There's just something so hauntingly beautiful with this read that I can't really put into words. It's the kind where you find yourself immersed in this world filled with darkness but yet you take comfort in the glimmer of light and hope amidst it.

*"The wounded, the broken, the struggling, the hopeful...the lost. We find beauty in poison, and we love the bitter taste."*

The only mini struggle I had with this was that it was a tad lengthy read but overall, I was still blown away by this author's work. I'm definitely looking forward to read more from him and would recommend this book if you're looking for an emotionally gripping dark read that's gritty but still able to dish out a solid love story with a swoon-worthy hero!

*The Lost is a standalone dark read in the Crow City series.*

***ARC kindly provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.***

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