



## The Best Man

*Kristan Higgins*

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## **The Best Man** Kristan Higgins

*Sometimes the best man is the one you least expect...*

Faith Holland left her hometown after being jilted at the altar. Now a little older and wiser, she's ready to return to the Blue Heron Winery, her family's vineyard, to confront the ghosts of her past, and maybe enjoy a glass of red. After all, there's some great scenery there....

Like Levi Cooper, the local police chief - and best friend of her former fiancé. There's a lot about Levi that Faith never noticed, and it's not just those deep green eyes. The only catch is she's having a hard time forgetting that he helped ruin her wedding all those years ago. If she can find a minute amidst all her family drama to stop and smell the rosé, she just might find a reason to stay at Blue Heron, and finish that walk down the aisle.

## **The Best Man Details**

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Author : Kristan Higgins

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## From Reader Review The Best Man for online ebook

### Viri says

Esperaba mucho más del libro. La primera parte me pareció muy lenta y a veces un poco aburridilla. Sip, si hubo algunos momentos hilarantes pero no los suficientes como para los comentarios esos que decían que te morías a carcajadas. Igual no era mi momento jajaja

Lo que si es que la segunda parte mejoró mucho y tuvo más romance, cosa que me encantó. Ideal para pasar el rato no más.

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### Blacky \*Romance Addict\* says

#### First time reading this author and I AM IN LOVE!

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### Jonetta says

The one thing you can always count on in a Kristan Higgins story is you're going to experience just about every emotion before you reach the end...and that's with the same characters! This one is no different in that your heart breaks for Faith Holland at the outset when she's jilted at the altar after Jeremy Lyons, her fiancé, announces he can't marry her because he's gay. And, his best man, Levi Cooper, is the one that halted the wedding to make him fess up. Since they were planning to honeymoon in San Francisco anyway, Faith goes alone and ends up staying there for three years.

When Faith returns home to work on a project at her family's winery, she only plans to stay for a few weeks. She's only visited a couple of times since her fiasco of a wedding and the town is so small that most everyone had attended. The first person she encounters is Levi, now the police chief and former Army vet (decorated at that) and the tension is thick; he never really cared for Princess Super-Cute and she hasn't forgiven him for his responsibility in halting her wedding.

While you can't help but like Faith, there are times you want her to get a backbone. But, there's a reason for why she behaves the way she does and it's an important part of the story. Her clashes with Levi sizzle with their animosity and lustful attraction, which neither really gets for a while. There are a lot of colorful characters in the town and no one is shy about sharing their points of view about and with the two. It doesn't help that Jeremy is beloved by all of them and is still there, too. Add to that Faith's pretty whacky family and you've got a story that is often hilarious, sometimes sad and always romantic in some form or fashion.

I love Higgins' stories with her less than perfect characters who end up surprising you when you dig underneath the surface. Faith doesn't look for your sympathy and you can't help but admire how she picked herself up and never shied away from what happened to her. Levi is über sexy and has his own issues to deal with and his journey to discover the real Faith helped him to look at his own situation in a different light. It's a fun, adult romance that tackles some serious issues but not so seriously that you end up in a bad place. I laughed so hard at times it brought me to tears. I liked them as a couple and am glad this is the first book in a new series, which will allow me to revisit some favorite characters again. 4.5 stars

(I received an ARC from NetGalley)

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## Duchess Nicole says

I just loved Faith and Levi! This is the first in the Blue Heron series by Kristan Higgins and my fourth book to read of hers. She never fails to impress me with her evocative, if somewhat long winded family drama and sweet, slow, believable romances. Add in a dash of humor that is seriously chuckle-worthy, and I'm game for everything she can throw at me. And anyone who calls enemies hemorrhoids and utilizes Fifty Shades of Grey as sexy, silly comic relief is, quite frankly, DA BOMB!

This is set in the Finger Lakes wine country of New York. I always know an author is fantastic if I just have to look up their settings after I'm done reading their book. Yeah, I totally went out and bought a bottle of wine for myself :) And check out some gorgeous photos I found of the area.

(That last pic holds special meaning for a young Faith and Levi.)

"How many men have you slept with? Levi asked.

Busted. "Uh, counting you?" she said, feeling her chest practically burst into flame with a blush.

His forehead crinkled with that incredulous look she'd seen so many times in their high school years. "We haven't slept together, Faith."

"No, I know that. You have a point. Can't argue with that."

Levi is the town sheriff and the best friend of Faith's ex fiancée. In fact, Levi is responsible for her ex leaving her at the altar! In fact, he's only the one who stopped the two from making a big mistake, but it takes years for Faith to realize that. Levi is very stoic, quiet and steady, and at times somewhat abrasive...especially when it comes to Faith. But he's also loyal to a fault, and he's willing to do anything to help the people of his town.

Faith has recently come home and quickly falls back in love with her hometown and her friends and family. Her predicament is common for those of us who come from small towns...you've moved on and spread your wings, found a new place in the world. But there's always something that calls you home.

Faith's family is wonderful! Her sister the sex maniac just slays me.

"I refuse to sign your contract, Mr. Grey, and furthermore, I've never even heard of that Japanese thingamajig you mentioned in your last email. And yes, I remain untouched, I have never even kissed a man before, yadda yadda." She looked at Levi. "I'm forty-seven years old, Levi, and the mother of Carl's children. Why I have to pretend to be an insipid virginal college student is beyond me."

Seriously?

Laugh. My. Ass. Off.

Kristin Higgins always manages to work a lovable, loyal canine friend into the mix and in this case it's a dorky, tennis ball loving, leg humping Golden Retriever.

I would have thought, with the length of this book and the very PG sex scenes (\*Note: there is ONLY fade to black sex in all of KH books that I've read so far....big fat bummer, and what does it say about me that I'd likely have rated this five stars if she went the extra mile there? Idk, I just need that intimacy) that I'd have taken a break between books like I normally do. Not the case. I moved right on to the next in the series and I loved it as well.

Do yourself a favor and read a Kristin Higgins novel. For lovers of Nora Roberts, Bella Andre, Jill Shalvis, Terri Osburn, and for lovers of fairly clean romance.

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◆ Anna's ??????g\$ ◆ says

This is my first read by this author. I can see why so many readers love her books. Her writing is compelling and witty. And while I do admit this book was funny and entertaining at times, it basically rubbed me the wrong way.

SPOILERAGE BELOW.  
RANT AHEAD.

**Issue No. 1:**

I couldn't relate to the heroine. She is naïve, whiny and has low self-confidence. She blushes all the time, needs to be looked after and has to be carried around because she forgets to take her meds and, as a result of that, has epileptic seizures.

Furthermore, she had a boyfriend for 8 years and, although it took their friend one look to see that man was gay, she was oblivious.

But that's not all.

After she was left at the altar, she occasionally went on dates. The first two men turned out to be gay as well (wtf?) and the third one was married with a child. Not to mention she found a potential wife for her father, who ended up being... a man?!

However.

The most irritating thing is, without doubt, her favorite cuss word: "Oh, hemorrhoid!".

### **Issue No. 2:**

The hero and the heroine are indifferent to each other throughout the book. They didn't like each other in high school and they don't like each other now. This is *not* love-to-hate-you thing; they simply DON'T LIKE each other.

The hero thinks the heroine is boring and unimportant. He gives her disinterested looks and practically ignores her all the time. His attitude towards her is condescending. He has a low opinion of her.

He does find her 'attractive' in that soft, warm, milky flesh way ~~but, basically, he thinks she's fat:~~

*"...her shirt coming out of her jeans to reveal a patch of creamy flesh. Looked like the fitness revolution had passed her by..."*

*"The baggy sweatshirt wasn't doing her any favors—gave her the same shape as a side of beef..."*

Which leads us to issue No. 3.

### **Issue No. 3:**

Unlike the heroine, the hero's ex-wife is drop dead gorgeous. The J.Lo look-alike is a badass military pilot. She is the woman he adored and wanted to have children with as soon as he saw her. She is his first love. When she left, she broke his heart.

When she appears out of nowhere *at the end* of the book (yes, after he hooked up with the heroine), his first thought when he sees her is:

*"Gorgeous."*

His second thought is:

*"Her ass was the seven wonders of the natural world."*

His further random thoughts:

*"She has a sex goddess smile."*

*"She was the type of woman who could seduce in seconds."*

He even feels an unwilling tug of affection for her.

Of course, the ex-wife wants him back. She tells him she wants to spend time with him over the weekend to convince him they should get together again. He does NOT refuse. He says: *Fine* .

And then he ignores the heroine FOR DAYS.

He doesn't say NO to his ex-wife because he doesn't love her anymore. He says NO because he isn't sure she won't vanish again.

But you know what pissed me off the most?

At around 90%, when the hero's ex-wife announces that she's leaving and accuses the hero that he never really loved her because they never fought, the hero does not agree with her. He actually thinks they didn't fight because they were *compatible*.

Whatever.

#### **Issue No. 4:**

After the ex-wife drama, the hero dumps the heroine without a second thought ~~not because he was an ass ignoring her and spending time with his ex-wife but~~ because she didn't tell him she was going away for a month because of her job.

### **Issue No. 5:**

After dumping the heroine, the hero, of course, gets lonely. After all, it's winter and life in a small town during the winter can be boring.

So he decides to reconcile with her. He tells her: "*I love you and... that's all I've got*". She forgives him. No groveling. The end.

I was left with the impression that he did not really love her. Hell, it didn't even feel like he was *in love* with her.

I am not a very demanding reader. I can read about cheaters and unrequited love as long as it's done well. But I need a convincing ending. Sadly, this one didn't convince me at all.

### **QUICK REVIEW:**

Enjoyment: 2/5

Writing style: 4/5

Storyline: 2/5

Hero: 1.5/5

Heroine: 2/5

Secondary characters: 4/5

Hotness/steam: 1.5/5

Romance: 1.5/5

Angst: 3/5

Darkness level: 1/5

Humor: 3.5/5

Depth of the book: 3/5

POV: third person, dual

Triggers: (view spoiler)

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### **Kiki says**

Sorry Mou, couldn't like the hero. I tried.

1. He had lots, she had ONE- her gay ex fiancé who pretended she's Justin Timberlake wearing a hoodie.
2. HE dumps her when she was upset because he's been spending time with his ex wife and he wasn't clued in her plans. He DUMPS her where she merely was looking for space while he was off emotionally cheating with his ex wife.
3. He DOES emotionally cheat with his ex wife. She wanted to talk, she wants him back, he says no. Who the fuck on their right mind keeps seeing her after she blatantly tells his current girlfriend she's planning to

get him back and her being in the picture is only a slight awkwardness not a drawback? What WAS there to talk about? Unless he was considering taking her back? She said give me some time to persuade you, and he says OK???? And then he dumps heroine saying it wasn't working between them because she didn't tell him about leaving for a month because she was upset over seeing him everywhere with his ex wife? And while she was insecure because he made no commitment?

4. He also finds his ex wife gorgeous AND does NOTHING to get the heroine back until es-wife leaves the town. He's clearly hungover on her and can't move on with heroine if the ex wife is in picture. Kinda makes the heroine second best.

5. There was absolutely ZERO grovelling. He deserved to be beaten up by all of her friends!

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### **Amy (Foxy) says**

*I just finished listening to this one which makes it the second book for me by this author.*

Since I read the second book first I knew a little bit about this story. I knew **Faith** was engaged to the love her life but was left at the altar when Jeremy came to terms with his true feelings. It wasn't that he didn't love her but that he was gay and had never accepted that as who he was until his best man, **Levi**, challenged him to see what he really wanted in life.

The title is so fitting for this story because Faith learned that the title Levi held as Best Man at her wedding was more than just a title. He is the best man she knows.

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### **Susan Elizabeth Phillips says**

I just love Kristan Higgins' author's "voice." She could write the phone book, and I'm sure I'd read it.

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### **Jennifer says**

I was late to the game when I finally found Kristan Higgins. My first experience with her was the perfection that was *If You Only Knew*. Although her former works are probably very good, if you've read any of her newer stuff, you'll know what I'm talking about when I say nothing else compares. *The Best Man* was published in 2013 and is the first installment in a series of romances set in the community of Blue Heron. I found it to be a good contemporary romance for adults. Overall, I liked it. It was simple, funny, a little long, and it did the trick. I plan to work my way through more of this series along with her other former books... but I will without a doubt be reading every single one of her new releases. I'm not sure when she found her mojo but I will have her publication dates on every calendar in my home from now on.

### **My favorite quote:**

*"Maybe love isn't just a bouquet of roses once in a while. Maybe it's just sticking it out, when it's hard, when you're mad, when you're tired."*

**\*TANYA\* says**

Adorable book. Faith was a hoot!! I liked that this wasn't your typical "insta-love" type read. And the family banter was hilarious, great family camaraderie.

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**Yolanda says**

le doy 4 estrellas porque me he reído taaaaannntoooo

Amena y divertida desde el momento 0. Faith y su familia son un puntazo, todos y cada uno. Me ha gustado mucho el romance de Faith y Levi.

De verdad que vale la pena leerlo. Nos ha mantenido riendo toooodo el libro.

No me lo esperaba, ha sido divertidísimo!!!!

Si queréis pasar un buen rato, no dejéis de leerlo.

Olga, gracias por la compañía en este viaje tannnnnnnnnnn diver, no nos hemos podido reír más.

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**♥Sharon♥ says**

I am so happy that I decided to pick up one of Kristan Higgins books. I absolutely adored this story and I cannot wait to read more from her.

**The Best Man** is book #1 in the **Blue Heron series**. What I loved most about this story was that the romance between the two main characters was so refreshing to read. It was sweet, tender, sexy and there was just the right amount of angst thrown in too. Nothing was overdone.

This is Faith Holland and Levi Cooper's story. Both characters were easy to love. Levi was that kind of guy that was imperfect in ways that drew you in and made you swoon like crazy. And sweet beautiful Faith. She was the perfect match for Levi even if he had a hard time seeing that himself.

With a shared past that had been a bit bumpy, Levi and Faith's lives end up going down paths that wouldn't cross again until a number of years had passed. Both of them have changed in different ways but there was a piece of their past that hadn't changed. There was something that had always simmered just below the surface when they were together and soon enough it would bubble over.

Faith and Levi's past involved Levi's best friend and Faith's ex-fiancé Jeremy. When Faith was left broken hearted at the alter nothing could take away the humiliation she felt. How did she not know? Why didn't someone say something to her? So she did the only thing she could and left Manningsport and headed to San Francisco.

There is something stirring within Faith's family that brings her back home after a few years. She was looking forward to seeing her father John, her brother Jack, her sisters Honor and Pru, her best friend Colleen and lets not forget Goggy and Pops. The one person that she wasn't looking forward to was seeing Levi.

Faith hadn't forgotten what happened on her wedding day and her feelings towards Levi hadn't changed much. That's until she runs into him and realizes that there is a bit of a spark between them. This spark sends them both into a passionate tailspin. ♥

I really enjoyed these two together. One minute Levi would be all brooding and the next minute he was being sweet and sexy. I loved Faith's tenacity and her sweetness. Their romance was slow building and I'll admit, the sex scenes were not over the top hot and heavy but it really didn't matter. They were sexy in such a tender way that it was rather refreshing.

There was so much more to this story than just the romance brewing between Faith and Levi. Faith needed to come to terms with something that happened when she lost her mom and Levi needed to realize he was so much more than that boy from the wrong side of the tracks. He deserved to be happy.

I also enjoyed the side story of Faith and her siblings trying to find a girlfriend for their dad John. It was comical. Groggy and Pop were a hoot too. And everyone needs a best friend like Colleen. She was rather entertaining to say the least. Oh and Blue. What a sweet dog he was. That is when he wasn't humping Levi's leg. :)

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## **Didi says**

### **RE-READ JANUARY 15/16**

10++++ MILLION STARS!!!!!!

I read this last year, loved it and then subsequently read everything else KH has ever written. I have faves from her amazing database, but some distinct standouts. This Blue Heron series is truly remarkable, but The Best Man is...UN-BELIEVABLY OUT OF THIS WORLD, FANTASTIC!

I noticed things I didn't the first time around, and frankly, fell in love with Levi and Faith even more. Much, much more. Levi, gah! I can't even tell you how incredibly amazing he is! And Faith, what a beautiful heroine. This is funny, laugh-out-loud, funny, sweet, beautiful, heart-breaking and emotional. I adored it more than I thought I could and can't believe how much more it resonated with me the second time around. Can't emphasize how much I LOVED this!

The whole series is among my favorite ever, and this, true as it was the first time I read it, is my utmost fave. I'll stop now because gushing tears don't imprint onto paper! <33

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Okay, I LOVED THIS BOOK! Why had I never heard of this author? Shame on me. But now I've found another talent to add to my roster, so I'm all good. This was a beautiful and sweet story about second chances

in the most unlikely of places. Getting jilted at the alter left Faith Holland humiliated and alone. She flees to San Fran and leaves Manningsport in the Finger Lakes region, her beloved home town.

But now, 3 and a half years later, Faith is back. She misses her family, misses home but unfortunately the first person she sees is Levi Cooper, the current chief of police in Manningsport, and her ex-fiancée's best man that ruined everything. But there's a history there, a connection that was never explored. And what starts out as forced civility soon turns into a passionate and long overdue encounter.

I loved Faith and Levi! They were so cute and loveable. Faith was a great heroine, always doing things for others and treating everyone kindly. Levi was the strong and silent type, saying few words but having an intimidating presence nonetheless. He was a sexy and seductive man who finally gave in to the simmering feelings for Faith. There were several scenes I wanted to reach through the pages and kiss the man. He was such a wonderful support for Faith, using his stoic presence to cushion her pain.

This was also a very atmospheric story. It reminded me of Terri Osburn's writing. The book was evocative and written in a way I loved. It almost read like a narrator was telling the story, very beautiful and moving. I'd love to visit Manningsport and buy a few crates of wine while I'm down there!

The epilogue was sweet and really came full circle, I was in tears during half of this book---sometimes happy tears but other times sad or empathetic ones. I loved this so much and even with the fade to black sex, it was a powerful and sexy book. Of course I prefer the steam! But when a book is written so well, when the story is so compelling and the romance is thick and rich....the steam is no longer a necessity. There was lovin' and such, foreplay working up to the main event, good stuff.

I am definitely checking out this authors another work, LOVED IT!!

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## Mo says

4.5

First off I want to say that I love Kristan Higgins. Have read all her books and totally love her stories, her characters, her humour, her dogs.... She has it all. Felt like I was waiting forever for this one as it only just became available NOW on KINDLE in Europe – why make us wait so long? Not fair.....

It is the story of Faith and Levi.... Oh and Jeremy is in there somewhere too.

Faith left her hometown after she was jilted at the altar.

Everybody loves her, she is popular, well off, has lots of friends and she lived in the “good” part of town ...

We have Levi ...

Tall, dark, handsome, good at sports but lives on the wrong side of the tracks...

Jeremy is Levi's best friend and Faith's ex-fiance.

Faith comes back to town after living in San Francisco for a number of years. She is under the impression that Levi never liked her. She was just too bubblegum for him. They meet up again on her first day back when he stops her for speeding. He is now the Chief of Police. Gotta love a man in Uniform.

The interactions between Faith and Levi are great – she feels that he is giving her dirty looks all the time. She admits that he is Fine but cannot get over the fact that HE was the one that OUTED, Jeremy, on their friggin supposed Wedding Day... She moves in next door to him. Faith also suffers from Epilipsy and one night she has a seizure and Levi takes care of her.... So Sweet. NOT, especially what happens the next morning. Annoying or what?

Just finished with a big goofy grin on my face. Seriously can anything be more PERFECT than a Kristan Higgins story. LOVED IT. Makes me want to go back and read her other books again. HURRY UP AND GET THE NEXT ONE OUT QUICKLY!!

Love the best friend, Colleen too. She is a hoot.

They get together – no HOT SEX SCENES HERE – and to tell you the truth I did not care. I just love her storytelling that I don't need it. Jeremy is still friends with both of them.

Love the Grandparents too.... Goggy and Pops....  
And the "Dates" they are trying to set up for the Dad ....

LOL, Love Prudence and her sexting her Old Man – and that Fifty Shades reference, love it.

**Her face grew red. "I flushed my sweater down the toilet."**

**"That happens to me all the time."**

**This earned another glare.**

**"So you decided to climb out the window?"**

**"Mmmm-hmmm."**

**"Where you are now stuck."**

**"Wow. Those analytical powers of yours are just stunning Levi. No wonder you're a cop."**

**Levi saw Faith at school, of course. Jeremy's angelic girlfriend, who couldn't tell the difference between a guy who wanted to bang her silly and a guy who didn't."**

**For the first time in a long time, it seemed like Levi was looking at her with something other than contempt. And you know ... a man in uniform ... with those big, brawny arms.... Her knees felt abruptly weak.**

**And she forgot, at least for a little while, that Levi was the one who ruined her wedding and outed the man she loved.**

**The man was such a pain in the ass.**

**Cookies and wine ... looked like those fifteen pounds wouldn't be going anywhere.**

**Damn. Colleen was right. Levi Cooper was sex on a stick.**

**Shit. He shouldn't be having those thoughts again. Faith was ... well, she wasn't his type. Too – too much, that was all. Too ~~delicious~~ edible complicated. He should not have kissed her that morning.**

That Rose Quartz heart – Sigh ...

Yes ...

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## **willaful says**

I'm really puzzled about how to approach this review. There is much about this book that is sensitive, generous, moving, and funny. There is also much that feels like getting a pie in the face. With a rock in it.

Faith has an exceptionally bad history with men, even for a Higgins heroine. Her longterm sweetheart Jeremy came out to her at their wedding and it's been nothing but bad revelations ever since. Yet fate has chosen her to be a matchmaker for her widowed father, who the family fears is in danger of marrying Lorena, "clearly a gold digger and *not* a candidate for stepmother." The burden of guilt Faith carries about her mother's death makes it impossible to refuse to go home, even though it means facing the lover who dumped her -- and his best friend Levi, who pushed him into doing it.

Starting with a gossipy prologue about the aborted wedding, the story is firmly set in the "small town full of lovably eccentric characters" subgenre, and the romance cliches fall thick and fast at the beginning. As I read on, I found I didn't mind, because the elements were all *used* -- yes it's a bit over the top that Chief of Police Levi gets called out to rescue pet chickens from dogs but it also reveals something about his dependable character. Faith's relationship with Jeremy is also more than just a plot point; they still care deeply about each other and regain some of their former closeness over the course of the story, and Jeremy and Levi's friendship is also strong. Despite his deceit, Jeremy is really a love and I *would have* read a romance for him in a minute.

And there's a realistic ugly side to this small town. In one poignant scene, Levi thinks about how, as police chief, he helped a woman who had once begrudged him some Halloween candy, because he was a "trailer

park kid."

Levi's sensitivity about class issues was one of the reasons he and Faith had never been friends -- that and his contempt for her people-pleasing attitude. Faith is so aware of his dislike, she has a "boredom scale" that measures the way he looks at her: "One was *Oh. It's you*. Ten was *You're invisible*." They start the story with a lot of bad feeling between them -- as well as a bit of history of attraction and a forbidden kiss. And that attraction begins to blossom as they start to understand how each misinterpreted the other.

The parts of the story from Levi's perspective were my favorites. He's written a little too self-consciously "just an average guy" at times, like when he thinks "A regular... what was that Greek chick's name? The one who caused the slaughter of an entire city?" He remembers the details, but not the well-known name Helen of Troy? But he's a good guy with a hard past, and I liked him for coping so well. Faith is less easily likable, until we discover what makes her so needy. "Jeremy, the only one who'd ever seen in her something that was special and rare and precious. Jeremy had been proof that she was forgiven. But now there was nothing."

Good characters, good backstory, good romance -- what went wrong for me was the humor, which too often sailed over-the-top into very offensive. I was uncomfortable when the wife of Faith's date shows up--toddler in tow--and gleefully calls her "whore." Ten times. I was uncomfortable with the depictions of no-class "gold digger" Lorena, and Faith's grandparents, who can't say a word to each other that doesn't contain an insult. I was uncomfortable when a blind date starts whimsically grilling Faith about whether she likes to be tied up, completely ignoring her obvious distaste. And I was enraged when a blind date for Faith's father turns out to be a "she male," to everyone's horror and amusement. "Humor" at the expense of a marginalized minority is ugly and mean-spirited.

And that's when I stopped wanting to read Jeremy's story, because who knows what might happen in it? I had a hard time even finishing this book, and I had to rate it down because my enjoyment was significantly spoiled. Here, two stars doesn't mean "it was okay," because it was *not* okay. It's just my acknowledgement that there was much about the story that was worth reading.

(reviewed from e-arc provided by netgalley)

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