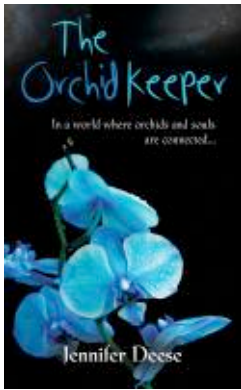


# The Orchid Keeper

In a world where orchids and souls  
are connected...



Jennifer Deese



*Drowning in addiction and denial, Cora's life is in a fast downward spiral. If her actions don't soon change, she could lose everything. After a visit from an odd little man, Cora finds herself experiencing an other worldly event that changes everything. With the out of this world assistance of The Orchid Keeper, she gets the opportunity to save her soul.*

# **The Orchid Keeper**

**Order the complete book from**

**[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7591.html?s=pdf)**

**<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7591.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**

**Your free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!**

# THE ORCHID KEEPER

Jennifer Deese



Copyright © 2014 Jennifer Deese

ISBN 978-1-63263-918-9

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

Deese, Jennifer

The Orchid Keeper by Jennifer Deese

Fiction

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014910817

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by Abuzz Press, Bradenton, Florida.

Printed in the United States of America.

The characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

Edited by Jenelle Roxie Marshall.

Abuzz Press

2014

First Edition

### **Chapter 3**

With the opening routine finished, Cora perched on the stool behind the counter staring at the stunning orchid she had chosen from the previous day's delivery to accent the space next to the register. It seemed to her that this particular orchid beckoned to her; reached out in some way to touch something she had forgotten she possessed...a soul. She hadn't felt anything like that in a very long time. Cora had long ago written her soul off as cold and numb, unable to be touched.

The orchid sitting in front of her was the most intense color of blue; unlike any she had ever seen. In all of her years selling flowers and running the shop Cora had never encountered a shade of flower like this. The petals were so richly hued that they

seemed to be man-made, as if they were made of velvet. The stark contrast of the green leaves made the whole thing look like it belonged in a painting. The air around the flower seemed charged. Cora caught herself being drawn to it again and again as she did her paperwork. She couldn't keep her eyes and attention from being pulled to it. The bell on the shop door jangled, letting her know there was a customer entering. Pushing aside the stack of papers she got up to greet the patron.

The man who had entered was already engrossed in the orchid display in the front window. Cora cleared her throat to let the gentleman know she was approaching. He turned with a smile so brilliantly genuine that she took a step back. "Hello", he said, "I was just admiring your wonderful orchid display". Cora thanked the man and let him know that they had just been delivered. "They are quite impressive, indeed!" the customer replied, with enthusiasm.

There was something unusual about this man; something about his presence seemed to be enigmatic and mysterious but not in an offensive way. "Are you from around here?" she asked the man. "I am often told I am familiar to people when I am in this place", he replied, with yet another brilliant and charming smile. "In this place, my shop?" she asked, puzzled. "Not just this shop but here", and he swung his arms wide toward the window and outside. Turning away from the display he walked purposefully to the counter where he pulled a blank greeting card from a rack. Pulling a pen from his pocket the man quickly scribbled on the inside and placed it in an envelope. Asking the strange fellow if he would like anything else Cora wrung up his purchase. "That will be all." he replied, and as she handed him his change, he reached over and touched one of the velveteen petals of the unusual orchid and abruptly walked out.

The rest of the day went as usual for Cora, every trip to the bathroom providing that drug fueled push

to a fallacy of normalcy, or at least what normal had become for her. When thoughts of guilt tried to work their way into the forefront of her mind she would push them back with rationalizations and projection; two things she had become very good at. After all, she thought to herself, who could expect her to not numb herself with alcohol and drugs? She missed her dad, her husband was gone, and her child, living in an institution, would never live a normal life and her own life continued to test her will. She just couldn't win and never would so why try?

Through-out the day the orchid on the counter caught her attention with it's out of the world etherealness, and its stunning beauty. It felt as if called to her as she went through her duties around the shop. She could sense it beckoning her; almost forcing her to turn her gaze to it and lose herself in its image. The shop's air was charged with the same feeling, the same energy it had the day before when the orchids were in the back room. The ominous feeling that something was looming was so intense



that there were times that it took her breath away. It was as if she was on the precipice of something major however she couldn't for the life of her put a name to it.

As the day came to an end and Cora was locking up, she noticed an envelope taped to the front door of her shop. Perplexed, she pulled it off and turned it over looking for a name or clue as to whom it could be from. There was nothing on the outside of the envelope so she opened it and pulled out the card. To her complete surprise it turned out to be the same card the odd little man with the brilliant smile and the unsettlingly bright eyes had purchased earlier that day. She flipped it open and read the elegantly written script inside;

*Roses Are Red*

*Violets Are Blue*

*When the Orchid Dies,*

*So Do You.*

Below the puzzling passage was a single sentence that made the hair on her neck stand up

even more than the short poem had. *Cora, the orchid is the key!* Her hands shaking, her knees weak she turned slowly toward the orchid on the counter. Could this surreal flower that had been calling to her all day in a most peculiar way be the orchid he was referring to? Who was this man, she thought, and what did he mean? Her mind was reeling and again she experienced that feeling of being on the threshold of something monumental. Unable to resist the urge to go to the orchid she moved closer to it with a compulsive fascination tempered by trepidation.

As she drew closer to the orchid on the counter she began to notice a shimmer to one of the petals that she was sure was new. Leaning in to gain a better look she gasped and stepped back a bit. The shimmer was indeed there! It was a glowing fingerprint! Suddenly she flashed back to earlier when the man had been in the shop; when he had paid for his card he reached over and touched a petal of the orchid. Was this the petal he had

touched? Was this his fingerprint? Her pulse quickened and she could hear her breath coming in quickened pants. This couldn't be happening; things like this were straight out of fantasy novels but not the real world. She cradled her head and rubbed her eyes in hopes that when she looked again it would have all been a figment of her imagination. Steeling herself, and opening her eyes she looked again at the petal of the orchid in question. The damned fingerprint was still there and now it began to swirl and pulse with increasing intensity.

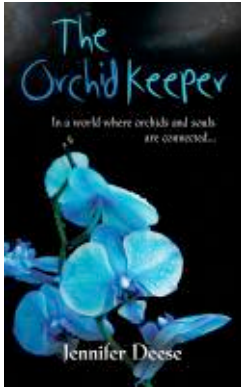
Unable to keep herself from doing it she reached tentatively out to touch the petal. As her finger got closer a sudden gale force wind kicked up in the shop, whipping her hair around her face and pressing her clothes to her body. Still she reached forward; it was as if her hand was being guided by a presence unseen. As her finger touched upon the petal a vortex opened up in front of her and the shop around her began to blur and melt away. Cora felt herself being sucked into this circling tunnel of

energy and knew there was no way to fight it. All she could do was give in to it and the very instant she did the world around her was completely gone.

Suddenly Cora found herself floating through a misty greyish cloudlike place that sparked with flashes of silvery light all around her. There was no sign of the world she knew. Her body felt as if it was traveling at a speed unnatural to her mind. Where was she? More importantly what was happening to her? Was she dead? Had she overdosed? Was this it, was this death? As these thoughts sped through her mind she noticed that the look of the misty grey cloud was changing and the sparks of light were now colored in blues, reds, and purples. The mist seemed to be taking on vague shapes that were yet indiscernible but definitely more substantial than a moment before. Something around her was forming itself and the mist was dissipating.

She began to feel a vibration throughout her entire body. With a sudden clarity Cora knew she had slipped from reality and into an out of the world

event. By touching that fingerprint she had fallen over the precipice she had teetered on all day. Somehow that man had caused a shift in her world and she had no control over what was happening to her. The feeling that she was slowing and falling downward was unmistakable. Closing her eyes in preparation of whatever was coming next, she felt herself spinning slowly and suddenly the air around her was still and deathly quiet.



*Drowning in addiction and denial, Cora's life is in a fast downward spiral. If her actions don't soon change, she could lose everything. After a visit from an odd little man, Cora finds herself experiencing an other worldly event that changes everything. With the out of this world assistance of The Orchid Keeper, she gets the opportunity to save her soul.*

# **The Orchid Keeper**

**Order the complete book from**

**[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7591.html?s=pdf)**

**<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7591.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**