



## Dune Drive

*Mariah Stewart*

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## **Dune Drive** Mariah Stewart

Always believing she was an ugly duckling, Chrissy Jenkins thought she had finally turned into a swan when her real-life Prince Charming swept her off her feet. But as his true character began to crack his perfect facade, Chrissy realized that not only was she better off without him, but that she was the only one who had the power to transform her life.

Returning to her ancestral home on Cannonball Island for a family wedding, Chrissy is reintroduced to a legacy she'd all but forgotten. In choosing to stay on the island, she reboots her life, successfully reinventing herself as a sous chef at the Inn at Sinclair's Point just over the bridge in St. Dennis. But despite her newfound self-confidence, she still doesn't trust her taste in men. So when she meets Jared Chandler, a handsome ship salvager staying at the inn while he conducts a nearby recovery operation, Chrissy's certain she can keep him as a friend—even though he's everything any woman would want in a man. As fellow newcomers, together they discover the charm of the historic bayside town and explore the idyllic island.

But when Chrissy agrees to be Jared's date for his father's wedding, they embark on a weekend that will find them each seeing the other in a completely different light, one that will change their lives forever.

## **Dune Drive Details**

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Author : Mariah Stewart

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## **From Reader Review Dune Drive for online ebook**

### **Dawn says**

Chrissie Jenkins always thought she was ugly and not worth anything in life. So when a handsome guy sweeps her off her feet, she figures she found her very own prince charming. Except he wasn't a prince nor charming. With more courage than she thought, she runs away and hides back on Cannonball Island and into the arms of her Great Aunt Ruby. Being back home soothes Chrissie's soul and battered heart in many ways. But when she meets Jared Chandler, she finds an honest and sincere man who she becomes friends with. With her newly rebuilt life moving forward., Chrissie is determined to not fall for another man if she can help it. But what happens when she helps Jared out at his family wedding, they see things in one another that they never imagined. The question is will they embrace what they see in each other or will they ignore it and have their hearts break?

Mariah Stewart's Chesapeake Diaries is a fun filled romp filled with captivating characters, intriguing bits of information about the locals and the history of Cannonball Island and St. Dennis filling the pages of DUNE DRIVE. I love this series since the first book, Coming Home, and was thrilled to see the author move onto the residents of Cannonball Island that is across the bridge from St. Dennis. The author does an amazing job in capturing the slow-paced life that makes up Cannonball Island and the few residents who live there are a treat. I loved seeing Ruby, the island's oldest resident and one who cracks me up whenever she is on the page. Chrissie is hurting and trying to reclaim the person she was before her life became shattered. What I love the most are the characters in this series. We meet some new ones and a few old friends from past books. I love seeing how everyone is doing, what they are up to and all the gossip. The author does a marvelous job in capturing every character's individual personality just perfectly. I like the diverse cast of characters and we got to see some older folk take center stage at times in the book.

Chrissie still can't believe she is back on Cannonball Island. She couldn't get enough dust behind her when she left. Coming back to the island to heal her battered heart and soul is just one aspect of Chrissie's life now. The other is find out where the girl she was is again. I love Chrissie. She was hurting and ran to something familiar in this case her Aunt Ruby and family she has in and around St. Dennis & Cannonball Island. She is quite relatable and is the perfect foil to Jared Chandler, a salvager who is determined to never fall in love. Except when these two meets, its pure combustion. The sparks fly between Jared and Chrissie as they get to know one another as well explore the tiny town of St. Dennis and Cannonball Island. I love Chrissie and Jared together. They complement one another, and I found myself rooting for them to have their own happy ever after. The author captures their attraction perfectly amid the pages of DUNE DRIVE and ramps up the sexual tension between them just right.

DUNE DRIVE is a sweet tale of a woman who feels she list herself and her life and has no idea how strong she really is. With the right amount of tension, sweet romance and a small town that fairly brims with life, I long to see for myself what Bling has for the casual shopper, what the flavors of ice cream are at Scoops and more. If you haven't read The Chesapeake Diaries series, I highly recommend you start from the beginning with Coming Home and just run with it. I love each book and hope the author returns to this quant town and island.

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### **Skye ~ A Court of Binge Reading says**

*\*\*Thank you to NetGalley and Gallery Books for sending me this ARC in exchange for an honest review\*\**

\*3.5 stars\*

Do you want to know what reading *Dune Drive* felt like? It's that indescribable homey feeling you only get when you curl up on the couch with a blanket and watch a Hallmark movie. You're at peace, content, happy, and carefree. That is what reading this book felt like.

*Dune Drive* is the twelfth novel in the Chesapeake Diaries. That being said, you don't need to have read any of the other books in order to enjoy this book--this is the first book I've read in this series. This story is about a young woman named Chrissie who goes back to her ancestral home on Cannonball Island. While Chrissie wasn't raised on the island, she spent nearly every summer there growing up and the island always felt like her true home. However, the reason for Chrissie's homecoming is not a pleasant one. She has finally escaped from her abusive boyfriend, Doug. Once she arrives on the island, she embarks on a journey to rediscover who she is after losing her identity in an abusive relationship.

Almost a year later, Chrissie meets Jared Chandler. The two become fast friends, but could there be more? Chrissie isn't sure if she is ready for a new relationship, while Jared on the other hand, has never allowed himself to be in a serious relationship. Jared's mother abandoned his family when he was quite young which caused him to protect his heart. These two definitely have their guards up, but when the right person comes along your defenses are often proven to be worthless.

I really enjoyed this story. I think Mariah Stewart handled the topic of an abusive relationship well. My favorite aspect of this book was that Stewart gave Chrissie time to herself before throwing her in another relationship. Typically, authors push their heroines into a new relationship as soon as they escape from their abusive partner. By Stewart not doing this she has created a more organic, believable story for her readers. The progression between Chrissie and Jared's relationship is natural and authentic.

Of course, the setting of Cannonball Island is perfect for this story. It's a quaint, picturesque town on the bay--what more could I ask for? All of the townspeople are friendly which only enhances the classic small-town vibe of the island. I mean who wouldn't want to live somewhere like that? As I mentioned earlier, this could be a Hallmark movie.

Overall, I really enjoyed this story. It was an endearing story of finding love--but more importantly yourself. Chrissie's journey is heartwarming and uplifting. I admire her courage and strength; she was a great main character. Full of romance, friendship, and family *Dune Drive* is certainly the perfect summer read.

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## **Cheri says**

This series has definitely had its ups and downs with me. But as I mentioned in my review of *The Chesapeake Bride*, I'm a big fan of the Cannonball Island stories and Ruby. The heroine of this story, Chrissy, is Ruby's great (great?) granddaughter. The hero, Jared, is a salvage diver who works with Owen, Chrissy's cousin who was the focus of *The Chesapeake Bride*. Needless to say, I really enjoyed this story.

There are parts to Chrissy's story that just had me in tears. I'm not giving anything away to say she was in an

abusive relationship...that's established from the beginning. It's not the abuse that tore at my heart, but more the aftermath. Things I hadn't ever really thought of. As much as I am aware of the long-lasting psychological effects of being in such a situation, the scope of how that can play out when looking for a job or making friends hadn't occurred to me. Mariah Stewart really handled Chrissy's situation beautifully and taught me a thing or two in the process.

The relationship between Jared and Chrissy starts very slowly. In fact, the two of them don't so much as hold hands for quite a while and insist they are "good friends" when anyone mistakes their relationship for anything more. It's actually very sweet and romantic although neither of them means for it to be sweet or romantic. Their bond happens so organically and their feelings grow in such a natural way, it's almost a surprise when you realize how enmeshed they are with each other.

As the reader, you know certain things are going to play out. I don't believe the author means for it to be a surprise and she surely drops hints constantly throughout the story. As always, that is fine with me when the author makes it a point of ensuring the trip is a joy to take. And here, it really was.

I'm a huge fan of this author's The Hudson Sisters series and my curiosity was piqued when Devlin's Light was mentioned. Now I'm going to have to hunt down the books in her Enright series since they tie to both The Hudson Sisters and The Chesapeake Diaries. I'd love to go back and find out more about some of the characters I've met in all the books that I didn't realize had their own stories.

**\*\*I received an ARC of this book courtesy of Net Galley and the publisher. All opinions expressed in this review are my own and given freely\*\***

<https://allingoodtimeblog.wordpress.c...>

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### **Melissa mckim says**

Love this series it's my favorite series from Mariah and I love a lot of her book's! I loved the cover and the title to and the characters. Christy Jenkins thought she turned in to a swan when her real life Prince charming swept her off her feet, but then his true characters started to crack. She realized she be better off with out him. She transformed her own life knowing she was the only one with the power to do so. To find out more get your copy pre-ordered. I received my copy through NetGalley and I enjoyed it!

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### **Ann Lorz says**

Reviewed by Romancing the Readers Blog: <https://romancingthereaders.blogspot...>

For those who haven't yet read this series by Mariah Stewart you don't know what you are missing. The stories are all wonderfully written with characters that leap off the pages. Dune Drive is #12 in the series and I have to say I hope there are way more to come.

I have a little secret for you. The book prior to this one is the Chesapeake Bride. Yes it's good but it wasn't as good as the past books so I worried a little that the author might have gone to far with the series. It happens. So when I decided to read this one I told myself to go in with a open mind.

I didn't want to taint the book before even giving it a try. Thankfully it was just let the others in the series. Right away I was into the story and loving it. My heart just broke for Chrissy and all that she was going through. She has stuck in a crap relationship and needed out. She also had some family situations that needed work too.

All this help start off Dune Drive and push it into a wonderful fast paced story that it was. I totally love have both Chrissy and Jared started their relationship as just friends. It was a very slow build but one that I think worked best for both of them. they needed to learn what the other was about in their own time without sex and emotions taking over.

I think all of that made them stronger when they did start having feelings for each other.

I'm so glad I gave Dune Drive a chance it was well worth it and it made me excited for the next book to come. Maybe someones brother? You'll have to read it to know what I'm talking about. If you haven't yet read this series then it's time.

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ARC received for a honest review

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## **Cheryl says**

In the beginning I was not sure about this book. It took me a while to find my groove with the story and the characters. Yet, after getting about a third of the way into the story, I did find my footing. I liked the location. Chrissie is the main focal character. I could understand her reluctance to Jared in the beginning and not wanting to start a relationship. Although, once things progressed from friends to more; I felt some spice.

Dune Drive can be read as a stand alone novel. This is a charming, sweet read. The characters are nice as is the storyline. As I got to know everyone, I would be friends with them. This book would be good as a beach read.

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## **BookAddict says**

After five horrible years with an abusive man, Chrissie Jenkins finally escapes. She runs to great-grandmother Ruby, Cannonball Island, and the wonderful people of St. Dennis on the Chesapeake Bay. Slowly over a period of months and in the care of a wise, all-knowing Ruby, Chrissie begins to heal and starts to find herself. She renews her childhood friendships with cousins, gets a job at Blossoms Restaurant and begins making friends. Probably the last friend she expects to make is Jared Chandler, a salvage diver with a bit of a player reputation. The first time she meets him, Chrissie had just observed him hitting on a cute young woman.

Although it seems an unlikely friendship, Chrissie and Jared find they have many things in common. A love of ice cream from Scoops, the historic town of St. Dennis (a new interest for Jared) and the pain of having a

parent leave them as a young child. For Chrissie the experience convinced her that it must have been her fault and she would never be good enough, and for Jared it taught him that love isn't real because it doesn't last. Their friendship is a cautious one, and Jared senses there's a lot more than he knows in Chrissie's past and she needs time to come to trust him, as well as herself. Chrissie is a breath of fresh air for Jared. She's real, transparent and honest, and she doesn't fawn over him like other women, but with his views on love, he's definitely not looking for more. But then love seems to have a way of sneaking up on people.

I've been a fan of this author since I read the first Chesapeake Diaries book so I was thrilled to be able to read an early copy of *Dune Drive*. St. Dennis is one of those inviting fictional small towns that I would live in forever if it were possible. I loved returning there and reacquainting myself with all these lively, delightful characters and the beautiful, picturesque setting. Then there's the touch of supernatural with the way Ruby and Grace, long-time St. Dennis newspaper editor and diary author, just seem to "know" things that makes the reading even more entertaining. Stewart paints vivid scenes and images with her detailed descriptions and her unique, endearing characters practically jump off the page.

When a character has been as damaged as Chrissie, there is a duty to handle it carefully, and Stewart got it exactly right. Chrissie needed to put the past behind her, discover the "new Chrissie" and gain confidence and strength in who she was becoming without relying on a man to define or support her and not jump carelessly into a new relationship. Ruby was a big help to her, and her friendship with Jared allowed her to be her true self without any pressure. It was a slow, simmering romance, which made it all the more special. In true Stewart fashion, *Dune Drive* is a heartfelt, humorous, sweet, uplifting romance that draws the reader into this delightfully wonderful, immensely satisfying journey to happily ever after.

\*I reviewed this book freely and voluntarily, having made no commitment to provide a review and receiving no compensation of any kind from any source for this review.

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## **Kathy says**

This is another addition to the Chesapeake Diaries series, but you do not have to have read the other books in the series to read and enjoy this one. In this book, Chrissy Jenkins returns to her ancestral home on Cannonball Island for a wedding and decides not to return to her home or job--or her abusive ex live-in. Chrissy has carefully planned everything out, so her ex will hopefully never find her, though she knows for certain he will track her down, even to the ends of the earth. Christy settles in nicely, working with her soon-to-be 101-year-old great-great grandmother in her country store and at a nearby restaurant. Though sworn off men, Christy befriends Jared, a local diver whose family company works on salvaging sunken ships and is going to dive for one in the area. Soon, this seemingly simple friendship moves into a different category, as both become enamored of each other. However, for obvious reasons, Christy is leery of any relationship, and Jared is just looking, enjoying himself and the women who come his way. Though Christy has worked hard to cover her tracks, she is constantly worried her ex will find her and punish her and anyone else he figures has helped her. Christy is also working through some other secrets about her past and her family, secrets her mother never would explain or clarify for her when asked while Christy was growing up. Still, one person, Great-great grandmother Ruby has information and answers—mostly due to the "sight" everyone claims she has.

This was a well-done book, like the others this author has written. One thing that drove me crazy as I read was the way the author had Ruby keep using "be" in lieu of other, more suited words/speech constructions whenever she spoke. I suspect the author was trying to give Ruby some sort of Cannonball Island dialect but

failed badly because Ruby never used any other unusual forms of speech or any dialect as she spoke the rest of the time. In fact, Ruby was well spoken, using conventional speech patterns everywhere else. The budding romance between Christy and Jared was expected from the start but it was nice to watch it develop, as it was to watch Chrissy heal after her traumas with her ex. The setting was a small town, just as could be expected. I am quite familiar with the area, having lived there for many years, and I am not quite sure where this author used for her setting, as this is not quite what I have come to experience or expect about this area. Still, this is fiction, and an author is allowed to stretch things a bit—and she has throughout this series. This is a well-written book. The characters and setting are spot-on for the ambiance the author wanted to create. I do, however, wish I could find a St. Dennis, just to visit, if not to live in. If you enjoy reading the books in this series or any of the others written by this author, I recommend this one, as it probably will not disappoint. Also, as I said, it is not necessary to have read any of the other books in the series before this one, though it is quite far along in the series. I received this from NetGalley to read and review.

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## **Up All Night With Books says**

### **3 Stars**

#### **Review by Kris**

#### **Late Night Reviewer**

#### **Up All Night w/ Books Blog**

Mariah Stewart's **Dune Drive** takes on the tough subject of abuse. Chrissy Jenkins went through some very tough times, with being in an abusive relationship for five years too many. She had low self-esteem because of it as well. While I was happy the author touched base on this topic, I felt there could have been so much more to it.

I would like to state this was a very hard read for me. I read the synopsis and was intrigued but later found myself bored with it. I did enjoy Chrissy's bounce back into finding herself. Mariah Stewart has a lot of talent in the writing words department and if I was my mother's or even grandmother's age, I would have probably enjoyed the book a little bit more. It was just too perfect despite hitting a topic like abuse. I truly wanted to enjoy this book but I just could not connect. Well Written, but not for everyone.

*\*\*ARC provided for honest review\*\**

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## **Chris Conley says**

I love the world of Cannonball Island and St. Denis. Ruby is an incredible matriarch. I find myself holding onto her strength and wisdom...and "sight"...since she cannot live on this plane forever. But while she is here, she can help, folks like Chrissy save herself. Great book.

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## **Diana says**

### **Chrissie and Jared**



This is another great story in the Chesapeake Diaries series. Chrissie has been in an abusive relationship for five years. A both physical and mental abusive one. She decided she needed to get out before he killed her. Sneaking away to her great grandmother's place in Maryland was her salvation. She obtains a job at a local restaurant and makes friends with the man whose company is dredging an old ship from the bay around St. Dennis. Jared is never serious about any girl he meets and has a rep of being a playboy. He finds his feelings for Chrissie may be more than friends.

Good tale with all the old characters stopping by to learn how their lives are going. Another great read by an amazing author.

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## **CLM says**

Here is a link to my review: <http://perfectretort.blogspot.com/201...>

In the 12th installment of this popular series, Chrissie escapes an abusive relationship and returns to the place she was happy as a child, Cannonball Island, near fictional St. Dennis in Maryland.

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## **Heather says**

This latest entry in the Chesapeake Diaries series deals with the difficult topic of domestic violence. Chrissie has returned to her roots on Cannonball Island to recover and start over, to once again reclaim her life on her terms. When she first meets Jared, she has no interest in a relationship but then either does he, so it works out perfectly. Until both realize that something has changed in their "friendship." There is a romantic element to the story but it is not the entire focus of the novel. It is more about Chrissie's journey to moving forward in her life while sorting out her own personal past.

While this book is part of a series, it can stand on its own. However, if you've followed the series, you will get to catch up not only with the familiar residents of St. Dennis, but also some of Chrissie's relatives who have also found love on the Chesapeake.

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## **Leah says**

Mariah Stewart returns to the Chesapeake Bay and her series *Chesapeake Diaries* in her newest book. Fans of the series will be thrilled to hear what happens next in the small town of St. Dennis and the nearby Cannonball Island. Newcomers will have no trouble reading this book on its own and being drawn into the spell that Ms. Stewart casts.

Chrissy Jenkins flees a terrible home situation to return to Cannonball Island and the loving arms of her great-grandmother, Gigi. Chrissy spends time healing and figuring out what she wants to do with her life moving forward. Walking around the town and the island, reconnecting with her cousins and her great-grandmother all give Chrissy what she needs. When Chrissy learns that there is a possible job as a cook at a local small restaurant, she jumps at the chance to work. The fear of her ex finding her does overshadow her joy, but she tries not to think about it. Having a handsome man who seems to just want to be friends helps her immensely.

Jared Chandler is a deep water salvager. He works for his father's company and travels all over the world working on a variety of shipwrecks and other jobs. Jared loves diving. He is currently in St. Dennis awaiting permission to dive on a local shipwreck. He needs something to occupy his time while he waits and when he

finds out Chrissy is exploring the town and island, he invites himself along. Jared has never claimed to be the marrying kind. He fears commitment. What he likes most about Chrissy is that she is easy to talk to and doesn't expect anything from him.

As Jared and Chrissy get closer, both of them must question their beliefs about love and commitment. They both have baggage from their childhood that makes trusting a challenge. They have to figure out if the relationship is worth the work and potential heartbreak.

There is so much more to this story, but I don't want to give away any of the details. I loved the way that Ms. Stewart built her story and took me on a journey with the characters. Things are revealed slowly and with a pace that makes the changes in both Jared and Chrissy believable. I really enjoyed reading this one.

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## **Chris C - A Midlife Wife says**

Wonderful story. 4.5 Stars

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I have been able to read and review several of Mariah Stewart books now and each one of them has been such a delight. She has the knack to create an amazing story filled with wonderful detail that is perfect for women's fiction readers and romance readers alike.

I look forward to each book that comes out in this series. The stories are focused around one particular member of a family, but we meet and get to know many other members of the small delightful community called Cannonball Island. And while the books are in a series, you don't have to read them in order, although it might help keep things straight as far as who is who and who is related to whom.

The author tackles a delicate subject in this story that is, unfortunately, not uncommon. Domestic violence can affect any household, but what I loved about the way Ms. Stewart can wrap the story around the subject, is she taught empowerment and strength.

With the love of family and friendship she develops coming home, we end up with a beautiful story of strength and family and a new found love that's worthy of her. Jake is a beautiful character and couldn't be more perfect.

If you're looking for perfect summer story and beach read, *Dune Drive* and the rest of the *Chesapeake Diaries* series should be at the top of the list. I'm ready to move and look for my own slice of heaven!

\* copy received for review consideration

Full Review - <http://amidlifewife.com/dune-beach-by...>

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