



## The Girl on the Midway Stage

*DeAnna Cameron*

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*What happens when a nice Victorian girl meets the Egyptian belly dancers? Follow Dora's scandalous adventure at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair...*

Young bride Dora Chambers can't wait to begin her new life in Chicago. It's an exciting time, with the 1893 World's Fair putting a kaleidoscope of new inventions, new cultures, and new ideas on display.

Unfortunately, those aren't the only things on display.

The Egyptian belly dancers' performances are stirring up a scandal, and the distasteful task of enforcing proper conduct on them has fallen to Dora as part of her initiation into the Fair's prestigious Board of Lady Managers.

But Dora's sensibilities are not so easily flustered by the dancers. She finds herself captivated by these exotic women, and by their enigmatic manager, Hossam Farouk, who makes his mistrust of her known—although his lingering glances hint at something else.

As Dora's eyes are opened to the world beyond her own, she finds the courage to break free of social expectations and her self-imposed bondage, and discovers the truth about the desire and passion in her own heart.

THE GIRL ON THE MIDWAY STAGE is a lush historical novel rich with authentic period detail, discovery, and romance that will sweep you up in Dora's struggle to understand herself, her quickly changing world, and her own unique journey to happiness.

Rating: PG

\*\*\* This title was formerly published as THE BELLY DANCER \*\*\*

**BONUS MATERIAL:** The novel includes a preview chapter of THE GIRL ON THE VAUDEVILLE STAGE, the next stand-alone novel in The Dancer Chronicles.

THE DANCER CHRONICLES is a series of stand-alone novels featuring young women destined for passion and fame. Step into their heart-warming stories of love and discovery, where there's never a cliff-hanger ending and always an uplifting happily-ever-after.... (so much better than real-life, right?)

Book 1: The Girl on the Midway Stage (available now)

Book 2: The Girl on the Vaudeville Stage (available now)

More on the way!

## The Girl on the Midway Stage Details

Date : Published September 2nd 2016 by Fine Skylark Media (first published May 20th 2009)

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Author : DeAnna Cameron

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## **From Reader Review The Girl on the Midway Stage for online ebook**

### **Fiona says**

I've enjoyed reading the book and liked the way belly dancing was weaved into the story.

I read this book during a roadtrip with the family, and annoyed them with my looks because I just wanted to shake the main character, Dora in the first half of the book. She was really naive and stupid; it was irritating. She wanted to change herself to fit in with the ladies of her husband's acquaintance, and to not shy away from intimacy with her husband after seeing him cheat with a former lover. If I was her, I would've divorced him from the moment I knew. I was also very irritated by the husband. He married Dora for all the wrong reasons.

In the second half of the book, my family liked me again because I was smiling again. Dora learned how to not change herself to fit in a group, and how really loving someone feels like.

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### **Diana says**

This really made me miss dancing. While my being a belly dancer was not the reason I decided to read this, it is the reason I knew of it. (Stupid Facebook you make one belly dance reference and they don't stop showing you ads for some book you wouldn't look twice at.) I guess I should be thankful for that.

I really liked it, especially the characters I think in any other story they might have bugged me but in this they were pretty great. This is the type of book that I really needed to read and didn't even realize til I did.

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### **Christina says**

I really enjoyed this book! I don't normally read "romance-y" type books, but this one kept me captivated enough to finish. I liked the historical aspect of the plot, especially since I had just finished reading "Looking For Little Egypt" before picking up this book. It really gave the events of the 1893 Fair a bit of extra life for me through the characters and the story.

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### **Nikki says**

I really liked it! Perhaps because the girl was from New Orleans, or perhaps because I love belly dancing, who knows :) And I enjoyed the setting of the Chicago World Fair. Very interesting, I would love to see pictures of it, it sounds larger than life. I enjoyed reading about the fair, the societal pressures the heroine of the book had to try and conform to, and the contrasting culture of the Egyptians she got to know.

I really enjoyed the 'awakening', so to speak, that she had through the dancing because it really can be powerful and liberating. And I miss belly dancing, it made me want to start again. Good read.

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### **Patricia O'Sullivan says**

DeAnna Cameron's The Belly Dancer is an interesting read on several levels. The plot is simple enough: a New Orleans girl marries up and has trouble fitting into her husband's set in Chicago. Complicating matters is her husband's lingering affair with one of the most powerful women in the ladies' club. The new bride's struggles are both funny and heartbreaking - anyone who's ever felt shut out by a clique will relate to Dora's situation. However, the novel gets really interesting when Dora begins to seek out help from the Egyptian dancers she's been sent to monitor by the ladies' club. The dancers help Dora awaken to the fact that she is stifled emotionally by her husband's inattention and physically by the restrictive Victorian clothing fashionable among the upper classes. Anyone interested in Victorian social mores, Victorian clothing, and Chicago's first World Fair in 1893 will love Cameron's historical detail.

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### **Victoria Vane says**

A wonderfully unique story set in the "gilded age".

When reading any historical work, be it HF or HR, I want to feel swept into the era as well as into the characters' lives. This story does not disappoint. I felt an immediate connection and empathy with Dora as she struggled to make her new life work and to find her "place" in upper class society and rooted for her as she came into her own.

The author's prose is lovely, research impeccable, and execution excellent.

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### **Gayle says**

Let me be clear: I don't read romances. My past brushes with the genre were torrid, melodramatic affairs, too over-the-top for me. After reading The Belly Dancer, I need to re-think that, because I loved this book. Dora's struggle to fit in where she thinks she belongs, against a world (and a man) she doesn't think she wants, had me so captivated that I read it in one day. OK, I'm a fast reader, but still - I stayed up late just to finish it. It's lush, it's lovely, it's pure enjoyment.

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### **Gaile says**

A young bride from New Orleans arrives in Chicago. She must be a prestigious lady now but she feels she doesn't belong. To make things worse, her husband is never home. At the Chicago World Fair, she finds the Egyptian Theater. Here, she makes friends, learns to belly dance, falls in love and--- I won't spoil the end! I enjoyed this tremendously and read it in two days!

The central character is a girl with low esteem who isn't quite sure how to please her husband, her only goal is to fit in.

She grows in this book in both self esteem and ideals.

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### **Judy says**

Being in the field of agriculture, I am very aware of the things I eat, and most of the time prefer my homegrown vegetables and a balanced diet. However, every once in a while it's fun to go to a fair and eat cotton candy and funnel cakes.

That's what "The Belly Dancer" was like for me: not for everyday fare, but completely enjoyable while I was reading it.

A couple of years ago I really enjoyed the non-fiction book, "The Devil in the White City," so was interested in reading more about the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

While something of a romance, "The Belly Dancer" is not a bodice-ripper. Instead it has more fully drawn characters, and Dora goes through some real growth.

A fun read!

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### **DeAnna says**

I'm the author and I've loved the art & history of belly dance for nearly 20 years. It's been a thrill for me to share that with readers.

You can read more about the book here: <http://deannacameron.com>

And you can read an excerpt here: <http://deannacameron.com/TheBellyDanc...>

Enjoy!

~DeAnna Cameron

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### **Jeannie Mancini says**

Dora Chambers has just arrived to the White City, Chicago in 1893 at the time of the great World's Fair. Newly wed to an up and coming banker, Charles Chambers, Dora finds life in the big city a bit different than that of her homeland back in New Orleans. With a mysterious past that even she was raised unaware of, Dora is accompanied into her new married life by her childhood nanny and servant Bonmarie, who is now their cook and maid, and holder of Dora's secret heritage.

Setting them up in a fine townhouse and with hopes of a better life, Charles requests that Dora join the society of Lady Managers, a group of wives taking up the task to keep the events and entertainments at the World's Fair safe and in proper order. Charles feels her participation and approval from the other ladies will boost him up the business ladder of success. Wishing to please her new husband and gain respect from

society, her first assignment is to get the Egyptian Belly Dancers at the Cairo exhibit to make changes in their costumes and method of dancing that is reeking havoc with the gentleman of Chicago. The naked bellies and undulating dances, provocative eyes and alluring exotic women, are causing a ruckus all too improper. The Lady Managers insist on taming the show to a dull roar and to bring it within propriety's guidelines. Fully taking the task in hand Dora makes a deal with Amina Mahomet, the lead dancer, and swaps services to make the necessary changes that will gain the wanted approval from her peers. Amina needs a doctor for another dancer and agrees to alter the performance if Dora finds her medical help. Thus begins a newfound friendship, albeit in secret, of Dora and Amina, two women raised in worlds as different as day and night.

Charles it seems has a wandering eye and soon begins an affair with another man's wife, leaving Dora alone and feeling rejected. Determined to win her man and attract his eye towards her alone, Dora visits her Egyptian friend daily to learn how to be more of the woman Charles will want. Dora and Amina invent a hilarious scheme when Dora asks Amina's assistance in learning the ways of love. Teaching her to walk, talk, bat her eyes and dance seductively, Amina proudly takes Dora on as her student of all things sensual.

As each night Charles arrives late or doesn't come home at all, Dora becomes more determined to show him she can be all he wants her to be. With every charm and seductive glance, Charles continually turns away from Dora leaving her in tears and frustration, and eventually into another man's arms. This story revolves around two scandalous and licentious secret liaisons set in a time when this would have been an outrage to society. The Belly Dancer, sweet and innocent Dora Chambers, transforms herself from decadent graceful swan to an alluring seductive siren with the help of her new friends from Egypt. Light and easy, silly and entertaining, I loved this debut book and look forward to what the author is writing next.

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### **Allison Greene says**

I read half of this novel waiting out a storm in a bookstore yesterday. I bought it at the in-store Starbucks on my Kindle/iPhone and finished it last night. A very good read, I just wish that the story had been fuller. It seemed very rushed, a short manuscript just long enough to hold its own as a novel. The characters had a beautiful chemistry and the subplots flowed well, but I am disappointed that certain nuances were not explored, and the book was not made more well-rounded.

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### **Gail says**

This book started out very interesting and then peetered out with some improbably leaps for the characters. Dora Chambers is a newly married lady, hoping to become a Lady Manager with the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. She's given the task of making the belly dancers acceptable to the proper and prim world of the U.S. The historical details of the World's Fair, Americans' reactions to foreignness are all very interesting.

Dora herself has a hidden past, hidden even from herself. She's the daughter of a boarding house owner. Her husband frequented their house on business and surprised them all with his proposal. Dora's proper behavior will help him achieve a vice presidency in that bastion of conservancy, a bank. Poor Dora is naive and uninitiated in the ways of the world, her ignorance of sex leaves her bewildered and her husband frustrated. He resumes the obsessive affair he was having with a very rich widow.

Dora is a nice creature and some of the characters are pull at the reader's interest. The details about the various kinds of oriental dance are well placed and interesting. The second half of the book hurriedly has Dora discover the secrets of her parentage, the secret passions of her body and the wonders of dance. Outside the norms of society. Well intentioned but hurriedly done it became implausible, a happy ending you longed for but somehow you don't believe the journey.

I liked the characters and the writing and I even liked hte ending, I just thing way to much was skipped along the way. How does Dora suddenly leap from ignorance to acceptance of her biracial heritage in a matter of pages. How does she overcome her well schooled primness and ignorance into a passionate lover with a man not her husband. How does she overcome the foreignness of it all, so ingrained in her and her society. The first half was well set up so that the second half didn't necessarily follow.

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### **Emery Lee says**

A wonderfully unique story set in the "gilded age".

When reading any historical work, be it HF or HR, I want to feel swept into the era as well as into the characters' lives. This story does not disappoint. I felt an immediate connection and empathy with Dora as she struggled to make her new life work and to find her "place" in upper class society and rooted for her as she came into her own.

The author's prose is lovely, research impeccable, and execution excellent.

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### **Tara Chevrestt says**

While reading the first half of this novel, I almost chucked it. The heroine, Dora is so dumb and naive at first, it is frustrating. She acts like a child, is treated like a child, and struggles most fruitlessly to please her new husband and every high society matron she crosses paths with. Not understanding the ways of the bedroom, she shies away from her husband when it comes to her wifely duties, sending him into the arms of a former paramour. Upon witnessing his indiscretion with her own eyes, she decides to gain the knowledge to win him back. WHY?? Why would anyone want him back?

BUT, I am glad I stuck with this. Dora's desire to attract her husband back to her leads her to the Chicago World's Fair (where she is already working as a Lady Manager) to the Egyptian Theater and its belly dancers. It is here that Dora makes friends, learns the ways of love, and begins to dance. Dora, having been shunned by society all her life, finally finds solace with a group of people that have been shunned themselves.

Will Dora use her newfound sexual charms on her husband, Charles? Or will she choose to use them on the myterious Arab man she is secretly attracted to?

Meanwhile, Dora has made an enemy of one of society's richest matrons. There may be some stuff hitting the fan.

Had Dora been just a bit less naive and blind in the first half, this would have hit the five star mark. It

certainly redeemed itself with a great ending.

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