



Fostering Faust

Randi Darren

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((Minor Spoiler and Warning at the bottom of the blurb. Please read all the way through.))

Alex is dead.

Dead, and apparently with a one way ticket to a place that only the worst of the worst go.

All for a simple choice he made about a product his company owned.

Damned for all time.

Luckily for him, he's about to be given a chance.

Another choice to make.

He can instead, return to the land of the living, though his soul would belong to another. Except the world he's being sent to, isn't the same one he came from. It's not even a similar period in time, but from something long past in history.

The dark ages.

And part of the deal to live again, is to make pacts with others. Pacts that would bind the soul of those who take a deal to the same entity who owns Alex's soul.

How much would you give of yourself to live on is an easy question.

The better question, is how much would you take from others?

If Alex wants to keep living, to keep his soul from being sent to the darkest corner of hell, he'll have to ask himself that question.

Daily.

Warning: This novel explores dark subjects, and what people will give up of themselves, and each other, to get what they want. The main character is written as a real person in a tough situation, and will not make choices that line up with societal and cultural norms.

It contains adult themes and moral ambiguities.

As with my previous work, explicit scenes are found within. It has violence and a harem relationship.

Fostering Faust Details

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Author : Randi Darren

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From Reader Review Fostering Faust for online ebook

ArchSilver says

Perfect for everyone who likes stories about a guy building a harem and prefers a lot of sexual content

Well It wasnt really what I expected when I took the book at kindle unlimited, but as it didnt cost me extra so ...

Anyways for those into Harem, building an empire(mainly military conquest with little tactics) and well sex... I can only recommend this book.

jared says

Loved it

I couldn't put this book down. I actually read it all in one sitting and like all books from this author I can't wait for the sequel.

David Howey says

Another great book though a touch darker than the others

I have nothing but praise for the author as usual. The way he relays to the reader what thoughts and emotions the characters are feeling without just outright saying them is amazing, it makes it very easy to get immersed in the story. With all his books, I love how the main character always manages to slowly build up loyalty with others. You don't really ever notice it until a character shows how truly loyal they are the MC, and then you're just like of course they're that loyal as you start mentally listing everything the MC did to build that loyalty. This book is darker than others he's written though. As usual, the MC builds a harem, but this time through coercion, one such unwillingly submits to him the first time they're together, though she didn't have to do so therefore making it not so unwilling. It feels dark if nothing else but she quickly ends up caring for him very much, making it seem as just a bad start to the relationship. All in all, I very much look forward to the sequel, as well as anything the author writes.

Jake says

Couldn't get enough

When I first read the name the description I wasn't exactly thrilled to check out the book, in fact, passing on it multiple times. I certainly wish I would have read it sooner.

The way the story is written and how the characters unfold reminds me of one of my favorite books, so that made it really easy to enjoy. The writing style is clear and mature without being confusing or convoluted. I really enjoyed the character development and how everyone was treated differently and yet the same in a way.

There are definitely some erotic parts. They are very well done.

I do have one thing to warn though: it is definitely the story of a man subjugating the world, most especially women. If you're not a fan of a man with a harem and the story of how he bends everyone to his will, then you're probably not going to be a big fan of this book.

However, if you're looking for a story about a guy that wheels and deals and bends people to his will, then I think you will thoroughly enjoy the story, I know I sure did.

Mr Colin says

Wow...Horny as hell and just fantastic!

I wasn't sure what to expect when I read the synopsis. Not many books come with a warning. I also wonder what it says about me that i absolutely LOVE this story. I dream about it and I was looking forward to the next day to read more of it. Now it's finished I'm desperate for more!!!

Jim Tyler says

1 star, I put a book down. 2 stars, I wouldn't read again and won't pick up a sequel. 3 stars, I won't read again, but maybe the sequel would move forward. 4 stars, I enjoyed it and would recommend it to a friend. 5 stars, I'll reread it, recommend it.

If I could give this 2.5 stars, I would, but I'm willing to pick up the sequel. Why 2.5 stars? Because only the continuation of the plot itself and what I think might be an interesting twist (or if I'm already guessing it, and obvious one) may be at the end. So if I'm willing to read the sequel, why the low score? Because it is almost more shallow than an upside down spoon.

I like the story of Don Giovanni, Faust, the Crossroads, and other "sold my soul to the devil" stories, and fall from grace and occasional redemption. I was intrugued by the description, in that the author states:

Warning: This novel explores dark subjects, and what people will give up of themselves, and each other, to get what they want. The main character is written as a real person in a tough situation, and will not make choices that line up with societal and cultural norms.

It contains adult themes and moral ambiguities

OK, then, there might be some depth there, just, there isn't. The author is honest. The MC is written as being in a tough situation. In the first few pages, the exposition describes why he's destined to hell (that isn't a spoiler, the author says as much in the description on Amazon) and in such a way that it is just an accounting fact. The author states also that the MC accepts the situation and analytically immediately moves to what his choices are, with no emotional nor moral consideration of the actions that brought him there. For me, that limited the empathy I could have with the character.

The author was also honest when they stated "will not make choices that line of with societal and cultural norms." I originally interpreted that as the actions of the character would add depth by creating intriguing reasoning for their actions and maybe clarity around understanding of the greater meaning. Nope, instead it means the MC is essentially going to make decisions based purely on immediate solving of the problem in

front of him, and in a way that a modern character would, and that there will be *very little* backlash because of it.

So in a nutshell, the MC is placed into another world to do the bidding of their patron demon to make deals to gather soul energy or something. By doing this, he gets a reprieve from immediate punishment of damnation in Hell (which isn't called hell, just the worst part of the deepest, darkest place his sort of people are sent). There doesn't seem to be a reward, so much as a reprieve only, which is slightly intriguing.

Immediately, with just a few simple (and I mean simple in a let's get the story moving, vs realistic and straightforward) plot points, the MC is established in a situation where he:

- can begin his mission,
- have very few, pesky obstacles (except for the major plot phases) interfering with their activities,
- receive convenient guidance from an internal encyclopedia so they will have the intrinsic knowledge needed to live in this new world and inhabiting this body.

This helps move the storyline along, but at the cost of skimming along on the surface of what could be a deeper lake of possibilities.

Now we are then introduced to something that might not have been obvious at the onset: this book has LitRPG elements. You, as the reader, do not get visibility into menus or HUDs providing stats and perks, but the mechanics of the soul dealing system are laid out pretty succinctly, and are later expanded upon when they become inconvenient.

And so, the MC begins to make deals, quickly establishes his not-so-secret intention to subvert women into a harem of tools and sex-slaves, and also, by virtue of not being a spend-thrift fop as the previous inhabitant of the body, also gets benefit that the county he runs (he's a count, not a sheriff) can effectively become profitable enough that all of his expenditures throughout the rest of the story are affordable with little more than a nod to the cost. Again, a lost opportunity for depth.

The protagonist moves into the main plot lines (interactions with other nobles) and quickly shows that he is smarter and more intuitive than all of them, and due to the fact that he played wargames with his father when he was younger (but importantly was not described as a gamer at his introduction) will also be able to micro-manage all of his military commanders to ultimate victory, except when desperately outnumbered.

Did I say desperately? Not really desperately, more like his plans won't work perfectly and he'll have to delay or adjust later. Just kidding, how about adding a Deus Ex Machina moment to wrap up that minor inconvenience of being outnumbered so the book can come to a denouement quickly enough for the author to get cracking on the next in the series.

What else can I criticize? The MC is a pretty bad mix of creepy and not directly misogynistic or abusive (except for the one masochist member of the harem) that you can't figure out if he's worth any emotion or response. I mean, he isn't a high-villain. He isn't Machiavellian (I disagree with one of the other viewers), because he doesn't have or need plan Bs for his plan A, or plan Cs for his plan Bs in an exponential complexity. He isn't even emotionally torn up about his actions because he doesn't consider any of his harem beyond the equation needed to bend them to his will. And none of them (sorry if this is a spoiler, but really, you shouldn't be surprised by now) are ever going to surprise him except for the one that may end up being the major series plot twist.

So, why did I bother reading it all the way through and will look for the next in the series:

- It was a quick read.
- I liked the personalities of the female characters and their actions. The author writes good female characters, until a point when they might actually become independent in the plot themselves.
- I would like to see the main plotline and end resolution to see how clever it might be.

Charles Applewhite says

Softcore Isekai

Guy dies, recruited by 'evil' goddess to get her souls. Agrees, and his main way to get them is sleeping with as many women as he can.

Ricardo Portella says

Corrupting book

This is a real dark side book. If you are a pure soul, do not read this book, because you will be corrupted by it. The story goes around a COO that dies suddenly and finds himself in Hell. One there he makes a pact with a demon to collect souls in her name in another world to escape an eternity of torments. This world happens to be a medieval world and he incarnate in the body of noble and immediately starts to get his part of the bargain.

The is a kind of light version of Marquis de Sade books, were the main character is evil and always wins. And there is also lots of graphical sex scenes. Although I appreciated the book, I am not sure I want to follow the adventures of an evil Lord.

Thomas Taylor says

A marvelously Machiavellian MC

If you've ever played D&D and wonder "How can someone be lawful and Evil at the same time ?" you'll find the answer here. The MC joins the short ranks of irredeemably evil yet likeable characters, this is no hero, no antihero, he's not even a villain , he's a greedy manipulative jerk and he's a joy to read.

Roberto Viña Sosa says

this author has the ability to make you like and enjoy the full cast of secondary characters, and love / hate the main one'

Seth says

Interesting

As with other books by this author, very well done. The characters are diverse, three dimensional beings, the story flows and the MC is all sorts of interesting. Having said all that, not sure if I'll pick up next in series, as the premise is just too far over the line for me in the soul selling notion. It's just one step too far for me to be

able to enjoy an otherwise excellent book.

Dayne says

Love it

I am so loving how all the different series are tied together. I cannot wait to see how it all works out.

Chandra Romano says

Ok

At first it was hard to get into but once I got on a roll it went pretty smooth after that. Is Leah one of Runner's wives? After the other series I suspect that it is so.

Jay Collins says

3.5 Stars, This book will not be for everyone due to the adult content but I liked it and will continue with the next book when it comes out.

Steven Naylor says

Rating 5.0 stars

I feel a little weird about that rating as this is not the type of story I usually read. Also a 5 star story usually means that I love it, and in this case that is not really true. But, it did make me think in a way I was not used to and for that I can't find many faults with the telling of the story. I could not decide where or why I would take away stars, so for that I gave it five stars. The main protagonist is not a good guy, one could go as far as to say he is evil, but I found myself liking him. I tend to place myself in the main character shoes while I read and try to imagine what I would do in that person's situation. While I would not do what he did, I completely understand his thought process and from a perspective of pure logic, I could not fault anything that he did.

This story made me think a lot about the concept of evil (example: which is worse: Doing something terrible to someone else and having them hate you for it, or slowing breaking that person down so that they do that same thing and make them love you for it?)

Another question: Which is worse: Doing something bad to someone else because you hate them, or doing something bad to someone else because you don't care either way?

The story begins with the main character waking up in a realm to find out he is dead and that he is going to hell. He wasn't really evil, he was just an executive of a company that made a product that turned out to be dangerous and instead of perfecting the technology to make sure it was safe, he quickly patched the problem

and placed a warning label on it so that he would not be held responsible. So, because he didn't really care, those deaths fell to him. He is offered a deal by a Goddess of hell for him to be sent to another world and to collect souls for her. He agrees and finds himself in a new world with Kings, Dukes and Counts and he ends up being one of those Counts.

This is where the question of evil comes in. I can say that I do not think Alex is a good guy, but I can't bring myself to think of him as evil. He died and was going to go to hell, so now he has to make deals with other people in order to stay out of hell. If he was alive and making deals to sell other people souls for power or something, then I could state for sure he was absolutely evil. In this case though, he is just trying to stay out of hell himself, so while he is a servant of evil, he is not doing it by choice so does that make him evil? It Surely doesn't make him good, but evil?

Now, if Alex went around tricking everyone no matter what into giving up their souls, then I could say he is evil. However, the only people that he offered deals to were people that were sentenced to death. So they do lose their souls, but they also get to live. Also, they were already going to one hell anyway. So does that make him a good guy? No, but does that make him evil? Maybe, but there are much worse evils out there.

So here comes another ethics question for you, Ready? If someone is starving and you do not feed them, are you evil or responsible for their death? If you never came by in the first place, they would still have died? Now what about this; lets say you decide to feed that person and make sure they live, but you require them to have sex with you for that help. Are you now a good person because you saved a life or a bad person because you made her have sex with you? At no point did you force them into sex, they could always have said no and you would not have harmed them in any way. Out of those two scenarios, which one is worse?

That was the most interesting part of the story. I found myself kind of liking the main character. He never did anything just to be cruel, but he did a lot of bad stuff. He was a sociopath and did not care one way or the other. He never told someone he would kill them if they did not do what he asked, instead he found people who were going to die anyway and offered them a choice, even if it was a shitty choice. He also found that making women do things that shamed them or took away their pride also seemed to take a piece of their soul, which helped fill his quota. So, almost all the people he made deals with in this book were women. It was actually pretty diabolical reading how he broke every woman down and made them into what he wanted and never once did he force them to do anything that they did not agree to.

There was a lot of sex in this book and as you can probably ascertain by what I wrote above, it was not the kind, soft, lovemaking sex. It was masochistic and dirty. Alex had sex and wanted to own his women and break them. He wanted to "break them in half".
