



## Connecting Strangers

*Rachel Carrington*

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**Connecting Strangers** Rachel Carrington  
**Getting close is dangerous...**

He's too close, and I start to fidget, needing to keep my hands busy so they won't grab hold of his shirt. Because that's what they want to do. Draw him closer. So I can Inhale his scent. Taste his skin.

I didn't run because I was in an abusive relationship; I ran because my soul was being crushed. I'd forgotten how to live, how to be happy. Running out of gas in a small town, I catch the eye of the local sheriff when the very last thing I want is to come under the scrutiny of the police. I left my boyfriend with blood on my hands, and I know as soon as the wound heals he'll come looking for me.

Adam Madison draws me to him so easily I can't even pretend to fight. And the closer we get, the more combustible we become. I've never experienced such passion or power. My need is as great as his, but I'm sure he'll walk away from me once he knows my secret. No other man would stay.

I've had enough complications in my life. I'm not looking for more, and that's exactly what Adam is—a sexy, magnetic complication with secrets of his own. And with my ex on the hunt, I can't risk bringing him down with me. But he won't leave...even when vengeance could kill us both.

## Connecting Strangers Details

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Author : Rachel Carrington

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## From Reader Review Connecting Strangers for online ebook

### Romancing the Book says

Reviewed by Amy W.

Book purchased by the reviewer for pleasure

Review originally posted at Romancing the Book

When Emily Jacobs decides to start a new life, she knows that her past won't be far behind. Yet with a solid dose of newly-found self confidence, she moves on. In the first installment of Rachel Carrington's Discovering Emily series, the focus is on building relationships. With Connecting Strangers, Emily gathers a support network as she fights to keep her past from becoming her future.

As a story with roots in an unhealthy relationship, there is plenty of angst. Emily's emotions, particularly the feeling of helplessness, are well portrayed without being too dramatic. Since every little girl dreams of a knight in shining armor, the fact that she catches the key of a handsome man with a badge only underscores the importance of good being able to triumph over evil.

It is part of a series, which means it comes with a bit of a cliffhanger. It's nothing too dramatic, but it's enough to serve as an enticement for the next book. Add in the secondary characters, and there is more room for development.

Although the storyline has romantic elements, the author has provided a solid sense of suspense leading up to the end of the story. While ending a story with more questions than answers isn't my choice, the author delivers the surprise plot twist very effectively.

Anyone familiar with small town life knows how powerful a family name can be. In Connecting Strangers, the characters may not share a name, but they demonstrate the power of friendship. Those friendships, coupled with the powerful chemistry between Emily and Adam, provide the basis for this interesting series.

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### Lily says

Emily thought her life was great. As head cheerleader she was dating the football star, loving and doting parents, a community in a small town and she had a home. Her relationship started falling apart when her boyfriend started drinking and became controlling. Her parents saw it as well and tried to convince her to leave him. But then tragedy struck and her parents died in an accident. Leaning more heavily on Mark she fell into a state of routine and familiarity.

Now on the run from him after he attacked her, Emily finds herself in a little town not so far from Mark. She's tried to leave the town behind and create more distance between her and her ex. But finding friendship with Francine has her rooted and of course then there's Adam. The local sheriff snags her attention instantly even though she knows she can't get involved. He is persistent though and recognizes their attraction and her need for help and protection.

When Mark returns will she and Adam make it through unscathed? When the plot thickens and other elements and threats are exposed how far will it go until it's finished?

For me this book was a mass of contradictions and I don't mean in the story line. The plot was enough to keep me glued to finish the book and see what happened but it also wasn't enough of a plot for me to rave about. I enjoyed reading the chemistry between the two leads but didn't quite buy in to how fast it happened and how well they seemed to read each other. As said I enjoyed reading the book but won't go out of my way to read the next installment. Apart from the end where you are left thinking 'huh?' the plot was some what predictable. I couldn't help but feeling a little disappointment when I put the book down, no big impression was left.

I would recommend as a quick read as I did enjoy the read but for me I wouldn't read it again and as said I wouldn't go out of my way for the next part of the story.

I received a copy in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Lady Leal says**

This a romantic thriller combined. Emily is a victim of an abusive relationship and one day she had the courage to run away from

his abusive long time boyfriend Mark. But things got messy when mark caught her in the act of leaving him, she shot him but he

wasn't dead and he will make sure that if he cant have Emily nobody can.

Emily drove in a town named juniper springs where she met a good samaritan and offered her a place to stay and even gave her a

job at her diner. The local sheriff named Adam is very interested in Emily and she felt the same way about him, but she was still

scared that she was moving too quickly and that Mark would appear any time soon and destroy her again.

This book portrays the situation of women in an abusive relationship and what happens to them when they run away. But in this

story Emily found another chance for love and she started over again in another place where no one knows her. But of course the

abusive boyfriend would pop out of nowhere and he will try to get Emily back in any way possible. There are a lot of love scenes in

this book and I think that the story line was so fast and not really realistic to fall in love and be intimate 24 hours after you ran

away from your abusive ex boyfriend. But on the other hand I feel sorry for Emily and all that she went through, I just think that

the book could have more story on Emily and Mark and how they got to the point where Mark is trying to kill her slowly by

repeatedly abusing her. This is more of a dark romantic novel than a thriller novel.

<http://ladyaleal.blog.com/2014/07/02/23/>

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### **Rhiannon Overby says**

This is a story of Emily, who is on the run from an abusive boyfriend and a few new friends that have rallied around her in support. This story was very enjoyable and I had a hard time putting it down. The story line was great and the characters were well thought out and seemed real. In fact, Emily's best friend Francine seemed like such a real person that you actually wanted her to be your best friend too.

My one complaint about this book was how fast the relationship between Emily and Adam occurred. It just felt a little too rushed for me and unbelievable. With that said, after you get over the timing they are a beautiful couple.

\*Thank you NetGalley for giving me a copy of this ebook in exchange for my honest opinion.\*

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### **Jenna says**

Actual Rating 2.5 Stars

I really wanted to love this book. The blurb drew me in. Not only did it promise a troubled past but also a little loving and some mystery... And yes it delivered but way to soon! This book starts off with a bang, literally, and Emily is leaving her abusive, obsessive boyfriend behind her. She leaves everything behind and ends up running out of gas. So of course I was drawn in. Then she meets the sexy sheriff of the town. This is where I wanted to see more. Insta love only bothers me in some cases.. This was one of those times. Their "pull" to each other was just too quick and unbelievable. I think even drawing it out 7 or 8 more days would have made me like it more. But 5 days? C'mon, with everything she has been through? It just didn't feel believable to me. A lot happens in the span of like a week. That being said, I really liked the last half of this book. Once all the other action started happening things took off. I wanted to see more of her relationship with Mark, I wanted to see just how bad things were. Because it seemed like his was more obsessive than anything. Which is just as bad but still. We only hear of one incident of abuse and even then we don't get much. Now I know some people don't want to read about it and I get that. But that is part of the main plot in the book. I would have just liked to get more of a background I guess.

I wasn't a bad read though. I just had a few pet peeves I guess. If you like instalove though then you will like this one. Personally this was one case where instalove didn't work for me.

\*\*\*Copy provided from the Publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review\*\*\*

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### **Diaries of 2 Thick Chicks says**

Absolutely loved this book. A full review to come.

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### **Linsy says**

I enjoyed this book, I just did not think it was anything special. In my opinion, it was a little anticlimactic. The book made it seem like there was this horrible, horrible bad guy, yet you never really saw him. In fact, I couldn't even tell if we were supposed to think the claimed bad guy was in fact a bad guy or not. I was honestly a little confused there.

On top of that, it was very much an insta-love book. I just don't get why the relationship cannot build up over the course of the book, especially if it is to be a series. That makes very little sense to me.

I have to say, I was highly annoyed with the overuse of the word "segue," too. That annoyed me to no end. It wasn't even used well most of the time. Just frustrating.

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### **Laura Bolinger says**

Interesting characters and plot. I read in approximately one day. Controversial subject matter shown in tasteful way without taking away from the story. Definitely looking forward to second book. Heartwarming and empowering

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### **Jenn Ballmann says**

I was sent a copy of the book for review through Net Galley, as always, all opinions are my own.

Emily is the kind of girl many of us would have been jealous of in high school because on the outside it seems like she has the perfect life. She's pretty, popular, and a cheerleader in love with a football player. Several years later she's still together with her high school sweetheart, but the relationship has been increasingly abusive. Things finally escalate enough that she feels the need to run, but she only makes it as far as the next town over before running out of gas and realizing she'd escaped without her purse. This is where she meets Adam, the handsome town sheriff and her knight in shining armor. My problem with the book starts here. She meets Adam and almost immediately falls in love, despite having only left her longtime abusive boyfriend a day ago. The timeline in this book wasn't very realistic, which is ultimately what kept me from rating it higher.

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### **Linda K says**

Wow!! I can't believe this was only 179 pages. I was impressed how this author was able to establish not only physical abuse but being mentally abused can be just as damaging. Love the whirlwind romance, I mean helloooow he said it from the beginning "I don't believe in wasting time". Great suspense read and like the beginning of the book that grabs you into the story the end will throw you down the cliff. I hope there is a second book.

I was provided a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sade says**

I want to be best friends with Emily and Francine. I so want to hang out at the diner with these two and just shot the shit. Anyways I loved the book, I read most of it in one sitting because I couldn't put it down. It's a concept that's been done before but Rachel executed it in a way that made it all her own. She's created a half dozen or so interesting characters and written book that evokes a great deal of emotion from it's reader. I truly cannot wait for book 2.

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### **Lucy at Rain and Cupcakes Book Blog says**

Actual rating, 2.5 stars.

This is an eARC review.

This book was kind of weird, it started out with a clear storyline, and ended with something else.

I thought the blurb of this book was somewhat misleading...

This was very much an insta-lust, insta-love type of relationship. Given Emily's situation, it didn't make any sense to me. She was running away from an abusive relationship, but she didn't run too far away (her car ran out of gas). In fact, after meeting Adam, she stay put and stop running. Thus, it wasn't a surprise when her past caught up with her.

Honestly, I didn't see the passion and intensity of Emily and Adam. Sure it was sweet, but it was still very superficial. They don't really know each other well. They don't know the whole story. And there were stories on both sides. Not to mention, Emily is suppose be running away...

I see Adam as someone who want to protect Emily, I see Emily as someone who is vulnerable, scared, lost and want to take back control of her life. I very much see the potential of Adam and Emily, and was hoping to see how would Emily fight back, begin healing and start a new life.

->that didn't really happened in this book.

->instead, I saw a new friend encourage Emily to immediately start a new relationship. When Emily still need time to heal, not to mention she is running away from 8 years of abusive relationships.

->instead, I saw a nice guy that want to start a new relationship with a girl that obviously have serious unresolved problem.

Then, here comes the weird bit, so who is after Emily? My first thought were either Mark or Mark's father (because that's all we were told in the book). In fact, there were never any other clues of unknown threats to Emily that were mention. Not until Mark's (Emily's ex) genuine confusion of the shooting incident took

place at the Jail, where Emily was being kept.

The next thing you know, Mark come forward and warn Emily about some threat then quickly die by another shooting at the Jail, where Emily was at (Mark never gotten out who is after Emily). So, here I thought, maybe it's Mark's father? Wrong, he might be dead as well.

What the heck was going on?! I have no idea. It was weird.

->with the topic of domestic violence, I found this book somewhat unrealistic.

->this book have the potential of addressing domestic violence in both emotional and physical abuses.

->since this is the first book of a series, I would've like to see Emily slowly finding herself again, along with the supports from Adam and her new friends on her side. Then slowly establish a new healthy relationship.

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### **\*Avonna says**

Check out all of my reviews at: <https://www.avonnalovesgenres.com>

CONNECTING STRANGERS (Discovering Emily #1) by Rachel Carrington is a Contemporary romance with an element of suspense. It is also the first in a series with a small cliffhanger to entice you to continue on in the series.

Emily Jacobs is on the run from an abusive boyfriend with powerful connections. She leaves with nothing and is lucky enough to find a woman who understands her, her situation and wants to help. She also seems to have attracted the eye of the handsome sheriff, Adam Madison. There is an instant attraction. Emily has secrets, but so does the sheriff. Can the two come together and overcome an ex on the hunt for revenge?

The story has some interesting characters, both good and bad. The small town feeling of acceptance and warmth where Emily ends up was a great contrast to where she came from. I hope there are people like Francine out there in the world.

Ms. Carrington's writing style was very readable, but there were too many tropes and unbelievable situations for me to really get into this story. Emily was a character that I wanted to empathize with and cheer on to a HEA, but an instant attraction put me off. Personally, I would have preferred a guardian relationship and then a growth into attraction over the story arc. I also had a problem with how often she fought the help she was offered. Even if she was afraid of her ex finding her and felt she was putting others in danger, she had nothing.

For me this was just an O.K. read for which I had to suspend realistic belief one too many times. The author's characters and writing style are what kept me reading, but I will not be continuing on in this series.

Written for and posted first on The Romance Reviews.

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### **Denise says**

Fabulous story!!! A must read!

Awesome start to a series! Emily runs away after she shoots her way out of an abusive relationship. Her ex has told her that she would always be his. But with no money and almost no gas, she ends up in Juniper Springs. She meets the local sheriff, Adam and is immediately drawn to him. She tries to deny her feelings toward him and not tell him of her past. Unfortunately, ones past seems to always catch up with you.

She meets Francine who seems to understand exactly where she had come from without Emily even telling her anything.

When the sheriff from her hometown comes to arrest her for shooting her ex, will Adam stand by her or uphold the law and send her back?

Can't wait for the next book!

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### **Collette says**

\*I received a complimentary e-book from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review\*

Overall I enjoyed this book. Similar to what others have said, I think it is an important book for girls and women of all ages to read. The manipulative side of abusive relationships is often overlooked in comparison to the physically abusive aspects. The author captured this aspect very well. I think the characters are somewhat dimensional, but I felt like they were slightly unrealistic in their actions and what they said.

3.5/5 stars

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