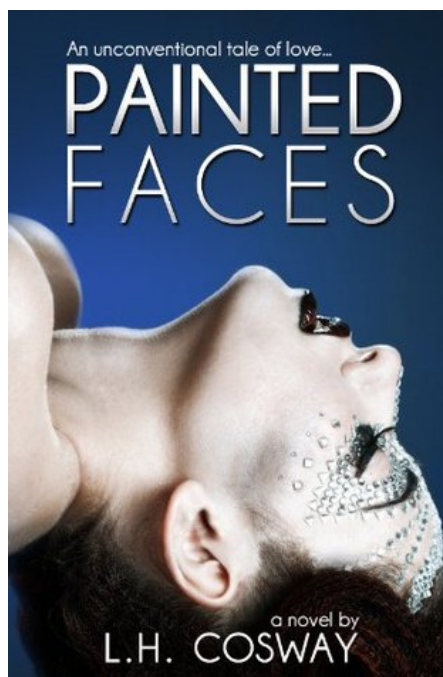




Painted Faces

L.H. Cosway

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Painted Faces

L.H. Cosway

Painted Faces L.H. Cosway

Come forth with an open mind, for an unconventional tale of love..

Dublin native Freda Wilson considers herself to be an acquired taste. She has a habit of making offensive jokes and speaking her mind too often. She doesn't have the best track record with first impressions, which is why she gets a surprise when her new neighbour Nicholas takes a shine to her.

Nicholas is darkly handsome, funny and magnetic, and Freda feels like her black and white existence is plunged into a rainbow of colour when she's around him. When he walks into a room he lights it up, with his quick wit and charisma. He is a travelling cabaret performer, but Freda doesn't know exactly what that entails until the curtains pull back on his opening night.

She is gob-smacked and entirely intrigued to see him take to the stage in drag. Later on, Nicholas asks her if she would like to become his show assistant. Excited by the idea, she jumps at the chance. Soon she finds herself immersed in a world of wigs, make-up and high heels, surrounded by pretty men and the temptation of falling for her incredibly beautiful employer.

In this story of passion and sexual discovery, Nicholas and Freda will contend with jealousy, emotional highs and lows, and the kind of love that only comes around once in a lifetime.

****Not suitable for younger readers. Contains some strong language and scenes of a sexual nature.****

Painted Faces Details

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, New Adult, Adult, Adult Fiction, Erotica

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From Reader Review Painted Faces for online ebook

Dali says

A wonderfully unique love story that's both poignant and happy. It will cause smiles, laughter and swooning while urging to think out of the box. I felt joyfully stunned after reading Fred and Viv's tale not just because it had a happy ending, but because I've never read anything like it. This is one story that will stay with me forever.

"Human beings don't always fit into a perfect box the way you want them to."

Before I dive into my review, I'd like to say I'm mostly a traditional reader where alpha boy meets girl and they live happily ever after. Having a drag queen hero was something I had trouble picturing. So I'm both sad and happy that it took me some time to pick this book up. Sad because now that I was exposed to a different perspective, I know I was missing out on a great read. But glad that I dove in because not only did I get to meet these amazing characters, I also got to read the brilliant flip side to this book right on its heels.

"Who would have thought that a drag queen could be my ultimate male fantasy?"

But I'm getting ahead of myself. In Painted Faces we get Freda's, affectionately known as Fred's side of how she met, got to know and fell in love with her ridiculously handsome and charismatic next door neighbor.

"With this strangely beautiful man in my life, I have a feeling it will never be the same again."

Cupcake baking Freda doesn't fit into the world's traditional definitions of physically perfect, she often gets overlooked and has a bit of a complex regarding her figure. But true beauty is not skin deep. She's a good friend and daughter and has humor, wit and snark shielding her insecurities. I loved her inner rants and her tendency to be blunt. I just plain loved her and how real she felt.

Nicholas, or Vivica, is a criminally handsome and addictive, but very broken straight man who seeks solace in dressing and performing as a woman to cope with childhood trauma.

"You're so pretty Viv, it's not fair. How can you be pretty and handsome?" ~ Freda

"I like to be a man in the bedroom, but a woman on the stage." ~ Nicholas

He's a "wonderfully flawed man," with scars hidden by charisma, who suffers from loneliness but is at the same time is cheerful, virile, naughty and completely unrepentant. He's a contradiction and a very atypical hero. I couldn't help but love him.

"He is such a complex creature, but I'm coming to think that his complexity is what I love about him."

When these two meet, sparks fly but there's also an instant recognition of kindred spirits. As an insatiable

womanizer Nicholas wants to seduce Freda, but her caution only lets room for friendship, which Nicholas readily accepts. They banter, tease, get to know one another and have fun while doing so. They experience emotional highs and lows and eventually fall in love.

He looks like a really hot woman. It's unsettling, but also titillating.

"If I was into girls, I'd do you."

"Psst, I'll let you in on a secret Fred... I actually have a cock. Don't tell anyone, it would ruin my reputation. But feel free to do me any time you want."

There were times when I would've liked to seriously reprimand him regarding his actions towards Freda. But it was clear she meant a great deal to him. More than what he deemed himself to be worthy of. He was electric and magnetic. But there were glimpses of sadness, vulnerability and deep pain underneath the flirty, confident surface.

"But I want all of him. Not just the sex. I want his smiles and his teasing, his smouldering looks. His sad eyes when he thinks nobody's watching. Most of all, I want his heart."

This tale was amazingly executed. From the way Freda could look past the high heels and painted face to the fractured man with a very masculine vibrancy. To the way Nicholas with his uncharacteristic view of life sees past Freda's protective shell. I loved how these two brought color, life and meaning to each other.

"You'll always be my friend, won't you Fred? Don't let me fuck this up. I need you in my life now. I need the golden eyed girl who can make me smile."

This is an unconventional love story, but I think the point is that we can find beauty in the most pleasantly unexpected places. It's so rare to find originality in contemporary romance, and I just love how L.H. does it time and again.

"I love you Freda... It feels like nobody in the history of the world has loved another person as much as I love you. I love you so much it hurts. You make me smile, you make me laugh, you make me burn."

If you want the usual and predictable love story, this is not the book for you. If you're looking for extraordinary and adventurous, I urge you to pick up this book. I can't wait to start with Killer Queen. Nicholas' side of this love story.

Get your copy on Amazon -> <http://amzn.to/1vOaCSU>

Pinterest board -> <http://www.pinterest.com/lhcosway13/k...>

(The pintrest board says for Killer Queen but its about the same characters)

* I was graciously given an ARC of this book by the author. The excerpts are from that copy. *

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Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

HOLY CRAP!! FREE FROM OCTOBER 4-8th 2013!! GO GET IT FOLKS!!

I absolutely adored this book.

I love books that push boundaries and this book pushed so many boundaries. *What is sexy? What is masculine? What is feminine?*

Plot summaries aren't really my thing but I have to say that this book gave me something content-wise that I haven't read about before. The author did a brilliant job of playing with gender boundaries and showing the aftereffects of abuse without being trite.

And the way the author ratcheted up the sexual tension between Nicholas and Freda was something else entirely. I was on the edge of my seat quite literally, and was anticipating their every caress like I was witnessing it firsthand. L.H. Cosway didn't just do a fab job with the romance aspect. I also felt totally sucked-in by their stories. These quirky, off-beat characters will really stick with me. Something about their journeys and struggles really resonated with me.

This book totally captivated me tonight and I couldn't put it down. It was a very special reading experience.

Vrsha (PeekAtMyBookReview) says

FULL REVIEW POSTED

Rating : 4.5 'VIVICA BLUE' STARS

My Views : Wow, Just Wow. I have been waiting for the right moment to read this one and I'm glad I did because this is honestly one of the most beautiful book that I've read. L.H.Cosway couldn't have painted Fred and Viv's story in any other way; **she outdid herself with this masterpiece.**

Style of writing : My first book by L.H.Cosway has been 'Six of Hearts' and she immediately became one of my favorite authors and I've been stalking her and reading her book since then. But I must say that in 'Painted Faces' I fell in love with her lyrical flow of writing all over again. **She's an amazing writer and she truly painted Fred and Viv's story in my heart.**

Characters : Freda is the smartass in the story, she's cute and funny and I loved her. Freda is not the classy heroine who is the epitome of beauty, she special in her own way which I really liked because I loved when my heroines resemble real life people and not a model out of Cosmopolitan!

Nicholas or let me say the lovely Vivica Blue was the one who stole my heart in this one. I loved his character portrayal and the way he paved his way to my heart. The concept of your heroes being virile and all manly is completely shaken with Viv but I must say that this didn't prevent me from loving him less. I loved

getting to see my hero in a different light and I'm going to devour book 2 as soon as I get my grabby hand on it.

Favorite Part : Okay, to be honest it's difficult to say which bit was my favorite because the whole book made me smile and sometimes led me to a puddle of tears and I loved both moments.

What did not work? Urm!

Similar books? NONE. Absolutely no book that I've read till date can match 'Painted Faces'

Recommended : YES PLEASE! I know most of you have read this book but those who haven't read it, let me tell you this, my friend **"LEAVE EVERYTHING ELSE, GRAB THIS BOOK, GO UNDERGROUND AND READ THE STORY THAT KISSED MY HEART!"**

Click On The Color Splashes To Join Me ;)

Richa says

...when in the fast embrace their limbs were knit, they two were two no more, nor man, nor woman – one body then that neither seemed and both.

WELCOME!!!

Welcome to the show, everyone!!

Tonight's show is a tale of unconventional, unrestricted, beautiful, colourful, amazing LOVE.....

Tired? Lost? Happy? Sad? Mad? Angry?.....No matter what...you're all welcome here....

So, just kick back and put up your feet and enjoy!!!

Pour yourselves a drink....it's on the house!

So, let's begin this show.....

Colours....they're so fascinating...aren't they?....So beautiful, so wonderful....what would life be without them?

*And **People**.....so different from each other and yet so similar to each other...all across the world....having different and yet same dreams, desires and colours....*

So, do you have it in you to accept all the colours and shades of the world....of the people in it...of life??

The story begins with....

WHITE: The colour of INNOCENCE

He was eight years old when his obsession began.

He is a young boy who tries to hold on to his sanity....his happiness...by trying to be like the person he loves.....because the world is too confusing when you're left alone like that....so he tries to find himself in the possessions of a dead woman...

But one day everything's shattered....

Because there are monsters lurking everywhere and when one catches him.....it's clear that...

His beautiful secret, the one that had brought him so much joy, would never be a happy, childish thing again.

PRESENT DAY....

But life can never remain monocoloured for long....

Soon a ray of light disperses the white into colours.....so many colours...so many shades...

It begins with a splash of rain....

It begins with **FREDA**....a girl who's soaked to the bone, fumbling around looking for her apartment keys, the girl with the self deprecating humour..

I'm the picture of a modern woman who doesn't own a car and doesn't possess the forethought to carry an umbrella.

It begins with running into new, gorgeous, fascinating neighbours...

He has jet black hair, sort of midway between long and short, ice blue eyes and a classically beautiful face. His physique is lightly muscled in that kind of athletic way, and when he smiles at me politely his whole face lights up. His eyes are all shines and sparkles.

It begins with **NICHOLAS**.

It begins with introductions and it begins with...

PINK: the colour of ATTRACTION

His eyes pull me in, like they hold secrets that could make my boring old life so much more exciting. You don't come across men this alluring very often.

"Fred, you can call me Fred," I tell him...

He laughs, a wonderfully low sound that vibrates through to my toes. **"Okay Fred, you can call me Vivica."**

Our eyes connect and we both smile at his joke. It's funny, but not funny enough to solicit a laugh. **"Cool, if we become close friends can I call you Viv?"** I respond.

She thinks she'll become his best friend who'll give him relationship advices, console him when he's sad....and...

I'd come out with sappy little nuggets of wisdom such as, Nicholas, true love is like a flower, it needs care and sustenance in order to grow. It will be cheesy in the most wonderful way. How sad is it that the idea of playing that kind of a role in his life actually excites me?

But what he wants is poles apart from her daydreams...

"You're very pretty, Fred," he says, matter of factly. Then he brings his face closer and traces his lips along my ear. "I'd really like to fuck you."

And her assumptions that he might be gay go down the drain....

BLACK, WHITE AND ALL THE SHADES OF GREY

When Freda's roommate and friend, Nora, asks him...

"So Nicholas, what do you do for a living?"

"I'm a cabaret performer," he answers simply...

And they've no idea what it entails till they meet her...

VIVICA BLUE

And it's none other than NICHOLAS!!!

This is astounding, amazing, so incredibly thrilling. Only today a world travelling cabaret performing drag queen took me out for lunch and named me as his new best friend. The idea plunges my black and white world into a vibrant techni-colour rainbow.

And then a very valid question arises in her mind....so she asks him about it subtly...(not!)

He levels me with a funny look. "You think I'm gay?.."

"...I don't think I've ever heard of a straight drag queen."

He smiles wryly before knocking back his shot. He stares up at the ceiling when he mutters, "Yeah well, you're looking at one."

"You're joking right? You have to be at least bi."

“Nope. I only have eyes for the ladies,” he states, all of a sudden he seems slightly pissed off.

Oops!

He likes to be a man in the bedroom and a woman on stage...he definitely has eyes for this particular lady...and makes her aware of it every time they're together!!

But when she declines repeatedly to be his bed partner because..

I want all of him. Not just the sex. I want his smiles and his teasing, his smouldering looks. His sad eyes when he thinks nobody's watching. Most of all, I want his heart.

So, he offers her a position as his assistant...

“Why are you so determined for me to agree?”

“I don't know. There's something about you that comforts me. Perhaps the fact that every second word out of your mouth begins with an F.”

*****This part contains spoilers...read at your own risk*** :)**

RED: The colour of PASSION...

So, she agrees to it and is plunged into a world she'd never thought of...never imagined could be so beautiful...so different....

And **after all, life's all about new experiences....**

So, she experiences it all...

They decide to be friends....

"...You're the perfect friend for me Fred, you the drag king and me the drag queen."

But they can't help dancing around each other....teasing and taunting each other....

I tell him that I drove my tractor through his haystack last night.

I tell him that I threw my pitchfork at his dog to keep quiet.

I tell him that I've got a brand new combine harvester and that I want to give him the key.

I tell him that we'll have twins and triplets because I'm a man built for speed.

I tell him that he's a fine looking woman and that I can't wait to get my hands on his land.

GREEN: The colour of JEALOUSY

She feels jealous, well, you can guess when...

RED, GREY, BLACK....So many colours of pain...

His pain...because he hurts inside...

Her pain...because she just couldn't take it anymore **when he said he didn't care...**

Their pain...because, well, humans are messed up beings, right?

My heart thumps hard and fast against my ribcage.

"So, this is me darling, a complete and total contradiction. A fucking mess." He smiles sadly.

"A beautiful mess," I proclaim.

BLUE: The colour of forgiveness

He drove her away...**because sometimes we're cruellest to the ones we care about the most...**but he couldn't live without her...**she was the only one who made feel clean...**

So....

He asks for another chance...and works to make it alright...

“Do you want to know what my favourite part of your body is?” he asks, leaning forward.

“Go on then, enlighten me,” I say, trying to sound bored. It's not like I'm dying to know or anything.

He reaches forward and traces his hand over my stomach. “This part. It's all round and soft. I'd love to fall asleep right here.”

He reaches out across the space between our two sleeping bags. “Give me your hand,” he whispers.

I glance down at his outstretched fingers, then I slowly reach out too and interlock mine with his. He rubs his thumb back and forth over my wrist, and I fall asleep to the calming motion of his touch.

ALL THE COLOURS TOGETHER: LOVE, PAIN, LAUGHTER, SADNESS, HOPE, LIFE...

And so, that's how it begins....the happy ever after...because those are the most beautiful beginnings everyone yearns for...

It's the most perfect moment of my life; I want to put it in a jar and shelve it, keep it forever.

He asks me what made him behave that way, using words he never says?

He can only think it must be love..

He asks me to kiss him like it's the final meal, kiss him like we'll die tonight..

He says that holy cow he loves my eyes..

That only now he sees the light..

He says to throw the curtains wide, that one day like this a year will see him right..

He pulls back to look down at me. “I love you Freda,” he breathes. “It feels like nobody in the history of the world has loved another person as much as I love you. I love you so much it hurts. You make me smile, you make me laugh, you make me burn.”

"You colour my world, Freda," he whispers...

Now he can be a man in a dress, but he isn't lost. He has his golden eyed girl to lead his fractured soul through a world that once seemed dark and empty. In the present there's nothing but bright, wonderful sun light.

He holds her tight, promising himself that he'll never, ever let her go.

And it's the beginning of their life together...

So many colours...

So many faces...

So many facets to every face...

Accept each and everyone...

Embrace it all...

Because we all paint on a face to show the world...

Maybe you're a man..

Maybe you're a woman...

Maybe you're neither

Maybe you're both

But whatever you're..

Whoever you're...

Wherever you're..

You...

Are..

Beautiful...

Marvellous...

Exquisite...

Amazing...

Complete...

And I want you to remember this always..

If anyone tells you differently....then just tell them...

Don't tell me not to live, just sit and putter
Life's candy and the sun's a ball of butter
Don't bring around a cloud to rain on my parade
Don't tell me not to fly, I simply got to
If someone takes a spill, it's me and not you
Who told you you're allowed to rain on my parade
I'll march my band out, I'll beat my drum
And if I'm fanned out, your turn at bat, sir
At least I didn't fake it, hat, sir
I guess I didn't make it
But whether I'm the rose of sheer perfection
A freckle on the nose of life's complexion
The Cinderella or the shine apple of its eye
I gotta fly once, I gotta try once,
Only can die once, right, sir?
Ooh, life is juicy, juicy and you see,
I gotta have my bite, sir.

I'm gonna live and live NOW!
Get what I want, I know how!
One roll for the whole shebang!
One throw that bell will go clang,
Eye on the target and wham,
One shot, one gun shot and bam!

I'll march my band out, I will beat my drum,
And if I'm fanned out, your turn at bat, sir,
At least I didn't fake it, hat, sir,
I guess I didn't make it
Get ready for me love, 'cause I'm a "comer"
I simply gotta march, my heart's a drummer
Nobody, no, nobody, is gonna rain on my parade!

So, to quote L.H. Cosway...

For all the men who are women and the women who are men, the men who are men and the women who are women. And those of you who are a little bit of both. You colour my world.

We hope you enjoyed the show...

Stay beautiful...

Stay colourful...

[image error]

Leaving you with this song...**YOUR SONG...**

It's a little bit funny, this feeling inside
I'm not one of those who can easily hide
I don't have much money, but boy if I did
I'd buy a big house where we both could live

If I was a sculptor, but then again, no
Or a man who makes potions in a traveling show
I know it's not much, but it's the best I can do
My gift is my song, and this one's for you

**And you can tell everybody this is your song
It may be quite simple, but now that it's done
I hope you don't mind, I hope you don't mind that I put down in words
How wonderful life is while you're in the world**

I sat on the roof and kicked off the moss
Well, a few of the verses, well, they've got me quite cross
But the sun's been quite kind while I wrote this song
It's for people like you that keep it turned on

So excuse me forgetting, but these things I do
You see I've forgotten if they're green or they're blue
Anyway the thing is what I really mean
Yours are the sweetest eyes I've ever seen

And you can tell everybody this is your song
It may be quite simple, but now that it's done
I hope you don't mind, I hope you don't mind that I put down in words
How wonderful life is while you're in the world

**I hope you don't mind, I hope you don't mind that I put down in words
How wonderful life is while you're in the world...**

Wish you all the colours in the world...

For a wonderful, unconventional tale of love....come forth with an open mind...to the world of...

[image error]

And lose yourself in this colourful world....

Enjoy!!

Buh bye!! :))

Alexis *Reality Bites* says

SPOILER FREE REVIEW

4 STARS OUT OF 5

Genre: Contemporary Romance

Setting: Dublin

In Painted Faces, Fred an outspoken women who thinks herself to be average and Nicholas a handsome man who also happens to be a drag queen find love.

Unconventional? Yes.

Not my normal love story? Nope.

Should you read it? Most definitely?

***'I want him so badly it hurts. But I want all of him. Not just the sex. I want his smiles and his teasing, his smouldering looks. His sad eyes when he thinks nobody's watching. Most of all I want his heart.'* ~Freda**

Freda considers herself to be average in the looks department. She is 25yrs old, the youngest of 4. Her parents had her late in life so her siblings out date her by at least a decade or more. Freda is an outspoken women known for telling you exactly how she feels without batting an eyelash. She is curvy considered on the thick side at a comfortable size14 with curly brown hair. She lives with her best friend and roommate Nora. Nora is pretty in the ideal way she is also thin and always looking for 'the one.'

Nora has her current sights set on the new neighbor Nicholas. Both Freda and Nora will be in for a shock when Nicholas let's his intentions known.

He want's Fred.

"You're very pretty Fred," he says matter of factly. Then he brings hi face closer and traces his lips among my ear. ***" I'd really like to fuck you."***

When Freda met Nicholas she was returning from shopping. Her clothes were sopping wet and she had three

grocer bags slung over her shoulder. He was coming out of his apartment as she wrestled to get her key out to enter her's.

He introduced himself as Vivica. She instantly was drawn in to his blue eyes and handsome face. While chatting she noticed some of his mannerism seemed..fey like. But after catching him leering at her D-cups which were visible through her soaking wet shirt she dismissed the thought.

It's at dinner later on that night when Nicholas openly flirts with Freda, much to Nora's dismay; when Freda turns Nicholas down on his proposition to have sex. Inwardly she can't deny that she is attracted to him. The man is gorgeous who wouldn't be?

"Lot's of kinks, lot's of quirks, my sexuality is multifaceted." ~Nicholas

Nicholas invites both Freda and Nora to see his show. Freda agrees to go. They quickly become friends even spending the afternoon together the day of his performance. Freda attends his cabaret performance that night with Nora and two other friends.

While there Freda takes notice early on that they are in a gay bar. Her suspicions begin to arise once more in regards to Nicholas and his sexuality. Nora is still holding out hope and is too busy getting sloshed to pick up on the atmosphere in the bar.

The announcer takes the stage to introduce Nicholas as Vivica Blue.

'He's a Fucking drag queen.' ~Freda

At first Freda feels a bit of discomfort but it quickly dissipates as she becomes enthralled by his performance.

'This is astounding, amazing, so incredibly thrilling. Only today a world traveling cabaret performing drag queen took me out for lunch and named me as his new best friend. The idea plunges my Black and white world into a vibrant techni-colour rainbow.' ~Freda's inner monologue

Freda assumes that Nicholas must be bi because...Well, because he hit on her. After the show Nicholas let's her know that he is a straight man.

"So it's not a fetish for you?"

He smirks ***"Nope. Cross dressing is often related to sexual preference. I like to be a man in the bedroom. But a woman on stage."***

Nicholas offers Freda a job as his assistant. She accepts and is now in the drag queen world of wigs, make-up, sparkly dresses and high heels. Slowly being pulled in by Nicholas, the attraction becomes palpable. The chemistry between the two is flammable.

"I'd like to see you speechless, breathless, panting..."

~Nicholas to Freda

Freda does her best to keep their relationship platonic. But her desires for Nicholas only increase the closer they get, the more she learns about the man behind the wigs and make up.

'I stare into his eyes for a second and get caught, like a fly in a spiders web. There is deep deep pain in him somewhere underneath the flirty, confident surface.' ~Freda's inner monologue

Friends to lovers.. This is a romantic tale of two people finding love in a very different way.

My thoughts

Nothing I was expecting. This is far from my normal romance. I found the writing engaging the deeper in to the story I got. The love story is very unique... Makes me wonder where the author came up with the concept.

Dear readers

I recommend this book to romance lovers looking for something different from the norm. Painted Faces meets that standard and then some.

Very beautiful and highly erotic! Check it out!

I consider author L.H. Cosway an **Author To Look-out For!**

My Ratings

Characters- Lovable and truly one of a kind

Writing Style- Witty, Sensual and Honest

Plot/Storyline- Unique in terms of the romance, also very Savory with lasting characters who are sure to stick with you

Steam Factor- High/Very Steamy

Overall- I enjoyed! Check it out!

Now go forth and read. Then come tell us about it on Goodreads!

For more reviews go to <http://realitybites-letsgetlost.blogs...>

****Copy kindly provided by the author for a honest review****

Dd says

For all the men who are women....

And the women who are men....

The men who are men and the women who are women....

And those of you who are a little bit of both....

Welcome to this unconventional tale of love!!

So Readers meet with Nicholas---

Jet black hair midway between long and short,ice blue eyes and a classically beautiful face.

His eyes can pull you in,like they hold secrets that can make your boring old life so much more exciting.

Well that's **Freda Wilson's** first impression of her new neighbour when they meet in the hallway.

"Fred,you can call me Fred."

"Okay Fred,you can call me Vivica."

"Cool,if we become close friends can I call you Viv?"

Nicholas is handsome,funny,charismatic and magnetic.Freda can't help getting pulled towards him.On the very first day they meet,her best friend and room-mate Nora,invites him to dinner.

"So Nicholas,what do you do for a living?"

"I'm a cabaret performer."

Now,what does it entail??

Readers,you are about to find out....

So,let me introduce you to **Miss Vivica Blue....**

....Androgynous boy-girl with a voice capable of singing like a legend.

Confused??

Don't be.

"For me, a drag queen dresses as a women purely for performance and that's what I think of myself as being."

Nicholas and Vivica are wildly different but one and the same....

Like two sides of the same coin.

And then Nicholas asks Freda if she would like to become his show assistant.Freda accepts.And soon her entire black and white world gets filled colours.

Well Readers,that is the **beauty** and **mystery** of **painted faces!!**

"We all paint on a face to show the world."

"For some of us, that's quite literal."

Also she gets introduced to the world of secrets in Nicholas's eyes.

So Readers, come and get lost in this unconventional romantic saga!!

No, no. Don't give me this look. Go and get this book right now!!

"You'll always be my friend, won't you Fred? Don't let me fuck this up. I need you in my life now. I need the golden eyed girl who can make me smile."

"So, this is me darling, a complete and total contradiction. A fucking mess." He smiles sadly.

"A beautiful mess," I proclaim.

That's all for now Readers!!

Ta-Ta!! Enjoy!!

Lucia says

Amazing! Brilliant! Perfection! I loved this book, one of the most unique stories ever written. Do not make any excuses, just go and read it!

My Freda and Nicholas:

"I'll have to admit that somewhere in the back of my mind I wanted to be special to him, different from all of the other women who've turned his head. Isn't that what every girl wants? To be loved by someone uniquely, to make a man feel something he hasn't yet felt for anyone else."

"He would wear her dresses and jewellery and spend hours putting her make-up on his face. In time his habit would evolve into a need to entertain; a desire to express his fascination with female form by impersonating it. But for now, it was all about her. The woman who brought him into the world and died before he had the chance to get to know her."

Freda is 25 years old cupcake baker who lives with her best friend Nora in apartment in Dublin. One day she meets her new charismatic and sexy neighbour, womanizer **Nicholas**. But after couple of their encounters and finding out what he does for a living, Freda is not sure about Nicholas's orientation. Is he gay? Or does his sexual insinuations mean that he is a straight? But as it seems, being a drag queen, did not influence Nicholas's fondness for female population at all...

I'm very open-minded person but my life can be pretty traditional sometimes. So I have to admit that this book enthralled me, took me to places I would normally did not go and showed me different perspective of our world. And I seriously LOVED it!

Being in **Freda**'s head and see things to develop from her perspective was amazing. Her inner monologues, snarky remarks and basically everything about her was great. I really liked her honesty and her thinking made me feel connected to her from the very beginning. She was excellent and totally lovable character. Since whole story is written with Freda being narrator (only prologue and epilogue are from Nicholas's POV), the style of writing reminded me my best friend telling me stories. It was descriptive, funny, sarcastic and full of emotions. I really LOVED it!

And **Nicholas**? His life story brought more thoughtfulness to this otherwise interesting, funny and sexy story. All the good or bad things he had to go through formed him and created one truly amazing person. Together with Freda they have become my new favourite bookish couple and I know for sure that I will be coming back to this story just to be with them again.

Moreover, I really liked the way author included in this book information about Ireland, Irish people, their culture and traditions. Ireland has a very special place in my heart and I enjoyed this side of novel immensely. Overall, I wanted to highlight the whole book, it was that awesome. Just **pure literal perfection**. Definitely one of the best books I have ever read! This story is unforgettable. It is so special that it stays with you forever.

MORE REVIEWS ON MY BLOG **Reading Is My Breathing**

Mo says

First off want to say how great it was to read a novel set in Ireland, even if it was Dublin..... !!!! What? I hear you say? Well, I am from the West of Ireland and there is a thing in Ireland about folks outside the Pale and the Dubs Especially when it comes to sport. You have your "ABU's" in the world of footie (that's soccer to you folks over the pond) and then in Ireland you have your "ABDs". I've lost you haven't I? An "ABU" is Anyone But United – i.e. those who do not support Manchester United. An "ABD" is Anyone But Dublin – same concept – those non-Dubliners will support any team playing against Dublin even we are not from that County.... Yeah, went off on a tangent there.

Oh, I can talk about sex like it's my specialized subject on Mastermind, but when it comes down to it I'm not that experienced.

Liked the book a lot but felt it sort of fizzled out and ended on a whimper and not a bang. Not sure why. The turning point came when they returned from Edinburgh... I sort of skimmed through to the end there. Saying that, the author knows her Ireland and all things Irish. I am assuming she is Irish. I know she lives in Dublin. But hey, I live in Belgium and I am not Belgian!!

I'm getting all hot and bothered about a man who is more comfortable in heels than I am.

The concept and theme of the book were original.... A normal, not skinny, ordinary girl and a Drag Queen!

It would not make my TOP TEN for 2013 but it was still a very enjoyable read.

I loved that Fred has body issues and was not a size zero. She hated shopping for clothes. Got you there girl!

I've never understood the appeal of sleeping in the nude, but slim people seem to be mad about it. Us heavier types tend to avoid doing anything with our full bodies on show, even if we're the only ones there to witness it.

Coolock is mainly known for being home to the Cadbury headquarters in Ireland, as well as the Tayto crisps factory

OK, will finish with a joke told to me by a colleague who is originally from Coolock

Two men were standing at a bus stop in Dublin. One of them was from Coolock and the other was from the Southside (think she mentions the difference between the North Side and the South Side in Dublin). The man from Coolock, in the North Side asks the Southsider "What time is the next bus at?" The Southsider replies, in his snooty D4 accent, "Don't you know you never finish a sentence with a preposition?" The Northsider then says, "What time is the next bus at, Cunt?"

Maybe you had to be there or maybe it was the Dublin accent but it was funny at the time!

**I sat within the valley green, I sat me with my true love
My sad heart strove the two between, the old love and the new love
The old for her, the new that made me think on Ireland dearly
While soft the wind blew down the glen and shook the golden barley**

**'Twas hard the woeful words to frame to break the ties that bound us
But harder still to bear the shame of foreign chains around us
And so I said, "The mountain glen I'll seek at morning early
And join the bold united men, while soft winds shake the barley"**

While sad I kissed away her tears, my fond arms round her flinging
The foeman's shot burst on our ears from out the wildwood ringing
A bullet pierced my true love's side in life's young spring so early
And on my breast in blood she died while soft winds shook the barley

**But blood for blood without remorse I've taken at Oulart Hollow
And laid my true love's clay cold corpse where I full soon may follow
As round her grave I wander drear, noon, night and morning early
With breaking heart when e'er I hear the wind that shakes the barley**

*** Meli Mel * says**

♥ ♥ ♥ 4 STARS ♥ ♥ ♥

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“I want to ruin you Freda, in the best way possible.”

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Freda is a 25 year old woman that doesn't seem to have a filter when it comes to her mouth, but she is a lovable character nonetheless. You can easily relate with her at times. She has a few insecurities concerning her weight. Then she meets her new neighbour, Nicholas, who's sees her as his perfect woman. To him she is all curves in the right places, with a personality that immediately brightens his day. Freda doesn't understand what is going on when Nicholas, who is highly attractive and fit, begins flirting with her.

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“You colour my world, Freda.”

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Nicholas has had his share of women, but there is something about Freda that just does it for him. So he proposes they have sex and is very disappointed when he is turned down. Freda isn't the one night stand kind of girl, despite her attraction to Nicholas, she just can't do it. They end up becoming flirty friends, and Freda notices something effeminate about him. When he invites her to a bar where he does a show, she agrees. It takes her awhile but she soon realizes it is a gay bar and becomes a bit shocked to see that this is where Nicholas performs in drag as Vivica Blue.

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‘I want him so badly it hurts. But I want all of him. Not just the sex. I want his smiles and his teasing, his smouldering looks. His sad eyes when he thinks nobody’s watching. Most of all I want his heart.’

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These two characters were such a hoot. I really enjoyed them both. I loved Freda's sense of humour and Nicholas was pretty damn sexy, even in women's clothing. Freda ends up being Nicholas' assistant in getting him ready for his performances. Every time they spend time together, the more closer they become. It was so cute seeing them fall for each other. The sexual tension between them was awesome, and quite hot. Thie story itself was so cute and unique. I loved the humour in this book. But it was also quite emotional, that it broke my heart. Despite me enjoying this book, there were some parts that were slow. I also became frustrated with Nicholas at times. Overall, I enjoyed the originality of the story, I don't think I have ever read a book like this. It was funny, steamy, and sweet. It's definitely worth checking out.

Fathima says

5 AWE-FILLED MAGNETIC STARS !

ABSO-FUCKING-LUTELY BRILLIANT !!!

Edit : 4/1/2013

“We all paint on a face to show the world,” Nicholas replies philosophically. “For some of us, that's quite literal.”

First book of the year 2013 and I'm gobsmacked , like literally !!!! This pretty much starts off my new year with a bang !!!

What do I say , where do I begin ???!! From the beginning , obviously !

Painted Faces is the story of Nicholas Turner aka Vivica Blue - a androgynous boy-girl

but unlike the general assumptions - he isn't gay

"I like to be a man in the bedroom, but a woman on the stage."

Painted Faces is also the story of Freda or Fred , a girl with "pathological self-deprecation" ... Basically , she's just not too happy with her weight .

I can relate ... I have those issues too you know ...

So anyway where was I ? Ah , yeah Nicholas and Fred(a) meet and what begins as a sexy friendship with a healthy dose of flirting quickly escalates into ah .. umm .. hmmm ... mmmm

yeah something like that

And that 'something' is exactly what Nicholas wants , a good fuck - nothing more . But for Freda , that's not enough . She knows that just sex with him wont satisfy her desires . She would want more , and that will push Nicholas away . Which in turn will ruin their friendship . So what's gonna happen now ? Well , read the book and see for yourself .

MY THOUGHTS :

Now , maybe I've made the story look like all romance gush fest and all - which it is by the way - but its sooo much more than that . Painted Faces also tells the story of a very fucked up society - our fucked up society ! We set standards for what is right and wrong . We categorize people we meet , depending on their lifestyles and preferences . We give them names , **WITHOUT** taking into consideration what kind of feelings could such name calling would evoke . We dont have the time to understand and talk to people , but we have all the time to assume and jump into conclusions ! Woah , I deviated from the actual topic here . I need to jump back and stick to the actual thing ! Basically , what I've been trying to say is Painted Faces is a story about two unusual people , a guy who is broken inside-out but paints a happy picture of himself and a girl , who is insecure and has self confidence issues .Its the story of how their paths collide , merge and become one . Its the story of how she becomes his light during his darkest hours . True to its made statement , Painted Faces is an unconventional love story .

Nicholas and Freda were A-MAH-ZING !!! Nicholas maybe a hoity-toity Vivica Blue on stage but the man is a true alpha off-stage . Pretty Very straight forward , persuasive enough , the guy knows what he wants and how he wants it !

“God you're so tight and soft Fred, I want to lick you all over.”

“You're scandalizing me Viv,” I manage to breathe with a smirk. He smirks right back at me.

“I told you I like to corrupt, and you are the perfect candidate with those innocent fucking eyes of yours.” He watches me as I writhe against him. “What will it take for you to scream my name? Do you need my cock inside you for that?”

“Oh God, shut up!”

[image error]

Damn boy its hot in here !!!!

Freda , she's just funny ! I mean , her thoughts about a lot of things around her reflected mine . The way she says her legs are shapely as an 8-8 as oppose to an eleven is how refer to my legs as ... I just loved her character ! My new BBF I tell ya ! I loved the fact that she saw way past Nicholas's painted face and saw that the man is broken and imperfect but capable of loving ..

"I stare into his eyes for a second and get caught, like a fly in a spider's web. There's deep, deep pain in him somewhere, underneath the flirty, confident surface. Is it strange that I suddenly feel like pulling it all out of him so that I can spread it before me and study the cracks? Like the little broken pieces of a lost relic, you try to put them together to create something that you can understand."

To sum it all up , I'll say that Painted Faces is an unconventional love story with conventional feelings and emotions . A story about two imperfects who make each other perfect . A story that will make a home on your heart and make you see that appearances can be deceiving and that the heart never lies . A story that will make you believe that sometimes you find love in the least expected places and times .

This book is a definite must read , and an absolute Hollywood movie material ! So grab your popcorns and soda cans and get lost in this world within a world where love takes the form of cabaret performances , make up , costumes and cup cakes !

Georgia ♥ Team Dex ♥ says

Copy, courtesy of L.H. Cosway in exchange for a honest review!

5 UNIQUE & LIBERATING STARS

A controversial and open-minding romance. A story of how two imperfect people can be perfect for each other. I found myself crying and laughing, cheering from the sidelines and cursing. An original tale about a man and a woman where sometimes the "roles" aren't what defines them...

Before continuing with my review, I don't want to lie to you... I didn't immediately go for this story. I know and understand that having the hero depicted as a drag queen is causing some concerns. It bothered me too, it made my stomach twist. But I took a chance and it paid off. It paid me off with a book that goes amongst my favorites and a hero that I'll never forget.

I urge you to give him the benefit of the doubt and let him give you a glimpse behind the facade, to the

sobbing boy who is heartbroken and afraid.

“We all paint on a face to show the world,” Nicholas replies philosophically. “For some of us, that’s quite literal.”

And let's not forget that female and male, good and bad, darkness and light are balanced because a tiny piece from one is always embedded deep within the other...

Freda aka Fred: Our heroine is the girl next door. She has the knack of blurting out the most inappropriate things and takes no bullshit. She is a little plump and because of this she has a serious case of low self-esteem. But our amazing girl is a snarky bitch who covers for the scared, shy girl inside.

When you're attracted to someone, extreme behaviour can be sort of...appealing. If Edward Cullen had been ugly, I'm sure Bella Swan wouldn't have been quite so smitten with him coming into her bedroom to watch her sleep at night. We females can be strange, shallow creatures when the mood takes us.

Nicholas aka Vivica aka Viv:To put it bluntly, a beautiful mess... Our hero is a cabaret performance. He does it dressed up as a woman. He is scared and scarred. He lost his mother as a boy and to console himself he was dressing up as her. He suffered terrible abuse and addictions. He fights depression and loneliness. But make no mistake, he is all man, unapologetic, protective and blatant. Glorious in and out of his work uniform.

So a drag queen performer... Unusual, yes. Disturbing, at first.

There is no question of his sexuality!!! None at all. Of his sanity... well maybe.

I get that some men want to dress up as woman because they want to be a woman. I don't want to be a woman though, at least not when I'm off the stage. I perform for the catharsis, because it's freeing.

For me, a drag queen dresses as a women purely for performance and that's what I think of myself as being. A transvestite or a cross dresser could be a man who wears women's clothing because it's a fetish.” “So it's not a fetish thing for you?” He smirks. “Nope ”.

They meet and the attraction is instant but how you give all of you to someone when you aren't whole? When there are pieces missing? So, they become best friends. They play, they banter, they have fun and somewhere along the way, they fall in love.

But love isn't a balmy day. Is a hurricane and stirs passions, change minds and fights as a wildcat. And sometimes, really special times, prevails.

I'd come to the realisation that I love Nicholas. All it took was for him to save me from being mangled by a car. But I know that's not the only reason why I love him. I love him because he makes me laugh when I don't feel like laughing. I love him because he challenges my view of what a man is. I love him because I know I shouldn't love him and that he'll break my heart. I love him because he's a complete and total anomaly. I love him because I want to kill the sadness inside him more than I want anything else in the world. ~ Freda

“I love you Freda,” he breathes. “It feels like nobody in the history of the world has loved another person as much as I love you. I love you so much it hurts. You make me smile, you make me laugh, you make me burn.” ~ Nicholas

The Irish/Dublin setting is charming and the perfect background for this colourful story. The whole book is in Freda's POV and feels like reading her diary and hearing her innermost thoughts. But the prologue and the epilogue are pure Nicholas. Perfectly imperfect Nicholas in all his ups and lows, all his glory.

*??Imperfect;
that's all that I'll ever be;
And god knows that's alright with me,
'Cause I know there's
No one greater
And everybody's imperfect,
When you trying to live in harmony,
but the song of life
Is out of key;
Just be perfectly imperfect. ?? ~ Imperfect by Mariah Carey*

Thank you L.H. Cosway for this amazing read, for suggesting it to me and for trusting me to review it. Also kudos for the best dedication I have read in a while. It set me in the right mood to enjoy your book.

I highly recommend this story! Don't let it disturb you, give it a try and I think you'll agree with me!!!

♥Sharon♥ says

“Love is not about how we appear on the outside, it’s about the soul contained within.” ~ Nicholas

Gosh, I really loved this one. It is such a beautiful and unique story that feeds your soul, your heart and your mind. It was....

“With this strangely beautiful man in my life, I have a feeling it will never be the same again.” ~ Freda

I’m not going to go into the plot at all. It is just that type of love story that you have to experience yourself. I will say that I absolutely **LOVED** and **ADORED** both Freda and Nicholas.

Freda (Fred) was lovely. Whether it was her outlook on life, her acceptance of others or just the fact that she wasn’t that perfectly packaged woman, she was a breath of fresh air.

Nicholas (Viv) was lovely too. His being touched my soul. I know that might sound a little deep but certain stories do that to me and this is one of them.

I adored the way that Fred and Viv come together. It is a colorful friends to lovers story. Fred was the color to Viv's otherwise gray life.

There were moments that made me laugh and moments that made me cried. I loved how music was used as forms of expression.

As with anything that is worthy of your heart, it doesn't come without some pain and heartache. But that's what makes it all worth it in the end. People are messy. Life is messy. Love is messy.

And finally, one of my favorite parts.

"He looks at me and smiles as he presses down on the final note. I hold his gaze and blow him a kiss."

He sings like he's making a vow. It frightens me....I soak in the words, the truth of them, how special they make me feel...."

This is only my second book by L.H. Cosway. As with Still Life with Strings, this story was wonderfully beautiful. If you haven't read this one I highly recommend that you do. It might be one of those books that you have to be in a certain mood for but don't miss out on meeting Fred and Viv. :)

Jennifer Kyle says

"We all paint on a face to show the world." Nicholas replies philosophically. "For some of us, that's quite literal."

I was looking for something different, something with substance, and this story had both in spades! Although I expected it to be much more risqué than what the author gave, I loved this story and have been smiling since I finished.

Have you ever heard of a straight drag queen? Well, Nicholas the sexy new neighbor happens to be one! He

performs in gowns, sings show tunes and ballads and falls for Freda from their first interaction in the apartment hallway.

Freda, is a terrific heroine. She is so very witty, she has a few self-image issues and I fell head over heels in love with her and Nicholas friendship/relationship.

"Okay, this is messed up. I'm getting all hot and bothered over a man who's more comfortable in make up and a pair of heels than I am."

Let me stress the point that Nicholas is completely straight and his flirting with Freda is pretty hot but don't expect sex scene after sex scene, their relationship progresses and is hot and beautiful.

"I want him so badly it hurts. But I want all of him. Not just the sex. I want his smiles and his teasing, his smouldering looks. His sad eyes when he thinks nobody is watching. Most of all, I want his heart."

Together they were one hell of a book couple. They had fun banter, sexual chemistry and that ending just made my heart melt!

"You colour my world, Freda."

Rachel Reads Ravenously says

5 odd and unconventional romance stars!

"We all paint on a face to show the world. For some of us, that's quite literal."

Wow. Just.... WOW. I have never read another book quite like this one before. It completely blew me away!!! I mean, I never would have thought "straight drag queen" and "romance" would fit in the same category, but I was wrong!!!

Painted Faces is about Freda, a twenty something Irish woman who works odd jobs and has some terrible ex boyfriends. This story begins when Fred has a new neighbor move in and he immediately expresses interest in her. Nicholas is attractive and suave, and despite his advances Fred almost has him pegged as gay. But then she see's his show and realizes he's a drag queen and everything begins to make sense.

Nicholas offers Fred a job working as his assistant and she accepts. As time goes by the attraction between the two of the builds, but Fred is wary of his advances. Nicholas has slept his way across Europe and she isn't sure if he's serious about her, or just looking to shag her.

"I want to ruin you Freda, in the best way possible."

I honestly didn't know what to expect going into this book. I had read some of Cosway's books before, but a friend had told me to read some of her earlier work as it was a little bit different (I then found out this friend hadn't read this book yet lol). I'm so glad I read this book, and I kind of can't believe I haven't read it before.

Why has no one recommended me this book???? Book friends, you are slacking!!! jkjk.

I loved both characters so much. Fred was an amazing heroine, she had insecurities yet she stood up for herself. She was understanding and accepting of ideas new to her. Was she perfect? No. But that's what I liked most about her. Nicholas, oh he's something else. He changed what I thought about masculinity. In a literary world of alpha males and dominance, here came a different kind of romantic hero and his uniqueness shone through the pages.

“I might not have a boyfriend, but I have cupcakes, and those tasty bastards haven't let me down yet.”

This was such the perfect blend of romance and angst for me. I couldn't put the book down, I was reading well into the early hours of the morning when I should have been sleeping. Believe me this book was worth not being able to adult properly the next day. I was so enraptured by this unique and special story, I didn't want it to end.

So as you can tell, I bloody loved this book. I find myself wanting to go back and reread it even as I type just to be near Nicholas and Freda again. I can honestly say this is my favorite Cosway book to date and I probably will be binge-reading the rest of her books sometime real soon.

“It feels like nobody in the history of the world has loved another person as much as I love you. I love you so much it hurts. You make me smile, you make me laugh, you make me burn.”

Christy says

*And you can tell everybody this is your song
It may be quite simple but now that it's done
I hope you don't mind
I hope you don't mind that I put down in words
How wonderful life is while you're in the world*

You have to get over your hang ups. Human beings don't always fit into a perfect box the way you want them to.

This story was beautiful, unconventional, magnificent, unique, and just brilliant! I fell in love with the story and the characters. Read it!!!

Nicholas or Vivica Blue

“Cross dressing is often related to sexual preference. I like to be a man in the bedroom, but a woman on the stage.”

and **Freda or Fred**

I might not have a boyfriend, but I have cupcakes, and those tasty bastards haven't let me down yet.

Nicholas and Freda meet when Nicholas moves next door to Fred and her roommate Nora. Nicholas is taken

with Fred right away, he can just tell when he first meets her that she is special

"You're a fucking hoot, Fred. I'm officially making you my new best friend. Its quite and honored and sought after position, I'll have you know."

I have to start out by saying, yes, Nicholas is a drag queen. He preforms on stage as a woman, Viviaca Blue, but he is all man. Fred notices him right away. She is very attracted to him, but has a hard time believing how much Nicholas wants her. She is a little on the curvy side and a bit insecure with her body. She becomes his assistant. Helping pick out his clothing and makeup etc for shows.

"You'll always be my friend, won't you Fred? Don't let me fuck this up. I need you in my life now. I need the golden eyed girl who can make me smile."

As their friendship grows, so does the sexual tension that has been there from the very beginning. The banter between the two of them is hilarious. They really are amazing together.

"I don't mind at all. The more the merrier, thats what I always say. Except if it's an orgy; you've got to be picky in matters of group sex."?

"Oh, I completely agree. You can never be too careful in a gang bang."?

"Sometimes you end up with too much gang and not enough bang." says Nicholas.

"I've never had a taste for too much gang. I much prefer the latter," I laugh.

"Ah, we have that in common then."

Fred is so funny. Loved her sense of humor. She is smart and sassy, and very beautiful, even if she can't see it for herself. She gets Nicholas. Even though he is not conventional, she is drawn to him. She is comfortable with him, loves him as Nicholas and/or Vivian. She lets him be who he needs to be.

I love him because he makes me laugh when I don't feel like laughing. I love him because he challenges my view on what a man is. I love him because I know I shouldn't love him and he'll break my heart. And I love him because he's a complete and total anomaly. I love him because I want to kill the sadness inside him more that I want anything else in the world.

I'm coming to think that his complexity is what I love about him. He has suffered in his life, and it's created this wonderfully flawed man who I don't think I could live without.

You cannot help but to love Nicholas. He is sexy, sensual, complex, sweet, charismatic, flirty, humorous and completely lovable. But he is also a beautiful mess. He has a past. He travels. It gets lonely. He doesn't really have much of an in between. When he is happy, he is extremely happy, and when he's not, he's extremely sad. I loved getting to know Nicholas. He was wonderful. He wasn't perfect, but he was perfect for Fred.

"I love you Freda," he breathes. "It feels like nobody in the history of the world has loved another person as I love you. I love you so much it hurts. You make me smile, you make me laugh, you make me burn."

"I belong to you. I've belonged to you since the beginning, since before I even knew that I did."

"You colour my world, Freda."

The secondary characters were wonderful as well, loved Nora(most of the time), Harry, Sean and Phillip. Of course, I especially loved Fred and Nicholas and their relationship together. They had a friendship first, a lot of sexual tension, and then some hot scenes. Just because Nicholas has an unconventional lifestyle, he was still able to have an happy ending. This was truly one of the most beautiful and unique love stories I have ever read. I would recommend it to all!