



## Beguiled

*Deeanne Gist, J. Mark Bertrand*

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## **Beguiled** Deeanne Gist , J. Mark Bertrand

When novelists Deeanne Gist and J. Mark Bertrand first met in a Houston critique group, they never expected where friendship would take them. She wrote romance; he wrote crime novels. But growing respect for each other's work culminated in the decision to try blending their talents into this wonderfully engaging story merging romance and mystery.

Rylee Monroe walks dogs in old-money Charleston, a part of the city recently targeted by a daring thief. Logan Woods works the crime beat for the local paper but dreams of a life as a nonfiction writer. When the string of robberies takes a strange twist, Logan sees the making of a once-in-a-lifetime book that seems to circle around this charming, eye-catching dogwalker. But pursuing the truth means ignoring that he seems to be falling for her. And what is she hiding in her past that could crack the story wide open?

## **Beguiled Details**

Date : Published February 1st 2010 by Bethany House Publishers

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Author : Deeanne Gist , J. Mark Bertrand

Format : Paperback 332 pages

Genre : Christian Fiction, Romance, Mystery, Christian, Fiction, Suspense, Contemporary, Christian Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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## **From Reader Review Beguiled for online ebook**

### **Cornelia says**

I loved the book. The characters are so fleshed out and interesting. The heroine is a strong independent woman and an incredibly hard worker she not only takes care of herself she takes care of her elderly grandmother in a nursing home. Her grandmother raised her when her father left and her mother committed suicide when she was young. As the suspense builds and the mystery of her past unfolds we find out that neither are true and she uncovers what really happened to her parents and who was responsible. The hero is a charming reporter who is also working on a nonfiction true crime book. The book comes alive from the first page, you see the characters and their surroundings to the tiny detail, you hear all the sounds smell all the scents, taste everything, you are pulled into the story, completely. This writer works so hard on her research and characterizations and her dialogue tags are magic. When I read Deeanne Gist's books I see all the characters and in this case, also hear them so clearly. I look at them as they speak. I highly recommend this book.

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### **Courtney says**

I really enjoyed this novel; however, it was rather slower. The way that I would describe this book was to be a decent show that you would get into if it was on, but you wouldn't seek it out to just watch it for the pleasure of it.

The characters were very developed and the story line well thought out. I enjoyed the complexity of the overall plot, I just wish that the climatic ending would have been more throughout the story except for just at the very end.

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### **Lisa Brown says**

A mystery with some great romance intertwined, it is the story of Rylee, a dog walker in Charlston, SC, who gets entangled in a series of robberies by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. It is also at this time that some men get introduced to her life - Logan, the reporter who is searching for a great story, and Karl, the lawyer and old family friend.

I really enjoyed this book, and read it in one day even. It was an easy and entertaining read, and was VERY clean. The characters were great and I got really involved in solving the mystery.

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### **Candi Criddle says**

Like all Deeanne Gist books this was well researched, well written, and fun to read. The difference with this book is that it is not historical. I still felt immersed in historic Charleston so it was expanding as well as entertaining. There is a crime spree through the book the heroine had to figure out while not getting

blamed, along with an excellent romance.

Pick this up if you want something fun and engrossing to read, doesn't make you feel like you are wasting your brain, and has a clean romance.

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### **Laura says**

3 1/2 stars

I received this book from LibraryThing's Early Reviewers program.

Rylee Monroe is a dogwalker for the elite in Charleston. When her clients find themselves being robbed by a thief nicknamed "Robin Hood," she finds herself becoming more and more involved as she is the link between the victims.

Logan Woods is the reporter on the story for the paper. He finds himself intrigued by not only the story, but also Rylee.

I found myself liking most of the book, but Rylee's character was a bit of a disappointment. She did a number of very stupid things and it irritated me quite a bit. I just didn't find myself really liking her very much. Logan on the other hand, was a much better developed character. He was likable. The romance between the 2 was enjoyable and during the romantic developments were the only times I found myself liking Rylee even a little bit.

The mystery surrounding the robberies was well done and kept me reading. It wasn't overly complicated, but it unfolded nicely.

Overall, I liked this book. It was a little rough around the edges, but still very much worth the read.

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### **Lori says**

First of all, you need to know that this is not your typical Deeanne Gist novel. It's not Historical; it does not have her trademark "edgy" romance vibe; nor is it really a Romance. I would have to classify it as Mystery/Suspense with a light romantic vein. To me, it felt like this story showed more of J. Mark Bertrand's writing style, since he "comes from a hard-boiled crime thriller background" (as stated on the back cover), than Deeanne's. I kept waiting for her "edgy" romance to shine through, but was really disappointed. A few romantic parts I thought had the potential to turn "edgy", but they stayed low-key. Taking all of this into consideration, it was a pretty good read...if you enjoy a good mystery, which I do on occasion. You will most likely be on the edge of your seat trying to figure out who the bad guy(s) is/are. I stuck with my gut feeling, and turned out to be partially right! I guess that was thanks to my fascination with Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys when I was growing up, before I became enamored with romance novels. :)

Since the excerpt from the back cover pretty much covers the gist of the story, there's not much more I can add, without giving away any vital parts. Although I do want to mention that I thoroughly enjoyed meeting all of Rylee's "clients"...they were a great addition to the story. Romeo and Toro were my favorites.

\*\* I would like to thank Jim @ Bethany House, and Cindy @ Princess Bookie for providing me with this ARC/Unedited Galley Proof. I won this book on Cindy's blog. \*\*

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### **Debbie says**

"Beguiled" is a Christian romance with a strong suspense element. The romance started out as "Oh, he is sooo handsome, and look at his BMW!" and "Wow, her legs go from here to there in that miniskirt!"--as in, solely physical attraction, but they did eventually get around to appreciating the kindness and other personality traits of each other.

The main characters were very earnest, and they dealt with realistic issues. The suspense was well-written and was mainly created by the threat of physical harm to Rylee from a stalker, false accusations threatening to ruin her business, and wondering who was behind the robberies. The vivid details of the setting brought the area alive in my imagination.

The Christian element mainly was a few reminders to the main characters that they needed to read the Bible, attend church, and pray more. I will say, though, that Logan and his friends did a very nice job of showing Christian love toward Rylee near the end.

There was no bad language or sex. Overall, I'd recommend this novel.

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### **Carman says**

This book definitely has a style that is different from Dee's normal writing, but that is to be expected since it was co-written. The suspense element was good and the plot ended in a way that I never saw coming. I had guessed one part of the "Robin Hood" thief very early on, but was surprised at how the whole story intertwined with other character's personal stories. I didn't connect with this book as well as with Dee's other books, but I still really liked it. And if Dee and Mark ever write another book together then I will definitely be reading that one too.

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### **Pastoralmusings says**

What do you get when you combine Old South charm, romance, and suspense? BEGUILLED by Deeanne Gist and Mark Bertrand.

Rylee Monroe is a young lady whose past haunts her. She's not quite sure about it, and has some memories that lurk just below the surface. In spite of it all she's relatively happy, enjoys her work as a dog walker, and loves taking care of her elderly grandmother.

All of this changes when a series of petty burglaries put her in the spotlight. As a result of this she finds danger and romance. More importantly, she finds answers to her past.

Logan Woods is a reporter who is working on the burglary case as well as seeking to solve it so that he can write a book about it. He finds himself drawn to Rylee in ways that may compromise his ability to report or find an answer to who is committing the crimes.

In the end, they both find more than they searched for.

An excellent book that was a pleasure to read.

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### **Melissa says**

I loved this book! It is an awesome mix of romance, mystery, and great characters. I love the name of the main character-Rylee. This story is set in Charleston and is about a lady dog walker who works for people that keep getting robbed. The police consider her the prime suspect but a news reporter named Logan is sure she's innocent and someone worth getting to know. The mystery keeps you guessing and the romance is sweet with outgoing corny. Perfect book for me!

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### **Jane says**

This was an author combo book. Deanne usually writes her own historical/romantic fiction. This time there is an element of an unsolved crime. The story has Rylee, dog-walker to the rich in historic Charleston, getting involved with a series of burglaries that just seem to cross her path. She needs this job as she has her only grandmother in a nursing home to take care of. She's trying to make ends meet. Logan Woods is a reporter who is also writing a book based on the burglaries, but can't finish his book until the crime is solved. He starts to investigate Rylee as the crimes all seem to happen to clients of hers. Solve the crime- finish the book.

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### **Angie says**

As a previous reviewer mentioned, this Early Reviewer book had no mention in its description that it is a Christian mystery/fiction. In fact there's nothing in the book's description itself that implied it might have any Christian references or go in any direction other than a romance/suspense. Since I wasn't expecting it, I was surprised when out of the blue there was a mention of Christ and devotional praying suddenly on page 44. It confused me b/c there wasn't another mention for that many more pages. If anything that angle of the book felt forced and like it was stuck in there to meet a publishing requirement. It didn't naturally flow with the storyline or characters. I will admit that Christian fiction isn't my taste, but I recently read Susan May Warren's first book of the PJ Sugar series for an early review and actually enjoyed it. [return][return]All that being said, I did enjoy this story and I enjoyed the characters. The writing was very good, interesting plot and good characterization. I've never read either author before, but want to warn others not to go into this thinking it's primarily a romantic novel. The mystery is at the heart of this book. [return][return]My only two problems were what I felt were random/forced Christian references and what they have chosen as the cover picture (at least for the advanced reading copy). The cover seems misleading - almost like it's a dated and historical romance. Although it is lovely, I feel that it doesn't characterize the whimsicalness and mystery of the book which is so predominant. Overall, I would recommend this book - it's a light and fun read.

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### **Mandy says**

I LOVED THIS BOOK! I think that I have discovered that my favorite genre of book is murder mystery/romance. I just love the suspense of the murder mystery and of course a great love story. Deanne Gist is a Christian author but I love that her entire books aren't religious she just includes enough for her

characters to learn a valuable lesson. These collaboration of these two authors was great. Once I picked this book up I could not put it down.

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## **Wendi says**

### **Beguiled: A Novel**

By Deeanne Gist, J. Mark Bertrand

Suspenseful and fast-paced, this first collaboration between Gist and Bertrand, is an action-packed mystery romance. Set in a richly detailed Charlotte, South Carolina, struggling heroine Kylee Monroe is a dog walker with a puzzling past and shackled heart who unwittingly lands smack in the middle of a baffling crime spree.

Local journalist and aspiring book author Logan Woods is covering the story; soon finding himself entangled in more than he bargained for. As past secrets emerge and an all but forgotten history reveals itself, both Kylee and Logan must learn to trust in, and put faith in, not only God and each other, but the people surrounding them as well.

A riveting read with a fulfilling conclusion, *Beguiled* is hopefully the first in many more collaborations between these two very talented authors.

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## **Amy says**

Ugh. I'm just going to say it right up front: I did not enjoy this book.

Imagine this scenario. Take Christian aspiring romantic fiction novelist. Combine her with an "acclaimed, yet has only written one book" Christian suspense writer. Now have them write a book combining both of their interests: suspense and describing attractive people.

Yeah. It didn't work.

Not only was the descriptions of both Rylee and Logan cringingly awkward, but their entire romance was just...ehh. They were cute together and I appreciated his concern for her safety, but they went from zero to ninety in a week or two. Annoyingly, unbelievably fast. Obviously they were attracted to each other. I had to spend half the book listening to them moon on about each other's stunning muscles, long legs, attractive figures, tempting lips, etc, etc, etc. It was like a trashy romance novel turned Christian.

The underlying message was not particularly compelling and the final moment of tension (like all intense novels have) was rather lame. The only reason I kept reading was to get closure about the mystery. With so many options for the culprit, I could not even begin to assume my guess was correct. Honestly, once I found out who it was...it was just disappointing.

But if you like an interesting suspense/mystery novel that's Christian, and can cringe past the terrible descriptions like I did, read it. The portions that Mr. Bertrand contributed do work, while Ms. Gist needs to work on her writing.

Content Warnings: Kissing

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