



Her Secret Life

Tiffany L. Warren

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"When I read a Tiffany L. Warren novel I know I'm going to get two things--a riveting story and a faith boost!" -ReShonda Tate Billingsley

Scarred by poverty and life with a crackhead mother, Onika Lewis had a rough start. Still, thanks to her sharp mind, and hard work, she graduated with honors from a prestigious college. But her achievements weren't enough to earn her the elite status she craved. So she leveraged her gorgeous looks to become a rich man's trophy...and was eventually dumped her for a younger model. Now Onika is unemployed, broke--and homeless. She's making a fresh start through a unique women's shelter, but when she meets Graham, a kind-hearted commuter with whom she has an instant connection, she can't bring herself to tell him her secret...

Suddenly Onika has someone who cares about who she is beyond her looks. Graham's unselfish love gives her the kind of hope she's never had. But when Onika's wealthy ex wants her back, she plays one deception too many trying to have it all. Now present lies and past secrets are tearing her world apart. And Onika will need to educate herself once more--to learn what really matters, find faith, forgiveness--and build a life she truly deserves.

Praise for Tiffany L. Warren's novels

"Filled with love, betrayal, heartbreak and forgiveness." --Kimberla Lawson Roby on *The Favorite Son*

"Highly entertaining. Captivating and compelling. Great book club option." --USAToday.com on *The Replacement Wife*

"In a fine blend of suspense and inspirational fiction, Warren spins an entertaining tale about folks misbehaving behind the pulpit in a modern African American church." --*Library Journal* on *The Pastor's Husband*

Her Secret Life Details

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From Reader Review Her Secret Life for online ebook

Tia says

Spooky lady Joyce delivered flyer and sister at funeral. Aaron was a total narcissistic asshole!! That Earlene was no better than her crack head daughter Judy. Sometimes awful people hide behind Christian. Leslie was bat shit stalker crazy. Gee whiz! He's not that into you... Let go!

Low self esteem will always lead you down the wrong path. Pretending to be more never works out.

Michelle Lindo-Rice says

Onika has a secret. Don't we all? But, a secret life? Onika is a complex woman and her tale has many layers. With each chapter and each page, I learned more about Onika, and when her life unravels, I wonder if she will ever get herself together. Her love interest, Graham, is a regular, hard-working good guy. I found myself rooting for him. There are points in the storyline where the characters reactions were very real and very human that some may view as shallow. But it makes you examine yourself and ask, what would you do? What should you do? There are takeaways that makes Her Secret Life a very thoughtful read.

Amy! says

This was a fun, engaging read. The end was a little weird - not a ton of definite resolution, but clearly heading in a happily-ever-after direction.

Onika made A LOT of really terrible decisions though, and she was kind of a jerk the whole time, so I was not quite sure what Graham saw in her.

T. Beasley says

Onika Lewis life has not been easy, when she gets an opportunity to go away for college, she takes it against her grandmother's wishes. Onika's roommate takes her under her wing and soon Onika is living a completely new life. She believes everything is going well until her education is threatened. She decides to attach herself to a rich man and become everything he wants her to be for appearances.

She receives warnings about what this will mean for her life, but Onika believes she knows what she is doing. When her status is taken, an unemployed Onika has to start from scratch. She is at her lowest point when she meets Graham. He is a caring man and only wants what is best for Onika but only if she will allow him.

Her Secret Life was an entertaining book about woman wanting a better life. The main character's transformation throughout the book kept me turning the page especially her innocence at the beginning of the book. This was a well-written book with well-developed characters and a consistent plot. Having read all of

this author's work, Her Secret Life is my favorite. I definitely recommend this book to others.

5 Stars=Non-Stop Page Turner
A&RBC Reviews

Diamond Jones says

I really enjoyed this book and the meaning behind it.

Shavonna Futrell says

Her Secret Life by Tiffany L. Warren

Onika Nikki Lewis has lived a roughed life and she is determined to leave that life behind as she receives a full scholarship to a prestigious school where she plans to have a better life. After her first year in college she falls for a very rich and handsome men that has every thing she wants but the only problem he won't commit and when he finishes with her, the only thing she has is the clothes on her back and her degree from her prestigious college. While waiting on the Metro Onika meets Graham someone she would have never have taken a second look at shows her how to be loved but her secret life and lies may ruin everything for her.

I really enjoyed this book, some of it was predictable but at the same time the author did have some twists that I was not expecting I was also happy that the ending was not predictable and it did not end how everyone will expect it to. I hope there is a second part to this because I would love to see the outcome of everything.

This book was provided by the publisher for an honest review.

Marva says

Chapters 1 - 60 kept me riveted. I was pulled immediately into the story of Onika/Nikki (all while giving a serious side-eye to the name...I kept picturing Nikki as Nicki Minaj and it threw me off). Nikki's story is humbling, and Tiffany L. Warren's writing allows us to view her as human who is trying to leave the past behind. This is my favorite thing about this book: Ms. Warren is an exceptional writer who fabulously melds strong characters and ripe storylines with soul-stirring examples of faith and overcoming demons. There were moments when I had to pause and let what I read soak in; the lessons and wisdom are abundant. But...

The last two chapters and the epilogue left me scratching my head AND wanting more. I have so many questions. I thought I understood where this story was going to end, but there really wasn't an ending...the story just stopped. And that stop left HUGE holes for me.

Overall, a good read. I would love throw my opinion out there and say this book needs a sequel. Or, at the very least, a spin-off. I want to know what happens to Graham, Nikki, Seraiah, Charmayne, and Ty.

Tumika Patrice says

Her Secret Life by Tiffany L. Warren

Onika “Nikki” Lewis was born on the proverbial wrong side of the tracks. A life wrought with poverty, it was a struggle to keep even her basic needs met by the emotionally inept grandmother who raised her. Tired of being the focus of jokes, ridicule and scorn, Onika set out to use the two things that poverty hadn’t taken from her: her looks and her intelligence. With the help of a mentor, she skyrocketed to the top of her class, securing a full scholarship to the exclusive university of her dreams. Leaving the town where she’d been reared opened up a world of opportunities to the small town girl.

After reinventing herself to fit in with the black elite crowd of the school, all was looking well in Nikki’s world. For the first time in her life Nikki had access to money, friends, and the high life. There was no turning back. Then entered Aaron – the cocky, attractive older guy who set his sights on her. She was no match for his charm and wit. With a wealth of experience, he knew exactly how to wine and dine her right where he wanted her. Not heeding any of the warnings of her mentor, she plunged full ahead into this exclusive lifestyle, hoping it would last forever. But men like Aaron always grow tired of their playthings. He was none too gentle when he pulled the rug out from under her, catapulting her back to a place she swore she’d never revisit.

It was at rock bottom where she was forced to make the hard decisions and see her life through a new set of eyes. But what’s a girl to do who had sworn off God years before when he seemed to be the only one who could help her out of the mess of her life?

As the carefully woven fabric of lies began to unravel around her intricately crafted life, Nikki has decisions to make that will not only affect her future, but will affect her here and now, as those who were there to help her placed a demand that the truth be put on the table...once and for all.

Tiffany L. Warren has written an engaging story of a young woman whom the tragedies of life has scarred and altered. With her back to the wall and feeling as if everything was closing in on her, Nikki did the best she could with the life she’d been dealt. But as with all things done in the dark, eventually the light was shone on her most shameful secrets. Warren tackles the story with grace and compassion for the wounded young woman, with a full understanding that although God was a big key in all Nikki needed, the way to him is not the same for everyone. She exposes the often times hard-hitting reality that there’s more than one way to reach someone and sometimes we have to go back to the drawing board to regroup when what we’re doing isn’t working. That love, in action, is much more powerful than a spoken sentiment. The story is well written although I would have liked to see her go a little deeper in some places. There were also a few areas where the story seemed to have been dropped. I love how Tiffany isn’t afraid to address real concerns of people and Christian related issues in her writing. Well done.

Review copy was provided by publisher.

Monique says

Life has not been fair to Onika. Her upbringing was bizarre. She managed to graduate high school and earn a full scholarship to a prestigious college. Onika recreated herself once she hit campus and forgot about her family (or at least she tired). As Onika morphed into her new lifestyle, she lost part of herself...her soul. After years of living in high cotton, she lost it all and had to struggle from the bottom. Would she find the strength to get up? Would she acknowledge God?

Say What Book Club says

Her Secret Life by Tiffany L. Warren

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Christian related issues in her writing. Well done.

4 stars

Review copy provided by publisher.

Reviewed by Tumika Patrice Cain

TR says

Since I've read several of Tiffany L. Warren's books, I was more than willing to read this one. And I have to admit this book is very touching. I have to admit that I was thrown off at first, because it was not what I expected. But within the first two chapters, I was hooked to find out what the end game was.

Carmen Lang says

Compelling

Received preview book from Net Galley. 4.5 Tiffany L Warren spins a compelling tale of Onika/Nikki in "Her Secret Life". Onika is that girl we all knew growing up. The girl who had a "hot mess" mama who was the talk of town and always managed to ruin anything good that might happen for her daughter. The girl who couldn't be in clubs, or cheerleading or sports, because her family was gonna mess it up. Onika grew up on a mission, to escape her painful upbringing and start over anywhere far away from her hometown in North Carolina. After graduation Onika becomes Nikki and begins her search for acceptance and a wealthy lifestyle. Onika meets Graham, as she struggles to get her life together. I found this a very enjoyable read. The character development is excellent. Nikki seemed like a real person and not just someone in a book. I was invested in wanting her to succeed and be happy. There are many instances in the book where she is not likeable and quite irritating. She makes you wonder how someone could be book smart and raised in the hood, but not have an ounce of street smarts. I enjoyed reading about characters with varying incomes and professions. The secondary characters are interesting and I would love to see them in another book. Her Secret Life touched on a lot of hot topics. Drug abuse, identity theft, elitism, colorism. My favorite aspect was how imperfect characters discover their self worth and the grace and mercy of a loving God.

Lena says

It's been awhile since I've been so conflicted about a protagonist. To say that I wanted to see Nikki lose isn't entirely accurate, but I definitely wasn't rooting for her happily ever after, either. Nikki is portrayed as a flawed, yet persistent woman. I can always understand her choices, even if I didn't always respect them.

Her Secret Life follows Onika "Nikki" Lewis through her young adult years, alternating between her high school graduation and early years of college to her post-graduate mid-twenties. In vivid flashbacks, Warren dredges up painful memories of a drug-addicted mother and grandmother who is too consumed with her daughter's "sickness" to love and nurture the granddaughter who's left behind. Nikki's escape comes in the form of a full scholarship to the prestigious Robinson University in Atlanta, a beacon of excellence for the

most promising black scholars. It here where Nikki opts to create a new identity. No longer known as the daughter of the town whore, she vows to become successful and sophisticated.

I thought the hardships of her youth and her tenacity to succeed would serve Nikki well. Unfortunately, she squandered her opportunity, instead being thrown out on the streets -- literally -- when her relationship with a wealthy playboy abruptly ends. The bulk of *Her Secret Life* focuses on Nikki as she reconciles who she thought she'd become with her new reality as another unemployed, homeless person on the streets of Washington, D.C.

What soured me on Nikki was her pride and greed, and her greatest character flaw was dishonesty. Although it was easy to understand her decision-making, Nikki's lies only dug her into hole after hole after hole. It got particularly old when it interfered with the growth of her relationship with Graham. It was as if she didn't learn her lessons, and was doomed to lose, even when it looked like she might start winning. Her inability to make smart choices when people from her past popped up kept me shaking my head in disdain. Nikki's arrogance -- even in the midst of her own downfall -- was frustrating. Her condescending attitude toward those trying to help and her mockery of their faith was grating and bordered on disrespectful. I kept wanting her to be able to simply acknowledge others' faith without always having to get the last word in about how her own faith wavered.

After finishing the book, however, I realized Nikki's journey was the entire point. Her struggle to put her past behind her without reconciling the true impact it had on who she became was a major theme. Even when she had the opportunity to pursue a healthy, promising relationship with Graham, her constant paranoia about her past and her present situation was always a roadblock. Only when she is forced to face her past head on does Nikki truly show growth.

Her Secret Life is a compelling read. Despite my mixed feelings about Nikki, I couldn't put it down. I would be particularly interested to see a sequel to *Her Secret Life*, whether following Nikki and Graham or one of their Graham's friends. They served as foils throughout the story, often providing cautionary advice or simply support to the main characters. However, they all seemed to have more lurking with their own situations.

Reading in Black & White says

"She seemed damaged and complicated, yet enlightened. She was insecure and maybe a little arrogant. She was modern and sophisticated, but the southern charm shone through. She was a series of beautiful contradictions."

Aren't we all just a bunch of contradictions?? Onika is the type of person that many of us, if we are being honest, would turn our noses up at if we met her in real life. Warren does an extremely excellent job of breaking down each of those contradictions and showing us why we are doing ourselves a disservice by judging folks simply based on face value. *Her Secret Life* reminds us that even though our current environment and/or situation might be less than ideal that we can rise above it.

"Yes, it does. You are like every other brother out here. Y'all want us to stand up for you, be down for you and have your back, and then when we need you, you're running after the first biracial, light bright chick you see. What is your little friend? She's Latina, isn't she? Anything but black?"

This passage and the entire book is the truth!! Oh my, I can't even put into words my initial reaction. It hits on so many different levels, issues, and emotions that you can't help but feel connected to Onika's story. Warren has written an almost perfect book with the only problem being that I wanted more. Do yourself a favor and buy a copy now. You'll be happy you did and you'll thank me later!!

Carla wynn says

Onika (Nikki) is a girl on the run. She runs from her Crack Addict. She runs from her Grandmother. What she is running from is the cycle of poverty that she is living and she is running from God.

I was really digging her determination to escape from her home and never be a statistic. But then she totally, threw me. She leaves all her strength somewhere else, when she meets Aaron.

Ms Warren has written imperfect characters, but there is a method to their imperfections.
