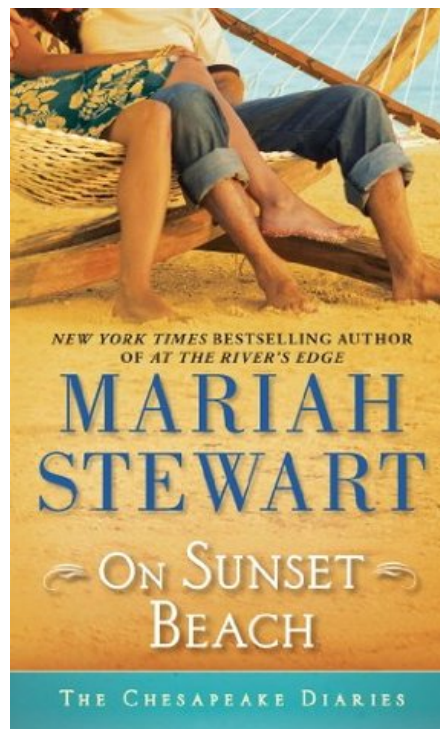




On Sunset Beach: The Chesapeake Diaries

Mariah Stewart

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On Sunset Beach: The Chesapeake Diaries Mariah Stewart

From *New York Times* bestselling author Mariah Stewart comes a captivating and heartwarming new novel in her beloved Chesapeake Diaries contemporary romance series—perfect for fans of Barbara Freethy, Robyn Carr, and Susan Mallery.

Carly Summit's name couldn't be more fitting, since in life she always lands on top. She grew up wealthy and privileged in a tony Connecticut town, opened her own gallery in New York City, and is about to make art world history displaying previously unknown works by a prominent twentieth-century painter. No wonder she possesses a can-do attitude that can't be soured. Ford Sinclair is another story. A military career in war-torn Africa, where he witnessed unspeakable violence and suffering, has left him haunted and deeply cynical. Now he's looking for a way to forget and a place to belong. He hopes to find both back home in St. Dennis.

When Carly is forced to move the premiere of her new exhibition from Manhattan to St. Dennis, and Ford agrees to take charge of the town's only newspaper, the two cross paths. But it's hardly the start of a beautiful friendship. While Ford can't ignore her charms, Carly's unflappable good cheer only confounds him. Yet beneath Ford's stormy brooding, Carly sees a man worth caring about—even if her warmest ways can't thaw his frozen heart.

From the Paperback edition.

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From Reader Review On Sunset Beach: The Chesapeake Diaries for online ebook

Paperback Book Club says

Ok, so, this book. After reading too much bad erotica, I decided I'd go the other direction and try to soothe my overloaded senses with some wholesome, small town, cozy romance. And that is exactly what Mariah Stewart delivered. Here's the thing, I've never read a Mariah Stewart novel, but I know she writes a lot of them and that they're pretty popular. I guess what I hadn't been prepared for was how much out of my wheelhouse this book would be.

The basic story is that Ford comes back from working for the military in Africa. He's seen the woman he was in love with shot to death, and returns to his family's inn on St. Dennis on the Chesapeake Bay (I've looked it up, I don't think this place actually exists, but I'd love to know for sure). Carly Summit is a privileged international art gallery owner and investor, because those are super common these days, who is in St. Dennis to show the paintings of a long-deceased St. Dennis artist. They meet at a party, and seem to like each other, then Ford conveniently has to interview her for his family-run newspaper, and they form a relationship. It all unfolds kind of slowly and without any real sort of honest emotional connection.

I think this kind of romance novel is definitely for an older age group, even though the characters are in my age group – late 20's/early 30's. In general, even though I got a warm and welcoming feel from the supporting characters, and the descriptions of the St. Dennis community at large, it didn't stop me from being just a little bored. The book just lacked sparkle, and a sense of urgency from the characters that would lend some dimension to their love story.

I also didn't think the characters were all that developed and their whole personalities seemed to hinge on one trait, making them somewhat generic and uninteresting. The dialogue was clunky, and oftentimes much of what was said by a character was said again in the next sentence, only in a different way, and not much of it sounded how people would actually talk in the first place. There was also a kind of embarrassing misuse of slang wherein the author used the already anachronistic, "Oh, snap," when one of the characters can't recall the location of her keys. Sorry, folks, but that's not how "oh, snap" works.

I don't mean to be a bummer about this book because I think it has a good heart, and as I've said, the author writes and sells a lot of books, so maybe I'm way out in left field. The book was a gentle balm for an overactive mind, and kind of took me to a place where people sit on their porch all day and drink lemonade, but I couldn't help but get a little bored. Maybe that's my own fault though, maybe I now expect every couple to engage in snappy banter and sexually heightened interludes, and need to make more room for the ordinary, but then again, isn't that the reason I read romance novels in the first place?

Jana says

I really enjoyed this book and can't wait to see what Mariah has in store for Dan! :)

Ada Iaboni says

This one had a bit more drama, but still a sweet story of, once again, finding one's self and what one is meant to do... and again, true love.
The only complaint for me was that the main character's revelation was so subtle that the reader almost misses it.

Karen Debolt says

This is the story of Ford and Carly. Good story line and the characters were developed well. Very believable story. Enjoyed the book and would recommend to anyone. Looking forward to reading the next book.

Carol Rankin says

On Sunset Beach

Great surprises and action. Love conquers all. Surprises galore especially when the main characters find out that they can't be apart!

Emsy Van Wyck says

Small town romance at its BEST! The PERFECT summer read!!!
Will an urbanite gallerist and a cynical soldier find love in Mariah Stewart's On Sunset Beach?

Combine the story of an art historian / gallerist who's discovered a priceless cache of heretofore unknown paintings by an early-20th-century female artist, with the return of a disillusioned soldier, a hometown boy who's served for too many years it seems as a support for UN Peacekeepers in a Central African country and you will have a bit of magic to read. Yes, you guessed right, I'm describing On Sunset Beach, the newest book in Mariah Stewart's The Chesapeake Diaries series and one that I couldn't wait to read.

I so enjoyed Stewart's depiction of Carly Summit. It was all spot on and made me ever so wistful about not "using" my advanced degree in art history . . . but all the more appreciative of the realistic and sometimes hilarious descriptions of Carly's life as a very well regarded gallerist, her research, and her curatorial work.

Another reason I adored the character of Carly was that she's so unabashedly positive. She happily creates the finest lemonade from a serving of life's lemons that might have other people tearing out their hair. In all probability, it is this positive energy that is the major draw for Ford's troubled soul. A good life lesson for all of us to send out positive vibes, rather than dwelling in negativity - and some magic may occur. Yes, a bit of the "Law of Attraction" right here on the Chesapeake.

But what is urbanite Carly doing in St. Dennis to begin with? In book seven, At the River's Edge, Carly and her BFF Ellie Ryder discovered a cache of Caroline Ellis' paintings, that will be the focal point of the exhibition, in Ellie's attic. Yes, Ellie is the great-great-granddaughter of Ellis. So many threads to weave the tapestry of The Chesapeake Diaries.

So there is a definite St. Dennis connection for Carolina Ellis. The fates (and some St. Dennis natives spurred on by Grace) decided that instead of the planned debut of exhibition Ellis' work at Carly's Manhattan gallery

that this exhibition of a St. Dennis native should open the new Art Center to be located at the former Enright estate. (If you're a series regular you'll remember how and why the estate was given to the town.)

So, that was first lemon handed to Carly - moving a groundbreaking and reputation enhancing exhibition from one of the art world's capital cities to a small town on the Chesapeake. How does she deal? She grumbles for a moment than figures out a way to make it all work, from overseeing where on the estate the exhibition will be held to getting the art world's decision makers to attend. It's fascinating how she oversees how the space will be designed and making it art friendly (climate control, security, etc). Luckily Ellie's fiancé Cameron has a construction company that will handle the remodel - and perhaps a certain ex-soldier might have a security expert friend to help too.

Speaking of ... Grace Sinclair's son Ford returned after years away in a very needed, but soul-destroying, off-the-books military service in Central Africa. He won't speak to anyone about his experience there, and really tries to avoid discussing his time away from St. Dennis, but does seem to find some peace in solo kayak trips on the Chesapeake. Ford eventually takes over some of Grace's newspaper duties after an unexpected accident. His first assignment? To interview and profile Carly.

Grace, the series' namesake diarist, is in her seventies and is the owner and publisher of the local newspaper, who lives at the families' five star Inn, and once in a while may use a bit of matchmaking magic to ensure friends and family pair off successfully. Her intuitive sense definitely went on the alert for a pairing of Carly (whom she just met) and Ford (who she senses is darkly troubled), but very little of her magic turns out to be needed. Really, they sparked from the moment they encounter one another in the Inn's lobby in front of one of Carolina Ellis' paintings.

On Sunset Beach is the perfect book to read and savor on a mid-summer day. There's just enough unresolved conflict surrounding Ford and Carly's budding relationship to keep a reader crossing fingers till the last page is turned. Many of the well-beloved characters from the previous books have return engagements and once again Scoop is a favorite destination as is the new restaurant, Blossoms.

That's one of the things I love about this series - the very magical way Stewart weaves together all these characters and story lines and creates a town that I know if I drive about three hours south I'll discover not the Chesapeake. Yes, she has that ability to imbue her stories with such a realism that I'm sure there are readers looking for St. Dennis all the time. Isn't that what every author seeks to accomplish? Just a perfect series! If you haven't read the seven other books, Stewart does provide enough backstory in On Sunset Beach for this to be a very interesting standalone title. But I do think you'll be swept up by a bit of Grace's magic and will put The Chesapeake Diaries on your must-read shelf. It's just one of the most engaging small-town romances around.

Ann Lorz says

Like all the other prior books in the series this one is well written, with wonderful characters. You can't help falling for both Ford and Carly. They are both very nice, likable people. You can't help but want them to be happy. Ford has a few past issues he needs to work out but with Carly's help his feet hit solid ground. You can't help but cheer these two on. A wonderful summer read!

Janeiowa says

This novel, the latest in the Chesapeake Diaries series, continues to revolve around the children of Grace Sinclair and the eastern shore town of St. Dennis.

The characters of Ford, Grace's youngest child, and the female main character Carly Summit, a wealthy and successful art gallery owner, are both believable and likeable. Neither is perfect, of course, and they should not be to be, for me, realistic.

The storyline progressed a bit slowly at times, but that was ok. All of this books in this series have a bit of "woo-woo"/a bit of maybe there are ghosts and communicating with those who have died. I am NOT a fan of the paranormal, but its presence here is confined to Grace and her beliefs which makes it tolerable and not annoying.

It seems as if the next book may be about Dan, a widower, the Inn manager, and Grace's oldest child. I look forward to it

Katy says

Another episode set in the Chesapeake Bay area town of "St. James." Ford returns home to recover from his time serving in Africa and comes to the realization his aging mother is doing just that===aging. He takes over her job of running the local paper temporarily (famous last words!) and falls in love with an art gallery owner who is setting up an event displaying of the works of one of the Bay's unsung artists.

BJ says

Another excellent entry in the Chesapeake Diaries series by Mariah Stewart. I love the small town on the Eastern Shore and its inhabitants. This series has a lot of charm and romance.

Jessica says

Mariah does it again with this charming, small town romance. This story balances the pain of shocking discovery with the pleasure of self discovery that only a good old fashioned soul shattering revelation can kick start. Though the rhythm of the story and pattern of events is synonymous with the rest of the series, Jamie's internal conflicts are easily familiar and she handles the bumps in her life journey with poise. With one heck of a supporting cast, not that Grace Sinclair takes a second seat to any lead character (wink, wink), this tale of love and rediscovery is an easy read that'll barely leave your hands until you're on the last page.

Amy Jacobson says

I enjoy this series that takes place on the Chesapeake. The characters have interesting lives and the author entwines a historical background for their stories. A light read; with a feel good story.

Erin says

Carly Summit grew up wealthy in Connecticut. She owns several art galleries and is making a name for herself, bringing fresh new faces to the art world. She is aiming for her world debut with her next project, a twentieth-century painter, who just happens to be a relative of her friend. Carly's positive attitude is the complete opposite of Ford Sinclair's. Ford is just returning home from his career in the military. While he was gone, he witnessed horrible, unspeakable acts. Ford keeps his emotions to himself, and likes to stay away from people, until he meets Carly. Though the two are complete opposites in their attitude, they both are very compassionate people. In spending time together, a bond is created, and a fire ignited, but when Ford is called back to duty, will this be the end of their relationship?

This book was a very sweet story. I loved the details in the story. It made me wish I were at the beach. I felt so bad for Ford. He has been through so much in his life already, and he seems to just continue to be dealt a bad hand, until his return home to St. Dennis. You can see that even though he tries to avoid people, his attraction to Carly is undeniable, and he can't stay away. I loved how Carly is understanding of Ford, and allows him time to open up to her.

I received a copy of this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Marcy says

Carly Summit's name couldn't be more fitting, since in life she always lands on top. She grew up wealthy and privileged in a tony Connecticut town, opened her own gallery in New York City, and is about to make art world history displaying previously unknown works by a prominent twentieth-century painter. No wonder she possesses a can-do attitude that can't be soured. Ford Sinclair is another story. A military career in war-torn Africa, where he witnessed unspeakable violence and suffering, has left him haunted and deeply cynical. Now he's looking for a way to forget and a place to belong. He hopes to find both back home in St. Dennis.

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Cate Martin says

Perhaps I wasn't in the mood to read a descriptive book. I can see how people would love this book but I did a quick speed read to the end. I love hotted up romances so this book wasn't so much for me
