



# Free Fall

*Catherine Mann*

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**Free Fall** Catherine Mann

**On This Mission, There Are No Accidents...**

Pararescueman Jose "Cuervo" James is the guy they call for the most dangerous assignments. He lives for his job.

On a high-risk rescue deep in the African jungle, Jose encounters sexy, smart Interpol agent Stella Carson. They'd once had an affair that burned hot and fast, but family is everything to Stella, and Jose just can't go there.

Fate has thrown them into the deadly hot zone together, and sparks will fly...but only if they can live to tell about it.

## Free Fall Details

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Author : Catherine Mann

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Genre : Romance, Romantic Suspense, War, Military Fiction, Military Romance, Suspense,  
Contemporary Romance

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# From Reader Review Free Fall for online ebook

## GraceMyBookSnack says

*“The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances; if there is any reaction, both are transformed.” -- Carl Jung*

I immediately grinned when I saw my favorite Carl Jung quote at the beginning of Free Fall. Upon finishing, I revisited this quote and thought how fitting it was for Jose and Stella's story.

Although Stella Carson, a code breaker and trained agent for Interpol, meets pararescueman Jose “Cuervo” James in the prologue, the story quickly jumps forward six months later to the present when they are no longer together. Circumstance brings their lives together again when Jose is called in to be part of the team to rescue Stella, who was taken hostage while undercover.

In the midst of terrorists threats and twists unfolding, we get glimpses of Jose and Stella's relationship through flashbacks. I know some would prefer that the story not go back and forth from past to present, but I found this didn't bother me so much. The flashbacks to their romantic dates together were some of my favorite parts! In these scenes Catherine Mann whisks the reader away to the most romantic and exotic locations in Africa. Jose planned some truly special dates for Stella to sweep her off her feet. Really, even I was swept off my feet! So, why did these two soul mates and intense lovers break up?

I found two running themes throughout Free Fall...second chances and making difficult choices in order to protect loved ones. Jose and Stella have a huge opportunity for a second chance to be together if they can only work out their differences. I love how Catherine Mann wove the second theme throughout the story. Boy, does it get really emotional as the plot thickens!

There is no doubt that fans of the Elite Force series will enjoy Free Fall. The heart-pounding action and suspense is all there. Free Fall can be read as a standalone. I've only read books 2 and 4, but I very much enjoy this series and plan to read the other books soon. I've been hooked! Catherine Mann's military romances are simply quite addicting!

\*\*\*I received a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.\*\*\*

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## Chantelle Larson says

Pulled from my "potential" list...not what I'm looking for.

Going to keep the 2-star rating, second half was inarguably better than the first one but that's the best compliment I can give.

There wasn't too much more past issue diving (though there was some in moderation). The romance was still a fizzle for me and sometimes the lingo/dramatization was overplayed a lot making certain plotline parts a little harder to follow.

I took a nice long break from this book half-way through because plotline was dragging and the romance was mediocre at best, going back into it was a good idea because I did partly enjoy the last half of the book and I also enjoyed the writing style of the author. I did not re-read the beginning nor did I read the blurb, I simply jumped right back into it. I have to point out that even doing that, basically starting the book from the middle

had absolutely no effect as to my enjoyment of it...I didn't miss a beat. To me...this says the beginning is filled with a lot of pointless garbage. Aside from her capture/rescue the rest of the 150 pages are unnecessary to the overall plotline.

For being a military romance I was disappointed with this book for several reasons, I would give this author another try but I think I will steer clear of this particular series.

I still LOVE the cover though! 5 stars for the cover!

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### **Theresa Hurley says**

Enjoyed this story with Jose and Stella.

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### **AliciaJ says**

What did I think...hmmm. It was pretty good. The suspense was intriguing. The romance part was a bit disappointing for me, though. I had hoped for more for Cuervo's story. Frankly, I wasn't all that enamored of the heroine, although there really wasn't any one thing about her that turned me off. It just seemed like she couldn't make a stand regarding her feelings for the hero and stick to it. It got frustrating. But other than that, the story was pretty good.

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### **Christi Snow says**

My Review:

This book is a different style of book. The prologue is written when the hero/heroine meet, but the actual book takes place after they dated for five months and then broke up a month ago. You don't get to see any of their relationship in current time. It's all done in flashbacks and I was fine with that at first, but by the middle of the book, I wanted to concentrate on their story.

Their story in current time is that they are caught up in this huge political firestorm in Africa. Jose is a PJ...a paramedic in the Air Force who runs high-risk missions all the time. Stella is an Interpol agent. The book starts when Stella has been kidnapped and Jose is part of the mission to go in and recover her.

Catherine Mann wrote these scenes so incredibly well...\*gah\*, the emotions!

Yes, they've broken up, but not because they didn't love each other. They broke up because of a significant disagreement about a future with kids. Jose grew up in an alcoholic family and is a recovering alcoholic himself. He refuses to curse another child with his genetic makeup. Stella can't see her future without a family. She grew up in a fairly dysfunctional one herself, but that has just made it so that she craves the whole 2 1/2 kids and a picket fence all that much more.

The tension and action is great in this. It starts from the first page and carries you pretty much through the entire book. I loved the seriously strong emotions between the hero/heroine and just how emotionally shattered they BOTH are by all that is happening between them and how they both know it's going to turn out. I love a good angst book and this one worked for me in that regard. I also have a personal fondness for PJs, so once again this book/series is a winner in my book!

I received a complimentary copy of this book in return for an honest review.

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## Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

Blog rating: C

Free Fall opens six months in the past when Jose and Sarah first meet during a mission. Sarah works with Interpol and Jose as a pararesceman. Their romance starts the minute these two lay eyes on each other but we don't see it because the story then jumps to present day and the couple has been broken up for a month. Through flashbacks we see their romance and eventually why they broke up, Sarah someday wants to settle down and have kids. Jose does not. They both love each other so much, thought that the other person was it for them, the one they were meant to be with, but neither one wants to give in on what they want for the future. They broke up and it's killing both of them to be apart. Their paths cross again when Sarah, undercover as a student trying to find out the truth about her mom's death, is held captive and Jose is part of the team assigned to go in and get her and the other captives. Once again, they can't stop the strong feelings between them, but it becomes a romance of who is going to change their vision of the future so they can be together.

I really enjoyed getting the history for both characters, their pasts are painful in different ways. Jose grew up with an alcoholic mother and later his sister and he's had his own battle with alcoholism. He's been sober for five years but feels strongly about not fathering any kids, worried that he'll follow in his mom's footsteps. Sarah dealt with the pain of an absent mom who chose to work in Africa with the Peace Corps helping the children there and abandoning her own kids back home. Sarah has never truly believed her mom's death was what they were told and she can't let it go and comes to Africa for answers until her own life hangs in the balance.

While I loved getting to know Jose and Sarah as characters, I felt like their romance was too back and forth to really get invested in. They kept saying things like "this will be the last time" (when they have sex) or "this goodbye is for good" but they can't keep their hands off each other. But the whole time they were together during their mission, they both kept thinking and saying that it wasn't going to work, but they loved each other SO much. It got a little old because it was obvious they loved each other and would find a way to be together, and the question became who was going to compromise. I liked the vulnerable scenes between them when they talked about their past and the pain they both grew up with and are still dealing with now. The emotion between the couple was great, but the romance left a bit to be desired.

The action was good, though nothing that stood out as gripping. The overall suspense storyline, tracking clues that Sarah was decoding in fabric wraps, led to a connection with the Vice President's wife coming to Africa for a speech. This leads to a more dangerous situation involving intelligence agents security and traitors close to Sarah and Jose. I liked seeing Sarah work her skills in cracking codes and Jose in his parajumper element – yum.

I felt like this was a good story, but nothing that really grabbed me and took hold. It's a bit predicable with Sarah and her mom's storyline, a bit frustrating with the romance and the constant "I can't stop loving you, but I can't be with you" routine. I did like the characters when they let their guards down with each other and I was a sap for a tortured Jose. The emotional level was great, but it wasn't enough to make this more than good read.

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## Tammy Zautner says

### 3.5-4 out of 5 Stars

“He was a PJ (parajumper) and she'd worked her entire career with Interpol with one goal: to find the truth about her mother's death....”

Free Fall was our first read by Catherine Mann, and we did not read previous books in the series. Although this is book four in the series, it may be read as a stand-alone. Free Fall was easy to follow and wrapped up without any cliffhangers.

"It's not about the pace or the distance. It's the 'afterward' that has me worried, the everyday life part, and the quiet moments. As long as I keep running, I'm good. When I stop, I crash."

Jose and Stella met on a covert mission and from there an intense fast relationship grew between them until five months in it came to a standstill. Stella wanted more from their relationship and Jose was unable to commit at the level she needed. Therefore, they broke things off. A pain filled month later, they are thrust back together in another covert mission, and this round has Jose saving Stella. Their journey isn't getting any easier, emotionally or physically. Both of them need to set their emotions for each other aside so they can focus on what lies ahead. State secrets are beginning to unfold, traitors are uncovered (inside and outside the multiple organizations), and betrayal of the worst kind will question whether forgiveness can be considered.

"You don't seem to get it. You broke my heart. Not some flowery, romantic sob story. It's messy and painful. Let me say it again, clearer. You broke my fucking heart."

Overall, we really liked Jose and Stella as characters. However, those two definitely struggled as a couple. Stella and Jose were a mess together. On their own, they kicked ass. Both had strong personalities; they were loyal and passionate towards their jobs and each other. The emotional struggle and connection was there between the characters and very well developed. We felt their love and their pain, but at times, the sexual chemistry seemed a little lacking to us. Their relationship teetered on the fact that they couldn't be together but they also couldn't stand to be apart. Even though they were deeply in love with each other, their different wants out of life became a huge obstacle that they couldn't seem to compromise on, and the outcome ended up breaking their hearts. They knew they need to be together, as there wasn't anyone else for them, but could not agree on what that really meant. Jose has commitment issues, his painful past interferes with his ability to commit the way Stella needs, and she is not willing to compromise on what she wants out of life; that included the house, kids, and white picket fence.

There were secrets, omissions, danger, drama, and twists that kept the story interesting. A major twist surprised us both. We adored Catherine Mann's writing style and her glimpses into their past and present memories from alternating points of view. Our hero and heroine were a complicated dance of denial, running, pushing away, and pulling back together. At times, we felt it moved a little slow and the push and pull between Jose and Stella seemed a little old after a while. The secondary characters, however, were a fun and entertaining mix amongst the turmoil helping to break up the tension.

Thank you to Catherine Mann for providing us with the opportunity of reviewing Free Fall for an honest opinion.

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**fleurette says**

This was my first book by Catherine Mann and I generally liked it.

I definitely liked Jose. He is not your typical alpha man, I enjoyed that he is more sensitive than Stella. Stella is okay but there were times I wasn't keen of her. She demands from Jose to left everything and to live her dream, the life she planned for them. She doesn't accept that he has some other plans, she just expects him to change them, to change himself. And she is not ready to give up even a tiny bit of her dream too just to be with him, to meet him halfway. But when for the first time he says he will leave everything for her she doesn't accept the offer. She wants him to not only live her dream but also to make it his own. It's selfish.  
(view spoiler)

The plot was okay. Jose and Stella already loves each other in the beginning of the book so the romance part doesn't seem to be undeveloped. The suspense part is entertaining but easy to forget after few weeks.

(view spoiler)

It was an entertaining read which I will likely not remember after few weeks. I'm giving three stars. I will read the other books in this series one day.

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**Sonia Cristina says**

[Foi engraçado descobrir que a mãe da protagonista estava viva e que era uma

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**Juliewheatcox.Net says**

This book didn't quite have the kick that Hot Zone had. For me, personally, it may have been the setting & scenario; just too stressful.

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**SheLove2Read says**

Good read but not great. I didn't love it. Jose and Stella individually were both likeable characters with interesting backgrounds, but I didn't feel a connection between them. There was heat but no warmth, if that makes sense. A little too much suspense, too little romance. C+

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**AndreaH says**

Parajumper Jose "Cuervo" James is a speed junkie — he has to keep moving, working, doing. Because he doesn't know how to handle quiet or relaxation.

Stella Cameron is an Interpol operative who is ready to get off the treadmill and nest.

A while back these two had a relationship before they let it blow up for obvious reasons: He can't settle and that's all she wants.

Now, she's been taken hostage as part of a student group by nasty rebels and Cuervo is part of the team sent in to get the hostages out. Problem is there's a mole on the inside, and Stella is in his sight.

While working to get out, the two stumble across a plot to disrupt a goodwill visit by the US veep's wife to this downtrodden country. The two must work together to unravel the plot and prevent a worldwide crisis, even while they struggle with their personal relationship, which is a total train wreck. These are the people who love each other but can't live together.

These two get their HEA, (which I found to be too much "in the crisis" moment) but I think the road ahead is going to be very bumpy and involve lots of counseling.

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### **Wendy says**

Not good...not bad...could have been better. I didn't really feel the connection between Jose and Stella. It was very undecided on where they wanted to take their relationship. As far as the pacing of the story, it was OK, but there are no "hanging on the edge of your seat" moments.

This is by far in my opinion, the weaker installment of the series so far.

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### **Dee says**

Two-haiku review:

She's agent, hostage  
She sends code message to him  
Looking for rescue

Spies and intrigue here  
Characters can't compromise  
African setting

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### **Dianne says**

Stella Carson met Pararescueman Jose "Cuervo" James when they were both on a covert mission. Their mutual attraction was intense, but with his damaged past, Jose couldn't give Stella what she needed, a family and home. Now, after their break up, they are back together in East Africa, facing more than just a terrorist plot against the wife of the Vice President.

Together they uncover both traitors and someone from Stella's past who shouldn't be alive, someone Stella has been searching for information about for years.



Jose and Stella still love each other, but must decide if they can beat back their demons to be together again.

Although this appeared to be a book with Jose as its central character, for the most part, it was Stella's struggles that were well showcased. These characters were well-matched, with strong personalities and needs that meshed well together like puzzle pieces!

With a little espionage, danger, and romance all rolled into one fast read, it was good entertainment!

This ARC edition was provided by NetGalley and Sourcebooks in exchange for an honest review. Publish date March 1, 2013

To see other reviews, check out: <http://tometender.blogspot.com/>

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