



# Redemption

*Samantha Charles*

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Lindy Carver Harrington loses her unborn child during a violent altercation with her husband. On the same day, her closest friend Sara careens off a mountainside to her death. Lindy is devastated. Imprisoned by grief, and paralyzed by fear, she is easy prey to her husband's abuse. She is unable to summon the strength to fight back, until now... A brutal confrontation forces Lindy to choose to either end her husband's life, or save her own. Escaping, she returns home to Parson's Gap to rebuild her shattered life. Still haunted by the cryptic message Sara left moments before she died, Lindy becomes determined to answer the voice from the grave and unravel the mystery surrounding Sara's death. On a perilous journey into the final days of her friend's life, Lindy's quest for truth will expose shocking secrets that will shake a small southern town to its roots. Confronting the demons of her past, she strips away layers of lies buried beneath the magnificent mountains she calls home. When the past and present collide, the truth may set Lindy free, if she can only live long enough to take her last shot at redemption.

## **Redemption Details**

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Author : Samantha Charles

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## **From Reader Review Redemption for online ebook**

### **Kellie Meyer says**

From the moment you start reading you are captured by Lindy so much that you can't put the book down until you are finished. This book is everything a book should be. It pulls you in and tugs at your heart strings. Lindy might be broken but she soon learns she isn't down and out. I can hardly wait for the second book. Do yourself a favor and read this book, it will not disappoint! Bravo Samantha!

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### **Marti says**

At first glance, this book seems less about the abstract concept of Redemption than about emotional repair.

The first third of the book is all about the set up, and the usual romance thing where the protagonist Lindy and her ex boyfriend are in angry stances vis-a-vis each other after Lindy leaves a bad marriage and returns to her tiny hometown in the Appalachias, and I thought, OK, this is nice, readable, but not so unique, yawn yawn.

THEN it got interesting. Lindy's best friend had died a year ago in a bad car accident. But it turns out the dead BFF was investigating a story, and little by little there is mounting evidence her death might not have been an accident. And as in most small towns, it seems like everyone is connected or related or involved with everyone else in one way or another.

Then it got really REALLY interesting and I couldn't put the darn thing down.

Very good writing, great story, and interestingly enough, filled with Shakespeare quotes, because one of the characters quotes the Bard throughout the book.

There is a lot going on in this multilayered book, with redemption in its many forms playing a prominent role, perhaps even the main role.

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### **Sophie says**

\*Review to come April 10 as part of blog tour\*

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### **Charlene says**

Redemption by Samantha Charles

Redemption is written with tremendous passion. The main character is struggling with escaping from some horrible events in her past. Samantha Charles not only writes an intriguing and captivating story, she makes the characters so believable that the reader feels the sadness, the pain, the terror, and the anger the characters

feel. The mystery was written in such a way that nothing is given away. The reader is drawn into the goings-on.

I recommend *Redemption* as an excellent mystery and Samantha Charles as an author to watch. Keep an eye out for her sequel *Salvation*. It will be worth the read

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### **Kathryn Svendsen says**

*Redemption* starts out as a gentle book about coming home and coming to terms with a life that turned out differently from the hopes and expectations of youth. Leaving an abusive marital relationship, the loss of an unborn child and still grieving the loss of a lifelong friend, Lindy Harrington returns to Parson's Gap, where she grew up to find herself again. But she found much more than she bargained for.

While *Redemption* might start slowly and gently, it quickly takes off in speed and action, rapidly developing in mystery and suspense. It seems unlikely that it takes a full year to discover that Sara's accidental death is not an accident after all, but calculated and premeditated.

The main characters are well-developed and likeable and I even found myself missing Sara right along with the main characters! I did have some difficulty in coming to terms with the character of Reverend Carver and his followers though. I thought his parishioners should have been able to see the disparity between the finances coming into the church and the monies being spent by the church for the renovations/expansions. Also the open disdain for Lindy expressed by members of the church seemed wrong to me.

I really liked that the friendships that Lindy had cultivated with others in the community in her youth had remained strong. I also appreciated the twists the author threw into some of the relationships in the story were great and really added some interesting dimensions to the plot. There were a lot of surprises throughout *Redemption* that made this novel unpredictable and added to the mystery, making the book that much more entertaining to read.

There was some swearing in this novel, and some romantic attraction too. But none of the romance was graphic.

I particularly liked Lindy's character. She is a strong female character. She is a little bit too fast to react without thinking things through first sometimes though, which can get her into trouble. I loved the scenes where she was interacting with Luke and Atticus. Lindy came to Parson's Gap emotionally broken, with a wall built around her heart to protect it from being hurt. I don't think even she realized that she had built that wall.

This was an amazing novel for a first work. Samantha Charles will be an author to watch in the coming years. I highly recommend *Redemption* to all readers of suspense and mystery. I gave this book 5 out of 5 stars. I look forward to her next project!

Thank you to the publisher, Black Rose Writing, who provided a copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review. A positive opinion was not required. All thoughts are my own.

This review was published on my blog Shelf Full of Books <http://kathrynsshelffullofbooks.blogs...>

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### **Susan says**

This was a great book! You cannot help but find a special place in your heart for Lindy and then find yourself rooting for Kit. This book takes you on an adventure and has you guessing until the end..... And then wanting more!

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### **Crystal says**

I received this book for free through the First Reads Program.

I have to say, I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Parson's Gap. The first half of this book sets the scene as Lindy, a victim of domestic abuse, returns to her home town to get her life back on track. Instead of finding peace, she finds herself investigating the murder of her best friend and dealing with her devious and insane father who happens to be the Reverend of the church in town. The book took a while to get going but it really picked up! The secrets and suspense had me racing to get to the end to figure out the answers! The only reason it didn't get five stars from me is because I had quite a few unanswered questions at the end. I'm not sure if it was intentional, and she was leaving the door open for more books based in this town or not. But if Ms. Charles writes another story based in Parson's Gap, I will gladly add it to my library. The book was engaging, the writing witty and the characters intriguing.

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### **Lisa says**

Samantha Charles has written a great mystery novel here. I was instantly drawn into Lindy's life and really warmed to her strong, no nonsense character.

It was a well written story line, which was fast paced and full of twists and turns. The author really brought the characters to life, and I have a thing with my books where I want the characters well described so I can picture them in my head, which I managed to do with these. I loved how she described small town life in this town full of intrigue and secrets. Just when you thought you knew where the book was going, Samantha Charles threw something else at you which took you down another path.

There were a couple of things in the book that didn't seem to have been finalised when the book came to an end and without giving any spoilers away, this relates to her Husband and Father in Law. However this did not detract from my enjoyment of the book and I will certainly read more from this author.

4 OUT OF 5

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### **Elise Abram says**

In *Redemption: A Parson's Gap Story*, author Samantha Charles pens a gripping tale about Lindy Harrington as she comes to terms with her past, present, and future. After escaping her abusive husband, Lindy returns

to Parson's Gap, the town of her birth, where she is reacquainted with the people from her youth, in particular, ex-boyfriend Kit, friend Grady, and her father, a less than ethical preacher who uses coercion and might to do what he thinks is the Lord's work. While there, Lindy uncovers clues that indicate the accident best-friend Sara was killed in was no accident, and the murderer is still alive and well and living in Parson's Gap. Sara's murder is not the only secret the small town harbours, and it's not in Lindy's character to shy away from the truth.

Abused, first by her father and then by her husband, Lindy emerges as a strong, female narrative voice, who refuses to give up her quest until the ghosts of her youth have been exorcised. Though Lindy's story meanders between high and low, the conflict is compelling. Charles creates an air of mystery throughout, driving the reader to continue reading to discover the truth, alongside Lindy. Besides Lindy, the most interesting character is Lindy's father, Reverend Carver, whose puritanical façade is pitted against Lindy's realism. Though Carver preaches redemption, it is Lindy who sets out to achieve it, and she does, emerging victorious in the battle against her father's warped sense of values, social prejudice, and the fallout from family secrets brought to light.

At times a page turner, at times a sleeper, my main criticism for *Redemption* is that it sometimes tries to do too much. Among the themes embedded in the novel include incest, homophobia, racism, black market adoption, abortion, religion, infidelity, and abuse. While reading I was unsure if this was a story about a woman's struggle for self-determination, or a murder mystery, or something else entirely. Many of my reviews include a text-to-text comparison, but I can find none here, which is a good thing, I think, as it serves as testament to Charles's originality. Samantha Charles's *Redemption: A Parson's Gap Story*, though the characters (save Lindy) are somewhat stereotypical, tells a powerful story against the backdrop of a setting made vibrant to impart the message that all of us are capable of rising above hardship in order to create ourselves anew.

Note: I was gifted an eCopy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Bree says**

I got this book as part of the Goodreads First Reads program.

I want to first say how nice the book looks and how much I appreciate the nice note the author included!

This book is in the drama/mystery genre that I don't usually go for, so I liked getting the chance to read something outside my comfort zone. The book focused on a woman, Lindy, who escaped from an abusive husband and returned to her hometown. In her hometown she meets up with a host of characters like her father, childhood romance, best friend's parents, etc., who are along with her on her journey to figure out what happened to her best friend who died years before.

Beyond the story itself which had a good amount of twists along the way, I did find the book a bit hard to get into. To be fair, it may be because *Redemption* is outside my normal genres, but I found some of the characters a bit shallow and confusing. A whole group of characters were introduced quickly in the first chapters of the book but most of them were not really distinct enough and I had a hard time following their role in the story. Additionally the author switched between POV a couple times but it wasn't clear when the POV shifted and it sometimes made the story hard to follow. I'm never a big fan of POV switching, so take that with a grain of salt, but it didn't always flow particularly well for me.

That being said, for a first book I was impressed with the world building and descriptions. I could clearly picture the old coal town and the other settings the author used.

If I could, I would give it a 3.5 but it's closer to a 4 than a 3. Again, story is delightfully twisty and the settings are vivid, but I struggled sometimes connecting to the characters.

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### **CK O'Neil says**

I'm a slow reader, so the fact that I started this 350+ page book a little over a week ago and plowed through it in about 10 days speaks volumes for the power of *Redemption*. The moment we meet Lindy is when she wakes up "with the carved wooden grip of her .38 caliber revolver still clutched in her right hand." Intense. I was sucked in, as if I had stepped into literary quick sand.

The 3rd person omniscient narrator moves the story from scene to scene, evoking empathy for the battered Lindy from the first page when, "she gently touched her stomach right below her naval where the embryo would have, given the chance, transformed." In only three paragraphs of brilliant and descriptive writing, Charles crafts a character so bruised and beaten by life and her husband that the reader can do nothing but hope that she can escape from her suffering. With her dog, Atticus, as her companion, Lindy courageously leaves her marriage, but her return to Parson's Gap lands her in a world far more dangerous.

On the anniversary of her miscarriage and her best friend's untimely death, Lindy sojourns upon a wild expedition to unravel the mystery of her past. The lover of her teenage years has also returned to Parson's Gap, but their history is littered with so much angst and misunderstanding that Lindy can not forgive Kit. But, I fell for Kit, and I fell hard. He is sweet and tender and forgiving. Lindy, though, refuses to see the grown man before her, recognizing him only as the "failed" boyfriend of her past.

Upon Lindy's return to Parson's Gap, we meet the complicated characters of her past who are intertwined with the crimes of her father, Preacher Carver, and her illicit father-in-law Harrington. The savior-best-friend-Bard-quoting, Grady is seemingly delicious but unavailable, which makes me love him all the more, but before we can piece together the clues of the mystery in Parson's Gap that connect Lindy's father and father-in-law, the now adults need to forget the pains of their teenaged selves. Not so easy to do. The plot twists and turns as we travel up and down the mountain between Mama Ray's, Big Stone Gap, and Ole Cougar's dive.

While the tale is a mystery, it's also rich with the complexities of being human. Linday, Grady, Kit, Becky, and Verle all deal with issues of love, rejection, race, sexuality, loss, and—of course—redemption. As the group works to unravel the truth of Sara's accident and Scooter's death, they unearth some complicated personal dilemmas that bring them closer together. I kept forgetting that this is fiction because they felt so real to me.

Lindy is guarded because of her vulnerability. She has learned to protect herself, but she learns so much more about friendship and love as she comes closer to the truth in this gripping and intense tale of *Redemption*.

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### **Jacque Stengel says**

If you have ever driven through the mountains, you know what the term white knuckle means. Not knowing what is coming around the bend or over the next hill. This book is similar. Just when you think you know where it is going, Samantha Charles knocks you for a loop and takes it to another level.

The characters and scene were so well described that I know I'd be able to find this town and feel at home

immediately. The dynamics between family and friends were defined enough that I felt myself cringe when an adversary turned up unexpected, knowing that it couldn't be good. I could definitely tell that Samantha Charles writes what she knows, and that is the best advice ever given to an author! It comes across in the writing and made the book all that much better.

There are a few instances where I was a bit confused, but I think that Ms. Charles can only get better with the next book. I'm not sure my heart can take much more suspense. But..I can't wait to see the next book in this series come to light!

If you like suspense and twists and turns and staying up all night just to find out what happens next. Pick this up. You won't regret it.

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### **Mary Bramwell says**

Redemption hooks you right from the start and doesn't let go until the last page. This is a well-written, intriguing story. Just when you think it can't get more complicated, it does. You can't wait to turn the page to see what will happen next. I enjoyed it right up to the very satisfying ending!

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### **Adrienne Scales says**

Wait...WHAT? NO WAY! Did that really just happen?

That's what I thought when I finished Redemption by Samantha Charles.

This story was nothing that I thought it would be yet somehow lived up to all my expectations. How great is that? I don't know if I can even explain it. I was intrigued by the synopsis and I was in the mood for something gritty. What I didn't expect was to be taken to take on a ride to a small (backwoods) southern Virginia town called Parson's Gap where nothing is as it seems.

Coming to Parson's Gap is like traveling back in time. It's an old coal mining town deep in the mountains of southwest Virginia. It's rich in history, a lot of it not so great. The people are mostly poor, devoutly religious, and hiding all sorts of secrets. So when Lindy comes home, fleeing from her abusive husband, she has no idea the storm she manages to start.

The story is classified a mystery. I also thought it could be called a romantic suspense. The romance although light, is an integral part of the story and not in the sense we're used to. When Lindy escapes her husband, she had no idea she's be running into her old Flame Kit. The history between these two is horrible and nasty. Even though they're both considerably older, neither has forgotten let alone forgiven. I almost felt bad for them when they shared the same breathing space.

Lindy, upon her return, quickly finds herself immersed in the secrets and scandals happening in and around Parson's Gap. Interestingly enough I thought I had everything all figured out and in true brilliant fashion the author proved me wrong. So very wrong. I never saw some of those twists and turns coming. I wish I could share with you all of my NO WAY moments.

There are so many characters in Redemption and I was quite impressed with the level of development for each and every one. I could clearly picture them and even hear them as I was reading. It was like watching a

movie where every character plays an important role and you quickly discover your favorites. I looked forward to certain interactions knowing the intensity would drip off my kindle. This is a long story. It has to be. There's so much to explain so much to describe and it takes a while to get really dirty and gritty. It's then that you'll realize you've been sitting there for hours and you won't want to put it down.

I have very few criticisms but they are worth mentioning. There were times when I had a hard time following who was talking. It's not so outrageous that you can't figure it out, it was just every now and then I had to go back a few sentences to gain my footing. My only other issue would be with Lindy and I'm not even sure that it's anyone's issue but my own. I'm super tough on female leads. I expect so much from them and when they don't measure up I end up disappointed. I think with Lindy it was her reckless out of control behavior and maybe her rigidness. I rarely felt any warmth from her, even when she was trying to hide behind her hands. I just couldn't feel that girl and I wanted to. Now after you read the book you're probably going to argue that she is the product of her environment and probably has a lot more of her father in her than she would ever care to admit. You may even be right.

I'm hoping that in book two I can see her redeem herself in my eyes. :-) I want to like Lindy. Oh and yes I'm pretty sure there will be a book two. There are too many loose ends for there not to be. Way too many unanswered questions. So now you're wondering was this a cliffhanger. Sort of but not really. It does not end on some big draw dropping moment. However, it does end in such a way, that you know there will be more to the story.

I'm very happy I took a chance on Redemption. As I stated in the beginning it was nothing like I thought it would be. It was so much better.

*\*A copy of this book was kindly provided by the author in exchange for an honest review\**

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### **Marvela Dawnay says**

The truth to be told in the story, Redemption, that happens too often in our society today. This story creates awareness of how abuse, corruption, cover up, circumvention of the legal system and even murder can happen when a person/persons have money and power with many connections. The good old boy system! The good news is that in a matter of time whether it's days, months or years the abusers and criminals dark seeded sick secrets are disclosed and justice is served in a way that the criminal never saw it coming. When you're a victim of these circumstances remain in faith and stay strong, reach out to others for help and NEVER be too embarrassed and ashamed. If you follow this path, your story could end like Redemption.

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