



Ever the Same

B.A. Tortuga

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Audie Barrack is in it up to his elbows with a sick calf when his son's school calls. Seems Grainger has gotten into yet another fight. When he walks into the principal's office, he's shocked to find his son has been fighting with a little girl named Randi.

A little girl with one blind dad and one dad who recently passed away.

Goddammit.

Dixon has lost his sight, his career, and his husband. Thank God for his brothers, Momma and Daddy, and his little girl, or he would simply give up. The last thing he needs is for Randi to start trouble at school, especially trouble that puts him in contact with another dad who might expect him to be a functional human being.

Dixon is struggling to live as a blind man, Audie is terrified someone might see he has a closet to come out of, and everyone from the school to both men's families is worried for the men and their children. Unless they get themselves together and commit to change, neither of them stands a chance.

Ever the Same Details

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From Reader Review Ever the Same for online ebook

Lisa says

This touching story had me by the end of the first paragraph. I just loved it. It was emotional, tragic, humorous and enlightening. Chuck in a couple of 6 years olds that love "spasgetti", a horse named Sarge, a couple of guitars and the ending came far too quick.

Audie and Dixon are single Father's who meet when their son & daughter fight at school. It is the start of a friendship that moves both men into looking at a future, which up to then, has been something neither of them had dared think about. Dixon is blind and not coping with his disability, he's coming out of mourning for his husband and trying to cope with Randi, his angry 6-year old daughter who is trying to cope with the changes in her life. Audie is working on his mother's ranch and trying to raise his son the best way he can, but hides his true self, just taking a day at a time. The slow burn relationship starts, not without a few harsh words and comments from family members (I was so angry with Audie's mum's attitude!!) My emotions were all over the place, the descriptions of Dixon's blindness, his worries, his hopelessness at times over simple needs that we take for granted and then fighting for his child! And Audie, just sweet, just caring and compassionate. He sees strength in Dixon, he sees his future their family.

A couple of stand-out scenes were Grainger's birthday, the stubborn set of a small child was so real - I cringed in memory of something similar!! Audie and Dixon first intimate moment and a huge "HELL YEAH!" when they stood up to their parents.... and Dixon's brother Dan, I so wish I had one!

A couple of things I struggled with - the use of the endearment "honey"....it was overly sweet and toothachey. And when the decision to move forward was made, I felt it was a little rushed, I wished there had been just a little more detail on Dixon's attending Blind school and Audie finding his land to ranch.

The epilogue was just bursting with information round a family BBQ, so it ended on a contented HFN, a couple of smirks and an eyeroll. A fab read, recommended.

Sandra says

This book had me in its grips from the start! Lonesome, gay, single dad, who's been hiding his sexuality for most of his life, meets lonesome, gay, widowed single dad, and sparks fly from the get-go.

Called into the principal's office because their kids have been fighting with each other, Audie, the closeted single dad, meets Dixon, who because a horrible car accident not only lost his beloved husband, but also his sight.

Audie is a great character. Loving and caring, he realizes quickly that Randi (Dixon's daughter) is only lashing out because of her pain, and does what he can to help. He doesn't expect to fall in love, doesn't quite know how to get out from under his mother's thumb. He's in the closet, more or less, and has little hope to make a better life for himself and his son, Grainger. He is humble, straight-forward, but also resigned to his lot in life.

Dixon is a bit more complicated, but what really stood out for me is the fact that he's basically given up. He's lost his husband, and he can't seem to find the will to make things easier for him. He's living with his parents

and his youngest brother, and initially struck me as mad at the world and hindering himself from moving forward. He seemed stuck.

The kids were a breath of fresh air. So often authors make them precocious and wiser than their years, but here all we get are two realistic children, who act their age. They were the catalyst to Audie meeting Dixon, but also the glue that kept them together, to explore the relationship we see unfolding before our eyes.

Of course, nothing is easy for either of them, but they learn quickly that working together makes things easier on both of them.

I really liked how the author made it very clear that Dixon is torn between the love he still feels for his deceased spouse and the new feelings Audie is waking in him. I liked that they didn't immediately fall into bed, that they made their kids a priority, that they had honest conversations, and nothing smacked of insta-love.

I also liked that for every step forward Dixon took, someone was trying to discourage him - as if they wanted him to stay stuck. I saw too much pity and not enough support from his family, but the two men face the challenges head-on, and eventually get to where they want to be.

The outside influences notwithstanding, their honesty and willingness to fight for each other is what made this such an enjoyable read. It was steady progress, and the setbacks along the way enhanced their final success. I loved the flirting, their banter, and there was plenty of heat between them too.

This is the kind of story I love to read!

Dys says

[Dixon had enough money to just throw \$250k without blinking at Audie, while they sit in what sounds like a multimillion dollar home, why didn't he just buy a maid/nanny/aide. He could have stayed in Austin to attend the special school for the blind and have a caretaker for both him and Randi. I was confused as to why it

Riina Y.T. says

This will appeal to a lot of people I'm sure. It's a nice story.
The characters are all likable, especially the kids. ADORABLE!

Personally I found it a bit drawn out, especially conversations (which were also a bit choppy), but maybe it seemed that way because I didn't feel very attached to either MC.

I understand where Dixon's frustration came from, and thankfully Audie was real sweet with him.

But that was it.

It was nice, but not a page-turner for me :/

Morgan Skye says

Dixon has had to move in with his parents after losing his husband and his sight. His parents are supportive – to an extent – but there is an underlying tension in the house that keeps Dixon on the edge of miserable.

Audie is a young, single father, working his family ranch because he knows nothing else. His mother is somewhat supportive of him, but doesn't approve of his being gay and isn't shy about letting him know it.

Dixon and Audie meet when Randi (Dixon's daughter) punches Grainger (Audie's son). Audie pretty much immediately falls for Dixon but it takes awhile for that to play out.

The romance between Dixon and Audie is fairly easy going, their relationship is not. Dixon is a widower, well meaning friends and family worry Audie is a rebound man. Dixon is blind, family members worry that he won't be able to contribute and that he might not be the best man to raise his own daughter, much less two children. Audie is a landless cowboy (he's mother won't put a gay boy in her will) with a child of his own.

Despite all the various obstacles and reasons why this shouldn't work... it does and it does so beautifully.

**

I really enjoyed this country mouse/city mouse story. The immediate attraction and the acceptance of their romance between themselves let the rest of the story be about each of their own growth.

For all intents and purposes, one wrong decision led to Audie being a single dad, trapped on his family ranch at the age of 25. He'd never gotten to be a single gay man or do any of the other stuff that we do when we are young and carefree. As a result he's older in some ways but still has a lot of that youth and inexperience in him that was a perfect mix for Dixon.

Dixon had been there and done that. Though he was only 33, he'd had a much more varied life, though not on a ranch! He was a bit jaded, a bit spoiled, a bit insecure, a bit self involved, but so brave. His family didn't support him – not really – and he felt totally lost.

What I loved was that both men saved each other and the kids helped too. It's hard to write kids because no two kids are a like and it can be hard to represent that mix of surprisingly mature things that sometimes come out of a young mouth along side the more immature tantrums and such. I think Randi and Grainger are excellent examples of kids done well. Though there were times I thought they were a little too mature, most of the time I really thought they were great.

I loved how the families were represented. They both felt very "gray" to me, meaning not all good and not all bad. So often the family is this all or nothing evil villain when in reality there is usually a mix. Dixon's parents are well meaning if not fully supportive. Audie's mom isn't all bad, though she is pretty judgmental and petty.

Dixon's reaction to being blind felt pretty appropriate as well, though I did wonder at his relative ease at getting over Ron. I also wondered why Ron's family was so intent on keeping Randi when Dixon was the biological father, why weren't his parents taking over?

Overall I thought this was a riveting and wonderful book and I highly recommend it.

Overall 4.6 of 5 stars!

Audio

Paul Morey did an amazing job with this. God I loved his Audie and Dix was PERFECTION. This was such a fun book to listen to with all the different southern accents! I highly recommend this as an audiobook!

6 of 5 stars

Tamika♥RBF MOOD♥ says

2.75 stars

After reading Say Something and The Terms of Release I was so enthralled with B.A. Tortuga. She had this way with her words that just brought out all type of emotions within me. Both books were 5 star reads. Reading this my expectations was super high. I really wanted to like that. It was okay for me. I didn't feel connected to the characters or the circumstances in the story.

This had all the elements of things I love. Hurt/comfort, children, disabilities and cowboys are all my happy spots, and I did enjoy some of them tremendously. I liked that both mc's had children in not the most conventional way. I did like that both guys were good parents and had flaws. Parenthood isn't easy.

What bothered me the most was the writing, and while both her previous books had locations in Texas this one felt different. I don't know if they talk different, but it felt choppy when they talked. It felt disjointed in the writing and I had a hard time finishing it. I enjoyed both guy's support system. I do feel like it just happened between one day and the next for the two guys. It was no level of attraction but bam it happened. I got confused when the point of view changes happened suddenly. All in all it was okay for me. I'm not thrilled by it and I will continue to read her work.

Karen says

This one really should have worked better than it did...

I love the elements involved in this story. We have a closeted cowboy, a tattooed, rocker boy who's lost his partner in an MVA and been blinded in said accident. Both of these men are parents to young children.

In the cowboy's (Audie) case he's the father of a little boy named Grainger. Grainger has a momma, she just couldn't get out of town fast enough once he was born. Dixon's little girl is Miranda or Randi as she's more frequently called. These men meet when Randi gives Grainger a black eye in the schoolyard and everyone gets hauled into the principal's office. (Ironically this is something I can relate to because back in the day my parents got hauled into the principals office when I gave the class bully a black-eye in the first grade).

Things started out really well and I was totally smitten with the story that was being given to me and then we hit a big stalling point because our two MCs couldn't keep their pants on. Don't get me wrong I'm down with the hot sexy times. I think it's a normal healthy part of a relationship but for me when I start rolling my eyes and skimming the pages because well...frankly...I was starting to get bored to tears because 'the boys were at it again' it really was time for the story to move on a bit, for some progress to be made in the plot.

Thankfully this did happen somewhere just past the 50% mark. Things were getting interesting again the boys weren't having as many sexy moments but that was cool because there was stuff happening and their relationship was progressing. Sadly what I feared might happen did and that was the fact that for me the last part of the story felt like it had been sacrificed and things were cut short. I really wanted to see these guys find their way to a comfortable life together, to see where their plans had taken them and how they'd resolved some of the issues and conflicts they had to deal with. What it felt like was that I got a peek at them a glimpse that said yeah our boys are ok and they all lived HEA! and dammit! I wanted more.

Now as to the characters in this book there was Audie and his adorable son, Grainger.

Audie's our closeted cowboy. He may not have a fancy college diploma or a university degree but thankfully he's got a truckload of common sense, determination.

Next we have Dixon and his equally adorable daughter, Randi.

Dixon's our tattooed rocker, gone blind-guy. He's a ginger (let's hear it for the ginger), he's more of a city boy. He and Randi are both trying to figure out how to make their lives work again after the accident that took Dixon's partner and Randi's other daddy away from them. Randi's angry at the world because of all the changes in her life that have come with the loss of her daddy Ron. In spite of all this Randi's still trying really hard to be a good girl for her remaining daddy. Dixon's determined to be around to at least see Randi to adulthood he's just not sure what to do next and his biggest problem is his freakin' parents...especially his mother. On one hand she's telling him he needs to learn how to manage being blind so he can be a more functional person but on the other hand she wants to put him in a cage so he won't get hurt. Sorry, momma' in case you didn't notice he's already been about as freakin' hurt as you can get. He's lost not only his eyesight but the love of his life. What you need to do isn't keep him from being hurt it's give him the love and support he needs to go pick himself up, dust himself off and get back out there into the world.

Sadly Dixon's mom isn't the worst of what these men have to deal with...nope, I'm giving that award to Audie's mom. That woman made me want to hurl my e-reader across the room.

(view spoiler)

In some ways this was a good read for me because the author made me feel invested in the characters. I wanted them to be together, to succeed in their relationship. I wanted Dixon to find his way in the world again and they did and he did. But too much of it happened off page for me so I felt rushed and the HEA that these two men got didn't leaving me feeling totally satisfied because I missed too much of it.

I've read a number of books by this author and compared to the books in her 'Road Trip' or 'Stormy Weather' series or 'The Release' series and standalones such as 'Old Town New', 'The Long Road Home', 'Just Like In The Movies', 'Menagerie' or 'Working Jerusalem' and some others this one for me didn't reflect the quality of story that Ms Tortuga is truly capable of. For me it was ok, what it wasn't was awesome.

~Mindy Lynn~ says

I could lie and say I wasn't disappointed with the entirety of the story but I'm not going to. The problem most

likely lays within my tastes. This book has gotten a lot of 4 to 5 star ratings so obviously it's my fault I didn't love it. I guess what I didn't like about the book the most was the dialogue. Sometimes, as I previously said in my update, I just didn't feel like I was reading about two grown men. They had a way of sounding like two teenagers conversing with each about 'how cool' things were or other things 'totally rocked'. Their conversations lacked maturity. Only sometimes though, it wasn't a constant occurrence. But when it did happen it was so annoying for me. That was my only big tiff with the story.

On the other hand what I did enjoy was some of the sweet moments the guys had together. They really did care for one another and for the well being of each other. They both had over pressing mothers. I could be annoyed by Dixon's ma, but absolutely did not like Audie's mother. She was a closed minded rude cunt. Yes, I said cunt. I did not like her high mighty superiority ass one bit.

THE KIDS! They were adorable and probably the best part of the book. The yes sirs and yes ma'am's made them so precious. I loved when they were on the page. I also loved the relationships between the father's and their children. The love for their babies are shown clearly on every page they interact with their kids. I loved this part of the book the most.

So do I regret buying the book? No. Do I regret spending more than \$5 on the book? Yes. LOL

Mary says

I loved this from beginning to end for the romance and the build but what I liked most of all was that the characterizations never wavered. Both men were so grounded and well developed and while I saw growth and change, it was consistent all the way through and I really enjoyed that. Highly recommended.

Valerie ❀M/M Romance Junkie❀ says

I should really learn that just because my favorite narrator narrated the book doesn't mean the book was meant for me. There is nothing wrong with this book. I was just never able to connect. That could simply be my mood. So it's not the book, it's me.

V says

I had great hopes for this story, I'm afraid this wasn't for me.
The guys behaved like teenagers and the two mommies still have a lot of input in these 2 grown men life. I hate that with a passion, when Parents Interfering with Adults life and the growing men don't have the balls to tell them to mind their own business.
They finally did but I had to wait to long to see these 2 men behaved like one, and by then it was too late.

Breann says

3.5 hearts <-- where I've been living lately -__-

Ever the Same is a very sweet and touching story.

The romance was natural and easy, but the dialogue was a bit stiff.

It was a nice story. I liked the characters, but the writing style lost me.

YullSanna says

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Nerea says

This book starts really well! I like the plot and the character introductions.
Also the LOW angst was OK.

BUT around the 33% their relationship come together in very abrupt mode in my opinion. And goes totally down from there. Not many happy moments :(

2.5*

Serena Yates says

This is an amazing story and I loved it from beginning to end. Told with a great deal of humor, it is a very touching story about two men who need to find their place in life while dealing with situations that would have most well-adjusted people struggle. Both men don't just have their own past and present situations to deal with, but they also have young children with issues and needs, and families who like to meddle and think they know what's best for them. I was involved from the first page to the last, and loved how BA Tortuga handled the problems of parenthood, learning to deal with being blind, and fighting for what is right for your children in the face of well-meant but utterly wrong advice from so-called experts.

Audie is a cowboy, and while he makes money by breeding cows, he loves working with horses. He has a son from a woman who didn't want children and left Grainger with him before leaving, and he isn't out. Meeting Dixon challenges him on several fronts, and as their relationship develops, Audie begins to think about the impact it has on Grainger, his family, and what he himself wants out of life.

Dixon lost his sight in an accident that killed his husband, and he is now trying to adjust to a life where he is

Randi's father, and wants to raise her, but is insecure because he cannot even see—how is he going to protect her? He struggles with his blindness, but his way of “coping” is trying to ignore it and struggle through. Not helpful! He needs Audie to help him understand that adapting in certain ways isn't “weak” and that learning “how to be blind” is a serious challenge, not something you can do on your own. But the key driving force is his need to take care of Randi, and all the well-meaning advice from strangers cannot replace father's love and determination to be the one who is there for her.

If you like stories where both main characters have a steep learning curve and lots of learning and changing to go through, if you want to know what it might be like to be blind and a father, and if you're looking for a read that is emotional, touching, and very funny in places, then you will probably like this novel as much as I did. It has wonderful characters, some adorable children, and some great emotional moments I won't quickly forget.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.
