



Brand New Me

Meg Benjamin

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If any man wants more than a dance with her, they ll have to get past him

Konigsburg, Texas, Book 5

Deirdre Brandenburg has an MBA and a dream to become the coffee supplier for Konigsburg s growing restaurant industry. What she doesn t have is money, courtesy of her billionaire father s scheme to make her come home. All she needs is three months until her trust fund kicks in. Until then, she needs a job.

Hiring the new girl next door is a no-brainer for ex-gambler Tom Ames. He s already succeeded in making his bar, The Faro, a growing tourist draw. Deirdre s beauty will pull in the locals particularly every red-blooded male in the Hill Country. As he watches her transform from tentative business wonk to confident, sassy barmaid, he realizes he wants first crack at her heart.

When Big John Brandenburg sends Deirdre s ex-boyfriend to drag her home, the plan backfires, leaving Tom s bar in shambles and Deirdre kidnapped by a band of loony Texas secessionists.

Things are looking pretty bleak except the good people of Konigsburg have no intention of giving Deirdre up, either. Even if it takes every Faro employee, every last Toleffson, and one cranky iguana to give the honky-tonk lovebirds a chance at forever.Warning: Contains dirty dancing, hot summer sex, a honky-tonk makeover, and one nippy iguana."

Brand New Me Details

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Estara says

This started as a great return to Konigsburg, Texas, with someone from the extended family of Docia Kent, the heroine of the very first Konigsburg book, and a newcomer to town. I like the fact that all of the books have successful entrepreneurs or at least people with some sort of job they enjoy! And that getting towards their goals is also part of the development of the books - it reminds me of Nora Roberts categories or even more closely of the early Jayne Anne Krentz categories, where we always had business people falling in love, just with very varied businesses.

Deirdre Brandenburg is well-described and does a nice evolution from accepting daddy's girl to self-confident woman with presence - having been ignored and even betrayed emotionally once too often. I could see the situation highlighted with Craig Dempsey right from the start - the suspense parts of these books are never all that hard to see through and while the villains can be entertaining they are often over the top (very much that Republic of Texas guy here) and because of that it weakens the rest of the romance story. I really wish she would keep it to the romance - the personal problems of hero and heroine are usually so well done and developed with the side characters that they would totally be enough.

And so I was majorly disappointed when Deirdre in a situation where her working place had already been attacked and she had gotten an anonymous note to meet somewhere outside AND she had thought that was stupid to do - actually WENT anyway! It made me lose a lot of confidence in her, and not even the clear-headed way she got herself out of that situation (which could have turned out much nastier, if the villain of that part had not been a caricature) could make me believe that this was in character. Basically it broke me out of the story.

The same goes for Tom Ames being so upset about what happened to Deirdre that he is only willing to get the support of the police after he has beaten the villains himself: he has no idea what the known villain has in the way of support and simply goes after him and takes the chance that he will be overwhelmed. Maybe that is something that Americans who seem to be getting ever more hung up about governmental department interference, will accept - but until then Tom seemed to put the good of Deirdre before anything else, so why go for his personal satisfaction here??

I'm left with a book I really enjoyed for the first two thirds. I will read the next one, because I have enjoyed the previous books, and I'm hoping there will be a return to what I liked in the first place.

Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says

A LASR 'BEST BOOK'!

Welcome back to Konigsburg, Texas. Won't you stay awhile? Catch up with familiar faces, and meet some new ones. Deidre Brandenburg has taken up residence in this little town, hoping to start a new life for herself instead of being under her father's fairly controlling days. In her mid-twenties, it's about time Deidre follows her own heart and dreams, even at the cost of Big John's angriness.

Thank goodness Tom Ames owns the empty building that Deidre wants to use to run her coffee business. Problem is, she's got no access to major funds. Working for Tom seems to be the logical thing to do, though she knows nothing about waitressing. Things are really going to get interesting around this town, that's for

sure!

Deidre strives for independence. The stubborn woman doesn't want anyone taking pity on her, nor does she want help. She needs to do this on her own, to be on her own. After years of being under Big John's thumb and living ever so cautiously, it's time for things to change. Oh, they change all right. She meets her match in Tom -- he is as stubborn as she and doesn't accept help easily either. Their growing attraction to one another gets mighty intense. Both want to help the other out and have to learn to allow it, or their building relationship won't work.

Enter an ex-boyfriend sent by Deidre's father and here comes trouble. Craig is up to no good and has an ulterior motive of his own. I spent the rest of this book wondering whether he was going to come between Deidre and Tom.

Brand New Me is an engaging contemporary read full of emotions and wonderful characters that you can't help but love. I applaud Deidre for her quest to finally branch out and make a life of her own, and she stuck with it well, considering the financial strain and the lack of support from her father. In Konigsburg, she found new friends that welcomed her. She transformed from a stuffy woman in a suit to a woman who is able to let loose and open her heart to new possibilities. She and Tom are a perfect match. Ms. Benjamin really knows how to create memorable characters and put them through plenty of drama.

If you enjoy a fiercely independent heroine who finally chooses her own destiny, a hero who would do anything for her, a small town full of unforgettable people, then plan your visit to Konigsburg. When you leave, you'll be smiling.

Originally posted at <http://longandshortreviews.blogspot.c...>

ms bookjunkie says

3.5 stars

Another happy addition to the Konigsburg series. These books make me smile, and reread. Often.

Also: Yay, a non-Toleffson hero! None of that brotherly family angst!

ValerieC says

I really liked this latest installment (Book 5) in the Konigsburg, TX series.

- Shy heroine leaves rich Daddy, grows up, and falls in love
- Lonely bar owner meets his love
- Plenty of catch-ups with the locals from previous books as well the Kent/Brandenburg/Tolleffson clan.
- Bad guys, scary action

Meg Benjamin has a fun series here, but mixes all the elements without going overboard on any of them.

Well balanced and enjoyable.

I will get the next one, too.

Michelle says

I loved this story! Sadly, again I'm coming in late to the game so this is the first in the Konigsburg series I've read even though it's the 5th in the series. I am motivated enough to try and find the other stories, I want to see how everyone had their HEA. I really liked Deirdre. She spent so much of her life being the good girl and doing what she was told that when she finally broke out to do what she wanted with her life, she did it with a vengeance. I really enjoyed the relationship build up between Tom and Deirdre. When it did come down to their smexy times I wasn't that impressed, the writing wasn't just quite there for me, but it didn't affect my overall enjoyment of their love story. I loved almost everything else about the story. I would have loved to jump in to the Sylvia/Chico dynamic to see how their relationship built. Maybe there will be more from them in the next story. Great read from a new-to-me author and I'm excited to see what else there is to enjoy from her.

Calisto says

Deirdre Brandenburg is the poor little rich girl who is not taken seriously by her billionaire father. Tom is an ex-gambler trying to change the reputation of his once seedy bar.

I wasn't that impressed with Deirdre. There was nothing really wrong with her but she kinda just felt a bit flat for me. I think it was that as there was just too many things that we were supposed to like about her being spunky, unsure of her looks, smart, determined, nice as pie...errr, marysue much? I guess that was the biggest thing is that even her 'flaws' felt shallow and not real.

Tom was fine. I mean nothing wrong with him either it just all felt ho-hum. For some reason the events in this book (kidnapping - gun finale) felt way over the top.

Still overall, it was a pleasant read if you are just looking for a small town romance about a poor little rich girl and the guy from the wrong side of the tracks. Despite being lukewarm about this book, I will definitely keep an eye out for this author.

Erotic Horizon says

A visit to Konigsburg is never a hardship for me and when **BRAND NEW ME** hit the shelves I had to get it post haste. This is the fifth book in Ms. Benjamin series of book set in the small town of Konigsburg, Texas.

To be honest this is one of those books I read with some trepidation, because the core characters of the series so far have all had their stories told and I enjoyed every moment. That said, Ms Benjamin writing style and everything about the series so far really made me wish the series wouldn't end and so we now have **BRAND NEW ME**.

This story is about new characters who were never featured in the previous five books and on one hand I was delighted as always when new blood comes into the town, but I was also edging my bets at the same time as I loved the tried and proven madness that I am used to from the Toleffson and their eclectic bunch of friends from the previous four books.

The story starts with Tom Ames sitting in one of his competitor place of business, contemplating how to get traffic into his bar, The Faro. Over the years The Faro had developed a reputation and despite his best attempt to clean it up and make it a place to enjoy a beer in the evenings it doesn't have the traffic it could have even with a cracker-jack of a cook as his secret weapon. Not one to brood over something to work towards Tom makes do with what he has and keeps his head above water and his little joint's reputation clean.

Tom also just happens to own the actual building where The Faro and another premises is housed, which in his mind should have been turning over even rent at least, but no takers so far. And because of that it comes as some surprise when the most gorgeous woman turns up out of the blue wanting to rent the off the beaten track premises.

Deirdre Brandenburg could not believe her luck when she spot the perfect little shop for her, with a sort of plan in mind she approaches the owner and set in motion a chain of events and lunacy that will have her taking a whole new look at her life.

Deidre is not the run of the mill girl, she is a "Brandenburg" and has the most chauvinistic father to prove it. When the two lock horns over Deirdre's career path she take matters into her own hands and branches out. With only few choices available to her she heads for Docia Toleffson who is as rock solid as they come and hopes for the best.

Meeting Tom doesn't factor into her plan, but he is a most welcome addition, along with a new found sense of independence and even a whole new wardrobe that seems to make men do weird things around her. Trouble follows Deidre from the big city and before long it's not only Deidre that's in the firing line figuratively and literally – but Tom and all her plan that she has worked so hard for.

As I mentioned before - I approached this book with a little bit of caution and a good thing too. Something's doesn't change, Benjamin writing is sweet - there is no two ways about it. Her characters are people I would love to meet and with a whole new set of people to fall in love with she introduced me to another set of people outside of the group that hang around the Toleffson brood, which I thought was a good thing as the Toleffson tends to overshadow a big part of anything that happens in the town. Good to know what else was happening down the road from the Dewdrop.

Some of the other things that worked for me are the fact that I met old friends and with some pretty decent scenes to show me where they where at and how the group were gelling together as well as how they made this little town of Konigsburg their own.

The sarcastic humour that is such a big part of the series is alive and well in **BRAND NEW ME** and I grinned at a few scenes. I really love Ms Benjamin dry sense of humour.

It wasn't all good though, the niggles I had was probably with the events that pushed the books along and the main protags themselves.

Tom and Deidre were too perfect, I don't mean to be mean to them but there was never really any angst that would prevent them from getting together. On one hand it's nice to have characters that just click and got on with making whoopee, but too much was happening around them and they both seem to walk around in this sensual haze.. it got old after a while.

There were one or two sub plotline that had a darker edge to it, however none of them really rung true to me and eventually just felt rather comical.

This book was definately more laid back than the others so far. While this might not be a problem for most readers, I do like to a bit of pace to my reading or some suitable suspenseful tension to compensate which I didn't get from this book.

Bottom line.

Fan of this series, there is no excuse why you have not picked this book up yet. While I had a few niggles with some of the plotline, overall the book did what it set out do. It filled me in with the happenings of all my favourite people, it also introduced a whole new set or people that just might be the main characters in future books.

New readers wanting a sweet series that has all the hallmark of an all round good read please do try the Konigsburg, Texas series of book.

BRAND NEW ME was a catch up book for me and as such it hit the spot.

Netty says

Cute!

Sue says

Fifth Konigsburg book, but no more brothers. But wait, the heroine of the first book has a cousin! She, too, conveniently wants to escape to Konigsburg. More romance amongst our familiar cast of characters.

Jill Fox says

I really enjoyed this book and read it in a day.

It was a quick and easy read.

C is for **censored**** says**

The star rating given reflects my opinion within 'the official goodreads rating system'.

1 star: Didn't Like it

2 stars: It's Okay

3 stars: Liked it

4 stars: Really Liked it

5 stars: It Was Amazing

I don't really give a rat-fuck that there are some who think I 'owe' an explanation for my opinion. Nope, nada, and not sorry about it.

Sometimes I may add notes to explain what my opinions are based on, and sometimes I don't. I do this for me, on my books, in my library and I don't 'owe' any special snowflakes a thing. Fuck off if you don't like it and stop reading my shit.

Particularly given the 'modifications' to reader's personal content going on (and outright censorship), unless particularly motivated I will not comment in detail.

It would help if GR was forthcoming in the new 'appropriate' and would make a site-wide announcement delineating the new focus from a reader-centric site to one that is now for authors and selling.
