



His Brother's Keeper

Ali Katz

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Genre: LGBT Contemporary

A Loose Id "Hot Hooks" Winner!

After six months, Jess and Sal are still living the honeymoon -- sex in the hall, sex on the stairs, sex on the kitchen floor. Life couldn't be more perfect. Enter Jess's little brother, Teddy.

A kid is the last thing the lovers need, especially a sullen, troubled teen with far too much baggage, but Teddy needs them, and when life throws a curve, real men swing.

A kid in the house, however, means getting together is no longer just a matter of wrestling to see who's going to top, or stashing little bottles of lube in convenient places. It takes innovation: they haven't tried the laundry room in the garage yet. And discretion: it's hard to be discreet if your lover crows when he comes.

Still, watching Teddy bloom makes the daily challenges worthwhile. They manage, and their little family is just beginning to take on a healthy new shape when Teddy is viciously attacked and Sal comes under suspicion.

Now, where and when take second place to if and but. The ultimate test begins as they fight to hold fast to love and family while merciless forces work to rip them apart.

Publisher's Note: This book contains explicit sexual content, graphic language, and situations that some readers may find objectionable: Male/male sexual practices.

His Brother's Keeper Details

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From Reader Review His Brother's Keeper for online ebook

L-D says

Not quite 4 stars.

This book was better than I expected since this is the first time reading this author. It touched on a lot of darker topics, so if you want light and fluffy you will not get that here. Sam is a policeman in a relationship and living with his partner, Jesse (not cop partner, lover-partner). Jesse reaches out to his brother, Teddy, who has run away from their abusive father. Okay, this whole book was a headcase. Teddy had so many issues that it was nearly impossible to relate to him, but Sam and Jesse do their best. It's stressful and tense and frustrating, but their strength as a family really comes through. I thought this was a good book and I really liked Sam.

Tj says

I did enjoy this book. Sal was a wonderful character, more loving than one would expect given his career. Jess was a bit more shallow and flighty but rounded out the couple well. (Checks and balances.) Teddy seemed so strong but was so broken and twisted by his past. The book really does revolve around Teddy and his effects on the main couple's lives. The overall story was very dramatic, it dealt with some hard issues and didn't shy away from them. I did think the story was a bit one sided and made "authorities" into bad guys. Not that some of these situations don't still happen but I felt like there was some liberty taken with it. Also this book just jumps into a story part way through. I did feel like part of the story was missing. Unlike some the ending with Teddy wasn't a surprise for me, the world is a lot more diverse than some give it credit for;))

Eyre says

This must be my weekend for reading tear-jerkers. I enjoyed this story about established couple Sal and Jess and the struggles they encounter after taking in Jess's abused, teenage brother Teddy. The author makes a good point about making assumptions and stereotypes at the end of the story. I won't say more about that because I don't want to give away any spoilers.

Also, I do feel the need to point out that some of my friends may find the descriptions of Teddy's abuse and its aftermath upsetting.

Deeze says

This for me has been one of the most realistically written stories I've read in a long time. I felt a connection with each character, their emotions and thought process felt very real to me.

Teddy is 15 and still trying to find himself while others around him assume they know him. He is a child with deep rooted fears and the understandable need to be loved by his parent.

Jess is the older brother who on the surface seems a bit care free and self centred, but as we get to know him we see that he really isn't the bad guy. He reacts badly at times but the caring is there, as is the guilt for leaving Teddy. At times the thoughts Jess has are selfish, but to me they also seem real. I think we are all capable of thinking the way he does after having so much responsibility pushed on us, especially when in Jess's case he is not that old.

Sal is the guy we all wish we had in our corner. He is the strong guy, the one to lean on, the one who knows what to do, the one who gets forgotten because he is always everyone else's anchor. Sal is the knight in shining armour, but he is not perfect. He has his own issues. He is so busy trying to keep everyone else safe and happy he forgets to let others do the same for him.

Overall a very interesting and emotional read, but unlike most the bad is not centre stage, we do not get pages of detailed abuse, instead we get thoughts and feelings and the frustrations of life kicking you when you are already down.

Worth reading when you are looking for that little bit more realistic emotion in your fiction.

Now I just want to see Teddy's story. I'm curious as to just who Teddy grew up to be lol.

On a side note, I don't think the book blurb gives a fair impression of what this book is about. From the blurb it sounds like a typical straight forward plot, *moody teen disrupts a perfect setting then they all get along until something bad happens* scenario. That is not how this book reads.

Stacey Jo says

I enjoyed this book. It took on some serious issues like child abuse and teen suicide and handled them well. The social services was enough to get your blood boiling. Sal and Jess were a very sweet couple. Sal was a wonderful guy taking on all that he did without question.

Jadette Paige says

Ali Katz story of love amid turmoil is beautifully written. This book captures the emotions of all three of the main characters. I loved it!

Table4Five says

3.5 STARS

I am not sure where to start with this book. I want to start off by saying that it's not a bad book, but it's not great either. The characters are somewhat likeable. Sal is great! He grabs you from the beginning. He is very thoughtful about others and gives 100% of his heart. Jess ... He drove me nuts. I understand that he wants to be there for his brother, but he did a lot of pushing away to his lover in the process. Jess just didn't seem mature enough throughout the book to be dealing with the situations that were going on. There was the one fight that he and Sal got into and he refused to talk to Sal for three weeks. Sal didn't really even know

what the problem was ... and to be honest I didn't either. Teddy was the kid that you felt sorry for. I was a bit frustrated with his character with how strong he seemed in the beginning of the book to how weak he became toward the end. I would have thought that once he had the support of his brother that he would have wanted to stand up to his father and end the abuse once and for all. Then I was really thrown for a curveball at the end when he ended up with a girlfriend.

The book was a bit all over the place for me. I never felt emotional for the characters :(I did enjoy Carmen and Beth! Happy Reading!

Emanuela ~plastic duck~ says

This book felt real. I am not familiar with the legal procedures and the social service issues in the United States with child abuse, but how the events of the book developed seemed plausible.

Sal and Jess are a solid couple. It's clear that they love and support each other. Sal is incredibly understanding and he welcomes - reluctantly at the beginning - his lover's brother into his life trying to control a situation that could be explosive. He is my favorite character in the book, because he was the more grounded and generous.

Jess remains a bit of a mystery for me. I want to blame him for what happened to his brother and I understand the initial resentment Teddy felt for Jess, the fact that he felt abandoned and later on cheated because Jess hid his homosexuality from his father and now Teddy is facing a difficult situation with their father because of this same reason.

Teddy is like all adolescents: he acts like he is strong and careless, but he hides his insecurity and confusion. He desperately wants to be loved and accepted, especially by his abusive father. It was so hard to accept Teddy's denial of his father's attack. I think the author treated the character of the father with an incredible balance. Sometimes it's too easy to use a negative character to collect all the frustration and anger of a reader for what's happening in a book, but there was something - again - real in the selfish behavior of the father, in his destructive desperation.

The book really seemed like the narration of what happens in the life of three people during a difficult situation, as if we could open a window on their life and spy on them and then close the window, with the feeling that we could finally stop worrying and let them go.

MsMiz (Tina) says

I have thought about this book for the last couple of weeks in relation to how I can review it. I am having trouble with putting it into words. Enjoyable is the wrong term as the story is dripping with pain and strife. Ali does a fantastic job of making you feel everything the characters are going through, without using a ton of words or explanation - you just know. If I could describe this book in one word, I would say 'real'. The hell that these 3 go through to get out relatively together at the end is a long road and one that does not sugar coat when a parent is abusive, social services gets involved and when one of the partners is a cop. I still stop every now and again and think about Teddy and what it must have been for him to go through all that - his despair is so deep and yet, just as Teddy does not 'know himself', you as a reader don't really know him

either. It is wonderfully complex, yet not.

Recommendation - read it - it is good!

Laura says

So this story has a lot of the elements I normally love but for some reason I just wasn't drawn into it. I couldn't see the connection between Sal and Jess. Another thing that really bothered me was how Sal had pet names for Teddy even though the story didn't really build them up to that level of bonding. They came off as creepy rather than endearing. Overall, just an ok story for me.

D.H. Starr says

I loved this book. When I read it, I felt an immediate connection to all three of the main characters. Ali's ability to infuse her book with real life problems, strong erotic romance, and believable characters who have depth was awesome. I read the book very quickly cause I couldn't put it down

Ebook Addict Reviews says

His Brother's Keeper by Ali Katz is one of those stories that linger on long past the time you've read the last words. Part of it is the subject matter, but a bigger part is the depth of the characters and their come-to-life personalities. Dear heaven, Sal and Jess are wonderful, both individually and as a couple. The love that they share, the still-new excitement of their being together rolls off the pages and leave me somewhat envious... I remember those days!

Then Teddy is brought into their lives; not by his choice mind you, and a whole new dimension of being together is added. Gotta love a big brother who is willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that his little brother is safe. And Sal is just freakin' amazing in that he is more than willing to do what needs to be done for both the man he loves and the kid brother.

But one of the things that made the biggest impact is that none of them are perfect and that's more than fine.

Jess is carrying around a mountain of guilt over his younger brother Teddy and, while intellectually I know there's really not much he could have done, I can still see why he feels as he does. It's heartbreaking in sooo many ways, for both Jess and Teddy, and now Sal.

Sal, being a cop, has seen so much hurt that to have it touch the man he loves is almost more than he can stand. But for Jess, and later Teddy, Sal will do anything and everything he can to protect these two even at the cost of his own happiness. A man like that is... beyond price.

Teddy; okay wow... his life has been one level of hell after another and it breaks my heart as we discover all that he's been subjected to. How he managed to remain someone with a heart is beyond me but he did manage to hold onto his humanity. The strength that this young man has is amazing, but the struggles that are ahead of him are not only daunting but almost overwhelming and not only for him.

This is an extremely emotionally charged story and yes while often difficult to read, it is rich and vibrant and very memorable. This is the first book that I've read by Ali Katz but the mastery with which she dealt with some extremely difficult issues—abuse and teen prostitution especially—is what kept me riveted to the pages. The vividness of her characters' personalities and the lack of 'type'—these are not caricatures, but people whose lives we are, for a time, allowed to be a part of however peripherally—is another wonderful facet of Ms. Katz's storytelling. And very definitely why I will be pursuing this author's books... you can never have enough stories like this. Kudos to Ms. Katz for this wonderful book; you've got yourself another fan.

Kathy K.

Diane Adams says

I loved this book. I picked up this book after reading a review at michelenjeff. They certainly didn't steer me wrong. This was a good book. It's well written and has strong, believable characters. I'm usually leery of this type of story because of stereo types, the tendency to over dramatize the situation. However Ali managed to avoid any of that.

I was most worried about Teddy's character, but if you can read this book and come away unaffected by his story, you have a heart of stone. Sal and Jess are equally good characters, and the effect bringing Teddy into their lives has on them is profound. it's a well balanced tale with a lot of heart. Sal and Jess are a wonderful couple, and very hot together. I think the only negative thing I can think of to say is that I wasn't really ready for it to end. Well done Ali!

MT says

This was one of Loose Id's Hot Hooks winners. I haven't read the final but read the submission and liked it very much. Some funny stuff, but still a serious subject about maintaining a relationship while dealing with a troubled teen and child abuse. Well handled, IMO.

Lily says

3.5 stars

Jess and Sal have been living together for six months when Teddy, Jess's younger brother, comes into their lives. Running away from a difficult home life he ends up living with Jess and Sal, a policeman. Now the lovers must adjust to having a teenager in their lives. Teddy's been through a lot and just when he's beginning to find his way a visit from his past leaves him injured and Sal in trouble. When they should be pulling together to help Teddy things go from bad to worse and the new family is split up. Teddy's life starts to spiral out of control and Jess and Sal have to find a way to help him, help each other and become a family again.

Jess and Sal are an established couple and obviously in love when the story starts and Teddy's problems will

touch them both in profound ways. I really liked all three of them as well as their neighbors. The other supporting characters were okay for the most part except for the one responsible for Teddy's problems. As I'm sure the author intended I couldn't stand that character and also had problems with some of the things that happened regarding 'the system' (social services, the police and judicial system) in the story. Those are hot buttons for me as I've always hated some of the injustices that can happen when people fall into the 'loving' arms of the justice system. The author did a good job though and was able to balance out the good and the bad of this issue.

Overall I enjoyed reading *His Brother's Keeper*. Solid writing, well drawn characters, and an interesting and well paced plot kept me engaged throughout. There are some hot sex scenes as well as some tender moments between the protagonists and I liked that Teddy's problems were not magically solved. This is the first of story I've read by Ali Katz and I look forward to reading more in the future.
