



## Desert Hearts

*Christine Pope*

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## **Desert Hearts** Christine Pope

Falling for one man when you're in love with someone else must be the quickest way to complicate your life...

A stranger staggers out of the desert and collapses in Kara Swenson's Sedona home. He pleads for help, and despite her better judgment, Kara takes him in, gives him shelter and a place to stay. She doesn't anticipate the dangerous attraction she begins to feel for him -- after all, she's been secretly in love with Lance Rinehart for more years than she cares to admit. Kara, who owns a UFO-themed shop and gives UFO tours in the desert outside town, thinks she's seen it all. But when the shocking truth of the stranger's identity is revealed, she finds herself having to make a terrible choice. (Book 2 of the Sedona Trilogy)

Paranormal romantic suspense • 96,000 words

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## **Desert Hearts Details**

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Author : Christine Pope

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## From Reader Review Desert Hearts for online ebook

### **Nikki Brooks says**

Desert Hearts picks up a few months after Bad Vibrations ended and brings us Kara and Lance's story. This is much more of a love triangle and certainly for me a lot more emotive. Yes there is still action and adventure but I enjoyed the more love entanglement elements of the story.

Kara runs the UFO depot and takes a very background role in the local underground alien hunting ring. She has lusted after Lance for a long time but he had never so much as winked in her direction and she finally decides to move on. When she returns home and finds a badly dehydrated man in her home she cares for him. He appears to have amnesia and she feels a strong pull to him. He may just be what she needs to move on from Lance. But as the story unfolds we find out more about Greyson and his part in the alien invasion.

Lance is a former spec ops soldier who was sidelined into a special project in remote viewing. When he suffered a personal tragedy when his wife was killed he distanced himself from those around him and became involved in the underground UFO ring. He feels the pull towards Kara but cannot get over his feelings that she is better off without him and that he is a good deal older than her.

When Kara and Greyson find out what he is and what he was tasked to do, the relationship they had falls apart. Lance is there to pick up the pieces and finally gives in to the fire between them. Then things get really messy!!!

Kara is kind-hearted, but incredibly careful of her own heart - she doesn't want to end up like her mother. She is always the responsible one, and I think in Greyson she finds her own way to rebel against her label. Kara's decision to choose between these two men in her life is made more difficult because both of them are totally adorable and lovable in their own way - Lance is stoic and total alpha male whilst Greyson is more emotionally available, and both of them want to keep Kara safe.

I've become totally attached to these UFO hunters and submerge myself in the world of alien hunting! The story is strong and the characters are a brilliant mix. There are still peeks at Paul and Persephone in this book so it's easier to feel the books flowing together and you feel the invasion plot heating up through all the books.

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### **Angi says**

I really enjoyed this book. I couldn't give it as high a rating as the first book in the series as it didn't keep me guessing as much as the first one. I really wish I could give it 4.5 stars as it is a really good book.

I'm still really thankful I won these books, they have given me many hours of enjoyment so far. Looking forward to starting the 3rd book in the series tonight.

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### **Denise says**

This is a NON-SPOILER REVIEW. Desert Hearts by Christine Pope is Book 2 in The Sedona Files series. I

really loved this story. This is Kara and Lance's story. You get to visit with Persephone and Paul (Book 1, Bad Vibrations) and get a taste of the other characters, but this is all Kara, Lance and Grayson. There was something really touching in the way Christine Pope wrote this story. I found myself laughing, disbelieving and finally tearing up in this one. The fact that I went into book two right after reading the first one says a lot about the storyline and the writing. This isn't a Scifi documentary, it's fun fiction with a twist. An addictive series that will leave you craving more.

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### **Kristine says**

I was hoping that the story would continue from the viewpoint of Persephone & Paul. The UFO shop is a logical continuation. I visited one in Roswell, so it was easy to visualize . Grayson is my favorite character in the story. Can't say I care much for Kara; she is rather mundane to be doing what she does ...even inherited. Still entertaining...on to number 3!

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### **Cristina says**

This continuation of stories in Sedona had a lot more emotion than the introduction, and maybe a tad of soap opera drama. I connected with Kara, and felt all her emotions during this journey. I hope Kiki's story (Angel Fire) shows Kara coping as well as she can.

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### **Carly Kirk says**

#### **I was wrong...**

I was wrong, I hadn't planned on purchasing this 2nd book in the series, but I read the synopsis and it was intriguing and then I saw that it was only 99¢ and I figured - why not? And I did enjoy this one well enough.....and I'm hooked... I really want to know what happens next in these character's lives!

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### **Bigbear Woolliscroft says**

A "it is complicated" love story with lots of alien. Or perhaps a Sci-fi story with a love interest. Either way it is well written, and even though the ending can only be described as being a happy end with reservation, this is definitely the best book in the series.

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### **Cassie Jones says**

**DESERT HEARTS** is book two in Christine Pope's sci-fi series about aliens trying to control the earth. Where book one was pretty much all constant action for the most part, this book had a good portion but was more about the emotional aspect. Kara, who was in book one, finds a stranger in her house when she comes

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come from walking her dog. Turns out he has absolutely *no* memory of anything, including his name. The twists and turns (though the one with Grayson I expected, just a tiny bit differently), were interesting. I fell in love with Grayson and Lance and for awhile there I wasn't sure which would end up with Kara in the end. I have to say what happened to Grayson in the end (no spoilers) just broke my heart. I actually ended up crying I read it just like Kara did. I mean, you'd have to have been made of stone not have felt bad for him (and Kara). I enjoyed the book very much and am interested to see what happens in Michael and Kiki's lives (I know Kiki is the heroine in book three but not sure if Michael will be getting his own book for not). Can't wait for the next one! FOUR AND A HALF SLIPPERS for **DESERT HEARTS**.

This review was originally posted on Happy Ever After.

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## Jo says

*I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for my honest review.*

The plot thickens (yes, I know that sounds cliché, but it is only the truth). What started out as a complex, intricate story line with Bad Vibrations continues, adding new layers and dimensions to the series. Once again, Christine Pope managed to surprise me on numerous occasions while reading. It seems like so few books do that now-a-days, so it is refreshing and exciting that Pope is so immensely creative in her writing.

As with the first book, the characters were complex. In this book we get to learn more about Cautious Kara and the mysterious Lance. Kara has a beautiful heart, full of compassion. She has given up a lot in her life for her family and continues to go out of her way to help others. Lance is broody and waging a war with himself in regards to Kara. His past has left him with some huge scars, ones that make him fear for Kara's safety were he to get too close to her. Both Kara and Lance have faced the loss of loved ones and it has impacted each of them differently. The losses in Kara's life have pushed her outside of herself, doing what she can for those she loves, whereas those in Lance's have caused him to turn inward and shut out anybody that tries to get too close. Kara's compassionate nature shows itself early when she finds a stranger on her living room floor in obvious need of help. She goes above and beyond what might be expected of someone in a similar situation. I have to admit, when I started this book, I was *not* expecting Grayson. He definitely serves to make things interesting! He and Kara form a bond that proves to be problematic later on. Regardless of what happened with Grayson, now that Lance has admitted his feelings for Kara, he is not letting anything come in his way of their being together. The plot in the Sedona Files series is continuously moving forward. There is no stagnant time in the books. They will hook you and keep you constantly engaged only to leave you itching to pick up the next book as soon as you finish the present one.

One of the things I have come to love most about this series is the close knit circle of friends (and the support of the larger MUFON community). Whatever they decide to do, they decide as a group. They don't keep secrets and they're always there to prop one another up, even during the most bizarre or terrifying of situations. These individuals (aside from Kara and Kiki) are not related, but might as well be a family.

Another thing that I find refreshing in this series is Pope's complete immersion in the present day, particularly in regards to sexuality. (For the record, this book has several sex scenes, but they are all very tasteful.) Pope does not pretend that all women are pretty much nuns until they are married nor that all men are promiscuous. Kara is an excellent example of this. Though she obviously isn't completely chaste, it is clear that she is not a loose woman. It is a great reminder that, just because a woman has slept with multiple men doesn't make her a slut (or any other degrading term you would like to substitute). It is clear that Kara is not one to sleep around, but she is comfortable with and confident in herself as a woman. She makes her

choices carefully and smartly and refuses to feel guilt where none is needed and will own up to her actions. Both *Bad Vibrations* and *Desert Hearts* are prime examples of women who are secure in who they are as a person, which I think is invaluable.

The book more or less has a HEA ending and doesn't necessarily have a cliffhanger. But the prior I mean that things end happily for Lance and Kara, but the overall danger to the group and the world is not yet over. In the latter I am referring to the fact that Lance and Kara's story is pretty well tied up (that they will have their HEA), but the book leaves you knowing that more is coming and this amazing group of friends has plenty to do before they are rid of the aliens with ill intent towards humanity. I could be read as a stand alone, but I would highly recommend reading this series sequentially and as a whole to get the full experience. The *only* reason this book is getting 4 stars instead of 5 is that I am not a huge fan of love triangles and find them a little anxiety-provoking. Overall, another excellent book by Pope. I can't wait to dive into *Angel Fire*!

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## Barbara Ann says

Christine Pope has written a great trilogy that blends elements of romance, paranormal, and science fiction genres and is set in beautiful Sedona, Arizona. The first book, *Bad Vibrations* introduces readers to a scattered group of UFO hunters and enthusiasts who come together to stop an alien invasion that threatens humankind.

*Desert Hearts* picks up where *Bad Vibrations* ended and features Kara Swenson and Lance Rinehart, two characters who played instrumental roles in the first book but remained in the background so that Paul and Persephone's love story could be told. I actually liked *Desert Hearts* even more than *Bad Vibrations*. It is more of a character-driven story with less external conflict and action than found in book one. Much of this second book focuses on character development, inner conflict, and the love triangle that emerges with Kara, Lance, and Grayson.

Kara runs a local UFO shop, which also serves as the group's home base. Even though they are just good friends, it is clear in the first book that Kara and Lance have a strong physical and emotional attraction to one another. Now readers get to know Kara and Lance better since this story is told from both of their perspectives.

I loved Kara's character. She is a genuinely nice person. Not only is she kind-hearted, but she cares deeply about others and their happiness. I found it easy to relate to her feelings and experiences. She has the reputation of being "careful Kara" because she has always been the responsible one, sacrificing her dreams to take care of others. Kara has been in love with Lance for the past six years even though he doesn't seem to reciprocate those same feelings for some unknown reason. However, when a mysterious, handsome man enters Kara's world, the door for a possible romance is opened. Over the course of the story, Kara realizes that this unknown man, who remembers nothing about his past, will forever change her life.

The man without an identity decides to call himself Grayson after watching a TV episode with a character by the same name. Although Kara is frustrated that she knows so little about Grayson, she is drawn to him. Grayson appears to be an ideal man, and his sincerity and openness to everything around him make him irresistible.

When Lance learns that Kara now has a man in her life, he is forced to confront his real feelings for her, and he doesn't like the thought of losing her to someone else even though loving her may put her life in danger. I typically avoid plots with love triangles because I know, most likely, someone will be hurt in the end. What makes Kara's decision even more difficult is that both men are lovable. The romantic scenes in *Desert Hearts*

are a bit more sensual than those in *Bad Vibrations*, yet I found them to be appropriate for the characters involved. The outcome of this love triangle was not exactly what I expected but one I could accept in the end.

There are lots of unexpected situations and shocking revelations that emerge as the plot develops, and I was riveted to this storyline. The last part of the book becomes more action-oriented, leading to a holding-my-breath, biting my nails climax and an, overall, emotionally satisfying conclusion. I don't want to say too much about the plot because discovering the truth is what makes this story so engaging, but I will end stating that I am still clinging to a tiny bit of hope about Grayson's future.

Over the course of reading the first two books, I've found that I have become attached to this tight-knit group of UFO hunters, and if I ever had to face an encounter with aliens, these are the type of people I would want watching my back!

I look forward to reading the final book, *Angel Fire*, which has just been released, but I have a feeling I will wish for this trilogy to develop into a series.

I received a copy of this book from the author for an honest review.

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### **Willow Webster says**

I really loved the book. Wish it wasn't so long before the next one comes out!

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### **Angelique says**

Review to go up in corroboration with the tour hosted by Sage's book tours.

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### **Arely says**

Though this is the second book in the series, you really don't need to read the first to understand what's going on. However, I highly recommend you do because a *lot* of the background information and characters are presented in the first book so it might be a bit confusing at first, especially with the onslaught of so many characters at once.

It was really nice to get more information about Kara, Kiki, Lance, and the crew, because in *Bad Vibrations* we had focused mostly on Persephone and Paul, with very little background on the rest of the people who helped them. We got background information and it made the characters more real. Kara is the girl who always plays it safe, even getting the nickname of "Careful Kara" as she grew up. It was really easy to relate to Kara, especially because she was written so well and in a realistic way.

Grayson's secret identity (secret even to himself) wasn't such a secret for me, since I'd already begun to suspect from the moment he showed up dehydrated on Kara's living room floor. The blurb pretty much spells it out as well, though I had thought it was going to take me in a different direction.

Though this is sort of a love triangle, it really didn't feel like one. At first I really was wondering who Kara would end up with — Grayson or Lance — but after Kara found out about Grayson and a bunch of other things happened it was really easy to tell who she was going to end up with.

Like with Persephone and Paul in *Bad Vibrations*, the romance between Kara and Lance felt really abrupt. Though they had history, it didn't *feel* like it from the writing. Yes, it felt like there was something there, but it didn't feel like love, especially because Kara and Lance didn't really talk much of anything. And when they did, the author cut that part right off. No serious discussion for us, just action and intrigue. I felt like I had been deprived of something necessary for these characters and their romance to become more real for me. It would have been nice to have been there for that discussion between Lance and Kara, but we don't get to see their relationship form closer, I suppose.

Unlike *Bad Vibrations*, however, this story doesn't wrap up so nicely. While the previous book can be read as a stand-alone and you can be satisfied with the ending and won't need to read more, this book ends in a somewhat of a cliffhanger. There are so many ends left to be tied and holes left to be filled that you really have to read the next book in order to feel like something's been solved.

And there's a *huge* plot twist there. Seriously. I was **not** expecting that one. And that plot twist is what is making me open the third book right away. I want to see what happens!

This book was shorter than the previous book—and I could feel it. I finished it way too quickly and I was felt wanting more. Though I understand the need to get people to read the third in this trilogy, it felt like there could have been more content in this story. Even so, this book was nice to read and it kept me well entertained—so much so that I read it in one sitting!

I recommend this book for people who like mystery/suspense, aliens, government conspiracies, and a somewhat instantaneous love.

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## Cary Morton says

After running through the first book of the Sedona Trilogy in just two days, I immediately attempted to secure a copy of book 2 (Thank you Sage!). It didn't disappoint! Desert Hearts returns to Sedona and the world established in *Bad Vibrations*, but this time focuses on Kara Swenson (the UFO themed shop owner from the first book!). One night, out of the blue, she returns home to find her house unlocked, and inside, a completely nude male. She quickly falls in love with the stranger, but soon discovers that he isn't what he appears. Torn between this stranger, and an old crush, she too is pulled into the alien conspiracy surrounding Sedona as the aliens once again try to come back—this time, without the help of the US government. Like the first book, *Desert Hearts* was a humorous, light-hearted adventure as the motley crew of UFO-enthusiasts from Sedona band together to once again, defeat the alien invasion. There's romance, mystery, and plenty of heart-stopping action. I have to admit, I didn't like it as much as the first book, but only for one reason : The love triangle didn't go the way I wanted it to. \*pouts\*, really, it was every bit as good as the first book. I'm just a sore loser.

Review Originally posted TO Author Unpublished as part of the Sedona Trilogy Book Tour. I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review from the tour organizer.

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