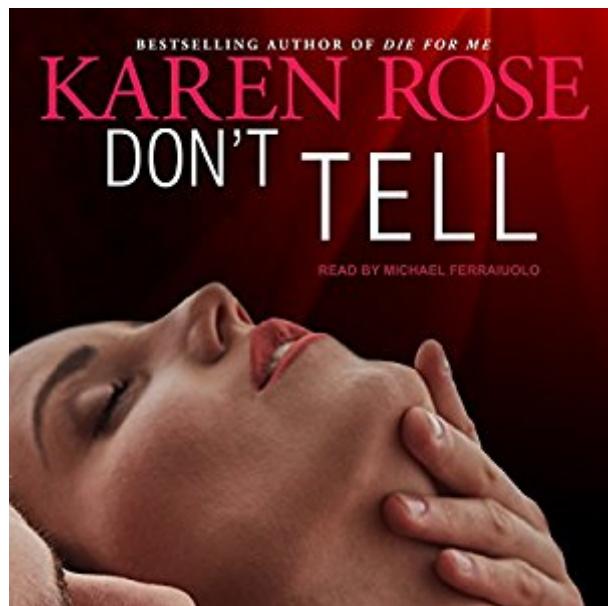


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Don't Tell: Romantic Suspense, Book 1



Synopsis

It was a desperate plan. But Mary Grace Winters knew the only way to save herself and her child from her abusive cop husband was to stage their own deaths. Now all that remains of their former life is at the bottom of a lake. Armed with a new identity in a new town, she and her son have found refuge hundreds of miles away. As Caroline Stewart, she has almost forgotten the nightmare she left behind nine years ago. She is even taking a chance on love with Max Hunter, a man with wounds of his own. But her past is about to collide with the present when her husband uncovers her trail and threatens her hard-won peace. Step by step, he's closing in on her - and everything and everyone she loves. Contains mature themes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A woman and her son, Mary Grace and Robbie, escape her abusive husband and start a new life. Mary Grace becomes Caroline and Robbie becomes Tom. She moves on to get a degree and a job as a secretary at a college. Years later she develops a romantic relationship with her boss Max, a history professor, and struggles to move forward when her past is haunting her. Meanwhile her ex stews in bitter darkness until he is inspired to find his wife and son.***** Minor Spoilers Ahead

*****Five Star Review: The most positive trait about this book is that it was a page turner. It keeps a steady pace. The exploits of the ex were outrageous and kept me going through this book, following this evil character as he follows the trail of his wife. It is unusual that I read a book to follow the villain (and not the romantic couple) but this was one romantic suspense novel in which I did. I was

engrossed with what was happening on the ex side and not as excited by the romantic couple. Tom, the son, was a wonderful character. I normally skim over any kid in a romance as they usually detract from a romance instead of add to it, but Tom wasn't annoying or trite. He was more alpha than his mother's love interest and I found him to be compelling and interesting to read about. I was on his side most of the read, thinking he was a smart kid who had seen too much. One day maybe he'll have his own romance.

Two Star Review: There was a lot not to love about this romance. The story line was extremely cliche and the characters were fairly two dimensional. Starting with the foundation of the romance itself, the romance happens way too quickly to be believable. It's not unusual in a romance for a couple to fall in love quickly or even based on lust, but this was one example that didn't make too much sense to me. The heroine has not dated a man in the seven years she's been away from her abusive husband and I found her sudden trust and willingness with Max, the hero, unlikely. They hardly speak to each other and they're both head over heels. I didn't understand their attraction emotionally or mentally. There were some really awkward scenes in which you would have to really stretch your imagination to make it work. The couple is a couple before they are actually a couple. I guess we are just TOLD that they are in love (how? why?) and are supposed to go along with it. Example: When Max and Caroline first meet, he "looks her over" and she blushes.... pages later she is jealous and upset that he stays after class to talk to young, female students. Max is aware that she is upset and feels he needs to apologize for talking with the students. At this point the couple has not been on a single date or expressed their interest to each other at all besides one heated look and return blush. I was very confused about why she was jealous and why he was apologizing. The scene gets even more strange when he comes in to his office to apologize, full of rage, and she reacts (rightly so) to the rage, flinching and falling back. I was confused as to why he was angry? What is going on with these two? The two week romance they share goes on like that - with interactions that would work for a contemporary couple who had been dating for months OR that had really gotten to know each other in just the couple of days they spent time together. It's awkward to read their fights (omg the fights, that's another review) and conversations as it reads like they are really, really intimate emotionally... but they are not. They are strangers just going through the motions. Caroline decides she can trust Max and, yes, loves him, based on very limited information. Max decides he loves Caroline and wants her within a couple of days of meeting her, though she literally has not told him ANYthing about herself except that she has a degree and a son.

The son, meanwhile, is the only character who is questioning the craziness of his mother rushing into a relationship with a complete stranger. He gets no support from Max, his potential stepfather, who has decided he wants to MARRY this woman less than two weeks after

meeting her. It all left me feeling hollow with the romance. Max, the hero, wasn't too inspiring as a romantic hero. His backstory (injury/car wreck/bitter lost dreams/icy ex fiance) just didn't seem that sincere. He came across more whiny than tortured. He had an annoying temper and was too generally grumpy to enjoy. He has sweet moments with the heroine here and there, but the couple argues more than they talk so I just saw him as temperamental. His back story is pretty lame and the story line with the fiance is pretty dropped. I'm not sure if it was necessary to the plot at all. Ultimately he was too beta for me. Mary Sue, I mean Mary Grace (Caroline), was generally okay as a character. There is little to go on with her besides a general perspective that she had been abused, had the courage to escape and has worked hard to improve her life and the life of her son. She is the Perfect Mom and "everyone loves her" (said over and over). I was disappointed that she didn't do more to protect her son and herself more as the years go by (besides not dating). There's no mention of self-defense courses or steps of awareness. I read romance because I love romance. It's interesting that this book made me more interested in the detective action, the villain and the kid than the actual couple but I can't count that as a positive. If I wanted to read a detective thriller, there are many I can pick up that do not have a romance to bother with. I pick up romance because I want to be carried away by a love story and this one just didn't have one to root for.

**An exciting thriller by bestselling author Karen Rose, will have you jumping at every little sound. With this romantic/suspense, you won't be able to stop reading until the very last page. It's a must read!.....With her life on hold and her heart entrapped inside a prison, Caroline Stewart couldn't help but think of those devastating times, nine long years ago. Escaping with her life along with her seven-year old son, she did everything humanly possible by faking and staging their own deaths and sinking the car at the bottom of a Tennessee lake, changed their appearances and identities, settled in a different state hoping beyond hope that her abusive husband and police officer Rob Winters, would believe that they were both dead somewhere where he would never find them again. She had been Mary Grace Winters back then and ever since he put her in the hospital almost causing her own death by leaving her crippled, instead, she promised herself she would definitely survive along with her son to get better by leaving her old life behind permanently to begin a fresh start by never looking with no remorse or regret. But after nine years of living in fear, she relocated in the Windy City of Chicago, she was not only attending law school but she was also starting a new job by working for the new Professor Head of the History Department. Who was he? Professor Maxwell "Max" Hunter walked through the outer door of his new office and was stunned by his secretary. Not only was this woman beautiful but she took his breath away and even though she

Mary Grace was in an abusive relationship. The only way out was to be dead. She faked her and her son's death, moved, changed her name and her hair color. She was very careful. She meets Max and his family and things change. Her son is apprehensive but in time goes along until one day he slips about something from their past. The police find the car underwater and the ex-husband starts looking for her determined to kill her and get his son back. What pursues is page turning fever to see what's next. This was my first time reading a book by Karen Rose and I was not disappointed. I like her style. The pages have to fly and they sure did. Looking forward to more of

her books.

Don't Tell is the first book in Karen Rose's Romantic Suspense. The book was really well written and very suspenseful. It kept me on the edge of my seat and the villain was truly horrific yet believable. So why only 3 stars. I didn't really like the hero. He fell into the self-pity trap too many times and along with having a terrible temper where he'd fly off the handle he just didn't work for me. I also didn't buy into the romance of the Lauren and Max being in love within two weeks of meeting each other. However, as I mentioned I really thought the book was well written and the suspense aspects were right on. I will definitely be checking on the next book in this series since I think this one just wasn't as good due to the hero for me.

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