

The Still Life of Hannah Morgan

by Lora Deepröse

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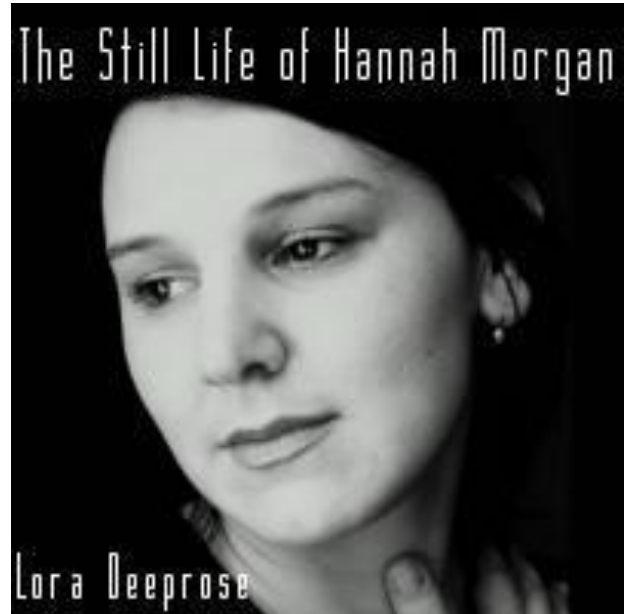
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“The longer you choose to play it safe, the more miserable your life will become. The universe rewards risk my dear; you know what you need to do.”

Hannah Morgan’s life is at a standstill. Her dreams of becoming an artist vanished with the sudden death of her grandmother and mentor. To appease her distant and disapproving mother, Hannah gets a respectable job at a high-end day spa. Instead of painting masterpieces, Hannah spends her days painting nails and giving facials to wealthy women. Her dreams for the future have become a hideous nightmare. And it just keeps getting worse. She catches her boyfriend cheating, loses her job, and has to watch from the sidelines as her best friend, Jasmine Blue, goes after her own dreams of owning her own salon.

Then she meets Aaron, a working artist, and finds in him a kindred spirit. And, to her surprise, she finds the courage to follow her dreams. When circumstances beyond her control threaten to destroy both her relationship with Aaron and her dreams of a bright future, Hannah fears her mother was right—that some dreams aren’t meant to come true.



Lora Deeprise

Contemporary Romance Writer

Living in the scenic wonder of Canada's countryside, Lora Deeprise writes books that inspires the reader's hopes, dreams, and shares in the triumphs and falls of her characters.

About Lora's early influences in writing:

I grew up in the small town of Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta located forty-five minutes north of Edmonton. I grew up in an abusive home where speaking the truth and speaking out wasn't allowed. I was also extremely shy. At an early age, I began keeping a journal (of course, back then we called them diaries), making up stories and in junior high and high school writing short stories and really bad brooding poetry. Because I had no voice growing up, the act of writing down my thoughts became my channel for getting my feeling out and a place to dream. The same was true with books. Stories became a safe place to go away from the reality of my childhood. I read everything from Edgar Allan Poe to Laura Ingalls Wilder. Little House in the Big Woods was my favourite book and I still have the whole series in my collection. As a little girl, I dreamed that one day I'd have a little house in a big forest and, at forty-two I am living in just such a location.

About Lora:

Lora Deeprise has a B.A. in Drama with a minor in History. She lives on Ravenwood Farm in the West Kootenay's with her older sister, two goats, a flock of Banty chickens, three cats, and a cockatiel. You can visit her at <http://www.loradeeprise.com>.

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by Lora Deeprose

Novel Excerpt:

After the sixth hydro tub treatment of the evening, I ran out of towels. I told Jessica, one of the hostesses stationed in the Great Room, where I was going so she wouldn't send a client to my room while I was gone. I headed into the Prep Room and grabbed a bunch of towels. I was tired and didn't want to make a second trip, so I took a few more than I could comfortably manage. I couldn't really see where I was going because the stack of towels obscured my view.

On my way back to the treatment room, I tried to ignore the drumbeat in my foot that was growing more persistent as the evening wore on. I turned the corner too quickly and twisted my sore ankle. The stack of towels started to teeter, and as I tried to stop them from falling, I ran smack into someone coming around the corner from the other direction. The towels toppled and scattered to the floor. I threw my arms out and braced myself against the wall barely stopping myself from following them.

"Sorry!"

"No reason to apologize," said the robe-clad guest with startling familiar brown eyes.

It was Yummy Man from the salon. I started picking up the towels. My hands shook as I snatched up the towels as fast as I could. Yummy Man bent down to help me and I noticed the tie on his robe had come undone. He was wearing a pair of navy boxers and nothing else. It was hard not to stare at an almost naked man, a very buff almost naked man, crouched only inches away from me. Embarrassed, I looked down at the floor, at his ankles, anywhere but at his exposed body.

"Uhm." I stumbled for the right words. "Your, uhm." I resorted to pointing.

"Oh God," Yummy Man chuckled and retied his robe. "That's one way to impress a girl or scare her off completely."

I laughed. We stood in the hallway, each of us clutching an armful of rumpled towels.

"You look vaguely familiar. Have we met before?"

"Yeah, at The Edge about a week and a half ago."

"Yes, that's it. I have a good memory for faces. I'm Christian, by the way."

"Hannah," I said, my heart fluttered wildly. We automatically went to shake hands but the

towels got in our way. I laughed again. "I'll take those." I held out my arms to take the rest of the towels from him.

"It was nice bumping into you again," Christian said. "See you around."

"See you," I said to his back as he headed down the hall and into a treatment room. I glanced around nervously, afraid that the Dark Lord of the Spa was lurking in the corridor ready to reprimand me for yet another of my blunders.

I shuffled as quickly as I could with my bum ankle and armload of rumped towels to the Prep Room to fetch another load of clean ones. Holding firmly to a new, smaller stack of towels, I quickly walked back through the Great Room. When I passed Jessica, I tried to avoid making eye contact with her. I told her I'd only be a few minutes. That was twenty minutes ago. She pinned me with a death ray look.

"I'm sorry," I whispered. "I got held up by a guest." I rushed back to my room to run the tub for the next client, feeling strangely giddy.

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Book Review by Coffee Cup Time Romance

Reviewer: Maura

Rating: 4 Cups

Hannah's life is not the one she would have chosen. She has always wanted to be an artist like her grandmother, but her life did not work out that way. In fact, her present life is not working out at all.

Aaron is a successful photographer. He is attracted to Hannah from their first meeting, but unable to do anything about it. He is willing to take things slowly once they finally get together.

Hannah is leading a dead-end life in Calgary. Her job in an upscale spa is getting progressively less appealing, her love life is toxic, and she is still mourning the death of her grandmother. Her best friend is taking charge of her life by opening up her own salon, which makes Hannah's life seem even more depressing. But sometimes you have to hit bottom before you can make changes, and Hannah's time has come.

This is not a quick read; the author writes a very detailed and emotional account of Hannah's life. Her life is not grand or exciting, at least at first, but it is very involving, and I could not wait to see what would happen to her next. I got very involved with Hannah and Jas' lives, friends, work, and families. Her relationships with Jas and her family are the most complicated. Her mother is very difficult. Her matriculation into art school really turned her life and attitude around. Her romance with Aaron was all the better for its slow pace, showing that she learned a lesson from her previous ones. Overall, this is a well-written and very entertaining story that I definitely recommend.

The Still Life of Hannah Morgan

by Lora Deeprise

Book Review by Karen Lennon

Hannah is one of the most delightful and realistic young women I've had the pleasure of meeting in a novel. I was able to identify easily with Hannah, while she was on her journey of discovering her true self; as she battled pain and loss from her past and present. I believe everyone who reads this book will find some of themselves in Hannah as well.

I adored reading "The Still Life of Hannah Morgan". Lora Deeprise's sense of humour is fantastic, from the ironic to the slap stick, it's all in Hannah and her surroundings. It isn't often that a book can make me laugh out loud, but this one has made its way onto my short list. So enthralled was I with this book, that I finished reading it in record time.

I was most impressed by the Canadiana within the novel. Set in Calgary, and talking of loonies and toonies (Canadian one and two dollar coins), Canadian Idol, and the extremely fitting mention of Tom Thomson of the group of seven. All of that is so refreshing from the all too common settings of New York City or London, England, found in countless novels.

This book has something for everyone. Funny and familiar characters, romance, love, sex, the arts, financial strains and gains, the feeling of being lost, and then of finding one's way. You'll definitely laugh, and maybe even cry.