



# The Scars Between Us

*M.K. Schiller*

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Emma Cooper is determined to fulfill her mother's dying wish to scatter her ashes with Aiden Sheffield in Linx, Texas. Just one problem. Why Texas and who the hell is Aiden Sheffield? The only clue is a faded piece of her mother's stationary. Emma imagines Aiden is a former love of her mother's, but when she meets the beautiful, damaged stranger, she realizes her assumptions couldn't be more wrong. He's hot and young. And Emma is as confused as ever.

Aiden Sheffield would rather go to hell than Linx. Who does Emma think she is disrupting his carefully built life? The last thing the Marine needs is to slice open the sealed wounds of his painful past. Yet, as he gets to know the lovely Emma, a woman who manages to smile even though she's lost everything, he changes his mind. He will not let her go to hell alone.

But neither is prepared for the devastating evil waiting for them at the end of the road. It might just destroy them.

## The Scars Between Us Details

Date : Published July 17th 2017 by Entangled: Embrace

ISBN :

Author : M.K. Schiller

Format : Kindle Edition 352 pages

Genre : Romance, War, Military Fiction, Contemporary, Contemporary Romance, New Adult

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## **From Reader Review The Scars Between Us for online ebook**

### **Jenny says**

I think Schiller is a very good writer. I love her style. She has a way of weaving in humor that is really charming. So why three stars? I really liked the characters and I really liked the idea. I think this might be where an editor should have stepped in to make a few suggestions.

The angst was over the top. It was very hard to suspend disbelief that the abuse went on for all those years and not one person in that town questioned the father's outlandish stories.

Nor was it believable that Amy would leave him there to suffer. Why didn't she bring in outside law enforcement? The FBI even? If the whole town was corrupt?

If I was the editor? I'd suggest finding balance between the pathos to make this more believable. Why not have Amy run with Aiden and leave him with foster care in a different state? This would still allow him his feelings of betrayal that she didn't take him with her. Yet also make more sense for what we've learned about Amy who I can't believe would abandon a helpless child.

The evil dad could have not gone to prison in that bizarrely contrived way but remained angry and free searching in vain for everybody.

This really read over the top. And the final confrontations were also a bit much. I would have suggested combining it in to one situation rather than the two.

The final scenes when the town seems to have woken up from a stupor was odd too.

The author is clearly very very talented. But I do think the editors need to work with her in finding balance.

She found balance in her book "The Do-Over" . However I noticed similar problems with over wrought soap opera plotting in her "Eight Days in the Sun" story.

This author has so much potential. Her romantic dialog reminds me of Lauren Layne in style. Crisp, snappy and fun.

However this reliance on over the top angst bogs the story down. There is nothing wrong with some angst but I really think it needs to be toned down in to more believable levels. This is where I think a good editor could step in and work it through.

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### **Holly Bryant-Simpson says**

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## Giedre says

What I loved most about the book is the dialogue. I think MK Schiller did a fantastic job with it. The storyline and characters were compelling as well. However, the last third had a bit too much drama for me. At one point I almost felt like I was reading a riff on the MFM podcast, which I'm a fan of, but I can't lie, the author kind of lost me there. I just wanted a little bit less.

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## AJ says

### 4.5 stars!

This is my first read by this author, and I am so glad I picked this book up! The blurb intrigued me, and I am happy to say that the story was everything that I was hoping for and more. A raw and emotional character-driven story that is both deeply profound and so much fun, with the different aspects balanced perfectly to create a read that had me laughing, swooning and falling in love, at the same time breaking my heart with its dark and gritty drama. It was a wonderfully immersive story, and I loved it!

After tragically losing both of her parents in the space of a year, 20-year-old Emma Cooper is carrying out her mother's last wishes by seeking out a man named Aiden Sheffield, and travelling with him to the small town of Linx in Texas to scatter her ashes. She has no idea who Aiden is or how he is linked to her mother, but she is determined to keep the promise she made. When she travels to Oregon to find Aiden, he is far from what she was expecting. She assumed he would be a past love of his mother's, but instead he turns out to be a handsome young man that instantly sets Emma's heart racing. But far from being welcoming, he is a broody asshole who appears to want nothing to do with her.

Aidan is the hot-guy-romance-hero trifecta – he's an ex-SEAL, an MMA fighter, and he runs a dog shelter (\*swoon\*). So from that alone we know he's tough and strong with a heart of gold. His attraction to Emma is as immediate as hers is for him, but he resents her coming into his carefully constructed life and reminding of a past he has worked so hard to overcome. But he shares some of his past with her, and after she ends up staying at his ranch with him for a few days and he spends some time with her, he knows there is no way that he can allow her to return to the town that almost destroyed him, so he agrees to go with her.

*His smile is sad. "You've been carrying it for a long time, Emma. Let someone else carry it for a while."*

Road trip! I freaking love road trip books! There is something about the experiences of travelling, and the intensity of two people being together all day every day that creates a wonderful set up for a romance. Add in the ridiculous chemistry that sizzles between Emma and Aiden, and the stage is set for some awesome fireworks!

I absolutely loved the relationship between these two. Yes, there is darkness and drama, but there is also a fantastic sense of fun, and the teasing, flirting and banter is sensational!

*"Do you really think I'd risk my lovelies being strewn all over the internet?"*

*"Well, no. Wait what do you mean by lovelies?"*  
*The pretty blush crawls across her collarbone. "Shut up. Don't make fun of my euphemism."*  
*"You can say a word like euphemism, but not vagina."*  
*She makes a disgusted face. "It's an ugly word."*  
*But it's such a beautiful thing.*  
*"I prefer to call my stuff lovelies. The bottom line is my lovelies are for my own private enjoyment not public consumption."*  
*I nod slowly. "Uh huh. How about you replay that sentence in your head again, Cooper."*  
*"What I said..." She face palms herself. "Shit, it makes me sound like I masturbate a lot."*  
*"Yeah, it does, but there's nothing wrong with it. It's nice we have so much in common."*

The story is written in dual POV so we get to see where both of them are at, and I loved the opportunity to get inside of their heads – experiencing the light and the not-so-light moments right along with them.

*I buy us hot dogs and try not to watch Emma eat hers. I'm must full of great ideas these days.*  
*Yeah, buy her some phallic food and dare your dick not to jump. What a fun game this is. In fact, why stop here? I'm sure she could go for a banana or, better yet, a Popsicle. Shit, what the hell is wrong with me?*

*I don't want to care for her. I want to be indifferent, pretend she does not affect me in any way, but she makes it impossible...because she affects me in every way.*

The emotion between them builds quickly but realistically, and I could feel each little shift in their relationship, and I loved every fun, passionate moment of it! From reluctant allies to friends to lovers, their open acceptance of each other, and of all that happens between them, is absolutely beautiful to read.

*"There is nothing in the world that can make me forget you. There is no ignoring what I'm feeling. There is no letting you go."*

But their road trip is leading them down a dark path, and as they slowly fall for each other, Aiden starts to open up about his past and all that he has been through, and it is absolutely heartwrenching. This book has some incredibly dark themes and it's not always an easy read. It's graphic and disturbing, and there are definitely some triggers to be aware of (physical and emotional abuse of both children and adults), but it's written with heart and emotion, and it really allows you to understand all that Aiden has been through and how much he has overcome. My heart ached for him, and it made him all the more incredible for being able to open himself up to Emma so completely.

*Cut me a break, Emma. I'm in new territory with no map or compass. Give me a second to find my way to you...please.*

And that darkness that haunts Aiden so deeply becomes all too real as they reach their destination. Will they be strong enough to face the horrors of the past head-on, or will it destroy them and all that they have managed to build together?

*I tuck a strand of hair behind her ear. "Don't let me lose you."  
"You won't."*

I loved this book. It's a heart-pounding ride, and the blend of dark drama and sweet, fun, chemistry-filled, sexy romance is really well done. Emma and Aiden are wonderful characters, and their journey – both literal and figurative – is beautifully written. My heart ached for them and all that they went through, and I feel like I experienced it all alongside them as they deal with the past, experience the present, and move towards their future.

I wasn't ready to let these characters go, but the book ends in a great place, and I finished this book with a huge grin on my face.

Absolutely beautiful – 4.5 stars.

*An Advanced Review Copy was generously provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.*

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## **Jemima says**

**M.K. Schiller- The scars between us**

**Genre: Contemporary, New Adult, Romance, Sociology**

***Warning: This book contains flashbacks which may be sensitive to some people.***

This book gave me the feels... The Scars Between Us was such an unexpected surprise..in a good way. I have loved every moment of it!

Nothing brings two people together more than experiencing the dark, sick and sadistic horrors of the world OR being 'confined' in car taking a road trip across the country.

Emma and Aiden are such easy characters to care and love for. Wait... actually...who am i kidding? Emma is an easy character to care and love for... Aiden on the other hand.. I wanted to throttle him, atleast during the first few chapters. But once that 'shield' is down, Geez, you can't help but fall for him.

A man's best friend is his dog, in this case it literally is for Aiden. Aiden and his dogs a.k.a the pack were bound together by a series of darkness from their past (FYI Aiden runs an animal rescue shelter called *Heavenly Paws*, which is more like a home for these animals that have gone through so much physical and emotional abuse)

Emma Cooper on the other is genuinely a sweet and caring person. she's the light that brightens Aiden's Dark world.

Aiden isn't the romantic type of guy who shows his feelings through declarations of love but rather his actions are subtle yet sweet and profound. Plus he has this gentleness, a kindness that squeezes your heart. Don't get me wrong.. Aiden is an 'alpha' male through and through but his greatest quality is that he has the beauty of courage and humility. I am in awe of Aiden just as much as Emma is of him.

Emma, the beacon of light, she heals the broken roads of the past for Aiden and takes them into a brighter horizon. Emma is silently strong. Granted Aiden has faced heartache and wounds with brutal force, Emma has her own hardships and heartaches with a resilient force of willpower and strength and I admire her for that.

I have loved this book and the message of kindness and love! Be kind people.. be kind. Like Detective Cole from the book says

*" The Thing about love, unlike any other emotion, is that it never dissipates. Once you put it in the atmosphere, it lives there. It travels and floats and goes to places you never imagine. when you love something, you unleash that love on the world."*

for more review, check out my blog [sentrancedjem](#)

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## **Bookgasms Book Blog says**

Gahhhhh. I'm trying to catch my breath and sound coherent at the same time. This book was amazing!! So so fantastic. It had humour, passion, love, a broody alpha male (THAT WAS EVERYTHING), a sassy heroine that took all the names while she handed you your ass and SO MANY SECRETS. Lord. The revelations in this book will blow your mind until the very end. It is honestly one of the best books I have read this year because at all times my heart was racing, my nerves were on edge or I had a smile on my face from ear to ear. It was such an incredibly emotional and poignant book that I had to take deep breaths at some points to continue. I could not get enough!

When Emma Cooper decided to go on a roadtrip to fulfill her mother's dying wish to scatter her ashes with Aiden Sheffield in Linx, Texas, she never knew it would change her life. She had no idea who this damaged and broody stranger was or the connection he had to her Mother but already on edge and grieving from losing both her parents, she was hellbent on finding out. But what happens when she learns that the secrets and torments from this young Marine's past and his connection to her mother will undoubtedly crush her and change everything?

I absolutely loved this novel! While not being a light read by any means, this novel was filled to the brim with light hearted moments that had me laughing out loud many times. It perfectly balanced the heavy and intense moments with witty, sarcastic and fun back and forth banter. I absolutely fell in love with Emma and Aiden and never wanted their story to end! It was so emotionally captivating that it completely won me over. I felt like I was on a magical journey of two people falling in love, coming to terms with the past and discovering shocking revelations that refused to stay in the dark. All in all this was a breathtaking read as I quite literally am still taking deep breaths upon finishing this book! I know it will stay with me for a long time. Bravo! 4.5 stars! ~Ratula

I would like to thank Entangled Publishing for an advanced copy of this book for an honest review!

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## Lynsey (A Bookish Life) says

M.K. Schiller - a new-to-me author - delivers an almost perfect New Adult romance with **The Scars Between Us**.

Emma Cooper's mother has passed away and left her a rather cryptic set of instructions: find a Mr. Aiden Sheffield, and convince him to come to the small town of Linx, Texas, to scatter her ashes. Intriguing, no? Well, I thought so, and it only gets more intriguing as you read and begin to wonder just what exactly is the connection between Aiden and Emma's mother...

I really enjoyed this book. If it weren't for that pesky needing to sleep thing, I'd have read it in one sitting. It immediately draws you in with the question of who the heck is Aiden, and once you actually meet Aiden and see the instant chemistry between him and Emma, you just won't want to stop reading until you find out everything there is to know.

Physically, Aiden sounded absolutely divine, and the swoon factor in this book is pretty darn high. Also, the fact that he rescues dogs was an instant hit with me - *love* dogs. I wasn't really fussed about the cage fighter aspect, but since this book only covers a few days, that wasn't really a part of the story anyway.

Character-wise, at first glance Aiden appears to have the stereotypical brooding hot guy with a back-story thing going on, but as I read on, I found it was all done really well and didn't seem at all contrived. Once you actually know Aiden's story, you'll definitely accept he has every right to brood and be a little Negative Nancy now and then. His problems are not superficial, and I thought this part of the story was tragic but fascinating.

As for Emma, she was fun. It might seem as though her characterisation wasn't as detailed or as interesting as Aiden's, simply because she's generally just a nice girl who's lived a happy, normal life. We, as readers, live through her rose-tinted outlook and experience each new revelation in this book as yet another blow to the happy bubble she's previously existed in.

The romance I thought was pretty perfect. Although the attraction for both was instant, they don't hop to it so soon you're not emotionally prepared for it (hate it when authors do that). No, I was definitely invested in them both by the time the first kiss happened. I did lots of grinning and even laughed aloud a few times at the dialogue.

So cute.

I'm now going to explain what I meant when I said it was *almost* perfect, and because this is quite subjective, I thought I'd leave it until the end.

So, having read quite a few NAs at this point, I've come to expect them to be intensely emotional reads, and for there to be at least a section of the book, usually towards the end, that completely emotionally *destroys* me. That has me lying like a quivering pile of heartbroken goop on the floor, unable to process all the feelings. I'm sure if you're interested in reading this book, you've probably already read a few of them yourself. Those awesome, stomach-dropping "Oh my God" moments that just kill you. In fact, since the cover art keeps reminding me of Travis Maddox, we could easily use Beautiful Disaster as a perfect example of a

New Adult book that gut punches you repeatedly until you're crying out for mercy. Now, you see, I *like* that. Love it, in fact. And in this genre, I kinda expect it now, too. That's not to say this book didn't produce feels, it did. But just not to the heart-shredding degree I crave when I'm in the mood for this genre. Schiller instead opted to keep it more tense and action-y, which is her right to do so, of course. I guess what I'm saying is, I have no actual complaints about what was *in* this book, but for me, there was just that little something missing from it that kept it from being a 5 star read. Because I'm apparently a masochist.

Still, if you're an NA junkie, maybe a book that's not quite so emotionally draining could be a welcome relief every now and then!

Overall, **The Scars Between Us** was wonderful book, and I'll definitely be checking out this author's future reads.

4 Stars ★★★★★ A copy of this book was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

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### Chris C - A Midlife Wife says

I just fell in love with this book. Something just sparked with me and totally pulled me in.

While the subject is familiar, an ex-military guy with many pains and anger in his life, and a young girl who has no one in the world, this could have very well been a poor me, I am angry at the world book. But instead the author chose to bring these two together through respect, enjoyment, and protectiveness.

This book is full of growing heat, sexy passion, fun, loyalty, and a huge twist that you do not expect at all. I have never read this author before, but this will not be the last book by her that I read. The Scars Between Us is unique and one you will want to read over and over!

Aiden is awesome, the writing is awesome, and this book is going on my Best of list, because I just loved it that much!!

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### Kate (beautifulbookland) says

After making a promise to her dying mother, Emma finds herself driving to Texas to find Aiden Sheffield. Why? She has no idea. Who is Aiden? She doesn't know that either. But while Emma isn't sure what to expect of Aiden, what she definitely DIDN'T expect was a twenty something MMA fighting ex-marine who works with rescue dogs. While affectionate with the dogs, Aiden is downright hostile to Emma to begin with, keeping firmly fixed behind his walls.

A brooding bad boy?? A brooding bad boy who loves dogs???? Pick me up off the floor because I am SWOONING.

Apart from having a brooding bad boy (who loves dogs - did I mention the dogs?) this book has a sassy-ass female lead. GodDAMN she owns Aiden so many times I'm surprised she doesn't give him a complex. And she's strong, too. Despite Aiden pushing her away, she never lets him. Not because she's a Bella "I can't live

without him" Swan, but because she KNOWS how he feels about her. She knows he cares about her, and therefore she doesn't let him push her away.

This book is emotional, but it's also funny and heartwarming - and it has DOGS. And it is also one of my favourite reads of the year.

\*thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for giving me the chance to read this book\*

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### **Aestas Book Blog says**

[image error]

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### **Amber Hughes says**

**\*\*4-4.5 stars\*\***

When I started this book, I knew it wasn't going to be a light read judging by the synopsis, but it went even deeper than I thought it would. M.K. Schiller writes about hard, heartbreaking subjects in this one, but it's also a story of hope, forgiveness and trying to heal emotional wounds; seeing that there can be goodness and love, even with all the ugliness that one can go through.

I really felt for both of Emma and Aiden. Their journey to fulfilling Emma's mother's dying wishes was not going to be an easy road, but along the way they found strength in each other. Emma was such a strong character and she could see the goodness in Aiden and that the wrongs of the past didn't make him like his father. Aiden may have tried to put the walls up to protect Emma at all costs from her being exposed to the ugly truths of his childhood, but she would do anything to break through those walls.

One of things I also loved about this book were the dogs. Aiden rescues dogs that have been abused and gives them a loving, safe environment and the hope of adopting them out to their forever homes. I'm a big dog lover and this really touched my heart. They were also really good for Aiden in his adult life. He was wonderful with them and it showed a lot about his character.

Add in some "OMG" moments I didn't see coming, this book had me totally invested in it.

This is my first read of M.K. Schiller's and I will continue to read her books in the future. This wasn't an easy read by any means, but I am glad I read it.

Warning: This story does deal with the subject of abuse.

**\*\*I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review\*\***

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### **Alex ? says**

Thanks to my dear friend Leonor, who brought this book to my attention!  
She wrote an excellent review, well, as always, this woman rocks! ?

I liked the book, but I also struggled.

The story had an amazing human message and his devotion to the animals and the chapter they rescued dogs were amazing!

I respected hell out of him for not going the "usual" path of self-destructing, but for trying to make a difference.

This aspect was written brilliantly!

The love story: I adored their emotional connection, but wasn't fond of their physical one. He was experienced, she wasn't. Plus totally unnecessary scene with 2 OWs, who proposed to him. Also his short flashbacks/thoughts about his sexual past were not my favourite.

But, it wasn't horrible. Just my picky nature's calling \*lol\*

I liked the heroine. She of course had typical (for CR books) hormonal behavior, but it was still bearable. Compared to "standard" CR heroines this one was still decent.

I loved her sass. I even learnt some new lines/jokes ?.

So, if you rate this book on the romance level, you will definitely go above average.

But I dug deeper.

My new obsession is dark romance with revenge trope. I recently read and OTT enjoyed the book with anti-hero, who killed bad guys (abusers, rapists).

So, when I read about child abuse - and there is plenty of it in this story, incl. heart-breaking detailed scenes - I also want to read about punishment and justice.

**I want the abuser to suffer ON PAGE!!!**

**I want him tortured and destroyed.**

**I want the JUSTICE!**

It's only fair!!! They gave me pages and pages of child's pain and I want long chapters about abuser's suffering.

But nope, I didn't get it here.

And it was over-frustrating.

How?! How could a whole town ignore the abuse of a small child? How could no one see the real devil?  
**f#%&!!!**

WTH with the story about her mother leaving him as child?

Why didn't she do anything?

The reasons they gave me were not enough.

Drama toward the end was too one-sided, IMO.

As if there were no laws and rules in his hometown.

Why did they arrest him and why did they beat him?

WTH with the kidnapping and why did they force the hero to almost give up? As he said to his father he could punish him as he/father/villain wanted incl. rape, I asked myself, if it happened before...

They just left me with many unanswered questions and without *enough* justice.

It really ruined the story for me.

Damn!

Cute epilogue though.

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## Carlene Inspired says

ARC provided via Netgalley

M.K. Schillers latest release is about forgiveness, the kind that changes everything and shapes you into someone new. It's heartbreaking, but hopeful, a book that will put a smile on your face right after you wipe the tears away. Told from the perspective of main characters Emma and Aiden, *The Scars Between Us* is a complex story that features a well-developed story line and engaging dialogue. It does focus heavily on some serious subject matter, including emotional and physical abuse, and some readers might find that Schiller's descriptive writing could be a trigger. I found myself aching alongside the characters as their past hurts weighed heavily on them, as they pushed through a sad trip that took them into a life one never wanted to revisit and one never could have imagined.

*"His smile is sad. 'You've been carrying it for a long time, Emma. Let someone else carry it for a while.'"*

*The Scars Between Us* was such a fantastic read, it was character driven, and Emma and Aiden have some significant development as the novel progresses. I really enjoyed that the events of the book didn't carry the story, but rather how the character reacted to those events did. Oftentimes a book has just too much going on, but each time a bit of Aiden's past was revealed Schiller focused on how he overcame it, how he used it moving forward, and how Emma had to process it to truly understand how the events affected her life without her even knowing it. Emma's attitude about her mom's true past felt so accurate, though I have never been in a similar situation the writing gave me a sense of what it might have been like. Aiden, on the other hand, is so kind and giving, despite his prior struggles. His wisdom about life is based on a life no child should ever have, yet he makes it through and fights each day to be better. Emma and Aiden's connection is unusual, he's so much more than just the guy her mom asked her to take along when she scattered her ashes. The twists this novel takes, the ugly truths it reveals, only make the book that much more beautiful. As the two face the past they find comfort in each other and they find that trusting another with their story can open the door to love.

*"What I want is him. He knows it. I hate him for it."*

The events that unfold in the novel are hard to read, they're ugly and raw, things we don't want to imagine, and M.K. Schiller makes these overwhelming scenes come to life. I loved being in the moment, even though it broke my heart to read it. I did find, however, that some of the overly descriptive writing was also a negative. Some of the adult nature of the book was a detriment to the overall story. While the characters are adult, the story feels more coming-of-age than adult, contemporary romance and the smut scenes did feel like a bit too much. Overall though, it is a read that won't leave me anytime soon, I felt like it lived it too.

*"It's time to forget the broken roads of the past, and look toward the bright horizon line.  
I should know better.  
i learned a long time ago, you can't outrun darkness."*

*The Scars Between Us* is my first M.K. Schiller novel, but it won't be my last. It was well-developed and held my interest from start to finish. Contemporary romance fans will love this thought-provoking release about love, loss, and life.

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## Syndi says

Based on the goodreads review, I know that this is going to be dark romance novel. And yes it is dark, a bit dark. Especially about Aiden's past. I like the story. I like Aiden. The writing is easy to follow. And has steamy romance inside.

The thing I do not like is the heroine, Emma. She is a very 1 dimensional character. I read a similar romance with dark background like this. Falling away series by Penelope Douglas. But Penelope creates a super kicking ass heroine to match the hero. In Scars between us, Emma is fall so far away. I think her character destroy the story.

3 stars.

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## Hanne says

The Scars Between Us is my first read by M.K. Schiller, but it won't be my last. It was beautiful, emotional and unique. The writing was incredible and the pace was perfect. It was a slow burn romance. There were some twist and turns that shocked me. I didn't want to put this book down.

Emma just graduated college and she hasn't found a new home yet, so she decides to fulfill her mother's last wish. She first needs to find Aiden so he can accompany her on her trip. Aiden isn't like Emma imagined him to be. He isn't very friendly and he doesn't want to go with her, but Emma doesn't give up. Emma and Aiden spend some time together and get to know each other better. Aiden eventually decides to go with her. The trip changes Emma and Aiden's lives.

I adored Emma and Aiden! Both of them didn't always have an easy life, but it has made them stronger. I felt for them on multiple occasions. They are there for each other and help each other heal. I absolutely adored them together. They are a beautiful and strong couple.

Aiden left his home town and never wanted to return. He loves to save and help dogs. He's amazing with them. He's so patient, passionate and kind. He also loves to fight. He's talented and strong. Aiden is attracted to Emma from the start, but he isn't sure what to do with those feelings. It's been very long since he had some feelings for someone else. He's also hiding something big from her.

Emma is sweet, nice and loving. She's a little lost and not sure what to do next. She was very close to her mother and losing her devastated Emma. She hasn't many friends. I'm so happy that Emma has found Aiden, because he's an amazing friend and great lover. Emma will finally find a home and love again.

-- My honest review is based on a copy provided by the author. --

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