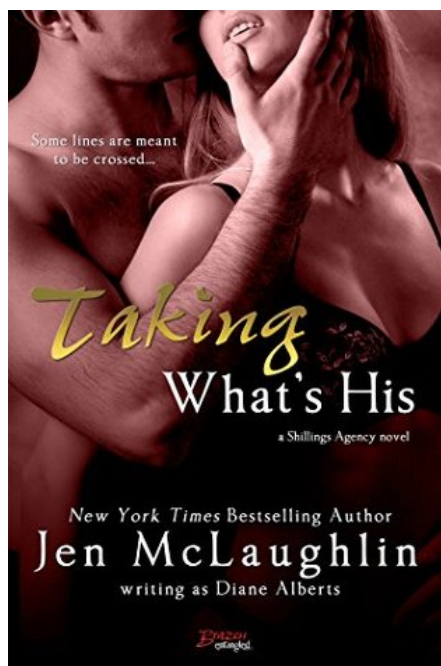




Taking What's His

Diane Alberts

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A sexy category romance from Entangled's Brazen imprint...

Some lines are meant to be crossed...

One explosive device was all it took to turn Holt Cunningham from ass-kicking Marine to IT technician. Hell, he's still not over it. So when the cute little strawberry blonde at the bar asks him to kiss her, Holt can't resist the temptation of a sexy distraction. Before he knows it, she's blown his mind...and then skipped out the next morning.

Lydia Thomas never expected things with Holt to go quite that far, but oh, it was worth it. After being far too good for way too long, she was ready to be bad. Except that there's that tiny detail that Lydia kept to herself- Holt just spent the night doing naughty things...with his best friend's little sister.

One night isn't nearly enough. But with his friendship on the line, how far will Holt go in order to claim what's his?

Taking What's His Details

Date : Published April 28th 2015 by Entangled: Brazen

ISBN :

Author : Diane Alberts

Format : Kindle Edition 206 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, War, Military Fiction

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From Reader Review Taking What's His for online ebook

Kim Reads (Read Your Writes Book Reviews) says

Reviewed for Read Your Writes Book Reviews

by Kim

Oh my God. I'm in love with a Gamma. Holt Cunningham is a thick-rimmed black glasses, plaid shirt wearing Clark Kent. He's former military with a dark, tragic past. He's a guy who's up for one-night stands, but doesn't do sleepovers or commitment. He's an IT guy for Shillings Agency and is one amazing coder. "You have no idea how dangerous a guy like me can be." Oh yes. I am melting here.

"Geeks were the dirtiest, freakiest, sexiest men of them all. Hands down. And this guy might be the king of them all."

Yes. That describes Holt to a "T". I so want to be his heroine. *Sigh.* Oh. The book. Yes, the book. Ahem.

Taking What's His is a forbidden romance, featuring the best friend sibling troupe. Holt is just....sigh. Sorry. Holt Cunningham is an IT guy for Shillings Agency, a security firm in Maine. Like all the employees of the agency, he's former military and sustained injuries while fighting in war. He's a soldier through and through and is not too happy that he's now stuck behind a desk. He keeps the extent and pain of his injury to himself.

I wanna be Lydia Thomas. She's the younger sister of Steven Thomas, Holt's best friend and co-worker. Lydia is a recent college grad, with a degree in nursing. She's independent, strong, and self-assured. In an attempt to make her former boyfriend jealous, she kisses Holt and agrees to one night of letting her inner bad girl go wild.

You hear all the time that a hero and heroine are perfect for each other for whatever reasons. But seriously, Holt and Lydia are truly perfect for each other. She understands his war injuries and is able to support him when he needs the support, whether he wants it or not. Holt is the guy who allows Lydia to step out of her comfort zone and be the woman she wants and needs to be. He doesn't believe he's what she needs or is good enough for her but their chemistry between the sheets and out is playful and hot.

"You said if I knocked, you'd always let me in. I'm knocking." ~ If only I was Lydia to open the door.

Diane Alberts continues to prove why she's one of my must read authors with Taking What's His. If you're looking for a hot read with loveable characters, this is the book for you.

****Received a copy from Entangled Publishing in exchange for an honest unbiased opinion.****

Rating: 4.5

Jackie Kiwibooknerd says

Advanced Readers Copy Courtesy of Entangled Publishing....)

This is the 4th book in this wonderful series by Diane Albert's and I can honestly say it is my favorite one so far...

This is Holt and Lydia's story and its a doozy.....Holt works for Cooper at Shillings Agency. He is a bit of a IT geek (even has the glasses to prove it), but he is all ALPHA....phew!!!!

He is drinking one night at a bar and a beautiful women comes on to him. They go back to his place to engage in a one night stand, because he does not do anything else....however what he does not know, is that Lydia his "hook up" for the night is his best friend, at Shillings sister.....ooopppsssiiee!!!!

Don't want to go into too much detail, because where is the fun in that? However these 2 certainly do set the pages alight, and their chemistry is off the charts.....Can anyone say "Yes Sir"!!!!

A really fun enjoyable read of what happens when you 2 people decide to ignore the one big rule "They shalt not nail your best friends sister" and engage in a hot little affair....)

Marla Mei says

I just didn't connect with this at all. I'm all for a slow-burn romance but I could still appreciate a romance that happens too fast only if I feel that it is justified. I didn't feel it here. Hence me not liking the book much. It was just an okay read for me.

What I did like though was how Holt's PTSD was portrayed here. Especially how the book didn't romanticize PTSD and make it seem that only love will fix it. I have no personal experience on the subject but I know that the recovery from it is a long road ahead and I'm glad that just because Holt had Lydia in his life, it didn't mean that his PTSD would suddenly go away. Sure having Lydia helped him slowly get over it but I'm glad that he didn't get cured overnight.

Lana ❄️Dirty Girl Romance❄️ says

4 Stars

She'd known that underneath those glasses was a bad boy who knew exactly what to do with a good girl like her.

Well, well, well, Diane Alberts. How DO you keep doing it? Giving us one hero after the other that just gets better and better. I think that Holt Cunningham just may be my favorite Shillings Agency man yet. There's just something so vulnerable and broken about him and yet with this darker edge that you just wouldn't expect. All of it combined together just makes for one deliciously sexy read.

So what are you saying?"

"I'm saying I want to bring you home and fuck you until you stop thinking about other guys. I want to claim you, Own you. Make you come more times than ever before."

Lydia is the quintessential good girl. After her latest boyfriend of two months dumps her because she wouldn't put out, she's determined to shake up her life a bit. When she spots her her ex at the bar, the dark,

broody and sexy stranger proves to be a welcome distraction. And when she asks him to kiss her, she certainly doesn't expect the type of sparks to fly as they do,

Holt may work in IT now, but he'll always be a Marine at heart. But he's not the man that he once was. He's more broken, inside and out. A devastating IED explosion on his latest tour caused him everything, his military brothers and his own wounds. Suffering from the repercussions of that and his crippling PTSD, all he's able to satisfy himself with is booze and one-night stands.

That's all he's good for anyway. But the beautiful and innocent woman at the bar tempts him for so much more. And c'mon, who can resist and sexy and dirty talking nerd anyway? Well, he's not really a nerd. But the glasses do certainly add to his appeal. But I digress...

He didn't want to be this guy with her. He wanted to be the guy who blew her mind with amazing orgasms. The guy she missed when he was gone. The guy she needed... Not the guy who needed HER.

But Lydia is not just another woman. She also happens to be his best friend and co-worker's little sister. She may know this going into their one-night deal, but he sure as hell doesn't. Too bad by the time that he finds out he's already hooked.

I really loved this latest installment in the series. Lydia and Holt were the perfect yin and yangs for each other. Holt is broody and tortured and Lydia is the lighthearted and sweet side. And together they're absolutely sizzling! But this was also so much more than simple chemistry, I found the characters to have so much depth (Holt in particular). His struggle with his mental and physical repercussions after his injury broke my heart to read. As stubborn and pigheaded as he was sometimes, he never frustrated me. My heart just hurt for him and for Lydia. I was rooting for them the entire time. This series just continues to get better and better for me. I really hope to get Steve's book next. Definitely a rec for fans of this series and even those that haven't read it yet. This is the perfect book to start with since it's easily read as a standalone. Though I highly recommend the rest of the series too since it's also fantastic.

ARC courtesy of publisher in exchange for an honest review

For more reviews visit

Devika says

4 stars.....

ARC provided by Entangled Publishing in exchange for an honest review

Lindy says

My Thoughts:

Taking What's His, by Diane Alberts, was such a fun, flirty, and fantabulous read! Not to mention steamy, sexy, and downright drool worthy! If you are in the mood for a fast-paced, erotic, and sizzling, sensual, and swoon-worthy escape, this is the perfect read for you!

A year ago Holt Cunningham was a marine in the midst of battle with the rest of his platoon, when an IED explosion killed everyone, leaving him the sole survivor. Now he is back home, suffering from long-term physical effects, as well as PTSD. He works as an IT guy along with his best friend, Steven, a former Seal, at Shillings Agency.

One night when Lydia is out at a bar, she see's her ex-boyfriend, a man that cheated on her. She does something she normally wouldn't do and approaches the gorgeous, hunky looking nerd at the bar and asks him to kiss her. She thinks the man looks familiar, and when he introduces himself as Holt, she quickly realizes that she recognizes him from her brother's Facebook photos.

After they share an explosive kiss that leaves Lydia weak in the knees, Holt asks her if she wants to go home with him. He doesn't know that she is Steven's little sister, and she decides one night of hot sex won't hurt anyone. He doesn't have to know who she is. They both agree to one night with no attachments, and they will go their separate ways in the morning. However, nothing goes according to plan...

Whew! This story was H-O-T, Sexy, Sweet, and Romantic! I loved the main characters, Lydia and Holt. Lydia was really sweet, adventurous, enthusiastic, caring, and compassion. She was the salve for Holt's wounded soul. Holt was a great guy! He felt broken, unworthy, unhappy, and lonely. Despite all of his challenges, he was a really special guy. He had two sides to him; the alpha-male, dirty talker, sexy pleaser, and the sweet, romantic, caring and loving lover.

My Rating:

I give, Taking What's His, by Diane Alberts, 4 Tantalizing Temptation, Frenzy Filled, Heated Stars!!! If you enjoy the Entangled Brazen Line, and really sexy reads, I highly recommend this one!

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The BookWhisperer says

Okay, when the opening letter from the author states this: "This one goes to all the Whovians out there. And if you're not one yet...what are you waiting for? Join the dark side. We have cookies, bowties, and fezzes." I know that I have a great book in my hands. And I did have a great book in my hands. *Just a little side note: I have mad love for Doctor Who and this book was all about it's nerdiness. It brought me great pleasure and joy to know that someone else loves the show just as much as I do and had their heart ripped out with Ten and Rose were separated by a wall with a parallel world dividing them. If you don't know Doctor Who yet, I highly recommend it. It is the most brilliant thing I have ever become addicted to. *

I was nervous at the beginning of this book because it started off getting straight to the point - Holt and Lydia leaving the bar together with an agreement of just one night and nothing else. At this point, I didn't know the characters but slowly Alberts introduces them and they are quite brilliant. Both amazing in their own ways, these two are a match made in heaven. Sweet Lydia brings calmness to the hectic world of Holt and Holt brings a bad (but good) edge to Lydia's life.

I really enjoyed reading this book and getting to know more of the Shilling Agency's characters. There was one perfect part of the book (besides the Doctor Who talk) that was poetic and really wrapped up the ending so nicely; "If you knock, I'll let you in." What a powerful way to end a great book. ~BooWhisperer
Reviewer MC~

Michelle says

[image error]

Chu says

Holt Cunningham has a lot of baggage. After an explosive device turned his world upside down, he gave up being a Marine and became an IT Technician at Shillings. Even though he tries to live a normal life, nightmares and headaches would still visit him at times. Meeting the strawberry-blondie who asked him to kiss her was unexpected, so is the chemistry that they shared with the kiss. He knew he had to have her. Indeed, she knocked him off his feet, but the next morning – she ran away.

Lydia Thomas never expected for things to go that far with Holt. But it was worth it! She had been on the right side of tracks all along, and she wanted to know what it's like to break the rules. One thing she withheld from Holt is that tiny little fact that she was his best friend's little sister.

Will one night be enough?

Lines are crossed, and friendships are in jeopardy – will Holt and Lydia last?

Lydia might have been a little too fast in falling in love according to her brother, but I like the fact that (1) she's a theater nurse (LIKE ME!) and of course (2) she cares a whole lot for Holt regardless of his baggage and his moods when he's having a headache. She understood him well. As for Holt, I knew he meant well when he tried to break her heart, being noble and all, but he could have asked her to save all the trouble.

It's a story of love, and second chances. Of finding love when we least expect and with the person we didn't expect it with. I had so much fun reading this book. I finished it in one sitting. Another short, sizzling, satisfying read from Diane Alberts!

Review originally posted on my blog

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•Complimentary Copy was given in exchange for an honest review.•

More of my reviews at <http://reviewsofabookmaniac.blogspot.com>

Janey says

ARC generously provided by Entangled Publishing in exchange for an honest review..

Merged review:

4 Doctor Who stars

Bloody loved Holt!

This was a great addition to this series, and a definite improvement on the last one IMO.

Holt Cunningham finds himself on his usual trail, following a day at the Shillings office. In a bar, perusing the scene, pickup ahoy. Infact, he's done little more since returning from a military mission that had detonated his life, physically and mentally.

Lydia Thomas is the little sister of Steven, a member of Shillings Agency. She finds herself in a bar after slight male distraction, following her relationship break up. Seeing her ex walk in, she grabs the guy next to her and requests a kiss. Little does he know that she is already aware of who he is.

A hurried kiss leads onto a longer night, which leaves its impression on both of them.

I celebrated both these characters, because of their well established personalities. Holt earned all the ticks for my attention; dark & dominant, broody & bossy, dirty talking deviant..yes, and hiding under the shadows of a geek. I relished his reveal, I felt his vulnerability, and Lydia was just the right compassionate soul to soothe him.

Add in the forbidden best friends little sister, and it was a winner for me.

ARC provided by entangled publishing in exchange for an honest review..

nick says

From time to time, I like to pick up an Entangled Brazen book as a palette cleanser. They are short, sexy and a lot of fun to read. When I found out that Holt, the main character in this book, was a nerd, I was all over it. Sure enough, I got out of Taking What's His exactly what I wanted : a fun and steamy read.

Taking What's His had one of my favorite tropes in romance books ever: the older brother's best friend trope. There's just something about the forbidden element to this trope that makes books very exciting. Lydia was a great main character. She was a good girl who was looking for some excitement in her life after her boyfriend dumped her. I liked Lydia's character. I especially enjoyed the fact that she was willing to go after what she wanted simply because she was passionate about it. While looking for some excitement, she meets the nerdy, but sexy as heck, Holt. Can I just say how glad I am that we are getting some seriously sexy nerds in romance books lately? Seriously, there is nothing more attractive to me than an intelligent and intellectual man. Oh and did I mention Holt was also a military man? Talk about the complete package! Another bonus?

He was a dirty talker. As soon as Holt and Lydia met, I could sense all the sparks between them. They had some hot, hot, hot chemistry together and phew, the sexy times had me blushing hard even though I was reading this book alone in my room. Because Holt was also battling with PTSD from his time in the military and because Lydia is also his best friend's sister, they did have a few obstacles. Most of them because Holt had a tendency to be quite bull-headed. Still, he could not resist the strong pull he felt towards Lydia and that led to many swoony scenes. Despite how much he tried to push her away, there was no denying that these love birds were meant to me. Diane Alberts' writing was a lot of fun and I'm definitely going to check out more books by her in the future.

All in all, *Taking What's His* was a fun and sexy read that I had a hard time putting down. If you're in the mood for a quick, but swoony read, I highly recommend this book.

Claire Robinson says

4.5 - "If you'll knock, I'll let you in." Stars!

Diane Alberts *Shillings Agency* series has so far offered up the good, the mediocre and the pretty damn special. *Taking What's His* definitely falls in the latter category for me. In fact, I would even go as fast as to say that Holt Cunningham has just edged Cooper Shillings into second place on my list of *Shillings* favorites.

"You have no idea how dangerous a guy like me can be."

Maybe not, but I was damn happy to find out whilst I read the book. This is your average, run-of-the-mill 'brother's best-friend' trope, with a few geeky twists thrown in for good measure. Holt is ex-military, and working in IT at Shillings is not very high on the excitement and adrenalin scale, however he is still very much dealing with his time in the Marines, and the issues that he has brought home with him limit the things he can do, and often stifle the man he wants and is trying to be, so much so that relationships and commitment are way down his list of priorities, one night, no-strings is a big as the commitment gets for him.

I really liked Lydia, she was bright, sparky and the perfect light to Holts dark. It really worked for their development as a couple, she challenged and pushed him, and didn't back off when he tried to push her away. Diane also managed to add in some really sexy-times between the pair of them as well, Holt has got mad oral skills, in both senses of the word!

This book goes a little deeper than some of the books in the series, the author gave both characters great back-stories, Holt and his issues, played a massive part in that, but Lydia and her's also rounded it all out nicely and it all clicked together into one really great read.

"No more running. No more fear."

I hope that we get more from this series and this author through Entangled's, Brazen imprint really soon, a fresh twist and a great couple in a tried and tested trope has rejuvenated the *Shillings Agency* series, I can only hope that Steven (Lydia's brother, Holt's friend/colleague) gets his story told next...

ARC generously provided via Entangled, and it was my pleasure to provide the above honest review.

2kasmom says

Holt Cunningham and Lydia Thomas had never met before. They have someone in common, her older brother is Holt's best friend. Is it a lie if she does not tell him?

Holt and Lydia are explosive right from the start. Where he was just sitting, drowning his sorrows in a bar and then she kisses him. You heard right - she kissed him!

Lydia has feelings so quickly for Holt that she is almost afraid. They are moving too fast and yet it sometimes feels too slow. They feel like they belong together, because they do.

Holt works and is good friends with Lydia's older brother who still thinks of her as a kid. When he finds out about them.... well it is not pretty. Is their relationship more important than friendship? Is what they have going to last?

If only he could keep his hands off her. Or maybe keep his mouth off her. They cannot be in a room together without some incredible passion taking over. This book isn't for the faint of heart.

Holt and Lydia must overcome past pain and trauma - to find one another and a future that could be filled with happiness. He is a war hero who feels that he has failed. She is a baby sister who is no longer a child. Totally hot book!

***This ARC copy was given free from Netgalley.com and the publisher, for review purposes. My honest opinion does not reflect Netgalley, nor its affiliates.

Maria Rose says

This sexy romance, book four in the Shillings Agency series but easily read as a standalone is the story of Holt and Lydia. Holt suffers from PTSD, physical as well as emotional symptoms from an IED explosion that ended his military career and has resulted in his new job in IT at the Shillings security agency. A hot one night stand with a beautiful woman he meets at a bar helps him forget his troubles for a night - until she turns out to be the younger sister of his colleague Steven. She's off limits but being with her feels so good he's willing to forgo the rules, so long as things don't get serious. He feels he has nothing to offer Lydia except sex. Can she convince him that he's wrong?

I liked the plot setup for this story, and the attraction between Holt and Lydia was sizzling. The love scenes between them were intense and well written. I had a bit of a problem with the story as a whole though - specifically due to the use of the 'F-word'. Now, I've got nothing against it and I'm quite used to it in romances, it's common in sex scenes and with men, especially military heroes. But the 'F-word' is used four times on the first page and it caught my attention, such that I started paying attention to it more. In fact, after I was done reading, I used the search function on my ereader and found it was used 137 times. (In contrast, the first story in this series, Temporarily Yours, used the 'F-word' 40 times). I have to be honest and say that I found this excessive, and it kept taking me out of the story which was disappointing because I was really enjoying the connection between Lydia and Holt. I liked Holt's character otherwise and the way being with

Lydia made him think about his life and what he wanted for his future. She makes him realize that the only way his PTSD will improve is if he is willing to share his emotional and physical symptoms with his friends and with her. Lydia was a delightful character- funny, friendly, warm and caring. She sees the goodness in Holt despite his assurances to her to the contrary, and is willing to take a chance on him.

The secondary characters were interesting and it was nice to see some from previous stories in the series as well as new ones that definitely have story potential. I've always really enjoyed this author's writing and though this one won't stand out as a favourite, I'm looking forward to the next in the series. 3.5 stars.

Note: a copy of this story was provided by the publisher via NetGalley for review.

Nicola says

Jen McLaughlin/Diane Alberts is just one of those authors you can rely on to bring you a hot sexy read. *Taking What's His* is another great addition to her *Shillings Agency* series, and brings us Holt Cunningham; a dirty-talking, bespectacled, dominant man with a vulnerable side.

When Holt meets Lydia Thomas in a bar, their chemistry sizzles and it burns bright throughout. I loved how prepared Lydia was to go toe-to-toe with him, but it was how hard Holt fell that made me adore him the way I did. He has vulnerabilities, he's stubborn and dominant but he's also a complete sweetheart.

If you're a Doctor Who fan, there are little moments in this book that will make perfect sense and bring the feels, and if you're not, well they'll still do that, just perhaps not on the same level. Jen certainly doesn't let her reader down and with Lydia's newly-single brother Steven featuring throughout, I hope we're given the opportunity to discover which lady will bring him to his knees.

4.5 stars.

Copy received courtesy of Entangled Publishing for an honest and unbiased opinion.
