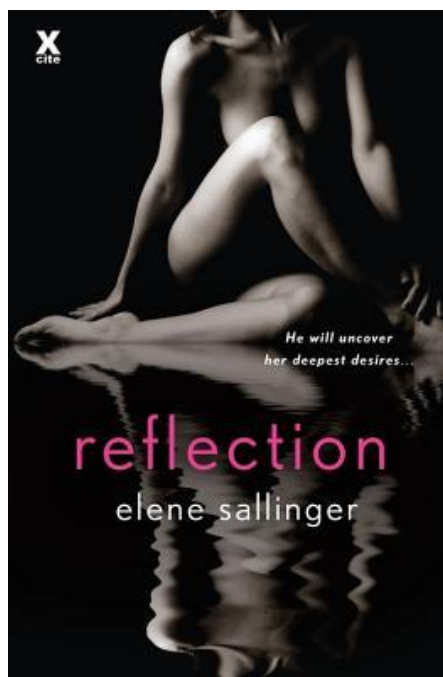




Reflection

Elene Sallinger

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Reflection

Elene Sallinger

Reflection Elene Sallinger

The much anticipated follow up to the award-winning 'Awakening' - a compelling novel of discovery and desire. Bridget Ross is a woman with a shameful secret. Despite a life full of success and close friends she denies herself her true desires in penance for the crimes she can't take back. Connor Reynolds is a man without a purpose. His own tragic past prevents him from putting down roots and pursuing his dreams. Their paths collide forcing them to face the ultimate question ... is their love worth fighting for?

Reflection Details

Date : Published May 6th 2014 by Sourcebooks Casablanca (first published July 29th 2013)

ISBN : 9781492601036

Author : Elene Sallinger

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Romance, Erotica, Bdsm, Contemporary Romance, Adult Fiction



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From Reader Review Reflection for online ebook

JG says

Reflection, the second book in Elene Sallinger's Chrysalis series, is the story of Bridget and Connor. Two people who have suffered from earlier trauma that has affected their lives, curtailing what they could have become. For Bridget, she suffered from guilt feelings about something in her past that has affected the way she sees her own sexuality and her inability to trust herself to let go. For Connor the ultimate expression of his art is to hide it because of the same guilty feelings brought about by events he couldn't have controlled. With a premise like that, the reader might expect something too heavy or even overly dramatic to occur but in the hands of the talented Ms. Sallinger the tale flows from lighthearted and sweet to deep and dark, romantic to heartbreakingly poignant. Although it deals with the subject of BDSM, the story doesn't delve too deeply on this. Instead it concentrates more on character development, resolution of the past and the realistic way two broken people can forge a relationship. The secondary characters gives added dimension to who Bridget and Connor are. The sub plot, was an added distraction that also serve as a plot device for Bridget to exorcise her own demons. Reflection is engaging, captivating, sensual and of course romantic, a very good read.

The ARC for this novel was provided by the publisher and NetGalley in return for an honest review

Proserpine says

I didn't read the first book from this series, but it's a stand-alone book!

Reflection by Elene Sallinger is an alluring story about two people that has deep need they can't complete or satisfy. After reading the blurb I didn't thought I would read that kind of story, honestly, I was surprised by the content, but it was a really good surprise!

It took me a few chapters before I got attracted to the main characters, especially Bridget who's stoic and cold. Everything around her is scheduled and prepared. She can't stand surprises, unplanned activities and she won't budge from places and people she knows. She's boring, but you'll find out why she opted for that kind of behaviour soon enough.

Connor isn't the typical male character that I read about in romance stories. I was amazed to find a man with a "normal" kind of life, job, and goals. The reader will learn about him and his dark past as the chapters goes by. It was refreshing not to read about an eccentric billionaire who has every female at his feet: as much for his money that for his sexual prowess!

When Bridget and Connor meet, it was intense but not for the reason you would thought. Bridget holds a cruel secret that might play on their future relationship. Connor is a good and intentioned man, but would he be able to understand Bridget's needs and fears!?!

The storyline was quite entertaining; Bridget's past is always in the way and haunting her. Connor is overwhelmed by Bridget's beauty and wants to be the one to shatter her fears. Sallinger didn't only build her story around Bridget and Connor's relation, but added a "bad guy" and some external situations that involve other great characters.

Without getting into any spoilers, Reflection is filled with sexy scenes, awkward conditions and even suspense but mostly this book is about trust between two people who were hurt in the past in very different ways. Elene Sallinger, the author, gives us a beautiful and well written story about love, comprehension, self-surrendering and being able to overcome his own fears no matter the circumstances.

Monica Cullip says

Reflection

Elene Sallinger

Professor Bridget Ross is jogging with her dog Daisy when Daisy becomes enthralled with another dog. Lotus, a Rhodesian Ridgeback is entangled with Daisy and this caused Bridget to fall helplessly to the ground as Daisy's leash is around her waist. She always needs the security of having her hands free. She won't let Connor touch her when he offers aid. She is actually rude to him " don't touch me." Her demons run deep. She sees him again and apologizes and offers to buy him coffee. Theirs is a slow moving relationship. He is a beautiful artist that is working as a janitor as he has his own demons that won't allow him to pursue his art as a career.

Together they try to form a relationship. She lets him closer than she has anyone else. He makes her feel things and allows her to try to come to grips with her past. He has dominant tendencies and urges and she has always had fantasies about being dominated, but she fights them at every turn and thinks it makes her a dirty girl. No body should like to be held down and spanked. She needs Connor in her life to show her that what she is feeling is okay and that she is normal.

Connor however, also needs her help so that he can put his own insecurities behind him and realize that the life that he is meant to live is also normal and totally allowable.

I thought that the chemistry between the two of them was sparking, I loved the fact that Connor was a bit younger than Bridget, it makes them seem so much more vulnerable. I also like that Bridget was dealing with issues at the school involving herself and her student Skylar. I didn't like how she kept it from Connor, but I appreciated that it was part of her character, it made her much deeper to me. I mean really because of her past trauma it only makes sense that she trust him in baby steps.

I thoroughly enjoyed all parts of this story from the sappy love story to the hot steamy love scenes. The plot line was well done and did not totally take place in the bedroom. I thought both the story line and the secondary characters were very well fleshed out. It was an easy read. I would rate it 5/5.

Melanie says

I have to say that I read this book without reading the first in the series (Awakening)but I am definitely going back to read that first one after reading this! Not that I felt this couldn't be read as a standalone, cause I did. I didn't really feel like I was missing out on anything in this story however, you really don't know what you're missing without having the experience right?

With that being said I have to say that I really liked the storyline for this read. We have Bridget who is a Southern gal who has all the strength and independence that a woman can have but uses it to mask the insecurities she also harbors due to her upbringing and some experiences she has had. Then there is Connor who loves to be immersed in art and has a talent for it but due to some tragic events in his past he keeps it more as a hobby for himself & chooses to work a low key job that will cover his bills.

Bridget and Connor literally bump into each other one day at a park and there is an immediate attraction. It's

not so easy to tell at first, since Bridget's reaction is a little more on the angry side, but we soon discover that it's just a protective shield that's been put in place and she isn't always able to prevent that from coming up. Connor can't stop thinking about her and Bridget, she feels bad for how she reacted & can't stop thinking about him. They soon run into one another again in their workplace, which happens to be the same place.

They begin seeing one another and through their relationship they both begin to learn a lot about themselves. Connor knows that Bridget is a woman that he wants to get to know better and he works to gain her trust so she will let her guard down. Bridget finds that she feels comfortable with Connor, and safe which is a big thing for her. Together they discover each other's guarded past and, in their own ways, try to help exorcise each other's demons. Connor opens Bridget's eyes to new views on the things in her past and while it takes her some time to accept and incorporate his views in with hers, she is able to let her guard down with him more than she has with anyone. In turn Bridget tries to help Connor see his potential and that it's something that shouldn't be hidden but he's a little more resistant to her views until he's put in a position where he has to face them if he wants them to ultimately be together.

There are some erotic scenes in the book but the story is really more about 2 people that find their true selves again while helping each other mend.

I was provided with an ARC by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Em says

This book was published by Xcite books as erotica and frankly that is blatantly false marketing. This is a romance that hints at kink but it is by no means erotic. As as romance it is only fair, the couple have commitment issues (of course) but how this author structured the plot and the reasons behind their issues is flimsy and in the case of the woman, potentially irresponsible. I thought the first book from this author was really good, and though there was only one kink scene I found the psychology underlying the characters kink fascinating and compelling. This one didn't have any of that and was a huge disappointment.

Bridget and Connor literally run into one another jogging in the park when both of their dogs bolt toward each other in search of a puppy pal. But when Connor physically gets too close to Bridget she thumps him in the chest and knocks him back. When later she spots him on campus (she is a chem professor, he is an artist who does maintenance work to pay the bills) she regrets her rudeness and offers to buy him coffee as an apology, and of course sparks of attraction fly that both characters fight to handle. They start a relationship that lurches and halts as is expected in a romance novel. But the impetus for the halting parts is where this novel breaks down.

Bridget's 'issue' is that she had experimented with kink with her first boyfriend, then after they broke up was raped by a friend who tied her up, drugged her and yet she 'remembers' being aroused during the rape and so she avoids sex entirely (WT_F!!). Connor is in knots because he blames himself for his parent's death and channels his emotional pain into inflicting physical pain during sex (not because he seeks to control the world around him?). He sets his kink aside to be with Bridget after she reveals that she was raped, but he misses the rough stuff and hates that she still seems emotionally distant (uh-huh?). I don't think I'll be reading any more from this author. I recognize that every author can have a book in their career that fails to connect, but this one doesn't even come close and I would not recommend it. And I'm doubtful I'll be reading more from this author.

Twin Sisters Rockin' Book Reviews says

Overall Rating: 3 Rockin' ★★★

We all have our hidden past, but sometimes it never stays in the past. Bridget has never been able to let go of a night that happened during her college years, night when she was drugged and raped by someone that she had trusted. Connor could not forget his parent's death in a car accident that left him as the only survivor and without anyone but two elderly grandparents.

"You don't know what it's like to be broken because every moment you're there trying to be intimate the shadow of you rapist is between you. Making you question your own judgment about, not just men, but yourself."

Bridget is being harassed by her boss at work, the Dean of her department. He is asking for sexual favors and holding her tenure ransom for her agreeing to his demands.

"What are you thinking about, Ross? Me, I hope." The low, elegant voice of her boss and Dean of the School of Sciences, Dale Whittier, scraped across her skin like nails. She instantly tensed as he continued, "We do have your tenure review at the end of the semester, after all."

Connor had cooked dinner for Bridget at his loft. He had to tell her that he was a janitor at the college and not an artist. His art was for his eyes only and she was one of the few people he had shared it with. Connor was afraid that she would no longer want to see him when she found out what he did for a living.

***"I'm not a professional photographer. I'm a janitor. At Pinewood, ironically." "Why did you lie to me?"
..."I am a photographer, Bridget. It is a passion and something that I do. That I don't make my living at it really shouldn't matter."***

Bridget agrees to a relationship with Connor and she shares her past with him. She still does not open herself completely to him, keeping a wall between them. Connor realizes that she is not willing to give him all of herself and he needs more than just sexual gratification.

"I understand your fear, Bridget. But if you don't trust yourself in this, why don't you consider trusting me until you do?"

Connor and Bridget finally understand that both have been hiding and that it is time to let the past go. Maybe there will be a future for both of them if they can.

Hero –Connor Reynolds: 3 stars

Heroine –Bridget Ross: 3 stars

Steam: 3.5 stars

Plot: 3 stars

Cliffhanger: No

Would I recommend this book: Yes! If you a book that shares how two tormented souls find resolution and each other this book is for you. There is also some kinky sex and true love that heals past wounds.

Would I read other books by this author: Yes! I would read other books by this author.

Received an ARC of this book from the Publisher in exchange for an honest review

Reflection
Elene Sallinger

Diana (Offbeat Vagabond) says

Original review here: <http://offbeatvagabond.blogspot.com/2014/05/reflection-blog-tour-book-review.html>

When I saw there was a sequel to the Awakening, I squealed. I loved the Awakening so much. I was so excited because this was Bridget's story. Bridget became Claire's best friend quickly in the first book and helped her so much. I loved her a lot. From the get go we see that Bridget has some demons that haunt her every waking moment it seems. While running and being distracted again by her demons, Bridget literally runs into a man named Connor and his dog, Lotus. Bridget is immediately taken aback because he startled her and she hates that she is attracted to him. She hasn't been attracted to a man in a long time. She hates the way she treated Connor and she wants to apologize to him. But things soon heat up between them, unfortunately though, the baggage between them may be too much for both of them.

I loved this book. I knew Bridget would be a favorite and she was. I loved her strong personality in the first book. She never seemed to shy away from much and always spoke her mind. But we learn that there is plenty she is hiding. Bridget has a dark past that won't let go and ruins all her relationships. She doesn't feel like the strong woman she lets people believe she is. Connor can see that though. He knows she is amazing and it is time for her to notice that too. I loved Connor. He was such a great guy who had a lot of patience where Bridget was concerned. He knew things weren't going to be easy though. Bridget, however, doesn't know whether to let he guard down yet with Connor. She hopes he is not like the other guys she has been with. But she doesn't know yet.

I loved the storytelling in this book and the character development. When I was done, I felt like I made new friends. The characters were so well fleshed out. I was rooting for Bridget to break down her walls because her and Connor were perfect for each other. I loved the other story with one of Bridget's students, Skylar. Oh, the hell this girl had to deal with. She had to deal with quite the villain in this book. The dean, Dale, of the college where Skylar is a student and Bridget teaches, is pretty much run by Dale. He is filthy rich and gets away with anything since he is so "generous" to the school. It is rumored he has had a few inappropriate relationships with the students, but no one says or does anything. Skylar, however, is more than frightened because of her situation with him and Bridget finds that Dale plans to put her in a similar situation as well. Dale is a master manipulator and holds things over their heads because he knows he can pull the strings to get it done. They have to think fast on how they can take him down without ruining their careers and without letting Connor know. I wanted to yell at the top of my lungs when she kept that from Connor, but again, this was Bridget. We know Connor is perfect, but she just couldn't admit it yet. She was still behind that wall.

I knew this was going to be one smoldering book given how insanely sexy the first one was. This was just as sexy. Connor was mouthwatering and charming as hell. I could clone him. I was rooting for him to get Bridget to break down her walls. I understand her situation, but he was right in a lot of his estimations I think. She hid so much of herself because of her past experience, she pushes everyone aside. It was amazing

given that Connor is younger than Bridget, but there were things he understood better than her. She didn't just want him, she needed him. He laid things on the line for her when no one else had. That is definitely something that she needed to help her become the woman she was meant to be. I loved this book so much. It goes from being sexy, cute, funny, scary, terrifying, sad, exhilarating, and back to sexy again. It really takes you through the roller coaster, but you love it all the more in the end. I loved seeing Bridget and Connor go through this journey. I am excited to see who is next. I hope we get something with Bridget's friends, Victor. I really liked him and he seems to have a story to tell. I loved all of her friends and the bond she created with Skylar who I hope we see more of. That girl deserves a happy ending. Highly recommended if you want a sexy read that packs an emotional punch.

Margreet Asselbergs says

<http://ripeforreader.blogspot.com/201...>

My rating: 4 of 5 ??

Bridget Ross appears to have her life together. Professor at a small college, good friends, nice dog and plenty of social interaction. But underneath that polished and slightly reserved exterior she hides a traumatic history that has left such an impact, it has changed the way she sees the world and more importantly, how she sees herself.

Connor Reynolds has perfect balance in his life. Or so he tells himself. He works to take care of his immediate needs, he uses his camera as a creative outlet and he paints to feed his soul. On top of that he knows exactly who he is. But when an innocent tangle of dogs in the park brings him to his knees in front of a beautiful woman, he feels his world tilting.

Charmed, but also a little apprehensive, Bridget tries to resist the persistent attentions of the much younger Connor, but with his gentle persuasion he manages to convince her to take a chance on him. But will Connor be able to release the fire Bridget is keeping so tightly contained inside?

Another fabulous book in the Chrysalis Series by Elene Sallinger!! A standalone novel with characters from the first book making their appearance, but this is a story all in itself.

I found REFLECTION to have a bit less of an edge than AWAKING, in that the plot was more predictable, there was less darkness in the build-up, less tension. The overall result was a very emotional journey for both main characters, actually. Although Connor's need for "reflection" did not become obvious - to him at least - until the final chapters of the book.

Bridget has reprogrammed her sensual development after a traumatic experience gave her a negative association, resulting in rather stunted and unfulfilling emotional and sexual relationships. Not to mention some massive trust issues she has still not been able to work through. And by my calculations, this event was more than half her life-time ago. That counts for a lot of years of damaging inner dialogue, without any apparent proper counseling to mitigate the effects. No wonder this woman cannot open herself up after simply unloading her past as if that is a magic healing.

Connor faces a similar emotional damaging pattern, except that for him it doesn't affect something inside him, but something that he can control - or thinks he can control - externally, painting. Of course the control

is something Connor craves, something he would like to explore with Bridget. The dom in him is torn between knowing what she needs and honoring what she wants. He is so focused on her, that he loses sight of his own responsibilities and shortcomings.

An ironic parallel, not seen by either of the main characters, but needed to be put in focus by a third party. I guess Bridget did see at some point, but Connor needed to be told, which was a bit of a disappointment in all honesty.

I enjoyed this couple together, I liked Connor's irreverent nature and the way Bridget could let go when she wanted to. The chemistry was there, the heat was there, but I feel we never got to the point where we see them truly reach all their potential until the very last. I would've enjoyed more exploration.

Elene Sallinger's writing is excellent, her style is flowing and sharp. Not necessarily 'easy reading' but not too complex either, simply writing with some substance. A good author to choose if you are looking for some literary bite on your erotica!

?A careful and sensual exposure..?

****Copy provided in return for an honest review.****

Dana says

Net Galley Review

Bridget Ross is afraid of getting close to another man. Her first sexual encounter was kinky and she enjoyed it immensely, despite her feeling that it was wrong to enjoy pain while also enduring pleasure. A few years later, Bridget was raped, and since then, has felt that it was punishment for enjoying erotic sex. Since then, she has held fast to her belief and has not let another man into her heart.

Connor Reynolds is walking his dog when his dog takes off. Literally knocking over Bridget, Connor is instantly smitten. Bridget is less so, and feels that she is being attacked and fights Connor off. When she runs into Connor at her favorite coffee shop days later, she reluctantly agrees to join him. Thus begins a very hot relationship between the two.

All relationships have problems and this one is no different. Bridget is terrified to let herself go and lose control. Connor has secrets in his past that he too is ashamed of, but he wants this relationship to work, and he goes all out and confesses everything. The question remains though, can a relationship work with only one member being honest?

What I liked about this novel, which is the second in a series, is that the author delves deeply into her characters, leaving nothing about their pasts to the imagination. Since this is part of a series, I enjoyed catching up with the characters from the first book to see where they were now. What I didn't like, was that this is billed as an erotic romance, but the eroticism was incredibly lukewarm. The eroticism was more hinted at than actually shown or written about.

While I disagree with the labeling, I did enjoy this book, and I look forward to the third book in this series.

Lorie says

If you haven't read Elene Sallinger yet, she's an author worth discovering!

In a sea of stories of tragic pasts and broken souls, *Reflection* is a stand out. It's different, refreshing, and it

will have you tied to your Kindle. I devoured this in no time at all. I loved Elene Sallinger's *Awakening*, and my feelings about *Reflection* are no different.

Reflection takes place in the same Vermont town as *Awakening*. Since it's the second in the series, we do get to see some of the characters from *Awakening*. Bridget and Conner run into one another (literally) by chance. This chance meeting unknowingly sets them off on a path to love and healing. Both have deep scars to tend with and will struggle to let go of their demons, but the pull of the past may be bigger than they expected. They will have to decide if what they have found in each other is worth fighting for.

"She's letting the past define and cage her. I know in my heart that we could be amazing together, but she's letting one event shape her whole life."

Ms. Sallinger's writing style is fresh, smooth, and insightful. *Reflection* is full of passion, emotion, and healing. The characters are real and endearing. You can't help but become invested in these two. The story deals with tragic pasts yet is light and enjoyable with a feeling of new and different. What makes it different and new? Two broken people meet and start a relationship (nothing new here), but their backstory, who they are, and how they help one another isn't what you're used to seeing. One isn't a dominating billionaire and the other a shy and naïve woman – no they are real people, with real jobs, and real lives. They actually talk about their relationship and issues – YES they actually have sincere and meaningful discussions. Not everything is solved with sex well some of it is (and when it is, it's very well done) but not all.

What I love most about this book is that the focus is on building the relationship and not just the physical aspect. The characters are well thought out, likeable, and easy to identify with since they are everyday people. The story was never rushed, even at the end.

If you're looking for a great story that's more than a surface level read with great characters that's original, then pick this one up!

Ilana says

Title: *Reflection*

Author: Elene Sallinger

Publisher/Year: Soucebooks Inc. 5/6/14

Length: 288 Pages

Series: Chrysalis Series #2

Overview

The moment Bridget Ross and Connor Reynolds run into each other on the street—quite literally while out on a run—tempers flare. But when the two get together for an apology coffee date, it's clear that the coffee isn't the only thing steaming.

Connor is a charming artist without purpose. His own tragic past prevents him from putting down roots or committing to anything. Bridget is feisty but guarded. She's aching to fill a void in her life but is wracked with guilt over her past and denies herself true pleasure. Can this gorgeous man tempt Bridget to finally succumb to her desires?

My Thoughts

in this 2nd installment we get to know more about Bridget and understand what makes her tick. I think that we came to really enjoy her banter with Claire in the first book of the series so i was really happy to see what we were getting into here. What i think that no one realized from book 1 is how damaged Bridget was, and although it was years and years ago, it's something that she's never processed and gotten past and it still really holds her back in just about everything in her life.

What we have is a story that takes us on a journey of Bridget realizing that what she wants isn't necessarily bad – but that doesn't mean that she'll ever allow it to happen, and as a result, it means that she may never get anywhere with a relationship that seems to be good.

We also get the subplot of what's going on at Bridget's job between her and her dean, and between her dean and various others. I hate to say it, but without the sub-plot, i wouldn't have been as invested as i was, and while i really wanted to like this story more than i did, i felt it was mediocre.

i'll tell you where my frustration stems from. We begin this story seeing into what darkness lies both within Bridget and Connor, but we don't really get too deep there. There are glimpses sure – we understand a bit more about why Connor has come to Vermont and how he's an artist but won't actually be one because of his parent's death, but that's really just as far as we get into it with him. Same goes for Bridget – we learn about her past, and while we see what stigma it's placed on her life, we don't really process it together in the story.

I wanted to really enjoy this book – i feel like i gave it a fighting chance, and it was mediocre at best. I always feel bad when i don't enjoy a book since i know that authors take it personally, but i feel like i owe it to myself to admit when i didn't love a book. oh well, maybe the series will get better. i feel like we'll either get to know Victor or Skyler next and that may be really good. i'd love the back story on Victor to be completely honest. (part of me wishes that he and Bridget got together – just sayin.....)

Kate Dirty Girls' Good Books says

Reflection (Chrysalis Series #2) by Elene Sallinger
B, inferno, moderate kink, BDSM, contemp, 240 pages

Reflection is the compelling story of Bridget and Connor. Bridget is a professor and is still dealing with a rape that happened 20 years ago. She hasn't let herself invest in a relationship since then. Connor is a janitor at the university where Bridget works and is a hobby photographer and artist. But when Connor and Bridget run into each other, Bridget finds herself wanting more in her relationship with Connor than she's ever dared to want before.

I could not stop turning pages while reading this book. The emotional pain that both Connor and Bridget have to travel through to reach their happily ever after is gripping while their budding relationship is tender and sweet and hot and steamy. A perfect combination. There's even a secondary plot that adds a bit of suspense to the story. I would highly recommend this book (as well as the first book in the series, Awakening) to anyone who enjoys an emotional journey on the way to happily ever after and doesn't mind some mild-moderate BDSM thrown into the mix. Elene Sallinger has me eagerly awaiting the next book in this series.

Chu says

Review Originally Posted at: Book Freak

Rating: 4.5 Stars

Reflection is one of the most beautiful and well-written erotic romance stories I have ever read. Elene Sallinger had mastered her craft, no doubt readers would be hooked with her words, characters and plot.

Reflection is the story of Bridget Ross and Connor Reynolds. They were two different people, with two very different backgrounds but with almost the same amount of baggage from the past. Fate lead then into each other on the street – and what started out as an apology coffee date, turned out to be something more as the attraction between two characters was just too big to ignore.

All the while I thought Connor was a talented-struggling artist. He is an artist – he loves to paint and takes fantastic pictures but he keeps it to himself. His tragic past prevents him from staying in one place and committing to just about anything. His art, despite the reprieve it brings him, would still remind him of his pain. Bridget on the other hand have been to hell and back and is still suffering from the consequences of what she thought was her fault. Guilt has been eating her alive, and the only way to assuage it was to deny herself one thing she was used to be fond of – pleasure. It's up to Connor to make her change her mind...

But this girl had built solid, tall walls around her heart. She lost control then, and she wanted to have it now. She may have feelings for him, she may like him – but is it enough to trust him? To let him in her life? Connor tried, he struggled. He wanted things he knew she'd like but didn't trust him enough to give. She was keeping something from him as well, something important. It was a question of trust- and with that, Connor had no other options but to let her go. She was not meeting him half-way, and it was killing him, and destroying any possibilities of them having a future together. Will she be willing to compromise? Or will she let her past dictate her future?

Will two broken people be finally having their happy ending?

Reflection is a story of love and how important the role trust plays in a relationship. Without TRUST, no relationship would prosper. This is also a story of strength and survival of two women who were victims, but chose to fight for their rights. Sellinger had threaded with care in some controversial cases she presented – some readers may frown at it, but it is happening, and if we continue to play blind, and shut up – issues like this would never ceased to exist. A beautifully-written love story that will not just melt your panties, but your hearts as well.

🌟Complimentary Copy was given in exchange for an honest review.🌟

More of my reviews at <http://reviewsofabookmaniac.blogspot.com>

Kathy says

3.5 stars.

Reflection, the second novel in **Elene Sallinger's** *Chrysalis* series, is an erotic romance with light BDSM elements. In this outing, Bridget Ross and Connor Reynolds' burgeoning relationship is threatened by the

unresolved issues from their respective pasts.

Bridget is a bright, well-educated college professor in her mid to late thirties and her guilt and shame over her sexual desires have become tangled up with a traumatic event that happened while she was a college student. Although she has dated over the years, her inability to open up about her past eventually leads to the end of her relationships. Bridget is stunned by her unexpected desire for Connor, and with a lot of encouragement from her close friends Claire and Mona, she tentatively and cautiously agrees to date him.

Connor is a bit of a loner who is happiest when he is viewing the world through his camera lens. He is a gifted photographer and painter but he refuses to pursue either professionally. While Connor's demons are less serious than Bridget's, they do hold him back from taking risks and living his life to the fullest.

Connor and Bridget's relationship is tenuous and while Bridget finally reveals her secrets, she remains unable to fully give in to her sexual desires. Connor is a bit of a contradiction as he continues to try to push Bridget's sexual boundaries despite his assertion that he is okay with a "vanilla" sex life. Their problems extend beyond the bedroom as Bridget stubbornly refuses to confide in him about a troubling situation at work. While Connor is forthcoming about his past, he is not completely honest about how deeply his losses affect him.

While I enjoyed the overall story, I found it difficult to believe that a smart woman like Bridget would not be more proactive in seeking out counseling for something that clearly defined so much of her life. I was equally frustrated by how she tiptoed around the growing problem with her repulsive boss. While she gave some very sensible advice to one of her students, the plan Bridget devised to help the young woman escape her horrible situation was extremely foolhardy and put her student in needless danger.

Reflection is the perfect novel for anyone who is new to erotic romance. The sex scenes are sensual with just the tiniest hint of a BDSM element. They are tastefully written and many of them fade to black leaving it up to the reader's imagination to fill in the blanks. However, if you are a long time reader of the genre, this might be a little bit of a letdown since the steam factor falls on the low end of the erotic spectrum.

All in all, *Reflection* is an engaging romance with sympathetic, likable protagonists. Bridget and Connor's issues are realistic and it is very satisfying watching them overcome their troubled pasts. With tantalizing and intriguing glimpses of secondary characters Mona and Victor, **Elene Sallinger** leaves readers eager for the next installment of this sexy series.

Although *Reflection* is the second novel in the *Chrysalis* series, it can be read as a standalone story.

Sandy says

****Received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review****

This is the second of a series after "Awakening". It's an HEA with lots of drama, dark tragic secrets & light BDSM along the way. Whether or not you enjoy it really depends on personal preference & expectations. Bridget Ross is a southern girl now living in Vermont. She's a chemistry prof who loves her job & the only problem she has professionally is dealing with her creepy boss. Her personal life is another story. She was raped 20 years ago & continues to suffer from panic attacks. Relationships have been few & far between as sooner or later, her issues take their toll.

Connor Reynolds has his own past to deal with. Working as a janitor at the university pays the bills but his real passion is art. Photography, digital, painting...they all capture how he sees the world. He's a loner who

prefers to observe from the sidelines & leave the risk taking to others. Then he runs into Bridget.

For me, this was a book in three parts. Getting through the first one was a bit of a slog. It's not that it's badly written, just very formulaic. You have the accidental meeting, OTT reactions & insta-lust. There is a lot of innuendo, ogling & clenching body parts. I found Bridget's character a bit difficult to believe as what we're told about her doesn't jive with her actions. Despite long passages about her aversion to being touched & intimacy issues, she immediately begins to fantasize about Connor & what they could get up to. I couldn't help thinking that someone still so traumatized after 20 years as to exhibit PTSD-like symptoms probably wouldn't suddenly become a lust crazed woman.

But I kept reading & the middle part picked up. The main characters began to sound more like real people, having conversations you'd expect if they're going to attempt a relationship & move past their individual stumbling blocks. We spend more time with peripheral characters such as those from the first book & there are also several side stories that are developed.

But again, I was frustrated with the contradictions in Bridget's character. When one of her students comes to her with a serious situation, not dissimilar to her own, her first reaction is to tell the girl to talk to someone & get help. Something she has never done herself. She's a mature, intelligent & well educated 38 year old woman with an issue that continues to define her life & it's never dawned on her to seek counselling?

The final third deals with high drama between Bridget & Connor and the resolution of the student's problem before everything is neatly tied up. The people who deserve happiness find it & one who doesn't gets his just desserts.

It all comes down to your expectations. I confess I liked the first book more & that was due to the characters. Their actions & words were consistent with their situations making them more believable. There's nothing new or different here but that might not be a bad thing. It's an easy read that won't tax the old grey matter & could be just what you're looking for at the end of a long day in reality.
