



A Home By The Sea

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Sometimes appearances aren't what they seem...

Grace Lindstrom has followed her fiance across three continents, starry-eyed and full of dreams. But when he dies in a plane crash, Grace discovers that their life together was the cruelest kind of lie--and swears to never lose herself to that kind of love again. Until one night, when a chance encounter leads her to the kind of man she's always dreamed of--and the deep family ties she's never known.

Noah McKay knows he can't offer Grace any kind of future--not when he spends every day putting his life on the line. But when Grace's grandfather suddenly falls ill and she's called home to the small island town where she grew up, he realizes he can't live without her. Aided by good knitting, good chocolate and deep friendship, Grace is slowly learning to trust again--but can she learn to love a man whose secrets run so deep?

A Home By The Sea Details

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Zelda Wendy says

All in all I like the book. It was a quick read and quite good. I just feel that the characters were slightly underdeveloped and I find it silly that Noah never tells her what he does, not even before the proposal. It just seemed a little unrealistic that she and her friends would not push to find out what he really did. Also, if he just works for a place that analyses and disarms bombs, why all the secrecy? He is not undercover. It does not make sense to me.

I also find it rather odd that they spend most of their time apart before and after their engagement. How can they really know each other when they are not even on the same continent? You also have speculation about what happened to her grandfather but no real proof. You also meet Noah's niece and sister-in-law but you never find out if they really move father away or if they don't. Nowhere in this book does it say that this is a series of books or is a book that has a sequel so shouldn't all of the questions have been answered by the end of the book.

The book just felt slightly incomplete. It is not a bad book, it is just not one of Christina Skye's best books. I did enjoy it. I just do not like walking away from a book when there are still so many unanswered questions and inconsistencies.

Again, I am just writing my own opinion and I know others opinions will inevitably differ from mine, but everyone is different and I love to know what others think!

Ruth says

Three young women who grew up together. Three young women who were young when they lost their parents. The first found love in The Knitting Diaries (my review); the second finds love in this book, and I'll bet I know who the guy will be in the third book. As is true of many series books, there are things that happen in this one for no apparent reason, but if you realize another book is coming, then they make sense.

It's a romance novel, a quick enjoyable read with a pretty basic plot. She writes about cooking and travels around the world doing research. She was engaged to be married by her fiancée died. Shortly thereafter she learned that he regularly cheated on her so she's twice burned. He defuses bombs for a living, for some top-secret government department, so he can't tell folks exactly what he does. He is on call frequently and has to go where the job sends him. He has had lots of women but no love. They meet when he sees her rescuing kittens from a dumpster and basically it is love at first sight for both of them, though they fight it. They are both loving people who love their families and are willing to sacrifice for them.

There is one moderately graphic romantic scene and it happens outside of wedlock. Its funny, the book mentions that he has no trouble getting women to share his bed, but that they know going in that it isn't serious. He meets her and courts her attentively for a few weeks, even going across the country to see her. At that time, just a few weeks after they meet, he uses his body to tell her what he cannot say. I have to wonder, if he falls into bed that easily and that indiscriminately, what does his body say? He may be technically proficient in such activities, but how can you communicate something special with an activity you will do with anyone--but that's just the old-fashioned Catholic in me speaking.

I'd like to thank the publisher for sending me a review copy of the book via NetGalley. I was not obligated to write a positive review. Grade: B.

Sandra says

I love the Draycott Abby series and that's why I picked this one up. Christina Skye writes a great story. But I found this one to be disjointed. We have lots of potential here. His story. Her story. Her Grandfather's story. Her two friends story. But nothing gets finished. I realize this is the first in a series, but I expected at least this story to have a conclusion. It really doesn't. I really debated between a 2 or 3 rating. The story is exciting, but just when you get into it, the "scenery" changes and you wonder what the answer is to the questions??? I don't know if I'll read the other books in the series. I've got too many books in my long line of books to read! Oh yes, the reason I picked this one up is the cover and the story line, talking about living on the Oregon coast. Well the female lead in this goes back there because she has to, but the story never gets to the beach... Oh well...

lol - a side note. When I write a review, I ALWAYS write it first, THEN, I read the other reviews, so I'm not influenced and I give a true account. So far, I'm amazed by how close my review is to most of the others.

Jessi says

This is an odd book, very frenetic. Grace Lindstrom was badly hurt by her fiance. He cheated on her, repressed her, and, after his death, she found out he was actually married. She's slowly rebuilding her life as someone who travels the globe collecting recipes.

One snowy night, Grace hears a noise and finds a cat with kittens (and one puppy!) in a dumpster. She is trying to rescue them when she herself is rescued by Noah McLeod. He had been caught by her beauty as he watched her at a party and then had to follow when she started digging through the trash. When the snow storm worsens, he takes her to his parents house. His mother is from Poland and his father is from Scotland. They recently lost Noah's brother in the line of duty, and now their granddaughter's mother is threatening to move their grandchild across the United States to Oregon.

Well, Noah's job is top-secret (he defuses bombs) and Grace understandably has some issues with not knowing about his life. They're just starting to get to know each other when Grace lands a huge contract to do a project of all of the major French chefs in America. Or in the White House. Or something. But the same night that Noah comes over to help her celebrate, she learns that her grandfather has gone to the hospital. He runs an animal shelter (and seems to be funneling all of his money into it.) While she's on Summer Island, her two friends (Jilly and Carol) convince her to stay and open a yarn store. And that's barely half way through the book.

Ann says

The first part of the book was much better than the last. It gave characters their background, it had a story and all of the sudden, it got hectic.

Sarah Eiseman says

I've been reading a number of books by Christina Skye recently, and this one, read out of order, was next in my queue. This book follows a short story in the Knitting Diaries. We meet Grace Lindstrom, a historical

food researcher and restaurant consultant, as she's about to launch an amazing new chapter in her career. For the past year she has been getting over her fiancé's death and the many secrets it has since uncovered. Following a party, Grace ends up rescuing a few cats and a dog in a dumpster, and is found by Noah McLeod, who ends up helping her out due to the weather. These two end up spending much more time together. I won't spoil the whole plot, but stuff happens to take Grace out of DC and away from Noah.

One of the things that has drawn me to Skye's books is that they typically don't have nasty alpha males. It's so nice to read a story where the crux of the plot is not a bone-headed male trying to escape a relationship, but a level-headed, genuinely nice human being, who just happens to have a lot of other things going on in their life that restricts their ability to have the relationship they might actually want. I haven't found too many authors that can pull this off and not look formulaic, but somehow Skye manages. Highly recommend this author and this book if you are looking for a nice series to relax while reading.

Erika says

Easy read, I loved Noah's character

Kristin says

This book was between 2 and 3 stars for me. Overall it was a very sweet and heartwarming story but just felt like it never got finished. The storyline began by setting up all these possibilities for a really entertaining story but just didn't deliver. This book had the potential to be much better but just fell a little flat towards the end. Noah works for the government by defusing terrorist bombs and is still trying to get over his brother dying due to a bomb explosion which he feels partly responsible for since he was the expert on bombs. He has a very close knit family and after these characters are introduced nothing really happens with them. Noah's dead brother left a wife and child who disrupted his family by saying they were going to move across the country and while this conflict was established, nothing was resolved by the end. Noah's job could have been a place for interest and conflict but nothing ever happened in regards to this either. Noah meets Grace who is a food historian who just landed her lucky break with a great job that would take her overseas. Grace's grandfather ends up falling ill and she has to go back home to take care of him. The book then completely switches into Grace and her best friends fixing up an old house to turn into a yarn shop/cafe. The first half and the second half of the book should be separate novels in my mind. The beginning had potential with Noah's family to be a full story but was left with too many loose ends. The second half with Grace and her friends could be a different story but also just ended without anything happening. It was almost like the author got bored with each section of the story and changed paths just to finally say "I'm done with this, let's make them say the 'I love yous' and end the novel". The book ends too suddenly for my taste and I missed all the romantic tension that usually builds between a couple. Overall it was a light read but just wasn't the best book.

Lisa says

1.5 Stars

Thanks to Harlequin for the ARC.

Well, I just finished this and it was just okay.

It had a very strong beginning, and then at about the quarter or a little over mark, it kinda went downhill.

I'm not sure what happened except it felt like it changed directions pretty quickly and it just lost me and I wasn't as interested anymore.

A heroine that had her mind made up on what she was gonna do with her life and stuff just ups and changes her life plans after just a phone call. Okay, I get life can change in an instant but seriously, it wasn't a smooth transition.

The love story was probably its only saving grace and a few of the supporting characters, but it was just a lot of confusion and unresolved issues.

Oh, and that 'love scene'... well, it was less than stellar.

If you wanna say they did and it was good, well, just say it!

Don't try to get all flowery on me and not really get across what you're trying to convey. It was bland and at one point I was like, um, how did his leg get there and then she was up there and then under there?

Yep, it had me going back and forth trying to figure out if they did it the first time or not.

Overall, it was all over the place to me.

EDIT Yes, it just lost a star.

Anita says

Grace thought that the man she was to marry was a good guy. After his death she finds it hard to trust. One snowy night brings her Noah. A bomb squad specialist with his own issues. Together they discover what its like to love and trust again. Added friends Jilly and Caro. Interested in the next story.. There were some grammer issues- like characters being called the wrong name

Mary Jo says

I liked the characters and the story was well written.

Janga says

Noah McLeod, a bomb squad specialist who works for a top secret government agency, is still dealing with grief over the loss of his brother when he meets food historian Grace Lindstrom, who is dealing with her own

conflicted grief over a fiancé whose infidelity was exposed with his death. The two meet and bond when Grace rescues a litter of abandoned puppies amid a Washington, D. C. snowstorm. Noah is immediately attracted to Grace. She's more reluctant to get involved, but she finds his good lucks and courtly ways difficult to resist.

Just when Grace seems to be getting her life on track with a dream job and a promising new relationship, she learns that her grandfather, her only family, is in the hospital. She returns to her home, Summer Island, Oregon (setting for Skye's novella "Return to Summer Island" in *The Knitting Diaries*), to care for her grandfather. It soon becomes clear that her grandfather's illness is serious, and she makes plans to stay on Summer Island, joining her oldest friends Jilly and Caro (heroine of "Return to Summer Island") in opening a yarn shop and café in a historic house. Text messages, phone calls, and gifts from Noah give Grace courage and make her feel cherished, but those feelings pale in comparison to those that emerge when Noah arrives for a visit.

Grace and Noah are engaging characters, and Grace's friendship with Jilly and Caro adds another dimension to the story. But the story leaves many loose ends. Doubtless some of these can be attributed to the series phenomenon; readers will anticipate Jilly's story, for example. However, I wanted Grace and Noah's HEA to have more substance. I'm still not clear about how this two-coast romance will work, and I also wanted more of a resolution to the grandfather's story. Then, there's Noah's niece who is being separated from her grandparents and his mother's hidden grief over the loss of her son. As I said—too many loose ends.

Candy says

Grace Lindstrom, a food historian, isn't looking for love. She lost her fiancé in a plane crash and afterwards found out that he cheated on her numerous times, even fathering a child. Leaving a party one night during a horrible snow storm, Grace hears some abandoned kittens crying in an alley. Unable to just walk away, Grace and handsome stranger Noah McKay rescue the momma and babies. Noah works as a bomb technician for a top secret government group. His job doesn't leave him time for a relationship, especially when he is on call virtually all the time, but there's something about Grace that he can't just walk away from. When Grace moves back to Oregon to care for a sick relative, will their fledgling relationship survive the distance?

One of the things I most enjoyed about this book was the slow build up between Grace and Noah. Nothing beats a good anticipated love scene and Skye certainly delivers in this book. Skye hints that Noah had been a bit of a player prior to Grace but he is nothing but a gentleman towards her, even courting her from across the country.

The other part of this book that I loved is that Grace is a knitter. She actually takes Noah to a yarn shop at one point. When Noah mentions his mom used to knit, Grace helps him pick out some yarn as a gift. There is a whole wonderful discussion about how knitting is therapeutic. Noah is also a smart guy because while in the yarn shop he pays attention to what yarn Grace is in love with and mails it to her when she moves to Oregon (if a guy sends a knitter cashmere yarn, he's definitely a keeper!).

This was a enjoyable contemporary romance. The characters were all well developed, including the secondary ones. The relationship between Grace and Noah was very sweet. I am hoping I get to read more about this couple as the series continues.

*review also to appear on somanyreads.com *

Libby says

Enjoyed the first third of this book the most. Author created strong characterizations of Noah McLeod and Grace Lindstrom, her two main characters. She also detailed strong characters from Noah's parents, Alex and Tatiana McLeod. I was very disappointed when Alex and Tatiana dropped out of the story. I see there are sequels to the story and perhaps the author hopes to get a return audience from the interest she creates in her fringe characters. While this is a great play for television, I don't think it's that great for a reading audience. Skye has a nice, descriptive style....I enjoyed the sequences where she describes Grace and Tatiana in the kitchen cooking as well as her descriptions about yarn. The plot is okay, but fell a little flat in engaging me. There's a long interval when Grace is separated from Noah and Skye introduces a huge host of new characters. This part of the book is not as interesting and just seems like filler between two parts of a story.

Lady Lioness says

Edited to add that I am so surprised that this won RT's Reviewer's Choice Award for Best Contemporary Romance. I felt many of the other nominees were MUCH stronger.

Whenever I get my new issue of the Romantic Times magazine, it tends to jolt me into action regarding my ARC backlog. These days, that's mainly NetGalley.

So, what to say about this one? Hmmm.

...

It didn't suck?

Faint praise, I know, but I don't know what to say. I blew through it and it was a comforting read because nothing really happens. Hell, Grace and Noah spend half the book apart. I loved Noah's family and I was disappointed when they disappeared from the narrative. I also thought Grace's career was fascinating and I was looking forward to learning more about that, only to have that disappear as well.

Oh, I know, okay, A Home by the Sea is like a TV episode on a serial drama. Nothing gets really gets resolved, but enough happens to keep you interested. (view spoiler), but things keep moving forward and readers will tune in for the next episode.

That's all I got. I kinda want to go back and re-read the early Draycott Abbey books. I loved those. And there wasn't a knitting needle in sight.
