



# The Kissing Room

*Cheryl Anne Gardner*

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## **The Kissing Room** Cheryl Anne Gardner

Merle tells us her tale of love, longing, and desperation. As she struggles with the guilt over her husband's suicide, Merle's gut wrenching quest for redemption takes her on a downward spiral into a hell of her own making. Will she find hope in a mysterious stranger, or will she die, entangled in a sadistic relationship with her husband's best friend. --Violence and Strong Language--

## **The Kissing Room Details**

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Author : Cheryl Anne Gardner

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## From Reader Review The Kissing Room for online ebook

### **Maria says**

I recently had the pleasure of reading Cheryl Anne Gardner's *The Kissing Room*, a novella of only 16K words. *The Kissing Room* is not a light, cheery romance for a Sunday afternoon; rather, it's a dark, disturbing story that threatens to repel the reader with its brutal honesty, but compels him to read on, anxious for resolution. Consider yourself warned—if you dare to sample the first page, make sure you're in a comfortable chair.

This fast-paced story is hardly a chronological one, beginning in the middle of the action, and then alternating between what happens next and what happened before. The story also fluctuates frequently between gentle, romantic, or bittersweet moments and truly ugly, stomach-churning scenes of violence and despair. I would add, however, that even the nastiest situations are not described graphically or in lengthy detail, though neither are they for the faint of heart.

*The Kissing Room* is told in the engaging, first person voice of Merle, a woman whose short life has already seen too much tragedy, making her wizened and weary beyond her years. While the reader may not agree with her choices or even understand her reasons for making them, it is impossible not to sympathize with this character and want to see her prevail. The character of Lain was less clear to me, and I wasn't always sure I liked him, but that did not seem important; I was rooting for Merle, and if he made her happy, that was all that mattered.

The Irish pub setting of the story is unique and authentic, with both the language and the details bringing it to life. I could always see and feel the story happening as though I was a participant, rather than some disconnected voyeur. The only time I felt thrown out of the story was when the point-of-view suddenly shifted from Merle to Lain for a brief passage near the end. I understand why the author did this, but for me, it broke the spell. Fortunately, I was so caught up in wanting to know what would happen, I just ignored it and went on.

I think I've made the point that *The Kissing Room* is not exactly a "beach read" with its violence and macabre themes, but I don't mean to imply that you will not enjoy it. I read the book nearly straight through, and only stopped because of an unavoidable interruption. I was annoyed to have to pause the action going on in my head, and went back to it as soon as I could—I just had to see how it would end. When it is all said and done, Cheryl Anne Gardner's *The Kissing Room* is a deeply touching love story; you just won't know it til it's over.

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### **Kristen Tsetsi says**

I read this recently with my morning coffee and ended up starting the day with the kind of enormous power and beauty you don't usually get exposed to so early in the day.

Cheryl Anne Gardner has a way with description, but even that doesn't account for the way the story immediately absorbs the (at least, this) reader. There's a vulnerable honesty in the writing that is a compelling combination of strength and weakness, and in just a few words, in a brief passage, Gardner can draw a complete and complex portrait of a place, a man, a history, or a love. It's hard, when reading *The Kissing Room*, to not feel one with the protagonist, Merle. It's less like reading about her and more like being her, Gardner's dive into her psyche is so complete.

## ? Sassy ~ Amy ? says

I am not sure how to really rate this story. It was different than anything I have read before. Excellently written in the first person, but...I don't know.

A messed up girl has taken over her dad's pub in Ireland & her husband had committed suicide. She's trapped in the depression and guilt of that while allowing her husband's former friend and business partner rape & abuse her.

A weak victim of a man she rescues ends up helping her & her life goes well for a time.

This is a story of a girl who is in a psychological hell and her growth to get out of it. I'm not sure it was really resolved to my satisfaction in 40 pages, though.

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## Ellen Maze says

The Kissing Room by Cheryl Anne Gardner

So what if The Kissing Room's star is a little "astray in the head"; Irish euphemisms only add to this stunning story's appeal. Set in a pub in Ireland, Meryl O'Byrne tends her deceased father's business with spit, grit and wit. Although she is haunted by the suicidal death of her beloved husband Jon, she muddles through with thoughts rampant and barely controlled as they gallop past her consciousness like wild horses. When Meryl meets an intriguing stranger named Lain, she slowly learns to release the past and begin anew—shrugging off her demons at the same time.

All of this makes her the most believable character I've read in a long time. Told in First Person, author Cheryl Anne Gardner expertly gives us a glimpse into the mind of a widow who sees and reacts to the world with her very last ounce of passion. The reader is invited onto a roller coaster ride of delicious descriptive settings and masterfully done character development.

Gardner is a superb storyteller and you won't regret giving her a try.

Ellen C Maze

Author Rabbit: Chasing Beth Rider

A Unique Spin on the Vampire Myth

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