



## Poisoned Love

Melanie Crane

Reviewed by Tina Avon

I read a lot of books on addiction and healing (recovery) and I have always managed to find a nugget (and at time many nuggets) of wisdom in each of these books, however, Melanie Cane's story made me so sad and touched me so deeply, that writing this review feels like an extremely personal thing to be doing and I found it extremely difficult to separate the tale told by the author and the fact that I was going to be writing this review. This, to me, is the sign of a gifted storyteller - to make one forget the fact that they are reading a book - with Cane's uncanny ways of detailing her most personal feelings, she actually had me feeling as though we were best friends sitting at the kitchen table as she described her frustration and fears to me.

I have to say that I have always believed that although women are the stronger of the two genders (on soooo many levels), we are also stupid - when it comes to relationships with both ourselves and with the opposite gender and reading this book just convinced me even more. Here is the wonderfully bright, smart and educated woman - who should have the world in her hand - but instead, she suffers abandonment issues, self-image issues and a variety of mental illness issues.

As soon as Melanie started describing the influence and power her 'non present' father had on her, I immediately knew where this would lead her. Unfortunately, Melanie was exposed to the same kinds of subconscious messages most women of my generation were given - you **MUST** be a strong woman in your own right - but don't let the guy know that! As Melanie described her deteriorating relationship with Luke (and her even more difficult relationship with her self) I wanted to both scream and cry at the same time.

If it was difficult for me, as the reader, to read this, I can only imagine how difficult it must have been for the author to write it. In this day and age where writing memoirs are a delicate and closely monitored process, I have to wonder what frame of mind she must have been in to be able to basically relive some of the most difficult periods in her life.

Yet, the writing rings true and Cane does not shy away from detailing for us, the absolutely crazy things she did in the name of "so called" love. The first part of the book, where she somehow

manages to make herself the victim (poor me, poor me - maybe now he will want to be with me) is so "out there" that I had to wonder if she somehow, over time, magnified the events - but, at the same time, I knew on a deeper level that Cane was describing the nightmare that so many women live - in various degrees. I also got the feeling that Cane was describing her action while maintaining a "in your face" attitude that bordered on the callous. The description of her conversation with Luke as he figures out what she did in order to keep him is a great example of this - although she seems to know, on one level, how crazy she was acting, she also seemed proud of it at times.

This memoir is frank and harsh - its difficult to travel the same path as Melanie did - countless times I wanted to yell out to her 'danger, danger' but it is obvious that Melanie needed to go through this path in order to come out at the other end.

This book is not all peaches and cream and it is certainly not for those women who still believe that 'love will conquer all'. It is a true look at what can happen when we, as women, forget to find our self-worth and our center within ourselves! and not try to find it through the love of a 'good man'.

I loved this book and I am actually going to reread it again - with the hopes that the life lessons will stick in MY subconscious.

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