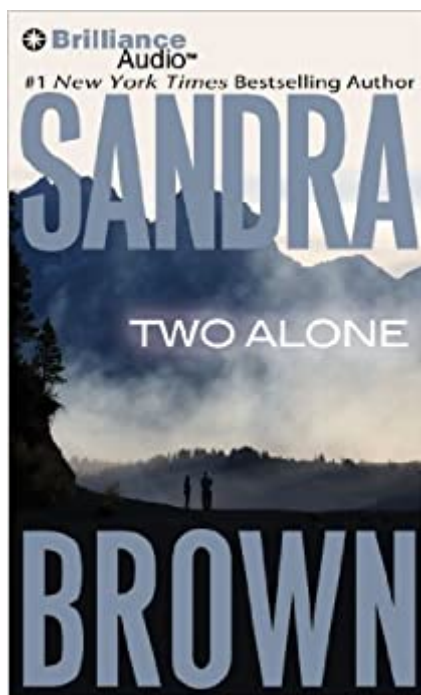


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Two Alone



Synopsis

Beautiful and self-confident businesswoman Rusty Carlson was hurt, terrified and alone with a man she feared. But one thing was certain – she would surely die without his help. Vietnam vet Cooper Landry had a deep-rooted grudge against beautiful women like Rusty. Experience had taught him they were takers. But he’d survived far worse dangers, and this time he’d be damned if he’d let her risk his chance for survival. But there were predators in the dense woods – both animals and human – and the odds were against them. They could handle that. What Rusty and Cooper weren’t prepared for was the discovery that they desired more than just survival.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Abridged edition (October 23, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1469249278

ISBN-13: 978-1469249278

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 107 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #137,135 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Books on CD >

Authors, A-Z > (B) > Brown, Sandra #18 in Books > Books on CD > Romance #86 in Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

Customer Reviews

Sandra Brown is the author of numerous New York Times bestsellers - including most recently *Smash Cut*, *Smoke Screen*, *Play Dirty*, *Ricochet*, *Chill Factor*, *White Hot*, *Hello, Darkness*, *The Crush*, and *Envy*. She is the recipient of the 2008 Thriller Master Award from International Thriller Writers, Inc. She and her husband live in Arlington, Texas.

They were all dead. All except her. She was sure of that. She didn't know how long it had been since the impact or how long she'd remained bent over with her head in her lap. It could have been seconds, minutes, light-years. Time could stand still. Endlessly, it seemed, torn metal had shifted before settling with a groan. The dismembered trees' innocent victims of the crash had ceased to quiver. Hardly a leaf was stirring now. Everything was frightfully still. There was no sound. Absurdly she thought of the question about a tree falling in the woods. Would it make a

sound? It did. She'd heard it. So she must be alive. She raised her head. Her hair and shoulders and back were littered with chips of shattered plastic; what had previously been the window next to her seat. She shook her head slightly and the chips rained off her, making tinkling, pinging little noises in the quiet. Slowly she forced herself to open her eyes. A scream rose in her throat, but she couldn't utter it. Her vocal cords froze. She was too terrified to scream. The carnage was worse than an air-traffic controller's nightmare. The two men sitting in the seats directly in front of hers; good friends, judging by their loud and rambunctious banter-ing with each other; were now dead, their joking and laughter forever silenced. One's head had gone through the window. That fact registered with her, but she didn't look too closely. There was a sea of blood. She slammed her eyes shut and didn't open them until after she'd averted her head. Across the aisle, another man lay dead, his head thrown back against the cushion as though he'd been sleeping when the plane went down. The Loner. She had mentally tagged him with that name before takeoff. Because the plane was small, there were strict regulations about weight. While the passengers and their luggage were being weighed before boarding, the Loner had stood apart from the group, his attitude superior and hostile. His unfriendliness hadn't invited conversation with any of the other passengers, who were all boisterously bragging about their kills. His aloofness had segregated him; just as her sex had isolated her. She was the only woman on board. Now, the only survivor. Looking toward the front of the cabin, she could see that the cockpit had been severed from the fuselage like a bottle cap that had been twisted off. It had come to rest several feet away. The pilot and copilot, both jovial and joking young men, were obviously, bloodily, dead. She swallowed the bile that filled the back of her throat. The robust, bearded copilot had helped her on board, flirting, saying he rarely had women passengers on his airplane and when he did, they didn't look like fashion models. The other two passengers, middle-aged brothers, were still strapped into their seats in the front row. They'd been killed by the jagged tree trunk that had cut into the cabin like a can opener. Their families would feel the tragedy with double intensity. She began to cry. Hopelessness and fear overwhelmed her. She was afraid she would faint. She was afraid she would die. And she was afraid she wouldn't. The deaths of her fellow passengers had been swift and painless. They had probably been killed on impact. They were better off. Her death would be long in coming because as far as she could tell, she was miraculously uninjured. She would die slowly of thirst, starvation, exposure. She wondered why she was still alive. The only explanation was that she was sitting in the last row. Unlike the rest of the passengers, she had left someone behind at the lodge on Great Bear Lake. Her goodbye had been drawn out, so she was the last one to board the aircraft. All the seats had been taken except that one in the last row. When the copilot assisted

her aboard, the rowdy dialogues had ceased abruptly. Bent at an angle because of the low ceiling, she had moved to the only available seat. She had felt distinctly uncomfortable, being the only woman on board. It was like walking into a smoke-filled room where a heated poker game was in progress. Some things were innately, exclusively male, and no amount of sexual equality was ever going to change that. Just as some things were innately, exclusively female. An airplane leaving a hunting and fishing lodge in the North-west Territories was one of those masculine things. She had tried to make herself as inconspicuous as possible, saying nothing, settling in her seat and staring out the window. Once, just after takeoff, she had turned her head and inadvertently made eye contact with the man sitting across the aisle. He had looked at her with such apparent disfavor that she had returned her gaze to the window and kept it there. Besides the pilots, she was probably the first one to notice the storm. Accompanied by dense fog, the torrential rain had made her nervous. Soon the others began to notice the juncy flight. Their braggadocio was replaced with uneasy quips about riding this one out and being glad the pilot was "driving" instead of one of them. But the pilots were having a difficult time. That soon became apparent to all of them. Eventually they fell silent and kept their eyes trained on the men in the cockpit. Tension inside the aircraft increased when the two-man crew lost radio contact with the ground. The plane's instruments could no longer be depended upon because the readings they were giving out were apparently inaccurate. Because of the impenetrable cloud cover, they hadn't seen the ground since takeoff. When the plane went into a spiraling nosedive and the pilot shouted back to his passengers, "We're going in. God be with us," they all took the news resignedly and with an amazing calm. She had bent double and pressed her head between her knees, covering it with her arms, praying all the way down. It seemed to take an eternity. She would never forget the shock of that first jarring impact. Even braced for it, she hadn't been adequately prepared. She didn't know why she had been spared instantaneous death, unless her smaller size had allowed her to wedge herself between the two seats more securely and better cushion the impact. However, under the circumstances, she wasn't sure that being spared was a favorable alternative. One could only reach the lodge on the northwestern tip of Great Bear Lake by airplane. Miles of virgin wilderness lay between it and Yellowknife, their destination. God only knew how far off the flight plan the plane had been when it went down. The authorities could search for months without finding her. Until they did—if ever—she was utterly alone and dependent solely on herself for survival. That thought galvanized her into action. With near-hysteri-cal frenzy she struggled to release her seat belt. It snapped apart and she fell forward, bumping her head on the seat in front of her. She eased herself into the narrow aisle and, on hands and knees, crawled toward the gaping tear in the airplane. Avoiding any direct contact with the

bodies, she looked up through the ripped metal seam. The rain had stopped, but the low, heavy, dark gray clouds looked so laden with menace they seemed ready to burst. Frequently they belched deep rolls of thunder. The sky looked cold and wet and threatening. She clutched the collar of her red fox coat high about her neck. There was virtually no wind. She supposed she should be grateful for that. The wind could get very cold. But wait! If there was no wind, where was that keening sound coming from? Holding her breath, she waited. There it was again! She whipped her head around, listening. It wasn't easy to hear anything over the pounding of her own heart. A stir. She looked toward the man who was sitting in the seat across the aisle from hers. Was it just her wishful imagination or did the Loner's eyelids flicker? She scrambled back up the aisle, brushing past the dangling, bleeding arm of one of the crash victims. She had studiously avoided touching it only moments ago. "Oh, please, God, let him be alive," she prayed fervently. Reaching his seat, she stared down into his face. He still seemed to be in peaceful repose. His eyelids were still. No flicker. No moaning sound coming from his lips, which were all but obscured by a thick, wide mustache. She looked at his chest, but he was wearing a quilted coat, so it was impossible to tell if he were breathing or not. She laid her index finger along the top curve of his mustache, just beneath his nostrils. She uttered a wordless exclamation when she felt the humid passage of air. Faint, but definitely there. "Thank God, thank God." She began laughing and crying at the same time. Lifting her hands to his cheeks, she slapped them lightly. "Wake up, mister. Please wake up." He moaned, but he didn't open his eyes. Intuition told her that the sooner he regained consciousness the better. Besides, she needed the reassurance that he wasn't dead or going to die; at least not immediately. She desperately needed to know that she wasn't alone. Reasoning that the cold air might help revive him, she resolved to get him outside the plane. It wasn't going to be easy; he probably outweighed her by a hundred pounds or more. She felt every ounce of it as she opened his seat belt and his dead weight slumped against her like a sack of concrete mix. She caught most of it with her right shoulder and supported him there while she backed down the aisle toward the opening, half lifting him, half dragging him with her. That seven-foot journey took her over half an hour. The bloody arm hanging over the armrest snagged them. She had to overcome her repulsion and touch it, moving it aside. She got blood on her hands. It was sticky. She whimpered with horror, but clamped her trembling lower lip between her teeth and continued tugging the man down the aisle; one struggling, agonizing inch at a time. It struck her suddenly that whatever his injury, she might be doing it more harm than good ... --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I listened to this while I was taking a road trip. I had no idea it was one of 'those' books. The sex parts cracked me up so I was entertained for a short while. I gave it to my sister-in-law. I hope she enjoys it.

Sandra Brown can write the most interesting of mystery novels, too bad she didn't on *Two Alone*. I suspect this is just a case of, "I feel like writing a book, so here goes", and what resulted was a very lame, 6th grader's essay on suspense, attempting to get a passing grade, and failing miserably. Plots were hatched simply to fill the page and were soon forgotten as to why because they weren't of any significance. Sandra Brown is worthy of her stature in the novel writing community and will continue to be one of my favorite writers of mystery novels; however, I can't rate *Two Alone* as close to one of my favorites. The bad one is written, now continue with the great ones you always produce.

A good short Audio Book . It was a change from some other authors / readers that I listen to while on long drive trips

ok

The heroine is beautiful and feisty but yielding and the man handsome, quirky and demanding. Ok there you have it. I leafed past the steamy chapters as I felt like a voyeur. I think I would like it better if the heroine had a wart on her nose and she told the man to jump in the lake. The least they could do was draw the curtains when they got intimate. There were no curtains.

Anything Sandra Brown is great!

I am not a fan of romance novels, so this was not my style. I did think the writer did a great job for anyone who likes this genre. Very descriptive on the "romance" scenarios.

Good book

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