



Perfect Fit

Carly Phillips

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Carly's NY Times Bestselling SERENDIPITY series was such a hit with readers, she brings you back to the picturesque upstate NY town, where three siblings have grown up in the shadow of their proud and respected police chief father. But what do love, fate, and fortune have in store for the next generation of Serendipity's finest?

MIKE

Always feeling like the odd man out in his family, Michael Marsden wanted to make it on his own. So he escaped Serendipity to become an undercover cop in Manhattan, where the Marsden name wasn't known. But Michael's independence is compromised when he returns home to replace his sick father as chief of police. Back in the shadow of his family, he's as lost and restless as ever, until he's challenged by someone he never anticipated.

CARA

Cara Hartley is the Serendipity cop with whom Mike had a one night stand three months earlier. Neither expected anything more but fate has other things in store. When Mike returns as Cara's boss, the sexual tension between them is impossible to ignore - and the unexpected emotional connection continues to grow. But Cara's a small town girl while Mike has a wanderer's blood in his veins.

Together their chemistry explodes but ...

Both are convinced a future together is impossible. Until Mike's real father's secrets come back to haunt him and he realizes there are some things worth staying and fighting for. Including Cara.

Perfect Fit Details

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From Reader Review Perfect Fit for online ebook

Trish R. says

Sooo glad I'm done with this book!!!

At 40% I was wondering if I was ever going to like our selfish hero Mike. Good grief, it was like he was only using Cara for a bed-partner. He was so jealous that he asked her about 2 old boyfriends that friended her on Facebook, both living out of state and both married. He had absolutely no respect for her or his family, since he took her in his old room and would have had her right there if someone hadn't called out that dessert was ready (they were at his parents' house for dinner). He didn't want anyone to know about them, since he was police chief and she was a cop. AND before they left his room he did tell her "you're mine." Really? Then he walked up to her in a bar a night or two later and kissed her right on the mouth. What happened to keeping it on the down-low? Mike was so screwy he was really hard to like.

Then they went to New York to meet a contact who could help with a case they were working on but he didn't bother to tell Cara that the "contact" was a drop-dead gorgeous woman he used to sleep with. AND when the woman patted the seat next to her for Mike to sit down Cara did the same thing Mike chose to sit next to Lauren, and I'm thinking WTH?

So, at 41 or 42% I decided to put this on my DNF shelf but then I decided to finish it because it had less than 300 pages. It says 305 but I checked and it stopped at 279 and the rest was spent on other books.

There was explicit sex, time and time again, in this book but not really an interesting plot, so I won't be reading any more books by this author. The only "plot" was about a cold case from 30 years ago that they were trying to solve, about a brothel and marked money.

AND Mike's stupid thinking that his father's blood ran through his veins and that's why he didn't want a long term relationship (he was afraid of not being able to be there for her.) His father left Mike's mother before he was even born so how he could use that excuse is beyond me. That's like saying if his father had been a serial killer Mike would too because the flowing blood. Just stupid!

And Mike remained a jerk until the last 3 or 4 pages. What a waste of my time.

The F-bomb was used 6 times.

As to the narrator: David Barker has a nice reading voice and his women's voices were fine but he read like a robot. Never laughed when the book called for it. No whispering. No nothing. His emotions were nonexistent. I wouldn't want to listen to him again.

Darcy says

This one was ok for me. Mike seemed to have a chip on his shoulder, one that had been there back to childhood. By the end of the book he worked through the issues, it was just too bad that through out the book he kept hurting Cara. There were times that I thought that Cara could have done better than Mike, that she deserved more.

Liz F says

Review posted on Kindles & Wine

Perfect Fit is the first book in the new Serendipity's Finest series by Carly Phillips but it's also part of the larger Serendipity series. I usually don't like to pick up a book that's in the middle of any kind of series. I guess that's the OCD in me coming out. But this didn't feel like I was picking up a story already in progress.

We meet Mike Marsden. Usually he's an undercover cop for the NYPD. His dad, Simon, who is the Serendipity Chief of Police, has started going through cancer treatment and has had to step down for a while, so Mike has come back to Serendipity to fill in for Simon until he's better. But Mike has a problem with Serendipity. Well, not so much Serendipity, maybe just staying in one place. He feels closed in, antsy. So he's only here for a little while and then it's back to the big city and all the excitement that he craves. While he's in town, he has plenty to occupy himself with, not the least of which is the beautiful Cara Hartley. Mike and Cara had a one-night fling a few months ago. They both thought it was over and done with, but now that Mike is back in town...well, the possibilities are endless!

Cara is the best. I think the author wrote her to perfection! It has to be hard to write a female cop that is tough and can keep up with the men but also make her likeable and vulnerable. I still don't know how she did it, but it really worked. Cara IS tough but I never got the feeling that she was mannish or abrasive or any of that. She was ALL woman! And she isn't just tough, she's strong and confident too.

When Mike comes back to town, Cara knows that she kind of digs him. But she also knows that he's not the kind of guy who sticks around; she knows that she shouldn't be making any plans involving him. And she doesn't. But that doesn't mean she doesn't wish things were different. I think that's what I like so much about Cara: she tries not to get emotionally invested in Mike. She tells herself that Mike isn't sticking around, that all of this is just temporary – it's just sex and nothing else. But she feels herself getting more involved. It's almost like she knows better but can't stop from falling for him, especially when she sees what a great, kind, caring guy he is. I think that's something we can all relate to in one way or another – maybe not with a guy but with something else: that yummy-looking dessert at the restaurant, a luxurious-looking cashmere sweater, heck, even a new pair of shoes that you know you can't afford but you can't stop loving and wanting them...oops, did I just reveal a little too much there? LOL!

But back to my point: Cara and Mike are dynamite together. They both know it but they both know it won't lead to something serious. Then, Mike starts feeling things he isn't used to feeling. I mean, in one way, it is so hilarious because that is such a stereotypical guy reaction: "What is this weird tight feeling in my chest when I think about leaving her?" On the other hand, it was really great to see Mike slowly realizing how amazing Cara is and how maybe staying in Serendipity might not be the end of the world. I won't tell you any more because you have to read this book to find out the rest. Trust me, you'll love it!

Bottom Line

I really enjoyed Perfect Fit. The two main characters have great chemistry and a hell of a lot of heat between them. There are plenty of laughs and lots of excitement, adventure, and some mystery, too! Although this is part of a series, you don't need to have read the previous books to catch what's going on. I would recommend this to anyone who likes a strong alpha male who also goes on a bit of a journey of self-discovery, too.

Rating: B+

Review copy courtesy of the publisher via NetGalley

Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says

Shey's review posted on Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

5 stars

My absolute favorite Carly Phillips has done it again in the first of the Serendipity's Finest Perfect Fit. It never fails with that we are given characters you can connect with and their lives you become a part of and this book was no different. I have to say that this could be a standalone because it is written that well but to get a broader view of Serendipity I would recommend starting from the beginning. Okay, maybe it's because I just love the whole damn series.

We step into the life of Mike Marsden as he takes over as Police Chief for his ailing father who has cancer. Not one for small town life or really anything permanent Mike does this knowing it's only temporary.

With a restlessness he doesn't do anything long term his job in New York, his women and even just visiting his family on occasion everyone that knows him understands that he isn't one to stick around. Although when it does come to his job and his family he is fiercely protective and caring. It wasn't hard to see through the tough alpha to know there was a lot of underlying conflicts and it only made wanting to get to know this dominating man that much more appealing. What Mike didn't expect was to feel more for the women, Officer Cara Hartley that he had a one night stand with months before. He is taken buy surprised by the feelings he has for Cara and the more time they spend together and he gets to know her that she isn't like the other women he has been with the more he falls for her.

Cara Hartley never thought that Mike would return much less be her boss she knew going in to the night they had together it was a onetime deal even if she hasn't been able to stop thinking about him. When her partner is out of commission and she and Mike have to work on a case together there chemistry is off the charts and they can't hold back any longer. Knowing that she is going to get her heart broken when he leaves she goes in with her eyes wide open. However, is she the one woman that can tame Mike's restlessness?

Cara is a tough as nails officer she can definitely stand on her own she is loyal to those she cares about yet a definite vulnerability lies underneath. I admire her for keeping herself together coming from a not so stellar home life she knows exactly what she wants for herself and she will settle for nothing less. Ms. Phillips hits on some tough subjects in most every one of her books and the one thing I admire about her is she pulls no punches about the subject matter. She didn't when it came to Cara's family life. Mikes either for that matter she makes the books more real with the situations that her characters deal with and go through to get where they need to be and for that it makes the book that much better.

Carly Phillips has the ability to suck you in to the lives of these people without you actually being aware and not putting the book down until you are completely done. From the first page when Mike Marsden made his appearance I totally feel for the man!! Now to wait for the next one *sigh* patience is not my virtue Ms. Phillips, Not.At.All. :)

Review copy provided for an honest review.

Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

Blog rating: B

We're back in Serendipity, this time getting to know the Marsden family and the three Marsden siblings Mike, and his half-siblings Sam and Erin. Mike was raised by Sam and Erin's father, but was never treated as anything but a son by their dad. He's never met his biological father, a man who bolted when Mike's mom was pregnant with him. His mom married her close friend, Simon, and he raised Mike as his own. Mike's absent father, Rex, is now making waves by contacting Mike's mom again after all these years and Rex also seems to have connections to a cold case that Mike and Cara have been investigating.

Cara is best friends and partners on the force with Mike's brother, Sam and she and Mike shared a one night stand that she can't forget. But she knows, as Sam constantly reminds her, that Mike isn't a forever kind of guy. He doesn't like to settle down anywhere and can't imagine staying in Serendipity. He does come back as a favor to Simon who's in treatment for cancer. Mike takes over his position as chief of police on a temporary basis and gets a taste of what his life could be like if he put down roots in Serendipity and the spot Cara could have in his life.

Cara is dealing with her share of family angst as well. Her father is abusive but her mom refuses to leave him. As a result, Cara has cut herself off from both her parents, refusing to stay in regular touch with her mom until she changes her situation. Cara also volunteers at a shelter for battered women and children and befriends many of the women who stay there, including one young woman who's battling the urge to go back to her ex. The last thing Cara needs is to let Mike into her life, get close to him to only have him up and leave her, which she knows is exactly what would happen. She can't deny the attraction between them and finds herself drawn to him again.

Mike and Cara go into their relationship with eyes wide open. Cara knows what Mike's all about and Mike doesn't make it any secret that he's not looking for anything long term. Of course that doesn't work out! They both fall hard regardless of what they set out to do and feel at the start of their relationship and Mike especially starts to realize that the way he was previously living his life might not be what he wants for his future. I ended up enjoying their relationship. They have some sexy moments together, lots of sexy moments in fact, and even though their relationship really starts in the bedroom, they slowly start to find their lives entwining more and more through dates, or even the cold case they're working puts them together and they go from a relationship that's just sex to having it be so much more. I liked seeing their dates and the moments when they were getting closer through talking about their pasts and issues they have with each of their families the best.

I do wish Mike would have gotten his stuff together a little sooner. His gut reaction to staying in Serendipity caused the relationship angst towards the end. It just felt like I could see that moment coming from a mile away and would have cheered for his character more had he worked through his feelings about Cara and made some life decisions before outside circumstances forced him to. That aside, I was entertained by not only Mike and Cara's relationship, but seeing them interact with Mike's siblings and Cara's friends. We also get quick glimpses of the Barron brothers and their families. I always like seeing the past characters show up, even just for a moment or two. And it wouldn't be a Serendipity book without a quick, memorable moment from Tess:

"Mike, this is Ethan, Dare and Nash's smart-mouthed sister, Tess. Tess, Mike Marsden. The police chief," Cara said, emphasizing his job description.

“Oh. Shit.” This time Tess grew silent, and Cara burst out laughing.

I enjoyed the new characters introduced for this next set of Serendipity books. Cara and Mike got things off to a strong start. I liked their romance, even though Mike had a moment or two when I wanted to smack him, he comes around and they're a sexy, romantic couple to get to know.

Rating: B

Heather Lire says

I've loved this series ever since the first book, and was super excited to discover that Carly was going to write about Dare's fellow officers.

I have only a couple of things to say about this book.

1. It was my top read of 2012
 2. Mike Mardsen wasn't only my top Carly hero, he was my top hero of 2012
 3. Mike and Cara's love story was absolutely perfect for them.
-

HR readsNstuff says

Entertaining enough read but there were some things that really annoyed me in this story...

i'm NEVER a fan of 'oh i know i'm going to get hurt in the end but i just don't care because the sex is so good' storylines....

and more stars were lost when the h had told the H that she didn't like being called 'baby' because of the way her abusive father always called her mother that. Instead of saying 'okay i won't call you that again' the H 'desensitises' her hatred of that word using sex... yuk yuk yukkety yuk!!! that kind of story telling really turns my stomach mainly because it's sooooo insulting... i would have had much more respect for the situation if the H said 'sorry i'll try not to use it in the future' and stuck with honey (or even boo-boo kitty fuck) rather than have us believe that a lifetime of negative connotations can be solved by having good sex. That's just not good romance to me, it's insulting my intelligence.

Then apparently all their trust issues could be solved with a shiny new house and a marriage proposal.

Okay, i admit it, i need my heroines to make their heroes crawl and sweat before taking them back and i feel really let down when the author gives me a glimpse that this is the heroine's intentions and then all it takes is a token gesture from the hero and then it's HEA...

CRAWL!!! CRAWL!!! I TELL YOU, MAKE THEM CRAWL!!!!

Holly says

I really enjoyed the first three books in Phillips' Serendipity series and I'm glad she's continuing on. Though this is set in the same town as the first three books, it's the start of a new trilogy and can be read as a standalone.

Cara is a great heroine. She's tough but still has a vulnerable side. She isn't afraid to speak her mind or stand up for herself, but also realizes sometimes it's better to let things go. As the novel progressed I came to respect her independence and sharp wit.

Mike has insecurities of his own. His biological father bailed on his mom before he was born. His step-father adopted him and raised him as his own, but he's always felt separated from the rest of his family. He knows he has his father's blood running through his veins, and just like the man who abandoned him, he's not made for permanence. His redeeming qualities were his tenderness toward Cara and his internal struggle with his feelings for her and his hometown.

The characters from previous books popped up, but weren't a distraction from the main protagonists and their story. I enjoyed seeing them again. I also enjoyed the new cast of secondary characters - Mike's family and Cara's friends - and look forward to learning more about them in the future.

Phillips has created a strong contemporary series with real-life characters and situations.

Cocktails and Books says

Mike Marsden always let the fact that he was an adopted member of his family bother him and let him feel like he was destined to be a jerk like his "real dad". Mike left Serendipity and his family to work as a cop in the big city and never let himself become involved with anyone because he knew that he would just hurt them by leaving.

Cara Hartley loves Serendipity and her job as a police officer, when Mike fills in for his father the chief of police temporarily it is all kinds uncomfortable being around Mike. After having a one night stand with Mike 3 months earlier she is still attracted to him but she doesn't trust he has any intention of sticking around after his father recovers.

Mike and Cara have great chemistry and attraction, can they find away to trust the other one enough to really have a relationship or will Mike's issues with his biological father and Cara's trying to protect herself from the hurt that would happen if Mike left after she let herself fall for him stop them from having the happily ever after they deserve?

Carly Phillips once again gives up emotion, depth and characters who draw us in and take a hold of our hearts in Perfect Fit. Ms. Phillips explores the feelings of an adult dealing with the abandonment of a biological parent and working out how much of who they are is in how they were raised and how much does biology factor in.

The character development is fantastic and you feel like you are a part of what is going on with the characters in Perfect Fit. as if you were a part of the story not just reading it. Perfect fit has a balance of romance, steam and secondary story and keeps you reading and reading. I am looking forward to more stories from Serendipity.

Reviewed by Carin for Cocktails and Books

Liv says

es war so unglaublich schlecht, ich ärgere mich einfach darüber es nicht abgebrochen zu haben.

Cheri says

So after reading the #3 in this series by accident, I got number #1 to read. I pretty much knew who ended up with who and other scenarios. I enjoyed Mike & Cara in #3 so it was nice to see how it originally came to be. They went through a lot to find each other. I really liked this book.

Lisa Berk says

I loved this book! It was definitely one of my favorites! I can't wait for Erin's book! The sneak peek was awesome!!

Nicole says

Review originally posted here: <http://thebookpushers.com/2012/12/28/...>

I've been a long time fan of Carly Phillips, and with her newest series set in small town New York, she has catapulted herself into one of my all-time favorite contemporary romance authors.

Mike never wanted to stay in Serendipity forever, but when his adoptive father gets sick, Mike returns home temporarily to take over the position of Police Chief. The last thing he expected was to fall back into insane lust with one of his cops, Cara. The sexual tension from their one-night stand is off-the-charts, and although Mike is hesitant to rekindle their relationship, he also can't deny how strong the pull is between them. When Cara comes to him with details of a cold case that points negatively towards his biological father, the two are thrown together on the clock, and off.

Cara doesn't bother trying to deny her attraction and growing feelings for Mike, but the fact that he doesn't want to settle in Serendipity is a constant reminder of how things could never work between them. But as they continue to work together, they grow closer as both friends and lovers, and before long Cara finds herself head over heels. As more and more details on their case come to light, Cara holds out hope that Mike will find something in Serendipity, besides her, that will make him stick around this time and give them a real shot at love.

I've long been a fan of the Serendipity series, and I was so excited when Phillips announced the next trilogy would feature some of the men in blue. I really liked Mike. Despite his insecurities about his family and where he fit within them, he was a pretty amazing hero. He had his own issues and problems and worries, and yet he was also a genuinely good guy. He cared for his mother, his adoptive father, and his half brother and sister. He wanted nothing more than to fit in somewhere, despite his inability to stay in one place long

enough. I liked that he had real issues that made perfect sense within the story.

I also really enjoyed Cara. She was one of those heroines that wore her heart on her sleeve, and had a place in her heart for everyone she meets. She was so sweet and loving and giving and I absolutely adored that about her. I was so glad that she was willing to fight for Mike, that she was patient in giving him space to figure out his place, and yet she also was able to have his back and support him while he made his decisions. I loved the relationship she had with Mike's younger brother, also her partner on the force. They already had a brother/sister kind of bond, and the fact that he went to bat against Mike FOR Cara was so sweet to see.

I thought the romance was wonderful as well. The sexual tension between them was so steamy, and the fact that they were both hesitant and quick to act on it made it all the more enjoyable. I loved seeing how well they worked together, and how well they complimented each other on the job and off. Poor Mike was a little slow on the up-take when it came to figuring out exactly what Cara meant to him, but when he got it, he did it right.

The mini sub-plot with Mike and Cara and the cold case was also done really well. It helped move the story along quicker, and was a huge factor in helping Mike really find his place, not only in Serendipity, but within his family as well. I enjoyed watching it all unfold, and was even a little surprised by some of the twists and turns.

All in all Phillips has come up with another great story for the small town of Serendipity. I adored Mike and Cara, and Mike's quirky family. This book had everything I've come to love and expect from Phillips: a smoking hot hero, a heroine I can relate to, a wonderful romance, and a few steamy moments to heat up the pages! I'm so excited for the next book in the series, set to feature Mike's younger sister Erin and town bad-boy Cole!

I give A Perfect Fit a B+

? Sassy ~ Amy ? says

This truly was my first Carly Phillips book & let me tell you... I liked it because it was totally balanced. It had a couple stories running through it, & the romance was solid, there & you knew what they were doing at all times. If there was a gap in time, by gosh she said something like "I didn't see him for 5 uneventful busy days..." then you knew what was going on. None of this wake up the next morning wondering how the hell we got there in the first place.

It was complete & I was satisfied at the end. The story was pretty good, but I would have definitely reacted way different than her characters did & I wouldn't have let stuff go as easily, but obviously the characters had different personalities than me. The dude on the cover also did nothing for me in the "Oooo he's hot department" AT ALL! He looked a little redneck to me, but they can't all have great cover models!! LOL!!

Definitely worth the read & she's an author I will definitely read more of!!

Francesca the Fierce (Under the Covers Book Blog) says

This review was posted at Under the Covers

What can I say? I loved, loved l.o.v.e.d, LOVED this book (yes I sound a bit fangirl-ish). Lets start with the

easy things and talk about the story. This book was by far the best this series has to offer as far as combining a great, slightly romantic suspense, contemporary romance. Mike is back in town to fill in as temporary Chief of Police due to his father's cancer battle. After his brother Sam is in a car accident, he has to take over an investigation he had started on a cold case that slowly uncovers family secrets.

But that's just about the slight suspense. What I really loved about this book was the characters. They are both badass, alpha in their own ways and just a bit, or more than a bit, damaged.

Mike thinks he is cut from the same cloth as his birth father, and will leave any woman he's in a relationship with. So he likes to keep things light and always make sure he can walk away. He's up front and tells women not to have expectations. And that's how he gets involved with Cara. Cara is a cop, his brother Sam's partner. They had a one night stand 3 months ago when he was visiting, and now that he's back they kind of pick up where they left off with the understanding that things will be casual and temporary.

Cara is, as I said before, damaged in her own way. Her mom is the victim of domestic abuse and still continues to stay in that relationship. This is one thing that hits close to home for Cara and she's made it a point to help women that are going through that, to get out of that situation.

But together, they compliment each other perfectly. Their chemistry is off the charts, but they are supportive of each other when they need to and know when to give each other space. Mike is, I can almost say, perfect. I don't mean there's nothing wrong with him, but he's the kind of guy any woman would want next to her. He's intense, he wants deeply, he loves strongly. He's very alpha with a touch of sweet. Not the funny guy, but the serious one you know you can rely on. He's swoon-worthy. And Cara is a strong woman, who has been through a lot and has made tough choices in her life. Just the type of heroine I love to read about.

With this book, we are technically moving on to a second trilogy in the Serendipity world. Yes, this is Serendipity # 4. But it could also be considered book one because we are moving away from the Barron brothers and now have a new family to read about, the Marsden. Mike, Sam and Erin. And let me just say that I couldn't resist reading the teaser from PERFECT FLING, which is about Erin, and I can't wait to get my paws all over that one. I loooove a good bad boy.

*ARC provided by publisher
