



River of Need

Shayla Kersten

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Two years after their breakup, Detective Kyle Shelton didn't expect to see his lying, cheating, closeted ex. Especially not behind bars for prostitution. Bailing him out is one of the stupidest things Kyle has done in a while. Although letting his ex back in his bed probably ranks higher on the dumbass scale. Dustin Eldridge's lies about his sexual preferences have left him with nothing. Literally. He's lost his home, his family, his job and, worse, he's lost Kyle. On the streets, with no one to turn to, he's resorted to selling his body to survive. Then Kyle-of all people-comes to his rescue. Dustin can't fix the past but maybe there's hope for a future. Unless Kyle really believes Dustin added serial killer to his resume, along with hooker. Note: For maximum reader enjoyment, we suggest also reading Hidden Force (Tony and Ryan) and Hidden Hands (David March), in which these secondary characters were heroes.

River of Need Details

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From Reader Review River of Need for online ebook

Alina says

Actually it's my favorite book of the series.

The setting worked for me really well. I guess it's just different things for me: when MCs are in a relationship and one of them starts having sex with someone on the side - yes, it's cheating and I'm pissed. But when MCs are in a relationship and then suddenly we learn one of them has a wife and a part of his life, where people think he's straight - it's not that much of a problem for me. Seriously. It's not like cheating, more like just being in the closet.

So I didn't have that big problem with Dustin and I thought he suffered more than enough for his transgressions. And I think the fact Kyle forgave him almost immediately - it just makes him a bigger man. All in all, that was very satisfying read for me!

pbj says

Too angry for my tastes. Too many ugly things said and done to come to a satisfying HEA in only 90 pages.

Brandy says

While not my favorite it was still enjoyable. I liked seeing how past characters interacted with each other and seeing a quick glimpse on how they are doing.

Kelly H. (Maybedog) says

35 is a little old to be a male prostitute, especially with gray hair in his beard.

I don't like that Dustin came out basically because he had to.

That's disgusting. Getting off on Dustin's abuse. Using it during sex as a come on.

Too much sex. Even more than a typical shifter story.

I don't understand this series. The first book was so different than the rest which are pretty much just sex.

Mediocre peril. Well the peril was okay but the hospital scene was pathetic.

So why we're the murders always after Dustin was there? That wasn't explained.

Nic says

Maybe not as good as the first 3 books in the series but still an enjoyable read. The story is about Kyle, a policeman, who broke up with Dustin two years previously, after Dustin lied about his marriage. Dustin finds himself on hard times and on the wrong side of the law. Kyle wants to help Dustin but needs to decide whether he can trust him. This is made even more difficult when Dustin becomes the suspect in a series of murders.....3.5 stars

Ami says

This book starts promising -- Detective Kyle Shelton, who apparently after two years still has feeling for Dustin Eldridge, decides to bail his ex of his when Dustin is caught for prostitution. Dustin's life has been turned into sh*t, after his wife found out about Kyle ... Dustin has lost his wife, his job, his family, mostly everything, and now he resorts to sell his body to survive. Kyle then takes Dustin home ...

... and then this is where it DOESN'T WORK for me. It says that Dustin liked to play it rough before, when he was with Kyle. That he enjoyed mild bondage, kinky sex, and the D/s relationship. BUT, come on, Dustin has been reduced to crap when he becomes a prostitute, when he doesn't have any choice but to accept whatever is given to him (rough sex or not). On top of that, he has scars in his body when one of his encounters gone wrong and he is tied, whipped, and gang-raped ... AND Kyle still does rough sex with him because Dustin likes it?! Because Dustin feels it is his punishment for lying to Kyle before? Not just that, Kyle gets turn on when he hears Dustin telling him about that abuse?!? SERIOUSLY?? Aaargh, no, for me it just doesn't scream romance. Sorry ... it really, REALLY doesn't sit well with my heart.

I guess so far, none other books in this series can top the first one with Tony and Ryan :(

Tonileg says

Contemproary Police M/M romance with a serial killer on the loose while some hot sexy reunion steam is blown off with Detective Kyle Shelton and his lying cheating ex-boyfriend, Dustin Eldridge. I was surprised to see how quickly someone can be rich and comfortable to homeless with nothing. In Dustin's case it only took less then two years to being totally helpless and homeless. Its true that who wants to help the unwashed stinky masses of men and women on the street who may not have a mental problem, but just need a job, a roof, and a bath. I was touched how the author wrote with respect and gentleness the plight of the homeless man who has to give away his pride and perhaps his health to sell his body for food money. This was not an easy subject to tackle with dignity and respect, but I feel like there was success in this story. Kyle is a kind and caring man that gives a friend a second chance at life and love. It was nice to get a peak at Hidden Force's Detective Tony and March construction makes a cameo from Hidden Hands. Maybe people do need a second chance, although personally, I'm an unforgiving opinionated b!tch. This was a great story! My second favorite after A Helping Hand which was the best in the series because I love a good friends to lovers scenario!

100 pages and AllRomance purchase for \$5.60

Janna says

I've been a fan of Ms Kersten's m/m romances ever since I read *A Helping Hand*, which is one of the books in her Tennessee Cops series, and which is still one of my favorites. I've said it before but I think she writes wonderful characters, that I can feel connected with. The way she shows a snippet from their lives, makes you understand them easily, because she effortlessly lets you slip inside her heroes' heads.

In the novella *River of Need* - the fourth installment in the Tennessee Cops series - we meet detective Kyle Shelton who reconnects with his ex lover Dustin when Dustin is arrested for prostitution. Kyle bails him out and takes him home because Dustin has nowhere else to go. All the past lies from his closeted ex aren't forgotten but Kyle can't help still feeling attracted to him.

The return of the lying, closeted ex lover in itself brings enough conflict into the story, but there's more. Another element is added when Dustin becomes a suspect for a murder, and with that we're headed for a romantic and suspenseful climax.

This story full of regret and uncertainty is told alternating from Kyle's and Dustin's point of view. This way we're given the opportunity to understand both heroes equally. Yet somehow I found it easier to identify with Kyle than with Dustin, but that has more to do with their personalities than with how their deep inner thoughts were conveyed. I didn't understand some of Dustin's 'choices' completely and additionally I found it somewhat difficult to believe that he liked to give up control and have rough sex, given his recent situation as a homeless and abused prostitute. Still, he and Kyle are a hot couple, even if I'd preferred more tenderness instead of the rough dominating smexing. The dirty talk that arouses Kyle at one point, probably should not have been about Dustin's recent experience of abuse either. However, I could understand Kyle's need for some sort of vengeance and taking delight in Dustin's suffering after all that he had put him through.

Although I might not have always agreed with their behavior, I still felt very engaged in the protags on an emotional level thanks to the impressive way the author writes about her characters' feelings. The heroes have to deal with doubts and regrets and the still present feelings for each other while some significant turmoil is going on in their lives. I found myself engrossed in their dilemmas and undeniable attraction. To be honest, I had to slow myself down because if I hadn't, I would've raced through this novella out of curiosity for the outcome of the mystery and the romance. It's how the story is paced – fast and steady towards a climax in which it's highly unpredictable if the main characters will steer clear from getting hurt. And I think it would've been a shame if I had rushed through this story, since it's already too short to my liking (but that's just greedy me). More importantly, I would've missed the little hints that clarify what's attracting one man to the other and vice versa, apart from the physical magnetism.

River of Need isn't my new favorite in this series, but it's certainly a great addition. With a few added extensions on the heroes' personalities and a bit more showing of their dynamics outside the suspenseful events – for example by continuing their story a little longer after the solving of the murder mystery and the subsequent happy-ending-smexing – it definitely could've become a serious rival in the 'favorite competition'. Now that place is still reserved for *A Helping Hand*.

Ebook Addict Reviews says

I really enjoyed River of Need. Having read both Hidden Force and Hidden Hands, I was excited to revisit the characters from those books and read Kyle's story.

River of Need starts out with an emotional punch that continues throughout the story. Shayla Kersten packs a lot emotion into ninety-nine pages. This story left a lump in my throat and teaches a valuable lesson in love. Dustin's life turned from good to bad in almost the blink of an eye because he wasn't honest but with the love and trust of the one person he betrayed you just know that there will be a happily ever after at the end of Kyle and Dustin's story. Shayla gives us a story that is both romantic and true to itself, without pulling the reader from the fantasy.

I have always enjoyed what I've read from Shayla Kersten and River of Need is no different. For a quick emotionally believable story, pick up River of Need. River of Need is a standalone story but for the best enjoyment I recommend reading Hidden Force and Hidden Hands.

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Theresa

Trix says

[The characters just didn't seem that convincing to me. Kyle was miserable for 2 years just because Dustin's wife came into the picture. And while keeping his distance after the break-up, he wasted no time in bringing Dustin home and in his bed. He first claimed he could not trust his lover with so many lies between them but when Dustin promises to make their relationship work the second time around, he believes it all. Dustin also se

Moomba says

3.25 stars

mah1 says

This is one of those booksa that was on my want-to-buy list for ages and then when I finally did, it only ended up on my to-read shelf.

I think River of Need falls into the category of books that have enormous potential that never blossoms. The characters were great, they had loads of chemistry and the sex was hot but it was like reading a Reader's Digest version. This was simply too short to handle all the elements that were present.

Shayla Kersten writes well and that made it doubly sad that the book seemed rushed. As it is, I would've preferred if the whole serial killer plot would've been dropped entirely and let the focus be on the two MCs

reconciling and building their relationship.

Three and a half stars, because the read was enjoyable and I really liked the MCs.

Eve says

[hearing about his ex-lover's unwilling gang bang while prostituting himself in the middle of sex should've been a turn on. That kind of killed that scene for me. A couple others like that. (hide spoiler)]

Bitchie says

Too much sex, too much anger, not enough trust.

Maya says

These were two MC's that I never could manage to give a damn about as neither were very likable or sympathetic. One HUGE problem for me was with Kyle. The fact that he was getting off on Dustin relaying the details of a trick turned bad and him being gang raped by four men? I think I despised him at that point.
