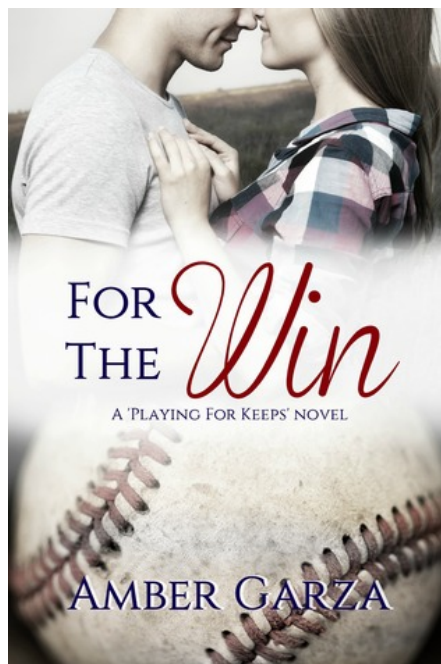




For the Win

Amber Garza

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London Miller has one best friend.

Words.

She lives in the pages of the books she reads, preferring the safety of fictional worlds over the dark and scary reality of her own life. Books aren't her escape...they're her salvation.

Cooper Montgomery has one true love.

Baseball.

When he's on the mound, throwing a pitch, the darkness of his world fades away. The game is something he can control, something he can count on.

A twist of fate brings London and Cooper together, a curve ball that forces them both outside of their comfort zones. As they spend time together, a relationship begins to blossom and both of them start to believe that there just might be something bright and beautiful in their lives.

However, the game changes when your heart is on the line. You have to play with everything you have for the win.

For the Win Details

Date : Published November 14th 2014 (first published November 12th 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Amber Garza

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Romance, Sports and Games, Sports, Young Adult, Contemporary Romance, Sports Romance, Contemporary

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From Reader Review For the Win for online ebook

Jen says

Man i thought i was done with Lurlene McDaniel type books in jr high....forget how it hits me... loooveee Cooper...one best book bfs...even if this book was ya...

Emily says

I really don't know what to rate this. It was a sweet story but I need to know what happens later. I hope there is more for them.

Blondies Little Book Life says

I was given an ARC for an honest review

This review may contain spoilers

There was that dimpled smile again. God it was cute. "What kind of Boyfriend would i be if i abandoned you when you needed me most?" "B-Boyfriend?" The air left me, and I swayed a little to the side. Cooper circled his arms around my waist. "Yeah. That's what it's called, you know? When your'e seeing someone and you really like them, and you don't want them seeing anyone else, are you, London?" I shook my head. "Do you want to see someone else?" Again, I shook my head. He lifted his hand, his fingers skimming my cheek. "Then I think that makes you my girlfriend." Girlfriend, I caught the word in my hands and hid it in my heart. No one had ever wanted to by my boyfriend before. And I never thought when someone did it would by Cooper Montgomery.

This is the first book I have read by this author and I am so excited I had the chance to read it. It was absolutely beautiful. I loved every single second of it. This book was so much more than I expected. The heroine London is shy, unbelievably smart and beautiful from the inside out. She is very guarded and doesn't trust easily. After what happened with her mom, who could blame her. She is raised by her dad, and he is such an amazing dad. He is always there for his daughter. They have very strong father daughter relationship that is so beautiful to read.

London pretty much keeps to herself, but her best friend Skylar keeps her life interesting. She is there for her when she needs someone to talk to. Then in walks Cooper. Charming, Smart and Sexy, in a wonderfully delightful package. How could you not love him?! He comes off as cocky and arrogant when London first meets him while interviewing him for their school paper, that she was forced into doing. But it turns out to be the best thing to ever happen to her.

This book is told from both London and Coopers POV'S. Which I absolutely love in books. I loved reading Coppers POV. He had me cheering for him from page one. As Cooper and London grow closer together, they both fight their attraction knowing that getting close to someone means opening up your heart and being at risk of getting it completely shattered again by the ones you love. They both decide to take that leap and see where it leads them, and the road they are headed down is full of ex's out for revenge, heartbreak, love and hope. Along the way they both struggle with the strength to hold on with everything they have, and fight for the future they both desperately want. After a couples weeks of being together, London receives news

that shatters her whole world. Just when things are looking up for her, her life takes a nose dive. Life happens. But when that revelation is revealed, my heart was shattered. I literally cried. Even though I kind of suspected it, but I was still hoping that I was wrong. After London tells her devastating news to Cooper, she is afraid that he will leave her. But guess what?! He doesn't, he proves to her that he is with her for the long haul. He reassures her time and time again that he isn't going anywhere. Throughout this whole ordeal, Cooper continues to keep London's spirits up. He gives London the best thing you could ever give the person you love, HOPE and the Courage to FIGHT.

These two were so freaking adorable. There were so many times between them that I was swooning over what was said that I couldn't help but have an awww moment. They never took each other granted. They both grew tremendously throughout the book, both as a person and a couple. Towards the end of the book London finally gets the good news that she was praying for. She finally gets to live her life the way she wants, or so she thinks. Doubt and fear are always in the back of her mind. Then just when you think you know what's going to happen, you would be wrong. Coming to the books end, Tragedy strikes the couple once again. At this point I couldn't handle it no more. Seriously?! My thoughts were as follows, Why oh why did this have to happen?! After all they have both been through why them?! They deserve to love and be loved. They deserve the future they both didn't dream about until they entered each other's lives. Then Cooper goes and says this to London "I win, London. It's what I do. And we're going to fight until we win." "We're going to beat this. Together." By that quote and that quote alone, I was holding out hope that they would Win this Fight. But I kept thinking, with the odds stacked against them, how?! Then the epilogue comes. By the way, that is my favorite part of a book for me. It was Absolutely, Amazingly Beautiful. If that makes any sense.

I bet your wondering what happened. Well I can't tell you that, you have to read the book yourself. But trust me when I say, it is a must read that you don't want to miss. This book makes you feel. You will feel anger towards the circumstances, your heart will break when hear the news, you will laugh, you will most definitely cry and last but not least you will feel hope. That no matter the circumstances you are given in life, never give up. Without darkness there can be no light, right?! Never let opportunities pass you by, grab onto them and don't let go.

Thank you Amber Garza for allowing me to read London and Cooper's story. It is a story I will never forget. I am hoping there is a sequel in the near, near future. Wink, Wink.

Aydrea says

Loved the sports angle of this one, plus it was a sweet romance like every Garza book. There were definitely some interesting twists. Can't wait to see what happens next. I really liked London, I connected to her really easily.

Sbell says

What a sweet, sweet book. I don't usually ever read YA, but I went into this not realizing it was, and I am glad that I read it. Cooper was one of those perfect heroes, he was so lovable and he made this book so enjoyable. I am a sucker for the books where the "it" guy falls for the nerd girl...and London was a nerd. This book definitely had a "Walk to Remember" vibe going on and at times I was scared in what direction this book would take. This was not a cliff hanger, but there is a continuation in "For the Game". I will read more

by this author.

Book Chatter-Cath says

3.5 stars

I know I was supposed to write a full review... but I procrastinated :(

And during my big cleanup in prep for the holidays, I misplaced my notes :(

So it's just a quickie review this time around...

For the Win was fairly easy to get into and held my attention for the most-part. Although it didn't wow me, I wasn't bored and I liked the characters, however I did find the story a little predictable overall.

Considering I'm not a huge sports fan, I liked this baseball themed read. 3.5 stars :)

Michelle says

Received a complimentary copy for an honest review. I knew it was gonna be good. Amber's books are always good. This story was about 2 people who help change each other for the better. One becomes more aware of his surroundings and grows up and the other comes out of her shell and learns to trust and live...But, then let's throw in the gut punch. All I'm going to say is have a BIG box of kleenex handy to wipe the tears & blow the nose. Because you want to be proactive in being able to see and finish reading this amazing book.

Annabel says

I liked this book and give it a solid three stars. This book had the chance to be really amazing but it just never really went there. The characters were great and likeable. I particularly liked London, she reminded me of me when I was younger. I didn't really warm up to Cooper, he seemed a bit immature to me, even at the end. But you can't love everybody ;)

There were really few though. London had only one friend and Cooper despite being popular only had one good friend too. And of course the annoying (ex)-girlfriend. But you never see them hanging out together. I haven't counted but there can't be more than 20 lines of dialogue between the so called best friends.

In short the novel lacked depth. The romance happened way too quickly for my taste. London really disliked Cooper and suddenly he was okay because he helped her. It felt a bit forced and I would have liked to see Cooper really winning London over.

But everything else could have used a bit more depth too. The description really makes it seem like it's a baseball romance, but you only see two practices and two games.

And I have to talk about (view spoiler) I don't feel like the characters really grew at all while reading.

It feels as if you're reading the first draft of a novel (a really well written first draft but still). There is so much stuff still missing. The book is great when you're looking for a light read with a sweet romance. But if you're looking for a bit more serious novel, this isn't the book for you.

Tanya says

Better than the 1st one. More focused & it showed what a long distance relationship feels like.... Related to it & loved it♥? bravo

Lauren says

Wow, can honestly say I didn't see that one coming. Totally not what I was expecting!

Mallory says

4 stars

Alexa Nichole Demers says

This was a pretty great read. Amber Garza's books usually are. This book is about two people who find each other and help them become better people. London learns to trust in people again and to come out of the shell her past put her in. She learned to live life to the fullest instead of being scared of it.

Cooper was a little harder for me to like. In the beginning he was immature and kind of a jerk. Once he met London and really let her in he became more likable. Cooper really grew up and realized there is more to life than baseball. He also learned that there is more to a person than what you see.

After everything there is another twist thrown into this book that just punches you in the gut. Twice. This book was more than just a sports romance. It showed you things about life and two teenagers that had to deal with more than they ever should. There is lots of emotions running throughout this book but it's worth it. I would definitely recommend this book to everyone that loves those ugly cry books.

Vallsykes says

By some tricky step of fate, London Miller finds herself on assignment to interview hot stuff-Cooper Montgomery, a rising star of the baseball team, for the school newspaper.

London is easy to like, if you like a bookishly cute heroine who speaks her mind, but is still just as vulnerable to mean girls as she is a champion of all girls who have to survive the charms of boys like Cooper.

Sometimes the hardest person in the world to be is yourself.

Cooper comes into his own when he meets London. He involuntarily connects with her and starts to figure

out that she's a person who has a lot in common with him; she's a person he wants to protect. Cooper also matches London's strength of character, outwardly, as he forms a bond with London despite the judgmental looks and ulterior motives of his peers.

This couple's bond gets tested in an unsurprising and rather morbid way. Previously, they both suffered loss; therefore, they were used to guarding a part of themselves. Yet circumstances test their mettle.

Two hang-ups: The story didn't contain anything new. The plot was predictable and elements presented were typical of your regular YA novel. Also, when you look at the amount of grief in this book, it could potentially make the mood too sad.

Why the 4 stars?

I don't mind reading YA, but when I read it, most of the time it's too cliché or repetitive and/or unoriginal.

Sure, the unoriginal happened in the story, but it was saved from being cliché due to the characterization of the hero and heroine. It was also saved from being too repetitive because there was an almost tangible reality following through the pacing, dialogue and events in the story.

This story was satisfactory and if the author were willing to go on with the story, to what happens between Cooper and London in the next phase of their young adult-to-twenty-something year old lives, I'd be willing to dive in.

Steam:1.5

T.H. Hernandez says

This started off as a sweet story of two teens, each resistant to romantic relationships because of tragedy in their pasts. Cooper, a baseball phenom, is the quintessential player, although he hates that label. The death of his parents at a young age makes him afraid to get close to anyone again. London is the shy girl with journalism on her mind who has suffered such a tragic loss that she tries to hide herself from the world. But London's ambitions throw her into Cooper's path when she's assigned to interview him for the school paper.

A quick interview and follow-up turns into something more when each sees something in the other they never expected to -- understanding. Their individual losses allow them to relate to each other in a way no one has before, and before long, both are breaking all their own rules about relationships. Life throws them a curve ball, though and what should be the happiest time of their lives is suddenly marred by uncertainty, and they'll have to find out if they have what it takes to win.

Plot

The main plot centers on the romance between London and Cooper, but there is a subplot I won't spoil that is well done. I thought the romance was stronger earlier in the book. Lots of angst, but it quickly resolved when the subplot came into play. I would have liked more of that throughout the story, but all-in-all, the plot worked.

Characters

The two main characters were really well developed, as was London's father. I didn't get much of a sense of the other characters, though.

Writing

The author seems to have done her homework on all points. The dual first-person points of view are balanced and don't recover the same territory from different perspectives, keeping the story flowing.

Ending

The ending was a logical conclusion to the story, but it did leave me wanting more, so it's a good thing there's another book in the series.

Top Five Things I enjoyed about For the Win:

1. London. She has such a sense of who she is, but still manages to come across as an authentic teen.
2. Cooper. He may be a player, but he's not a jerk about it. He's open and honest about what he wants and what he doesn't want from girls.
3. London and Cooper. They are beyond adorable together.
4. Dexter. London's dad is great as the single father trying to raise a teen daughter. There's appropriate awkward discomfort over female stuff and just general doting-dad thing that makes him one of my favorite fictional fathers.
5. Baseball Caps. Cooper's feelings about his caps and who he lets wear them lays the groundwork for one of the book's sweetest moments.

Bottom Line

For the Win is a sweet teen romance starring a couple of flawed but really likable characters.

Mitsy says

For the Win is another excellent, well written, novel from Amber Garza. While Engraved, The Prowl Trilogy and Cuts Run Deep are amongst my favorite books, For the Win is different. I usually do not read novels like For the Win. While I love YA sports stories, For the Win has a twist I think is overwritten. Yet, I could not stop thinking about this story. Here's why.

London is a likeable teen heroine. She's strong, intelligent, mature beyond her years - in a good way, and a bookworm.

Cooper is every girl's favorite teen hero. He will win awards like "Favorite Book Boyfriend". He's intelligent, an athlete, and good looking. His growth in this novel is nothing short of remarkable. :)

Together this teen couple will steal hearts.

The surprising climax I did not see coming. It made this astonishing.

For the Win is perfect for movie screens RIGHT NOW.

So, while I rarely read novels like For the Win, I must admit I absolutely love it.
