



Baby, It's You

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"Irresistible. Jane Graves writes with charm, wit and heart!" --Carly Phillips, *New York Times* bestselling author

With only the wedding dress on her back and her honeymoon luggage in the car, Kari Worthington is running away. Determined to put her controlling father, her rigidly structured life, and the uptight groom she left at the altar in her rearview mirror, she escapes to the Texas Hill country . . . and lands on a tall, dark, and gorgeous winery owner's doorstep. All she needs is a job and a place to live until she can get back on her feet. So why is she fantasizing about losing herself in his powerful arms?

For Marc Cordero, freedom is so close he can taste it. He's devoted his life to managing the family business and being a single dad. Now with his daughter away at college and his brother taking over the winery, Marc is ready to hop on his Harley for parts unknown-until a runaway bride bursts onto the scene. Free-spirited and tantalizingly sexy, Kari excites him like no other woman has before. But when irresistible passion turns into something more, will Marc give up his future to take a chance on love?

(90,000 words)

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From Reader Review Baby, It's You for online ebook

Barbara Roth says

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I was lucky enough to receive an advanced copy of this book. I absolutely loved it. The characters Marc and Kari were wonderful. I enjoyed the setting in a vineyard and the supporting cast as well. There was just enough angst and drama to suck me right into their world. I loved the strength that both characters seemed to exude but I was happy by the subtle changes that Kari was able to make in Marc and the strength that Kari was able to finally grasp through this journey into a small town in Texas. Marc had so much responsibility thrust upon him his whole life. He took the role of father at a very young age not only to his own child but his siblings as well. I felt he had every right to want to do something for himself in life. I was scared for Kari when I realized she was pregnant. I thought about how he left her that night and I felt he had that right as well. He'd been through all that before.

I did like that everyone in town pulled together to help bring in the crop. It showed how much he'd given to his friends and the community. It was the perfect opportunity for Angela and Kari to work out their differences while Marc wasn't there to intervene. The dialogue was great and the romance was superb. Excellent story that I recommend for everyone!

Ami says

For me, **Baby It's You** represents the "what you want is not always what you need" theme, and Ms. Graves has done a very good job in twisting my emotion and my thoughts about it. There were times that I wondered if the decision was the right one, and whether or not I should be upset with the outcome. However, after all was said and done, I realized that this story had a very good depth of facing tough choices in life and well, it just spoke to me greatly.

The characterization is wonderful here. I really adored Kari. Duly noted that Kari starts the story as the daughter of someone wealthy, who has never really done anything on her own (daddy pays for everything, even opening her bank account!) and easily quits when things get tough (like running away from her own wedding, rather than tell confronting her dad).

However, I saw how Kari slowly but steadily took her steps of independence. While she still gets help in doing so — and there's one moment when Kari almost quit again after a grueling first day being a waitress at a local diner — but Kari is then able to work through the pain and actually learn to enjoy the job. Oh, Kari still makes mistakes, but she finds out how good she is with kids, she realizes that she can entertain people, and she ends up getting her tips worth. For someone who never really worked a day in her life, I thought that was quite admirable.

Meanwhile, Marc is one of those heroes whose actions definitely speak louder than his words. Being the oldest of three who have learned to take responsibility in life since a teenager, Marc thinks that it's time for him to get his freedom. People have been relying on him for eighteen years. He basically takes care of that vineyard on his own too, since his younger brother and sister are not really into it.

Just when freedom seems to be waiting around the corner, life throws challenges again into Marc's way. Marc's brother doesn't seem to know the best way to take care of the vineyard. Marc's sister is suffering from heartache after losing her husband and her beloved dog. Then, his daughter doesn't seem to be happy in university and wishes that Marc was there to be a safety net. The whole twist with Kari (I can't really say without spoiling anything, but the 'twist' was definitely the point where I was having conflicting emotions the most!).

You see, I couldn't help but think that Marc **DESERVED** the freedom after everything he was going through. So I wondered if that was fair for Marc. But then, I started to think that **THIS** was what the story wanted to say to us: sometimes you need to alter your dreams when life challenges you. And yes, like I said in the beginning of this review: "what you want is not always what you need".

Because Marc finally realizes that freedom isn't exactly what is best for him. Being with his family and the community who cares about him is. Even if it seems that Marc is back to where it all started, he isn't really. This time, his siblings have grown up, his brother is a millionaire who can help financially, and his daughter also knows what she wants from life. Then there's Kari ... a woman who loves him and will stay with him, who understands Marc's love for his vineyard and is willing to fight to save it when nature is threatening it. And Marc himself is not exactly a seventeen-year-old boy anymore.

So, in the end, **Baby It's You** is a great story of self-discovery, for both Kari and Marc (and myself too in a way). I enjoyed it immensely. I hope Ms. Graves continues this series with either one of Marc's siblings — their moments in this book make me want to read their stories of reaching happily ever after too.

A Guest Review for The Blogger Girls

TSN says

It was... nice i guess. I did enjoy it, but it is not one of those books that leaves a lasting impression.

Kathy says

4.5 stars.

Baby, It's You is a heartfelt and engaging addition to **Jane Graves'** delightfully charming *Rainbow Valley* series. In this outing, opposites attract when runaway bride Kari Worthington ends up at Marc Cordero's vineyard. Although they are at very different places in their lives, they find it impossible to resist their sizzling passion for one another. But with Kari deciding to put down roots and Marc equally determined to leave is there any chance of a future for this seemingly mismatched couple?

Kari is fun-loving and impulsive but there is a surprising amount of depth to her character. Growing up the only daughter of a wealthy businessman, Kari has subdued much of her vibrant personality in her efforts to gain her emotionally distant father's approval. She has a long history of taking the easy way out, but once she runs away from her wedding, Kari is forced to not only stand up for herself, but also stand her own two feet for the first time in her life.

Following his father's death, Marc took on the responsibility of caring for his siblings while running the family business and raising his daughter Angela on his own. With Angela finally off to college, the carefree life he has been longing for is finally within his grasp. Marc is quite logical, viewing the world in black and white and Kari's arrival brings a bit of chaos to his well-ordered life.

With his new responsibility free life, Marc is very reluctant to have another person depending on him even for a short time, so he is eager for Kari to leave town. She steadfastly refuses to return to her former life and she eventually persuades him to help her out temporarily. Their relationship heats up fairly quickly and with neither of them looking for lasting commitment, Marc and Kari agree to a new strings fling. As Marc's departure date draws near, they are reluctant to end their relationship but unexpected complications quickly jeopardize their future.

Baby, It's You is an emotional journey of self-discovery for both Kari and Marc. Their romance is surprisingly sweet yet full of passion. The intriguing glimpses of Marc's siblings (especially his sister Nina) leave me hopeful that **Jane Graves** is planning to feature them in upcoming installments of the *Rainbow Valley* series.

Although *Baby, It's You* is the second book of the *Rainbow Valley* series, it can be read as a standalone.

Danielle says

Omg I love this series!

Jacob Proffitt says

I'm a little conflicted about parts of this book, but still enjoyed it immensely. A big part of that is simply Kari. She's a flat-out delight and brightened every page she was on (and, since she is one of the main protagonists, that was a lot). She had a lot of growth to make, but she didn't hesitate (uh, for very long) to knuckle down and do what it takes to become who she wanted to be—all without compromising the generosity and joy she brought in to begin with.

Harder to take was Marc. He *seems* like he should be a lot further along, emotionally, because he's not only older, but seeing his daughter off to college (so he's had the life experience of successfully raising a kid to adulthood). Yes, he had the child young (*very* young), but he weathered it pretty well. That and the fact that he has obviously been a pillar of the community and is respected by all would lead you to believe he's doesn't have much to change, right? Only it turns out that he does, and that's disconcerting at first. Indeed, he has almost as far to go as Kari, just in a different direction.

Once I realized that both Marc and Kari had some serious growing to do, I felt a whole lot better about the story. Marc needs to internalize the joys he experienced in his service to others. He had allowed himself that teenage "poor me" attitude most of his life (which is reasonable as he *was* a teen when he "had" to take on so much responsibility). And his teen view of freedom has been holding him down all this time—to the extent that he cannot wait to take off for parts unknown with no responsibilities to "hold him down". He doesn't even realize how that attitude is making the people he loves feel and the effect his emotional abandonment is having in advance of his planned physical abandonment. Fortunately for him, Kari shows up to help him see the joy he already has, even as she adds her own to his life.

And I love stories where the two main characters are such great extensions to each other—each providing exactly what the other needs to become complete.

Some of the weaknesses of the first book persist in this one. The town is even less well-populated than the previous book, though we get a different set of folks in this one. And some of the emotional storyline dragged on a bit long. And I thought the "big complication" that happened was kind of cheap (and clumsily forecast), even if it was a contrast through parallelism.

But the weaknesses were light, particularly when compared to my enjoyment of Kari. Seriously, she was just awesome and Marc was exactly the right man for her (and she the right woman for him).

A note about Steamy: I worried about this one because it got all its steam out up front. Two explicit scenes, all before the midway point and not short ones, either. There were two more fooling around bits that weren't insignificant, but altogether, it was still within the middle of my tolerance range. I think that's mostly because the scenes in question were deeply involved in the emotional arc of the main characters and thus were obviously in service to the broader story (and thus, not at all gratuitous).

Kate Sherwood says

I bought this because it won the RITA, so maybe my expectations were unrealistically high.

I thought it was okay. The heroine was really annoying - totally flakey, and acting like it was a big deal for her to be "standing on her own two feet" when really she'd gone from being a dependent of her father's to being a dependent of a total stranger.

The writing was smooth, and the story was... okay.

Liz F says

Review copy courtesy of the publisher via NetGalley

Hmmm, how to rate this one... This is definitely a tough one for me. There were parts of this book that I absolutely hated... a lot. But most of this book was just fine. Nothing amazing but nothing awful. I hate to say that but not all of them can knock our socks off.

I was poised and ready to L-O-V-E Kari, the heroine. I totally enjoy stories about brides who quit their weddings on the day (it seems so daring and ballsy) and I love stories about heroines who are getting away from a controlling man and learning to stand on their own two feet. Love it! But the more I read Kari, the less I loved her. What seemed like a daring and ballsy move -running away from her wedding- began to seem like the actions of a grown woman who has never had to deal with consequences in a very real way. Like, when you're 12 and you get a puppy. You never train the puppy and he poops and pees all over the floor so your parents give the puppy away as a consequence. But the REAL consequence was the money that was spent on getting the puppy, getting his shots, taking him to the vet, finding a new owner after you failed to care for the puppy. THOSE are real consequences. Not just losing your furry, breathing toy. I was glad that Kari ran from her wedding but I don't know that she did it for the right reasons and I don't know that she did it in the right way. But she wants to make decisions on her own and I'm all for that so I'm still on board with Kari. Then, she appears to be satisfied with her version of standing on her own two feet... that is, getting a job that was offered to her on a silver platter (or a plastic serving tray, as the case may be), getting a vehicle for free, getting some clothing for free and staying at a vineyard... also rent free. THIS is standing on your own two feet? Making your OWN way? Are you kidding me? She reminded me of people who grow up in small towns and think they know everything there is to know and they go from living with their parents to getting married and living with their husbands and still thinking they know what it's like to make your way in the world. They don't. And Kari couldn't make it even if she actually tried.

Marc is the vineyard owner and he becomes Kari's knight in muted burlap. He works his butt off, trying to keep the winery afloat. He's looked forward to taking a few years to himself on his motorcycle once his daughter that he had as a teenager starts college. He took her to the state college last week and he only has a few more weeks until the harvest and then he can go. I have to say that I felt like Marc had earned some time off. Running such a huge and finicky business like wine making has got to be tough. Running it while raising a teenage daughter? Next to impossible! Of course, as the time for Marc to depart draws nearer, more and more things make him not so sure that leaving is a great idea. I really felt angry that Marc was being tied down again by the same old obligations. It made me angry at his family, angry at Kari and I ended up being angry at Marc for not sticking to his guns and making a clean get-away.

On the downside, I felt like Kari and Marc had little to no chemistry until they did. To me, it felt extremely abrupt and false. I'm leaving out a huge section of the book because I'm trying to avoid a major spoiler but it makes it REALLY difficult to explain why I disliked this book so much if I can't talk about the spoiler. The spoiler was the main reason I disliked this book, disliked Kari and felt nothing but pity for Marc, the hero.

On the upside, as an animal lover, I really connected with the story behind the town this takes place in, Rainbow Valley. The Rainbow Bridge is the bridge that our pets cross after they die. They're restored to full health and wait at the other side of the Rainbow Bridge until we, their humans, cross the bridge and join them. It's on the other side of the Rainbow Bridge that humans are reunited with all of their pets and stay together forever. I just love that tale and it gets me all misty eyed whenever I hear it. It's told MUCH more beautifully in the book but that's the general idea. There's a chance that it's worth reading this book just for the Rainbow Bridge explanation.

I don't think I would recommend this book to anyone looking for a light and fun romance. I thought the heroine was childish at best and the hero was a hot, pitiful mess. Anyone liking heroines who need to be kept may enjoy this and that is in no way an insult. I just can't imagine a way that Kari could take care of herself, let alone anyone else. So any relationship with her is going to be lopsided on the "taking care of each other" scale. But the writing is solid and I'm definitely going to give this series another shot!

Wendy Marcus says

Funny thing happened to me at the library yesterday. I stumbled across this book in the New Releases section. They usually don't have many romance books, but that doesn't stop me from looking every time I'm there.

And boy am I glad I did. I absolutely LOVED this book...and now I plan to devour Jane Graves's backlist!!!

Amy says

Not a bad continuation of the rainbow Valley series. I have to admit to liking the last book a little bit better but I still thought this one was very good. A good story about a girl who is able to finally figure out who she is away from her controlling father. The relationship between the two main characters was rather interesting. It was a rather fluffy little romantic book without a whole lot of substance to it as far as plot but I really enjoyed the character play. The writing style was also good at it was a nice little piece that made you feel good about spending some time to relax your mind. I'm looking forward to reading the next book in the series.

Patricia says

Two and a half stars.

I liked the writing style and I skimmed along to find out what happens but I had trouble liking and connecting with the female character. Twenty eight and a spoiled, clueless "rebel". No sympathy from me.

Lisa Filipe says

OMG...Jane Graves does it EVERY TIME....BABY IT'S YOU is a MUST READ for 2014...Hell...for any year, but I HIGHLY recommend you pre-order this one.

Full review coming around release day, but I just finished the book and I am still smiling, I LOVED it that much! Marc Cordero...OH MOMMA...and Kari, the heroine was simply perfect for him.

Just the right amount of emotion and steam to keep me turning page after page, and have me tearing up...sniff...

Definitely a Top Tasty Read...GRAB THIS ONE

Cristina says

A let down for me! :(Very predictable.

kristen says

This is a good single-father romance - complete with requisite understandable baggage on both the daughter and the father's parts. Quick, charming read with emotional depth.

Teresa says

I loved this book. It was fun with a few little twists. Kari, one of the main characters, was a delight. She had so many levels to her personality. A quirky little ray of sunshine with wisdom thrown in. Marc, her counterpart, was interesting. He seemed to have a chip on his shoulder because he had a child at 17 and ended up raising her alone. He loved his daughter, Angela, and had raised a good kid, but was ready to have the life he felt he missed out on while raising her. He was an incredibly responsible man, very active in the community and the small town relied on him on a daily basis to fix this or make that right.

When their two worlds collide on a stormy night, neither of their lives will ever be the same. We get to watch them become the people they were meant to be. She from a wealthy family with an overbearing controlling father and no idea how to take care of herself and him from a position of forced responsibility for the last 18 years. She is exactly what he needs and he is exactly what she needs.

It's like the supporting cast was handpicked. They were also a treat a strange but loveable group of characters.

I will definitely recommend this book. It was such a fun read.
