



Rikki

Abigail Strom

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Ever since junior high and an ill-fated game of seven minutes in heaven, Rikki Eisendrath and Sam Payne have hated each others' guts. But when they end up at the same college—and the same dorm—they figure it's time to declare a truce.

They even become friends... sort of. But when Sam asks Rikki to model for his sculpting project, they start spending more time together—and her feelings for him get more complicated.

She tries to focus on the guy she's been crushing on instead. But Sam's the one she can't stop thinking about, even though their arguments are starting to heat up as much as the chemistry between them.

With antagonism and attraction this intense, there's bound to be an explosion. But when the dust settles, will Sam and Rikki be enemies, friends... or something more?

Rikki Details

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From Reader Review Rikki for online ebook

Lily (Night Owl Book Cafe) says

So I did something unthinkable yesterday. I read a book in one day. Something I did not think I would ever do now that I have an infant in the house, but even with the lack of sleep, so I thought it was worth it.

It took one game in Junior High to get Rikki and Sam to hate each other for most of their high school year. Two very motivated, driven teens who love the competition between each other on an intellectual level. Sam has always proven to be a worthy opponent to Rikki and she had never seen him past what he really was, her competition, her rival. When one ill-fated game of seven minutes in heaven leaves a lot of miscommunication, the two go through high school mostly not speaking. But fate brings them back together their first year in college. Of course being under the same roof, the two call a truce and become friends, except sparks fly and soon test the boundaries of their relationship.

Wow. I did not know I was going to enjoy this book as much as I did, but the moment I picked it up I did not regret it. I found myself pulled into this world, Strom's writing and had a really hard time putting it down. I honestly don't know how I made it through the book in one day, I know I missed hours of sleep because of it, but I have done it. The plan was to finish it in two days, but once I got involved with Rikki and Sam, I knew I had to find out how it was all going to turn out.

The romance was slow burn and exciting. The character's felt, real, true, and emotionally raw. I loved watching Rikki grow through the story, and I loved that Strom kept her character true to form. Rikki was inexperienced, but she was far from perfect and flawed in her own way. She wasn't good in relationships, she never really had a grown up relationship, so when she finds herself in college she wants a boyfriend. Despite her want for adult relationship, I still found glimpses of her teenage like innocence. She isn't readily prepared for the influx of emotion she starts to suddenly feel towards Sam, and doesn't know how to handle it. Her inexperience only ends up causing more headache than necessary between the two as well as her inability to deduct that she was the girl who Sam wants but thinks he cannot have.

"I've wanted you for six years"

Sam, poor foolish Sam. I honestly couldn't believe he didn't pick up on her actions. Okay, they weren't the greatest moves to seduce in the world, but the girl practically had it written all over her face. Why didn't he just ask her?

"You want to fight with me?" he asked with a grin. "It seems like we've been doing that for years." "No. I want to fight for you."

I was really rooting for these two. Given their inexperience the romantic in me was hoping for the two to be together, but then Sam went and done something stupid and I felt a small crack in my heart for Rikki.

Okay, to be fair. I get it, he didn't know. But I also felt it was a little out of character for him. I didn't feel like he had enough for him to drink to do that, not when he had other beliefs about the whole situation. For him to assume that poor inexperienced Rikki was headed in that direction was pigheaded. I found myself uncharacteristically angry and a little heartbroken. I am still not 100% sure I agree with the choice here, alcohol or not, but whatever. I picked up the pieces and plowed on with the story in hopes it got the little cracks healed.

It did, Abigail Strom did manage to take the little pieces and neatly place them back together. I did come to the conclusion that I was just being a grumpy hopeless romantic and Sam wasn't with her at that time, his inexperience was also his flaw biggest flaw here.

I think I spent more time blabbing than writing an actual review, but you get it. I found myself very invested with the characters and was rationalizing their mistakes. In the end, I loved the story, I thought it was good. I took some brownie points for Sam's stupid mistake, which I found out of character, and alcohol or not, I didn't feel like he would have done it. I love that there was enough steam in it without being too much, just seemed perfect for these two. Unlike other New Adult books out there, this one was refreshing, tame and a wonderful, well written read. Looking forward to the next book in the series featuring Claire and I think Will ;)

I have been doing this thing lately, taking suggestions on some of my reads from friends. I picked this one up because Ali @ My Guilty Obsession really enjoyed it. Had good experience so far, so how about it :) what book did you guys seriously loved recently that you think I should give a shot? I am taking suggestions! Any genre is welcome :)

P.S. The gif review was just me mixing it up a little. This review was originally posted on Night Owl Book Café

NiCoLeTa E. says

*****5 "Love to Hate" stars with all my heart*****

This story was beyond hatred...

It was beyond friendship...

And surely was beyond love...

This was a really sweet and anticipating story...

Why was that???

This book gave me wrong signs toward the whole story...

Or should i say the right signs who Sam and Rikki thought wrong????

I did confuse you, right??? I'm still very frustrated too over this book...

And that's why my feelings were torn apart in every chapter...

I felt angst (too much angst) and sweetness and terror and panic...

I felt joy and happiness and tenderness...

All the time my hopes were rising and a big smile plastered in my mouth and then... my hopes were shattered for once again...

It was like a ping pong game between hope and disappointment...

But no, don't you ever think that i didn't like that book!!! I am a major majocist and i enjoyed every single moment in it...

I just lost my way some times and that's from clear frustration...

But i think that i have to explain you what was the deal with this book...

Rikki and Sam were classmates for all their lives and they didn't like each other at all... Their hatred was too big and all came from their antagonistics natures...

They were too much into school and they wanted to be the best, and if you want to be the best, you have to bit the second best....

One day when they were about 13 years old, they went to a party and from a twist of luck they stuck together inside a closet while they were playing "Seven Minutes in Heaven", and Rikki was kissed forthe first time in her life by her sworn emeny!!!

After that kiss they got back to their old ways, ignoring each other...

Now, after some interesting facts, they go both to the Hart University but not only that, they are living and to the same dorms... They even have the same friends...

So they start to have more friendly contact and they decide to put a stop to their old hatred and they are embracing this new friendship...

Everything are starting to change when Sam asks Rikki to be the model for a sculpture that he had to make for an essay... and Rikki is accepting it.

So now, the already blurred lines becomes more unrecognisable than ever...

Was it always hate that they were feeling for each other or was it something beyond that??? Something that will make them run into a hill and hide away from everyone???

Well, Rikki was an interested and challenging character...

She was a control freak who loved to study and she had some serious goals in her life...

Her love life sucked... She took her first kiss from her enemy and now, she is the only remained virgin around the Hart University...

She never takes risks especially for love and she is very acceptable to anything...

She doesn't judge nobody and i liked that to her...

But she is so insecure about herself and that was pissing me off.

As for her feelings for Sam???

I think that she always felt something big for him but that scared her and she preffered to ignore it. It was easiest this way!!!

Sam was a really brilliant and wonderfull young man...

For the first time that i saw him in this book, i instantly fell in love with his character...
He was so thoughtful, so caring, so decent... He was putting the others above himself, and especially Rikki...

Yeah, i know that i told you that they were enemies, but i always felt that behind Sam's behavior underlying some solid and big feelings for Rikki...

The way Sam seeing her was amazing and the way he was caring for her was so touching...

So that's why i'm wondering how the hell she wasn't seeing it???

But Rikki underestimated herself so much that i wanted to shake her up and open her eyes with force...

That's why i almost got crazy... because everytime that i was saying "now, it's the time", the time was passing and i was getting very disappointed!!!

I don't know what else can i say to you about this book, i don't want to reveal you too much....

I'll just say that i really liked the plot and i will recommend it to everyone that liked this kind of stories...

It was a sweet and deep story...

A story about finding yourself and learning to take risks in the name of love...

I can not wait for Claire's turn...

ARC kindly provided via NetGalley for the exchange of an honest review

Kate (beautifulbookland) says

THIS. I NEEDED THIS BOOK. I needed something light and angsty and hopeful and cute. This book is all of that, and I loved it. While I know some people will read this and write it off as another new adult university romance, I just loved every minute of it. Books like this can get away with being a 'typical New Adult' romance if they have characters like these.

Rikki and Sam are both top students; they're always battling it out for the top spot. They also hate each other. They cling onto that hatred for 6 years, until they head to university and, upon finding out they're both in the same dorm, decide to call a truce.

I *loved* how intelligent Rikki was. The last 'smart girl' book I read was Smart Tass, and Tass drove me up the fucking wall. Rikki is smart, she knows it, but she doesn't put anyone else down when they're not as dedicated to their studies as she is. She *loves learning*. She doesn't do it to show off, she does it because she loves it, and I just loved that.

And Rikki? Has two mams. And she doesn't get teased or bullied about it by her peers. Literally nobody questioned it and that is SO GOOD. Her parents both love her no matter what, and I'm just so here for caring parents. There's not enough of them in YA/NA books.

And Sam? Oh my god, Sam. Where can I get me one? I just...gah. I love him. There were times where I just wanted to batter them about the head because they're both so fucking stubborn, but it was worth the wait.

I loved this book, and I'm so grateful to the publisher and NetGalley for allowing me to read it.

chandler ainsley ? says

sometimes you see someone reading a book & you just have to know what all the fuss is about. thank you Sara, this was the perfect friday night read.

the story is about sam and rikki (duh) and their hate-to-love relationship which spans roughly 5 years of their lives. they're both academically competitive, and seem to have real feelings and interests which didn't make them flat characters... HELL YEAH.

i genuinely liked everything about this story. we had lesbian moms, college hijinks, and some cute chemistry, my dudes. i also liked the tone of this, idk it was relatable and not corny.

only reason this wasn't perfect was the lack of *ahem* consummation. don't build me up if you ain't gon sex me up (or at least provide me with some gorgeous sexual imagery, ya feel).

Mari?ina says

I'll dive in right away! Rikki is an interesting book as a wholesome. It has unique characters, perspective, no slut-shaming to a delirious degree and in actuality an open-minded community who is very politically correct to the T and very supportive.

Yeah right, please enroll me there right away! Where is it? Near Narnia you say, between Hogwarts and the dystopian Chicago from the Divergent series? Cool, tonight i'll drink to that!
Come on all those proactive things are absolutely amazing and i'm sure at some point in the far, far, far future -and maybe in a galaxy far, far away- this will be possible but for now it's sadly not!

And that's the main problem for me. Although the characters are intensely realistic and compelling the story missed its mark while trying to get a footing in the N.A. world. Sorry, but i don't think there is a person out there that when a friend, who is only 18 btw, confesses that she/he already slept with 23 people, won't be alarmed.

It doesn't have to be judgemental but there must be some concern! Or at least a WOW! I would ask if everything is alright. I think that while the author tried to write a refreshing and a bit utopian version of the late-millennials in college something went terribly wrong. Adjusting an idea in order to fit in every new sociological factor is not always very wise.

But apart from all that i enjoyed the storyline very much. I found it tumbling between a unique innocence and a new sexual conceptism. The heroine was a bit too analytical but the hero was very sweet, chivalrous and likeable even when he made a mistake. I will read the next in the series and keep an eye on the authors for other releases!

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE BOOK

- It was very easy to read it. In just a few hours.
- Her family was very interesting i wanted to know more.
- There is no mention of her friends after she leaves. None at all.
- I liked their chemistry and the sweet tension that was an ongoing theme between them.
- I didn't like Mena right from the start. She was so snobby.
- Tamsin was a little insensitive at first but she grew on me.
- 3,5 Stars!

ARC provided via Netgalley in exchange of an honest review. Thank you!

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

It has been awhile since I have read anything in this genre because, if truth be told, I have been a bit burnt out on it. So it was with little expectation that I picked this up, even though I have loved Strom's work before. It wasn't anything against her, I just wasn't sure I was ready to dive back into the genre yet.

Boy was I wrong. This was such a fun read and it made me realize why I fell in love with this genre to begin with.

It had just the right amount of fun, steam, and romance as well and character growth.

All the fun romantic tropes I crave and love most, all packed into a little read that was so worth my time.

It left me with a smile on my face and just a complete feeling. Like seeing an old friend you haven't seen in forever and remembering why they were your friend to begin with.

Strom did a fun job delivering and making every aspect of this believable and entertaining and she reminded me why I trust her work to being with.

I can't wait for the next book!

An ARC Copy of this was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Lucia says

Quick and cute leisure read for all those who enjoy enemies-to-lovers trope in romance genre. Writing has this natural feel to it and I liked it. Also, I liked heroine. She was "opinionated but non-judgmental". Her enemies/friends/lovers dynamics with Sam were fun to read about.

However, this story is very short and straightforward. It lacks deeper character development or more detailed insight into other characters' life. So overall, Rikki is good but average book with nothing that would make it stand out. In next couple of weeks, this novel will be lost in a sea of other contemporary romances in my mind and I probably won't even remember the names of the characters...

Jessica says

Yesss! That's what I'm talking about!

I must say, I very much enjoyed the younger vibe in this one. Somehow there was more tension and chemistry that way. Really enjoyed it! And Rikki gets bonus points for making me laugh quite a bit :-)

Amber .:★Wild Heart Reviews★:. says

I'm going to be massively blunt here and say that I have an extreme love/hate relationship with this book. *Rikki* was fantastic up until about 85%, and then it made me gasp aloud, and want to bawl my darn head off. Not for good reasons either! Even looking past that bit, it was -still- a good book, but what takes place is hard to swallow. It's also hard for me to wrap my head around because I did not see it coming, nor did I imagine it would happen. I'm not sure if it feels like an author's plot hook for the shock factor to me, or if it's just diabolical genius. I also absolutely hated the plot hook used, because it is one that is over used... but again, it was jaw dropping results. I wasn't sure if I wanted to put my Kindle down and stop reading one moment, or just keep on reading because I wanted to know how it turned out. I kept reading!

Let me back up a bit and give you the technical information. *Rikki* is the first novel in new-to-me author Abigail Storm's new *Hart University* series. It's told primarily from a first person point-of-view by Rikki, the female lead of the book. It can be read as a standalone, has an HEA and thankfully, no cliffhanger. It is intense in some regards, angsty, it'll give you the feels, and it'll very likely make you want to punch out one of the main characters are one point.

Rikki and Sam have known each other since grade school. They've been competing their whole lives, over everything when it comes to academics. They don't talk, they don't have much to do with each other before or after their Jr. High game of Seven Minutes in Heaven. (Not sure what that is, look here .) That is pretty much where the book starts off too. You get a sense of Rikki's feelings on it and it goes from there.

As characters, Rikki and Sam are both pretty developed. They can make you want to pull your hair out though because both are stubborn, they don't know how to talk, and when it comes to each other.. they totally suck at communicating. In a way I feel like you watch them grown up, and do stupid things, and learn from their mistakes. Things are not easy for them, and a majority of the time, when it comes to them, it's their own faults.

I'm giving it a solid four stars because it is a great book. It'd have been a five for me, save for the plot twist that I still can't get past. As a reader, it was like being smacked upside the head with it, and a part of me feels betrayed by it, which is probably silly, but there it is. Overall, I would definitely recommend the book!

Sylvie says

Rikki
by Abigail Strom

4/5 Stars!

After reading depressing books one after another, all I wanted to read was a cute and fluffy contemporary novel and this book was exactly it.

Also from enemies to friends and then to lovers? I can never resist that.

The main characters: Rikki and Sam are always head to head in the top of the class, they're always competing against one another for being the best, They've been 'kind of enemies' since they were 11 years old.

Also, this book beside romance was about love, friendship and more importantly figuring yourself out and what you really want. So overall, this book was adorable, they were diverse characters which I really liked and the book was a perfect feel good read.

Deserie williams says

Self Note:H loses his V-card to OW couple of hours before he has sex with h(who is a virgin). Thats just stupid ! Not something im interested in.

Sara► Ink Is My Sword says

4.5 “Your intelligence turns me on” Stars

Disclaimer: *Copy provided by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

I guess I read this book in the perfect moment, it was unexpected, entertaining and made me feel all the feels.

You know when you have a book you really like, but then you feel is a guilty pleasure and you shouldn't love it as much? Well, this book is that for me. But I know I shouldn't be ashamed of anything I like, I am just insecure. (?)

The romance. It was like this romance was my kryptonite, I was addicted to this shit. If you love hate-to-love relationships this is perfect for you. It was a slow burn, the chemistry was flowing out of the pages to my body, I felt butterflies all over me. I had to re-read many scenes like three times because I need to feel everything again, every single detail I had to absorb.

Characters.It was so perfect for me because the characters are not a cliché, they are odd, different, quirky, not blindingly hot, more like average. They are people focused on academics, going through their first year in college, with normal problems in their lives. I love the fact that Rikki had a diverse family, been raised by two moms. Something really important too was how consent was portrayed very well. The characters always asked each other if it was okay to this or that, that it was okay to stop at any time, and it gave a sweeter tone more than awkwardness. I also liked some secondary characters, especially Andre and Tasmin, I am looking forward to their books.

Plot. Well, here is the way I couldn't give it five full stars. Almost at the end of the book, there is this conflict that happens, where I just wanted to fucking punch Sam, because he was so perfect until that point. I lost a lot of respect for him, and I felt the author should have put a bit more of difficulty to solve it. Apart from that, everything was perfect for me.

I really want for more people to read this and discuss the same scenes that made fall for this book.

Roksana says

SELF NOTE: Hero was intimate with heroine just "HOURS" after he has sex with someone else! Heroine was not even away of it whilst being intimate with him..what a cheating liar! The worst is that you are intimate with a guy and he is not even honest enough to admit that "he screwed" someone few hours ago and he's touching you when his penis was in another woman the same night? "Gag"

Rose says

Initial reaction: How in fresh heck do I write a review on this book? I'll need a full night to meditate on my thoughts, but I'll give all of you some precursory details.

I actually thought there were many great parts of this book and it proved to be a very quick read - I read this in a matter of a couple of hours, I think. Plus I found some of the interactions and inclusions refreshing to read, which were direct knockdowns of a lot of New Adult stereotypes. Kudos to Abigail Strom for addressing them and even being responsible for addressing the conflicts themselves via the characters' dialogue.

But then the latter half of the book, I felt, tried to throw in too much, especially given the quick nature of the style and dictation this had from the beginning. I could get behind some of the occurrences, I could definitely feel for them, but some of it was overload.

Still, I'm in for following this series and the rest of the author's works.

Full review:

"Rikki" was a breath of fresh air in New Adult on many levels. I really liked how fluid the writing and interactions were (it took me only a couple of hours to read through it). I loved how it made me laugh at some of the banter between characters (Rikki and Alex had moments that left me doubled over in stitches laughing). I also, really appreciated that it incorporated a diversity of different characters and seemed to knock down many New Adult stereotypes. Rikki's parents were a lesbian couple who had prominent featuring in the book, Rikki herself was a sex-positive young woman who didn't believe in slut shaming (none of the characters did, to think of it), and even with this book dealing a lot with jealousy factors, for many places in the narrative, it handled it much better than I thought it would. I could probably credit Abigail Strom for dealing with all the conflicts in this novel in a plausible, open dialogue way that gave good insight into the motivations of the characters.

If there were a couple of caveats I would say that made me knock a few stars from the overarching experience, I'd say two things.

1. The novel's aide in its fluidity and brevity might've also been its Achilles Heel, because I think I would've easily given this higher stars if the narrative had a little more flesh to it. The college environment was realistic, the interests of the characters were too. I especially liked the dialogue and how it flowed, but I still felt like the characters themselves only scratched the surface of having depth enough to care about fully for me to identify with them. It's a good start to a series though, and I expect I'll get to know these characters more as the series goes on. I have some investment in them. Probably the most investment came with the two leads - what it was supposed to do, but a little more dimension to the side characters would've made this more fun as well.

2. I think the latter part of this novel threw too many curveballs/eggs against the wall. I mean, I expected to be frustrated with the sexual tension between the two leads and some other conflicts that were occurring around them (which felt realistic and palpable, I'm not saying none of this is realistic at all). I even expected that the heroine would be asked to grapple with some tough coming to terms. While all the conflicts were addressed in a way that felt conversational and aired things out in the open, in the last 40% of the novel it all felt like it was way too fast to digest and piled on more than I could really process. The flow of the first part of the novel was progressive and even, but it felt like the latter part disrupted the flow a bit.

And for personal peeves: I did have issues with the panty thing, and probably that's just my own level of discomfort within a novel that had uncomfortable moments, but at least it addressed that issue too. Although (slight spoiler):

(view spoiler)

But this novel had fun moments and some building blocks that were steps in decent directions, so I have to give it credit for that. I'm definitely reading more of Strom's work, and this series, to get more accustomed to her style, because I like the flow, dialogue, and bits of the humor in her writing.

Overall score: 3/5 stars.

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley, from the publisher.

Glire says

Not the most original story out there, but it was fluffy, cute and entertaining... until it wasn't.

That ending?

The last 15% ruined the book for me :[
