



# Playing the Maestro

*Aubrie Dionne*

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## **Playing the Maestro** Aubrie Dionne

Melody Mires has sworn off dating musicians, but when the sexy European conductor Wolf Braun takes over her struggling symphony, her hesitation almost flies out the window with the notes of her flute—until he opens his mouth. Wolf is arrogant, haughty, and seems to have a personal vendetta against Melody. Oh, and he's her boss. If she wants to keep her job as principal flutist, she'll have to impress Wolf while simultaneously keeping her undeniable attraction to herself.

Wolf came to America to get as far away from his past as possible, and to recover some of the swagger he had as one of the world's best maestros. He never imagined being forced to reassess the entire orchestra's talent—and potentially fire anyone who doesn't make his cut. Dating the attractive flutist is out of the question, but as their feelings reach a fever pitch, can they risk both their careers for a chance at love?

## **Playing the Maestro Details**

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Author : Aubrie Dionne

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## From Reader Review Playing the Maestro for online ebook

### Kathryn Barrett says

I love books in which the characters have interesting professions, and further, when we see them actually doing their jobs rather than just references to business tycoons taking meetings. In *Playing the Maestro* both main characters are professional musicians, trying to save a small city orchestra. That premise alone was enough to pique my interest. While I'm not a musician, I come from a family of musicians, so this was a particularly interesting premise for me.

The hero, Wolfgang, is from Germany--another bonus, as far as I'm concerned, as I've visited Germany several times. When he compares the sight of an "old" building in the US that proclaims its heritage from 1872, and laughingly compares it to the Porta Nigra in Trier, I shouted OMG loud enough to wake my husband! Trier is not only my favorite city in Europe (barring Oxford) but when I stayed there I was in a hotel right across the street from the Porta Nigra. I have tons of photos of the Black Gate. Wolfgang is right; the city of Trier and its ancient Roman structures, many of them still standing, are truly "old"!

The conflict, both the internal conflict between the two characters and the external conflict facing them as they try to save the orchestra and their jobs, is satisfying and handled very well. The conclusion feels justified--everyone gets theirs in the end, including the very nice couple we come to know during the book.

Whenever an author takes the time to include so many details from her research and from "real life" I feel like I've learned something in addition to being entertained. So this book is more than a love story, it's an education in the inner workings of an orchestra. Bravo!

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### Christina M Condy says

This book is incredible! Melody Mires is the principal flutist in the Easthampton Civic Symphony. She has sworn off musicians because of the way they are so egotistical and her disastrous "date" with Blake where he could only talk about his violin showed that much.

I love how the author set the stage, first we have Blake whose only goal seems to be to get his sister the principal flutist seat, and we have Wolf who is trying desperately to escape an ex. Not too promising of a romance in the making huh?

Well I have to say that I truly enjoyed this book. I nearly ate it up, I read it so quickly. I was sucked into the story from the very first page. Melody just spoke to me on some level, she is so sweet and caring and down to earth. She isn't into herself as so many musicians seem to be.

I loved all the little twists and turns this book took and all the little disasters that cropped up. It had me turning the page just to find out if there would ever be a happy ever after. I think this was an absolutely wonderful and heart-warming story.

I give this book 5 stars and I HIGHLY recommend this book to anyone who likes a little musical romance in their life. By the way, my two daughters actually played in New York and it was nice to be able to relate to some of the story, especially since I haven't touched an instrument in about 6 years. Now I'm actually

missing it and thinking of getting a new keyboard at least so I can play again.

Thank you Aubrie Dionne for this wonderful tale and for re-awakening my love of playing the music not just listening to it!

Details/Disclaimer: Review copy was provided to me in exchange for a fair and honest review. The free book held no determination on my personal review

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## **MsRomanticReads says**

Melody Mires is the principle flutist with the Easthampton Civic Symphony. Her love of classical music is in her bones, and it shows in the way she plays. When it comes to dating, she's drawn to fellow musicians because they "get" the love of music and understand the long hours required to get stage ready and to stay at the top of their game. A disastrous date with Blake, the orchestra's personal manager, is the last straw. She vows never to date another musician again, and then fate throws the sexy, hunky new guest conductor in her path.

Wolfgang Braun wants a fresh start in America. He thought that as the new guest conductor, he'd have to help and breathe new life into the flailing orchestra. Nor did he count on the strong attraction to the sexy flutist who is a dead ringer for his ex girlfriend, someone he'd rather forget about. As the saying goes: "Once bitten, twice shy", Wolf isn't interested in another relationship so soon, but his head isn't communicating with his heart. Are these two willing to disobey the rules and potentially risk their careers for love?

Playing the Maestro was a sweet romance with great characters, heart and drama. The characters were well developed and continued to grow throughout the story. Melody was a strong character – she was a loyal friend, a devoted sister and aunt, and she cared about the "oldtimers" in the orchestra. For her, it wasn't about the money or the prestige. Music was her life, and it showed in the reverence she had for the pieces that were mentioned in this book. My favorite moments with Melody all seemed to revolve around her sister and her niece. She always made time for them, and if there was a crisis, she was right there in the thick of things.

Wolf was a loveable hero. He found himself stuck between a rock and a hard place regarding Melody and the orchestra. Essentially, he was the poster boy for the orchestra. With his bosses breathing down his neck to make cuts left and right, it soon became obvious that love of music wasn't enough to sustain a business. He had to carry a huge burden on his shoulders between what was the right thing to do and what was necessary. Asking her for some help was perhaps the smartest thing he ever did.

I loved Melody and Wolf as a couple. I felt the chemistry from the first moment they laid eyes on one another. Melody had something to prove, and Wolf tried to ignore his attraction to her which made him come across as a moody and brooding. Both of them assumed the worst about each other which made it even sweeter when they actually paid attention to the sums of the whole instead of what was displayed on the surface. There were so many cute moments between them. Two of my favorites involved a stuffed turtle and pajamas, and Wolf dressed up as Mozart. The love scene(s) were fade to black or touched upon in their memories, but the story didn't need graphic descriptions anyway to get the emotional development across.

Once the drama portion hit, I was fully invested in them. There were a few teary-eyed moments, but the ending suited them perfectly.

If I had any complaints, it was just one thing – the use of a foreign language. I consider it a part of any other type of research that authors often do, therefore it's important to get the spelling and grammar correct. But even with those few errors, I'd recommend this sweet love story to anyone who loves classical music, a determined young heroine and a hunky hero. I would definitely read more from this author.

*Disclaimer: I received a review copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.*

This review and more can be found on my blog.

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### **Dianne says**

If you are looking for a contemporary romance that doesn't dance to the same tune as many other romances, **Playing the Maestro** by Aubrie Dionne might resonate well with you! The Easthampton's Civic Symphony is slowly becoming obsolete and in desperate need of new patrons, new interest and new money to keep going. Enter young German conductor Wolf Braun, looking to get his life back on track after a disastrous relationship with a beautiful, yet poisonous model. His job is to breathe new life into the group, and getting involved with any of its members. First flutist Melody Mires has sworn off dating musicians, until she lays eyes on Wolf. Too bad their first meeting hits a sour note because beautiful Melody bears too much of a resemblance to wolf's ex, but she is being set up for failure by another's machinations in the ECS and Wolf can't just stand by. Breaking all the rules, these two find they are meant for each other, like rosin and a bow. Aubrie Dionne has written a light romance with characters that are NOT damaged beyond belief by their pasts! The angst is at a minimum, making this a perfect fast read with a little intrigue, a little romance and a plot that moves along quickly. Take this one to the beach this summer!

A copy of this book was provided for my honest review.

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### **Leona says**

Melody is a talented flutist working at a small symphony outside Boston when she meets the new Maestro, Wolf Braun. They get off to a shaky start, but soon realize that they are attracted to one another and that their initial impressions of each other were far from accurate.

This was fast paced and fun, but I didn't feel a real connection between the two of them, and the story moved so fast that it sometimes lacked depth.

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### **♥Rachel♥ says**

**Playing the Maestro** was a sweet tug-at-your-heartstrings type of romance that will leave you with a smile on your face.

Melody's life revolves around her music. She's a flutist in an orchestra, but to make ends meet she also gives

flute lessons and plays the odd wedding here and there. Nowhere in her life is there room for a romance, or so she thinks. Trouble is the men she has access to are musicians and for the most part, in her experience, they're "self-centered, arrogant, egotistical." Sounds like real winners to me.\*not\* Understandably Melody is concerned when a new fancy and incredibly sexy conductor, Wolf Braun is hired to shape up her orchestra. She doesn't want someone who isn't familiar their dynamic to change and deconstruct the orchestra that she's become attached to. She also worries about her own job when their first encounter goes less than well, and Wolf seems just as arrogant as she thought he would be.

Wolf has been hired to overhaul a struggling orchestra, and make cuts where he sees fit. He's happy to be in America, eager to get away from his past after a bad breakup. Wolf has no desire to start anything romantic, especially with a performer in the orchestra he's been hired to assess, but the feisty flutist Melody captures his attention immediately.

These two get started off on the wrong foot, but the sparks are flying between them. Melody was a sweet and strong woman with a passion for her music and a love for her sister and niece as the center of her life. She wasn't looking to fall for someone but Wolf gets under her skin.

Wolf, even though he comes off a bit arrogant at first, is anything but. This story is told in third person but bounces back and forth between Melody's and Wolf's perspective so we get Wolf's thoughts and he's a sweetie. His charity work really touched Melody's heart and broke down some of her reservations when she saw another side to him. As I said before these two cause sparks to fly:

***Wolf's gaze smoldered, taking in each inch of her face, then the curve of her lips. He touched the bandage on her forehead, then ran his finger down her cheek and underneath her chin, trailing warmth. He leaned in and kissed her before she could take in another breath.***

This romance is more on the sweet rather than spicy side, but I enjoyed it even so. It's one that warmed my heart.

This is the first time I've read a story about a musician in an orchestra and I found it very interesting to get a peek into their world. I recently attended a ballet and I found myself watching the orchestra performing and thinking about this story wondering if there were any Melody and Wolfs down in the box, lol!

*A copy was provided by Entangled Publishing in exchange for an honest review.*

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## Jody says

Aubrie Dionne plunges readers into the vividly cutthroat world of classical music in *Playing the Maestro*. For flutist Melody, she's done with dating musicians. After her recent break-up with fellow symphony worker, Blake, her job seems in jeopardy from his nefarious machinations so the last thing she wants to do is act on her growing attraction to the new conductor, Wolf. But the more she sees of him and his numerous acts of kindness the more caught up in his life she becomes and the idea of a future together takes root. It's a bumpy ride to their HEA though as a woman from his past almost destroys the trust and love forming between them. Melody is a likable character who's been burned by relationships before and is very doubtful of love's existence. She easily jumps to conclusions and assumes the worst whenever Wolf's honesty is in doubt. While these feelings of doubt are understandable they make it difficult to truly believe in this relationship at times.

Wolf has come to America to escape an ex who stole not only his heart but also his life savings. He too is

cautious in wanting to start another relationship and with Melody the spitting image of his ex they definitely start off on the wrong foot. But Wolf finds it difficult to keep his true self hidden and slowly lets Melody into his life, keeping the big issue of his ex a secret until her appearance creates all sorts of unwanted chaos that he has to struggle to set right. He completely makes amends in a very masterful and vocal way at the end though, so all is easily forgiven. Wolf is exotically sexy with his occasional uses of German speech. He's caring and honorable which made him easy to fall for.

The story brings the world of classical music/symphonies alive with its vivid depictions of the struggles of musicians, the cutthroat nature to become a star, and the passions that this kind of music inspires. The story does feel a bit draggy though. The writing pace is laid back which is reflected in the romance that remains very sweet and progresses very slowly. There's sexual tension present but it never fully explodes into a hot and steamy encounter. This doesn't make the romance any less satisfying though as they're an immensely cute couple that have much in common. Add in a cast of memorable characters and you end up with a satisfying story that once again demonstrates Ms. Dionne's writing talent.

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### **Jonel Boyko says**

Wow. What a heart-warming and interesting story. I barely put this novel down. To top that off, it was also quite well written and flows fluently from one section to the next.

I appreciated that this novel had a beginning, some very captivating and at times comical drama in the middle, and a definite ending. The author does not rely on erotic scenes to carry this story forward, but rather develops amazing relationships between her characters. By basing her storyline on these characters and their budding relationships she creates a very solid story that is hard to beat.

I absolutely fell in love with some of the characters in this novel. I couldn't believe how extremely well developed they were. They were also developed in such a way that they were quite real and very approachable. Their actions are also consistent with their personalities, allowing the reader to better relate to the characters.

As a whole, this was a brilliant way to spend an afternoon. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with these characters and would definitely recommend it to others.

Please note that I received this novel free of charge from the author in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Brandy Dorsch says**

This was a fun read and if you love classical music, this is a story for you. Melody is a flutist that has sworn off musicians. I love how when you swear that you won't date a type of person that is who gets thrown in your lap. Wolf is the new conductor and Melody is drawn to him. Sometimes even when you know the choice you are making might not be the best, you still follow your heart.

I was delighted at how well developed these characters are and the direction of the story. Wolf and Melody are two characters that I would enjoy seeing more of. I love music and romance so this story was a wonderful combination.

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## Melody May (What I'm Reading) says

Originally posted on What I'm Reading

Good morning everyone. Today I bring you another sweet read. I'm really excited to share this book with you all today. Last night I finished **Playing the Maestro** by Aubrie Dionne. I must say I really enjoy. Here's why:

Melody Mires is a principal flutist in the Easthampton Civic Symphony. She has vow never to date another musician again. Funny how that goes out the window when she sees Wolf Braun the new conductor from Germany.

However, there are a few obstacles that need to be tackled before these two kids can get together. First, Blake Templeton and his conniving scheme to get his sister as principal flutist. Second is the reason Wolf came to America, which happen to be escaping the clutches of an ex-girlfriend. However, she somehow weaseled her way to get close to Wolf.

Really, I did enjoy this book. Granted I did kind of read the book, because the heroine and I share the the same name. If you think about it we have the same initials and not many of you know I do play the flute. Not as well as the heroine, but I still play.

Let me share main reason why I enjoyed this story:

I love how caring and sweet Melody was in the story. She wasn't self-absorbed, but very down to earth. Then you have Wolf who came to America to start fresh and get away from a self-absorbed ex-girlfriend. Wolf wanted to steer clear from any relationship with Melody, because of what happen with his past ex. Plus, it didn't help Mel's case when she looks so similar to Alda. I love when Wolf comes to the realization that Mel is nothing like Alda. You start to hope for the best, then all of a sudden catastrophe happens and you start to wonder if it's all going to workout. Fortunately, it's a romance novel and you know it will, but it's the how?

Overall, I found this a delightful sweet romance and lives up to the *Bliss* line. I do love the *Bliss* line, because they tend bring out the heart-warming sappy romance novels. I think everyone needs that every now again. So, if you are looking for that heart-warming feeling and want it with some musicians, I would say take a look at **Playing the Maestro**. Who knows you might get the urge to play too.

Copy provided by the publisher

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## Sophia says

I just couldn't resist the opportunity to read a contemporary romance with a backdrop that involved classical musicians and music. Okay, let's add that I couldn't resist reading another story by this particular author even though its in a different genre than I'm used to because I love her storytelling. I was not disappointed either. This was a lovely story and it even provided a mild amount of intrigue to make the romance interesting. Who knew the world of the symphony orchestra could be a cut throat place too?

Melody Mire is the first flutist in the orchestra and she has just sworn off dating musicians after a catastrophic date with the first violin and manager who is conniving against her to have her replaced by his child prodigy sister. Too bad, she has just gotten a gander at the new conductor who is a Thor look alike all the way from Germany. Before anything can spark, she gets a glimpse at Wolf Braun's personality and wants



none of it. If only she can convince her wayward hormones and emotions...

Wolf has just endured heartbreak and betrayal and has sworn off women. He took this position in another country to escape his past mistake, but who does he spy perched in the first flute chair? His ex's lookalike and she's already claiming to have not received her music- let the lies and excuses commence he thinks. Only, his heart isn't so convinced that Melody Mire is anything like Alma when he bumps into her a few times away from their work. Not that it matters- he's not allowed to fraternize with the musicians and what will she think when she discovers what he's been brought in to do.

In a back and forth clashing of interests, goals and even personal barriers to guard their hearts, Wolf and Melody against better judgment are drawn to each other and allow themselves to hope that this time will be different. Will a conniving ex and a need to save the orchestra be too much for their fledgling romance to bear?

The plot of this one was sweet and the pace gentle. Yes, there were a few barriers in the romance both internal and external, but I still felt the flow of the story was mellow. I enjoyed this about the story and was glad that it balanced well without getting angsty or flat. I was worried when I saw all the misunderstandings and seeming betrayals coming, but the reactions to this didn't hang on too long and get irritating. It was handled well. I loved the inclusion of family scenes that made up a secondary plot which were enjoyable in and of themselves, but also helped paint Melody and Wolf's characters with more depth.

Now as to the backdrop to this story- music is so prominent that it is like its own character. It doesn't get over the top technical with the terms and things are explained or inferred. I loved it since I have a background in music particularly classical.

Wolf and Melody are great characters and it was a pleasure to get to know them. I confess the combo of a conductor of music with Thor's body was a warm and pleasant thought. I love how Melody just wants to have a family and a man who understands her and Wolf is looking for a real person that isn't faking in whom he can intrust his heart. And who can resist a guy who voluntarily dresses up like a clown Mozart to entertain the children in the hospital?

It was a lovely story that I would recommend to fans of contemporary romance on the sweeter side.

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### **Nancy (The Avid Reader) says**

The following review is my opinion and not a paid review. I was received a free copy of the book from the author for my honest opinion.

Melody Mires is the lead flutist in an orchestra that is struggling to stay alive. Melody is worried that someone in the orchestra is trying to get her fired. She works very hard and tries to play the very best that she can. She works more than one job just to make ends meet. She is trying her best to prove to her family that she can make it as a musician. Being a musician has been a dream for Melody all her life.

With the orchestra doing everything it can to stay afloat they get a new conductor from Germany, Wolf Braun. Melody is attracted to Wolf the very first time she lays eyes on him but dating her boss is not a good idea. Everyone will think that she is trying to sleep her way to the top. Not counting all of that, she has sworn off musicians because she was hurt in the past. Wolf is also attracted to Melody and he thinks that this job is his chance at starting over and dating one of his employees just would not help his career. Besides he came to America to start a new life and leave an old one behind not to make the same mistake again.

The more Melody and Wolf try to stay away from each other the harder it is. I mean hey they work together so they are going to have to spend time together. They have to work together to try and find a way to keep the orchestra from falling apart and to keep their own jobs. They have to find out who it is that is trying to frame them and find the evidence they need to stop them.

This is like the third book by Aubrie Dionne that I have read. The first one was Colonization and the second one was Paradise 21 and I totally loved both of them. I plan on reading all of the New Dawn series and Paradise Reclaimed series. When I said that I would read and review Playing the Maestro I didn't think I would like it. I mean I like horror or you know romance with a paranormal creature thrown in with a little romance on the side. Or fantasy with a little romance on the side. But I thought well it is Aubrie Dionne there is no way that it could be a bad or even a boring book not with the way she writes. I am very glad that I gave Playing the Maestro a chance because it is a very good story. Yes, I liked it very much. Thanks Mel.

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## Stella says

Uplifting, heartwarming story for a very light and quick read with very likable main and secondary characters. I picked this one because I'm such a sucker for music.. I just had to and it didn't disappoint me.

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## Jennifer says

3.5 Stars

A man and a woman who have both given up on ever finding love, come together and fight their attraction. Why? He's not only her boss, but she's determined never to go out with another musician again. Meanwhile he has been scorned by a selfish ex, who has used him for his influence and left him broke.

This is the story of Melody Mires, the principle flutist in a local orchestra who has finally sworn off dating another musician, and Wolfgang "Wolf" Braun, the recently hired Conductor who has been flown in from Germany to turn around the ailing symphony.

"A man with dark chestnut flowing in waves around his broad shoulders took the conductor's podium and tapped his baton on the music stand. Blue eyes that reminded Melody of the Atlantic Ocean on a sunny day surveyed the orchestra. He pursed curvy lips framed by a strong-ridged jaw and gorgeously high cheekbones..."

Melody does her best to avoid him, but they continually run into each other outside of work. They begin to develop feelings for each other, but Wolf has been warned by the Symphony Manager, Blake, that dating one of the musicians will lead to his dismissal. They try to carry on a "secret" relationship, but hit many bumps in the road - a visit by Wolf's ex claiming to be his fiancée; Blake trying to sabotage Melody so that he can get his sister to replace her in the symphony. Can they overcome these obstacles and find their happily ever after?

Playing the Maestro is a sweet read told from the alternating perspectives of both Melody and Wolf. I love reading books where we get to hear from both the female and male leads, so this was a definite plus! The Author is actually a flutist in "real life", so it was interesting to read about the behind-the-scenes drama that may occur in a symphony, especially for someone like me who has no experience with classical music (except for a one-time visit to watch the Long Island Philharmonic play at a local park).

The book was only 190 pages so it was a quick read. However, I felt that there was not enough time to get

into too much depth with the characters and develop the relationship, so I did not connect with them as much as I would have liked to. I also think that if it had been longer there could have been more detail included. There were scenarios that were introduced but never really tied up in the end, like the visit from Wolf's ex. She was there and then she was suddenly gone. On a personal note, I also wouldn't have minded a little steaminess to the story. This was a very "clean" read, where the Author fades to black, just when things get hot, but there's nothing wrong with that! ;)

This Ms. Dionne's first foray into Adult Contemporary Romance and she did a great job. She typically writes Sci-fi, dystopian and fantasy, genres that I also love. I will definitely be adding these to my tbr!

An ARC was provided by the Author for an honest review.

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## **Ruth Hill says**

I have to admit that I would not generally give a simple romance like this a five-star rating. The book is fairly short, and it was fairly predictable. The book is fairly clean. One truly "profane" word, and few more minor words, but no bedroom scenes (thankfully) even though one was implied. The writing is certainly better than most contemporary romance novels. I am actually not a fan of contemporary romance novels, so in many ways, this rating makes no sense.

So why did I rate this book so high? Well, Aubrie Dionne was only known to me as a science fiction author. She was certainly an above average author of that genre (at least in my humble opinion). I was sent this book for review almost a year ago (yikes!), and somehow I just never got around to reviewing it. Until I happened upon it this past week. I am a musician (voice was my major), and I appreciate classical music (in spite of my obvious penchant for country and Broadway music). From the first page, I was absolutely mesmerized by this story. Melody and Wolf were the perfect couple before they even realized it. And the author inserted several surprises along the way as well as a bit of heart-warming humor. I found myself captivated by Wolf as well (good grief, I haven't broken up with my book boyfriend from a couple of days ago--I might be two-timing, and I never do that!), and I honestly did not want to set this book down. I can highly recommend this book to those who appreciate romance (and even if you only mildly enjoy the genre, this may be for you)!

As a side note, when I discovered that the author is a flautist and flute teacher, I understood why I connected so well with this book. I majored in music, and it was clear that the author knew what she was talking about. And indeed she did! I love it when authors write about what they know.

I was sent a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I was not financially compensated, and all opinions are 100 percent mine.

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