



Beatrice Munson

Lorena Bathey , Melissa Brandzel (Editor) , Terry Whittington (Illustrator)

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In Vista Heights, the women of the neighborhood have started to look like their homes, varying shades of beige.

Lost in this world of suburbia, Marissa Lyons learns her high school nemesis has bought the house right across the street from her. Afraid that her arch enemy, Beatrice Munson, will move in with Marissa's high school crush as her husband and cause Marissa to relive the insecurity of high school in her forties, she decides to face the music and heads to Beatrice's house with warm cupcakes. But what Marissa finds is something she never expected.

How will Marissa and the rest of the women of San Martino deal with someone like Beatrice Munson, whose defining moment in her life was to get a boob job or go on a trip to Egypt.

This story is about friendship, love, learning to look at things differently, and great parties. Step into the world of Vista Heights where you might recognize the women, or you might be one of them.

Beatrice Munson Details

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Author : Lorena Bathey , Melissa Brandzel (Editor) , Terry Whittington (Illustrator)

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Download and Read Free Online Beatrice Munson Lorena Bathey , Melissa Brandzel (Editor) , Terry Whittington (Illustrator)

From Reader Review Beatrice Munson for online ebook

E.B. Loan says

Beatrice Munson is Mary Poppins for every woman over forty. She is the person you wish you were, the person you wish was your BFF, and the person you will strive to be forevermore.

This book is enjoyable. Not what you expect, considering Marissa spent her years post high school building her up as her arch nemesis. Beatrice rides into town, her carpet bag full of tricks & tips to shake up the neighborhood in a good way. She is a Good Witch, a fortune teller, & the female equivalent to Buddha. Marissa and her besties fall prey to Beatrice's intoxicating ways and before you know it...*poof*they find the courage and dreams they lost between diaper changes.

This is a great summer read. If you've ever felt like an outcast for not drinking the "motherhood is the end all be all" Kool-Aid, this is the book for you. Do yourself a favor, get a little Beatrice Munson'd. You'll be glad you did!

ILoveBooks says

<http://livetoread-krystal.blogspot.co...>

Marissa is currently in a boring life cycle. Everything tends to fall into place, but nothing truly exciting happens to her. When she learns that her rival in high school, Beatrice, is moving in, she is understandably worried. She rushes over only to find that Beatrice is nothing like what she expected. In fact, Beatrice quickly changes the neighborhood womens' lives for the better. Many lessons are imparted via this book, some applicable to everyday life.

The character were the best part of the novel. I loved Marissa's and Beatrice's character. They were both so dynamic and intriguing. Beatrice never reacted as a reader might expect her to to the many events that come her way. Marissa slowly emerges from a boring lifestyle. The secondary characters themselves are interesting as well, they all play an integral part in this book.

The events were interesting and fun. The author has a way of writing to capture and hold the reader's attention that easily. This book is recommended to adult readers.

Charlie says

I loved the premise of this book and the idea behind the development. I believe most SAHM and those living in modern cul de sac developments will appreciate the struggles of these women. Some might not agree, but the beige cage is a modern day anthropology study waiting to happen.

"We all went silent in understanding. Even as adult women we knew that we had to get permission from our husbands to do something as drastic as start a business and create an empire. There would be an unsaid commitment to our partner that we would not let things slide around the house. The kids would still have to be earning great GPAs, the dinners would still be ready on time, the dog would be walked, and by all means we could not ever become more successful in the business world than they were. It was unwritten but implied and it was the caveat to the world that we found ourselves living in."

I was particularly impressed with this passage for its emotional exposure to the underlying problem and for providing a peek at the true wizard behind the curtain. Beatrice Munson moves into the neighborhood and shakes it up by really not doing very much, but being herself. As I mentioned, a great concept and important contemporary ideology to explore. However, I wanted more of the story to be flushed out. Some truly deep opportunities were glided over mostly do to the 'telling' instead of 'showing' concept which contributed to the feeling the story was being 'reported' rather than fictionally development. The scope was stuck in wide-frame and did not zoom in enough at the important moments to provide me with a satisfying internal struggle. The voice of each character was too similar and not clearly defined. Again, this contributed to the reporting overall feeling I got. Areas of the story were redundant and setting descriptions were lengthy in detail -- by doing so, I got lost in decor and didn't really know what objects were important or relevant, if any. Not everything has to have deep meaning, but in my opinion it was over done.

Cracks of the inner workings of this world were exposed and perhaps, the curtain drawn to offer a glimpse. I wanted more -- I wanted stripped down and pushed to the front of the stage. I was hoping for more rawness and I was left with a quaint, inspirational tale where most things work out after a few bumps and bruises. I doubt this story will make many cry, but it will certainly drum up a few chuckles and if you're a fan of chick lit and contemporary ladies fiction, you might want to give Beatrice Munson a go.

JeanBookNerd says

Lorena Bathey's "Beatrice Munson" is the story of friendship and love, about women allowing themselves and each other to live a fulfilling life, about acceptance, absolution and reinvention. Just the very thought of your arch-nemesis from high school moving in next door would be dreadful. And that's just what happened to Marissa Lyons when Beatrice Munson moves across the street from her. Just the sight of Beatrice brings Marissa flashbacks on how she stole her high school sweetheart. With a failed marriage and raising two kids on her own, Marissa has feelings of unworthiness. But much to her surprise, the newly moved in neighbor is not the same girl that she knew in high school.

Bathey explores the thoughts of women in their forties about how they feel about friendship and love. She reminds us that despite living an ordinary life in a cookie-cutter home in suburbia that high school is over years ago, that every woman is worth of love, live life to its fullest, answer that door when opportunity knocks, and dreams can still come to life. The story is fast-paced with many activities happening that touches the subject of divorce, marriage, friendships, flirtations and much more. Although all of these events come at the reader, it does not encumber you and leaves your heart warm and enlightened.

There is a controversial scene but Bathey wrote it a very mature way. It was written well and I see many readers accepting it. Bathey's Beatrice Munson was empowering that reaches a fulfilling climax and relayed many fundamental messages. I highly recommended this book as it will make you laugh, cry, cringe, and dream.

Kirsty says

I will start by saying that I hate the stigma that is attached to the term ‘chick-lit’. I do use the phrase myself, because I think it’s cuter than ‘women’s fiction’ or something of a similar ilk, but I hate that many people regard books in this category as being of little substance and therefore to be avoided. I’ve read a fair few books that would class as chick-lit and yes, there are some that were pretty cliché and not at all worth reading, but there are many that I’ve really enjoyed. Beatrice Munson is one of them.

As soon as I read the synopsis, I knew that this would be something I’d enjoy and I wasn’t disappointed. I loved the character of Beatrice... I really connected with her free-spiritedness and her affinity with all things spiritual. I did find myself wanting to know more about her and her past though – I guess this may have been difficult to do given that she wasn’t the protagonist, but I found that I actually cared more about her than I did about Marissa. I wanted to know how she became the worldly-wise woman that she seems to be. I also wanted to know more about Jeffrey, the boy Marissa really liked at school (but couldn’t have as he was with Beatrice), who she re-connects with through Beatrice.

I really liked the dynamics between the group of friends in the book. I found the relationships between the various women to be easy to relate to and it was quite entertaining when I realised that I could see these characteristics in my own friends. Some parts were like good observational comedy and there were a few points that had me giggling to myself.

Marissa’s journey was similar to that of many other chick-lit books, but what made this deeper for me was the influence of Beatrice and how it wasn’t only Marissa that went on a journey, but all of the characters in some way or another. Ok so maybe it doesn’t all happen so neatly in real life, but it was nice to see good things happen for a change when all we seem to hear about in the news at the moment is how bad things are.

The plot was well constructed, the narrative flowed and the pages turned themselves. I would say that there was a little too much description in places, but overall I think it was a well-written book. I guess the overall message is that life is too short to dwell on the past and that we really need to make the most of life whilst we’re here. We shouldn’t settle for something just because it’s easy and if we’re not happy the only one that can ultimately change it is ourselves. This was a fun read and I would love to read more work from Lorena Bathey.

Kaitlin says

Finish Time: A few nights. 3 reviews in one day. This must be a record. This was an impulse download. I had just made it up to Ohio and needed a light read. This was light, yet so much more. This is the kind of book I troll the free titles under Kindle Best Sellers for. It was really inspiring and a perfect read to fill in between some of my “heavier” reads.

Beatrice Munson (click on book or see below for description)

By Lorena Bathey

Downloaded free through Amazon on 5/5/14 (came out in March 2011)

Rating: 4 bones

The scene is suburban America. All the houses are the same color, everyone is a slave to routine, no one ventures out because of fear, unknowns, or maybe just the comfort. But everyone is bored just waiting to be shook up. Enter Beatrice Munson. A colorful, lively woman who won't accept status quo. She has traveled all over the world, has crazy stories to tell, but also has an amazingly big heart. She insights action within people who has laid dormant for so long, and people's lives were changed for the better because of her.

Realistic? The optimist inside me hopes so. To this extent, I guess you'll never really know unless it happens to you. The main character is Marissa. Stuck in what I described above until Beatrice moves in from across the street. A girl who invoked strong emotion in her in high school, one she will soon learn was far from what she believed to be true. Already feeling the energy, she walks across the street and introduces herself. The following night is neighborhood Bunco, with a little apprehension, Marissa introduces Beatrice to the ladies of the neighborhood. It goes better than expected and changes start happening.

New business is opening throughout the town, new relationships are explored, some old faces come back into the picture, and it's just a happy story. Not without struggle for some, but a feel good story that did not disappoint, in fact really surprised me!

I love when that happens. If you need a pick-me-up or just a fun read, check this one out!

<http://mydogearedpurpose.com/2014/05/...>

Amy says

What would you do if your arch nemesis from high school suddenly moves across the street from you? And you happen to be still holding a grudge after all those years? Meet Marissa Lyons, a stay at home mom, and divorce, living a pretty boring and routine life. She observes the women (very much like the Stepford Wives) and homes of Vista Heights, all dressing and looking the same, blah and dull. Marissa happens to see a woman moving into the house across the street from her, and guess who it is? Beatrice Munson, her high school rival. She has hated her all these years because she stole away her first crush. Marissa swallows her pride and walks across the street with cupcakes to welcome her into the neighborhood. It turns out Beatrice is a totally different person. Starting with Bunko game night at Beatrice's house, she slowly transmits just a little bit of her magical persona into the women. When the women started raising families they stopped following their dreams, but with a bit of Beatrice's push their dreams become alive again. Friendships are formed, romances marriages are strengthened, and we see a few romances blossom.

Beatrice can be compared to a modern day Maria from the Sound of Music. Just as Maria brings joy and laughter to the children's lives, Beatrice breathes vivid color, excitement and sparkle into those around her, from her passion and love for life. Because of Beatrice's little pushes, each woman finds her way to true happiness.

Lorena has an incredible way with her use of adjectives and imagery. When she describes the smells of food (one of the characters opens a bakery), my mouth starts to water. When she describes the interior of Beatrice's home, be it the first time we go inside with Marissa, or at the various parties she throws, it's as though I can actually feel the soft pillows and see the vibrant colors EVERYWHERE. At times though, there was a bit too much description. I wish there was a little more plot to balance it out.

I absolutely devoured this book. Lorena teaches us the power and importance of friendship. Sometimes friends are there for you more than your family, because true friends really "get" you. I laughed, cried and found myself wanting my own Beatrice. She would visit me when I'm being lazy and stubborn, and not

taking the bulls by the horn; she would then give me a good kick in the butt. Beatrice teaches us that we have to keep our dreams at the forefront of our minds, and not let them sit on a high shelf in our closet collecting dust. The following quote by Louisa May Alcott sums it up perfectly:

We all have our own life to pursue, our own kind of dreams to weave. And we all have some power to make wishes come true, as long as we keep believing.

If you ever feel life is passing you by, or you happen to be in a rut, and are staying with it because it's comfortable (who wants to deal with change and uncertainty)...then you will love this book. I think I just described pretty much everyone.

I'm very much looking forward to reading more from Lorena Bathey.

Gayle says

I rarely give five stars to a chick lit book. I was tempted to do so in this case. This is a debut novel by an up and coming talent. I won an autographed copy.

I loved the characters who were well developed.

The colors, sights and smells in the book were easy for me to visualize and experience and the book is filled with lavish parties and beautiful settings.

Marissa lives on a street where all of the houses are some shade of beige and the women have each put her own dreams on hold in order to be a perfect wife and mother. The highlight of each week is the women's Bunko game night.

Marissa is beside herself when she realizes Beatrice Munson is moving in across the street from her. Back in high school, Beatrice Munson was the pretty perky blonde who dated the cutest boy in the school, the one Melissa desired. Out of curiosity, Melissa goes to welcome Bernice to the neighborhood and finds a completely different Bernice from the one she remembered.

Bernice seems to have some kind of magic that transforms each of the women and they find themselves picking up their own dreams and bringing them to fruition. Bernice's magic is simply Love.

One of my favorite scenes is when the group of friends visit a drag club.

You'll laugh; you'll cry; you'll want to read more.

As much as I hate it in myself, I'm one of the grammar patrol nuts. Mistakes jump out at me and numerous mistakes will make me close a book faster than anything. In this case, I couldn't do it. I was too involved in the wonderful characters and their interactions. Please don't let some typos, poor punctuation and dropped words deter you from finishing this book. You'll be glad you read it and will look forward to Bathey's next book

Amanda Norwood says

So I won this book! It was really cool to get it and start reading. Then once I started reading, I had a hard

time stopping. The author has a really great writing style that is really warm and just makes you want to keep reading. I liked following the growth of the main character. All the characters started kind of bland, which was the point of the story, but developed into colorful and interesting characters who bring something to the story. While Beatrice Munson began as a character that stood out because of her color ended up being part of a tapestry of people. The book at first started out as a light summer read sort of book, it ended up being a heartfelt story, good for any time. I enjoyed reading it all the way to the end

Lynnette Phillips says

Lorena Bathey has woven a charming and sparkling narrative of reconnecting, friendship, love and compassion. This fun read almost glides past before you know it as the characters are surprised by a long overdue reawakening.

Beatrice Munson was the girl you hated in high school...cute enough to be popular, smart enough to be geeky. Twenty years later, now an author and world traveler, she has moved in across the street from Marissa. When Marissa finally gets up enough courage to cross the street and welcome Beatrice to the neighborhood it feels like she's meeting a movie star.

Beatrice's free-spirited ways take on the Bay Area's Vista Heights cul?de?sac bringing life back to the neighborhood and its ladies who had unconsciously put their lives on a shelf and lost themselves when they started families. It's time now to save themselves, their marriages and their futures!

Lorena Bathey's beguiling novel, *Beatrice Munson*, was released by Kindle March 26, 2011 and will be available in print April 13, 2011.

Growing up in the Bay Area Lorena Bathey attended St. Mary's College in Moraga graduating with a degree in English. Then she traveled, learned about life, and developed great fodder for a book. Losing her mother to cancer and her own marriage's demise brought her to find herself. She wrote *Happy Beginnings: How I Became My Own Fairy Godmother* and found speaking and empowering others was her passion. Find out more www.beyourfairygodmother.com.

Elsie Love says

Beatrice Munson is Mary Poppins for every woman over forty. She is the person you wish you were, the person you wish was your BFF, and the person you will strive to be forevermore.

This book is enjoyable. Not what you expect, considering Marissa spent her years post high school building her up as her arch nemesis. Beatrice rides into town, her carpet bag full of tricks & tips to shake up the neighborhood in a good way. She is a Good Witch, a fortune teller, & the female equivalent to Buddha. Marissa and her besties fall prey to Beatrice's intoxicating ways and before you know it...*poof*they find the courage and dreams they lost between diaper changes.

This is a great summer read. If you've ever felt like an outcast for not drinking the "motherhood is the end all be all" Kool-Aid, this is the book for you. Do yourself a favor, get a little Beatrice Munson'd. You'll be glad you did!

Christy says

If there ever was a character made to uplift, enlighten, and make us all as women to be better people, Beatrice is the one! She is the neighbor we all wish to have (and be at times). This story is told from Marissa's point of view. When we meet her, she is a beat-down, divorced, blase` housewife. Then Beatrice moves into town. Beatrice is not so much a character in this story, but the force, the essence, the tsunami that empowers the women of this down-trodden town to take charge and change their stars. She is not colorful, so much as she IS color. She helps the women wake up to who they really are. This, in turn, strengthens weak relationships, emboldens change, and brings them all back to LIFE!!

I enjoyed the telling of this story. The characters were believable and you wanted them to succeed. My only issue was the dialogue at times. At times the author used contractions, and at times their conversations were full of proper english with no contractions. Personally, I use contractions on a regular basis and find too much non-contracted word usage feels stiff and stilted. That's not really a killing point for the story, just something that I noticed. Also, I'm an English teacher, so I tend to see editing mistakes more readily than others at times. The story wasn't rift with them, but they were there. They didn't take away from the telling, but I did notice them.

All in all, I enjoyed the story. There are a lot of beatiful scenes described in detail. I tend to skim those most times, but I may go back and read the book again, just to relish in the images that are conjured in my mind's eye. I think this book makes you want to get off of your arse and just DO something, anything wonderful with your life. It makes you want to live a life so rich, you are saturated with the opulence of it until the day you leave this Earth.

Read it for what it is; an exuberant journey of self-discovery, love, and life.

Laurie Carlson says

This is going to be one of my favorite books that I have read in 2012! I dearly LOVED this book!

You cannot chance missing this book!

It's time to meet the women of Vista Heights, in one of the cul-de-sac's! A delightfully fun and very refreshing read, yet full of depth! Hilarious at times! Brilliantly written! (This is one of the best written, best edited books I have come across!) Compassionate. The plot is so true-to-life. These women could be any one of us. Contemporary Fiction/Chic-Lit at it's finest! The story is touching, moving, and endearing, and yet goes much deeper than that in this book. Each time I would go and pick this book back up to read, it was like opening a brand new present for myself! I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and HIGHLY RECOMMEND this book to you to take your mind off the daily, mundane things that tend to happen in life. Take a day or two and spend it with these women! You won't want to put it down. These women stay in your mind till you pick it back up.

The women in the cul-de-sac inside of Vista Heights are living a regular, nice, but mundane life in their little worlds, when someone new moves into the house that just sold on their street. A person who is about to change their lives, they just don't know it yet. One of the main characters, a woman named Marissa, recently divorced, has lived on this street since before her two children were born. She is very curious as to who it is moving into the house across the street. She is peeking through her curtains trying to see who it is that has just moved in, hoping she doesn't get caught! So, she bakes up a plan! Brownies! Later that afternoon she takes them over to meet the new owner. Oh, does she meet her! After introducing herself, she thought she recognized this woman. Sure enough! "Hello, I'm Beatrice Munson." Oh my! When she figures out that this was her High School nemesis, she is determined to befriend her in a new light.

Oh, Beatrice Munson! She had what everyone wanted back in High School when Marissa knew her. She had style, charisma, drive, dreams, and even the most handsome boyfriend in the school that Marissa always envied. And now, Beatrice still manages to have what everyone wants, even as grown adults. Beatrice has a style all her own that many people envy. She moves into Vista Heights, and takes the neighborhood by storm

with most everything she does! I LOVE this character!

Not only do Marissa and Beatrice become really close friends, but they become very true and dear friends. ALL of the characters who befriend Beatrice Munson have their lives' change for the better, as Beatrice teaches them how, through life enriching occurrences, to the every day grind, how to have real meaning in the mundane. Beatrice puts a new spin on life for these women. She teaches them to go after their dreams and reach them! Not just dream them, but to really reach them, create them, LIVE them, and they do.

This book is a truly a charm of a read! I could not stop turning the pages of this book!

One of my favorite lines in this book is this:

"We have all been living in a state of perpetuity and Beatrice's paradigm of freedom just shone a spotlight on it."

I received this book for "FREE" from the Author, Lorena Bathey, in exchange to read and write a review about this book. It is NOT required for my review I write to be either positive or negative, but, "of my own opinion." I was NOT provided with "ANY" monies to accept this book, "NOR" to read it, NOR were "ANY" monies given to me to write the review for this book. All that was 'expected' of me was to enjoy the pure pleasure of reading it. Again, the opinions expressed for and about this book are 'of my own opinion'. I am disclosing this information in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255, <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/wa...> Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

This book is so beautifully written. I was caught up in the story and entranced by the people in this book.

Picture an average neighborhood in the suburbs. Mothers get caught up in the lives of their children, husbands, and homes and put all of their dreams on hold. Life becomes commonplace until an amazing woman moves in across the street and shakes everything up. That is the basis behind this story.

Beatrice Munson has lived her life as she wanted to live it. She comes back to the neighborhood of her growing up years to have the final dream, to become a mother to an adopted child. She is now in her 40's and content with the life she has lived. She breathes vitality into those around her because of her love and zest for life.

Marissa is the first person that her vitality touches. Marissa is a divorcee, stay at home mother. She begins to notice the monotony of the neighborhood and starts to make small changes, the first thing is her wardrobe.

Pretty soon, Beatrice has touched the lives of many of the women of the neighborhood. They begin to dream again and grab life. Their relationships begin to change, not just with each other, but with their families.

Romances come, marriages are strengthened, new friendships are forged. This is a book about hope and love.

I was amazed at how some sensitive life issues were handled. I loved how it was illustrated those others who are living a different life, or whose lifestyle is different are human, with hopes and dreams.

There are some elements of the story that I would say that it takes a mature reader to appreciate this book. There are some issues, like a near date rape that are hard to read, but show the growth of the characters, and the love of caring neighbors and friends.

Overall, a great book.

<http://lisaisabookworm.blogspot.com>

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Meet Beatrice Munson, high school nemesis and boyfriend stealer. Well, that's how Marissa Lyons remembers her, anyway. Even after all these years she hasn't forgiven Beatrice for swooping in on Jeffrey, the love of Marissa's life - who in truth barely even knew that Marissa existed. So now that Beatrice has moved into the house right across the street, what's Marissa to do? After the initial panic wears off, she decides to meet her enemy head on! This is *her* turf, after all. *She* was here first! So Marissa does the only thing she can possibly do in this situation - She marches right up to Beatrice's front door armed with a plate of homemade cupcakes and welcomes her to the neighborhood!

And nothing in Marissa's life, or Vista Heights, would ever be the same.

Beatrice Munson is one of those stories that really makes you think about what your life might have been like had you made different choices. Maybe it would have been better, or maybe not. It's a sometimes lighthearted, sometimes emotional story about letting go of your past, opening up to the possibilities of the present, and learning to trust, to love and to let yourself be loved. It's about accepting yourself for who you are, and accepting others for who they are, too. And, in my opinion, its most valuable lesson is to not be afraid of stepping outside the beige colored world you may have lost yourself in, and embrace life and the amazing colors it has to offer you.

While this debut, self published novel was not without some flaws – minor editing errors and some scenes that were a lot of “tell” when I would have preferred more “show,” I have to say that this has turned out to be one of my favorite books of the year, and a great introduction into the “what genre is that exactly?” world of Chick-Lit. *Beatrice Munson* had me laughing one minute, crying the next. Cheering for some people and booing others. And I enjoyed every minute of it!

Some of my favorite quotes from the story:

“It doesn't matter. These are just things. You don't get it, do you? I have substituted my entire life for things. I don't have a man who loves or respects me. But I have the perfect shade of mushroom on my walls. I don't have a son who feels like he can run and throw his arms around his mommy, but my dishes are perfect with no nicks in them. I have everything I thought was important and nothing that really is.”

“There are all kinds of pretty in the world, hon. But what you have is a depth of soul. You are beautiful way deeper than just skin deep. And your eyes, well a man could get lost there.”

As I left my house and moved down the street I looked up at the houses. Where before every house had looked the same and the shades of beige had been prevalent, I saw that now every house had a new color. Some were vibrant ochre, some were blue or green. There were new lights, more flowers and lots of sounds from wind chimes. Looking in the windows I saw people laughing, a few couples kissing in the window and an ease about the energy...

So, what are *you* waiting for? Get on over to Vista Heights where Housewives don't have to be Desperate, The Burbs have never seen so much excitement, and Stepford doesn't stand a snowball's chance in Hell against Beatrice Munson!

I want to thank the author, Lorena Bathey, for asking me to read and review this book, and for the opportunity to get to know these wonderful people. I hope to revisit Vista Heights again someday, very soon.

Edited to add that this book is currently listed in the Goodreads First Reads giveaway contest.
