



Perfect For Me

D.H. Starr

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Sean Sullivan is a principal and a happy person, but he has one major complication.HIV. Frustrated with constant rejection, Sean decides to stop dating negative men. When a student experiences a crisis and Sean meets Emery Benton, the case worker assigned from Child Protective Services, his decision is challenged.

Sparks fly the moment they meet, but Emery is negative and Sean doesn't want the pain of another disappointment. As he struggles with his feelings for Emery, a war between the fear in his head and the fire in his heart force him to answer one simple question. Is this the perfect man for me?

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From Reader Review Perfect For Me for online ebook

Pippii says

This is a book about heavy issues; it deals with HIV and child abuse. But still it is an enjoyable read.

School Principal Sean Sullivan, meets Social worker Emery Benton when a child at the school is abused at home.

The two men instantly feel attracted to each other, but one thing stands in the way of happiness.

Sean is HIV positive..and even being healthy and well, getting the right medication, his condition makes him push Emery away...Fortunately for Sean and this story, Emery is no quitter..

The story is really well written, the two men are sweet and likeable, even if sometimes I wanted to smack them over the head, when they were acting stupid;)

The people around them are nice and caring too, the foster mom in particular, so all on all this is a great book that I enjoyed a lot.

In the real world I wish that every Sean gets their Emery, they need and deserve that.

Gwendolyn says

Deliver me from whiny protagonists. 2.75 so I rounded.

A says

3.75 Stars.

Review Originally Posted here: <http://joyfullyjay.com/2013/03/review...>

Sean Sullivan seems like the perfect man. He's a middle school principal and loves his job. He is gorgeous, in shape, and has a heart of gold. Attracting guys is not his problem. His problem is, when they find out he is HIV positive, they generally run for the hills. Years of disappointment have left Sean closed off to the idea of meeting someone who is able to accept him for every part of him, including his HIV status.

When Sean becomes involved in a domestic abuse case that affects one of his favorite students, he meets Emery Benton, a case worker from Child Protective Services. The two feel an immediate attraction, but need to keep things professional for the case. Without meaning to, they start spending more time together and talk about the spark they're feeling for each other. It becomes a force that neither can ignore, so Sean feels like he needs to be up front, knowing he'll probably be left in the dust as he has many times before. He's not counting on Emery. Emery is strong and knows what he wants and won't take no for an answer. He pursues Sean with a ferocity that Sean wasn't expecting.

Meanwhile, these two sensitive, amazing men are wrapped around this case that is one problem after another. Even if they want to pull away from each other, the case keeps bringing them back together. And through it all, Sean is struggling with his feelings about being HIV positive. He's healthy and thinks he's dealt with it emotionally, but realizes that it has affected him much more seriously than he ever thought. We see him process and process some more, while Emery tries to become part of his life. It's a struggle, but one that needs to happen in order for Sean to be the man he needs and wants to be for Emery.

There are some really great things happening in this book. First, this is the first book I've ever read in the vast m/m romance genre which deals head-on with a healthy HIV positive man. It was touching to see his struggle and the emotional and mental anguish he suffered, yet at the same time, Sean was successful, healthy, and desirable. It was not the end of his life, it was just part of it and one that he dealt with quite well.

In that same regard, Starr mentions before the book begins that, while it's a story dealing with HIV, it's really meant for anyone who thinks they aren't good enough to have what they deserve. I really saw this theme throughout the book and I think it's such a good one to emphasize. Anyone could connect with Sean in some way because, at some point in their life, they have felt less than. Less than worthy, less than desirable, less than perfect. And the title says it all: Perfect for Me. You don't have to be perfect, you just have to be the perfect person for the one you love.

Emery Benton is everything. He's good-looking, hard-working, committed to an unglamorous but highly needed profession, and he's able to look past everything and see Sean for who he is. And when Sean wants to push him away, he'll be damned if he's going to let that happen. It's impossible not to love Emery. Everyone dreams of the person who will fight for him, and Emery is that guy. He makes Sean a better person too, which for a guy pretty close to perfection himself, is quite a feat.

I did have some serious problems with the mechanics and storyline of this novel, which is what kept it from having a better rating. One of my major problems with it is the sex scenes. They felt clunky to me, and used terms that I just can't abide in writing. Like "member." I realize there aren't a lot of terms for this particular area of the male body, but stick to repetition rather than use terms that seem so harlequin romance to the me, it takes me out of the scene.

Also, since these men spend most of the novel trying to decide if they can make it work, there are very few sex scenes together. Instead, the author relies on fantasy sex scenes or dream sex scenes, which I just don't like. Because I know that the characters have not truly come together in a real sense, it lacks the chemistry and connection that makes a sex scene sizzle. I found myself skimming these parts rather than being caught up in them.

I understand that Sean had turmoil going on, but it got a bit frustrating. There was a lot of talking between the two of them — discussing why they could work, why they wouldn't work, why they're attracted to each other, etc. — and not enough action. It started to feel a little cyclical. Just as soon as the relationship made progress, it would turn back and start at the beginning again. I appreciate a story that makes you wait. I have no problem with that. But there needs to be a better reason for them to stay apart, and, in this case, I just wasn't feeling it.

Overall, I'd recommend this story if only because it dealt with a difficult theme in a really positive way. It also contains some great characters, including a foster mom who could kick ass and give bear hugs with equal efficiency. Yes, it has some problems. But overall it's a good read I think you'll enjoy.

Emily says

The idea of this story was really great. The book started out really well but then I just couldn't get into it anymore. The storyline got slow and the characters got on my nerves. I don't like when men in a m/m story start acting like teenage girls.....

Gabbi says

<http://top2bottomreviews.wordpress.com/>

DH Starr is one of my favorite authors. I've yet to read a book written by Mr. Starr that I haven't loved, and after I've finished reading it, the characters live in my mind and heart long after I've read their story. One of the reasons why I love his books so much is... he knows his characters so well and they are written in such a realistic way, they truly live and breathe off of the written page.

The blurb does an outstanding job at describing the book, so I won't rehash a lot of it. Sean is a popular principal and basically a well-respected and liked man. He takes very good care of himself, lives his life on a pretty tight schedule and longs to have a partner of his own. At first glance, any man would be proud to have Sean on his arm, but once Sean meets a new date he must reveal something that scare many prospective dates away...he's HIV positive.

Because Sean's been rejected before, he feels like he's doomed to ever find someone who can look past his disease and will want and love him for himself. When he meets the sweet, sexy and compassionate Emery, and Emery shows interest in him and overlooks his disease, Sean finds himself onto unchartered waters. He's scared and confused, and only through Emery's love and acceptance will he be able to give love a chance.

I loved this book! Both heroes are likeable, realistically written men who are humanly flawed and easy to love. I loved how Mr. Starr didn't sweep Sean's disease under the carpet; instead choosing for both heroes to really have to deal with the consequences of living with HIV. I thought Sean's worry, confusion and fear was well justified, and I understood why he'd be afraid to really allow someone new into his life. Sean's one of those characters that I found myself wishing I could magically crawl into their story and give him a big, reassuring hug. He's definitely a sympathetic character, but he's also stronger than what he realizes, and I enjoyed watching him learn to trust in Emery as well as allowing himself to love and be loved.

Emery...sigh...who wouldn't love him? His stubborn determination to be with Sean and to have him in his life, made me want to stand up and cheer. I loved him and I loved him with Sean, as well as every moment they spent together. Because this book is so well-written and such an emotionally-driven read, I found myself going through a different array of emotions myself. Between the laughter and the tears (get the hankies out) and the characters that I truly loved, Perfect for Me is one of my favorite books I've read this year.

Beautifully written with heroes that will capture your heart, Perfect for Me is a story of forgiveness, hope and love that will leave you with a smile on your face. I loved this book so much; I hated to see if come to an end. I'm anxiously awaiting Mr. Starr's next book, but in the meantime, at least I'll get to read and enjoy this book again and again. Highly Recommended!

Page Crusherz says

It was not a bad read, but more of a gentle read, despite the subject matter. I probably would give it a 3 for story but a 4 for tackling some tough issues in a meaningful way.

Anke says

Nope, this wasn't perfect for me. In fact, Sean with his back and forth was thoroughly getting on my nerves. Emery was too good to be true and the epilogue wasn't really fitting, at least for me.

Pixie Mmgoodbookreviews says

4 Hearts

Review written for MM Good Book Reviews

<http://mmgoodbookreviews.wordpress.com/>

Sean has a lot going for him, he has a great job, he has a great apartment and he is handsome, but finding a man is difficult because the moment he reveals his secret they turn tail and run. When one of his student's lands in hospital it brings Sean into contact with Emery, a caseworker for Child Protective Services, a man who refuses to run. Emery isn't one to back down from a challenge and when his work brings him in to contact with a middle school principal he is in for one hell of a challenge, helping a young man find the support he needs and convincing Sean that he wants to be around for the long haul.

This is a really good story about the conflicts and doubts that someone with HIV can face... even when that conflict is from within. Sean has faced rejection because of his illness many times, he has just decided to only date other Positive men when Emery walks into his life, Emery who he feels instant attraction to, but who he fears to date. Emery wants to get to know the sexy principal better and they seem to hit it off, when he learns that Sean has HIV he doesn't bat an eyelid, but Sean is throwing obstacles in the way and Emery finds it hard to fight Sean's fears.

The characters in this story are brilliant, Sean is a loving and caring man who is HIV positive and is constantly being rejected by men because of it, when he does find someone who accepts him he finds excuses and reasons to sabotage the relationship because of his own fears. Emery is bubbly and has a great personality; he is stubborn and he will try to do the best for all the children that come to his attention, and he will also do his best to beat down Sean's walls. Lamar is a thirteen-year old student who is going through a hard time because of his parents, he just wants to go back home to help his mom not really realising the danger he could be placed in. Sonya is a foster mother who takes care of her boys like a mother tiger, she also mothers Emery to some extent, and she is totally wonderful throughout the book.

I have to admit that at times Sean got on my nerves... he has a man who meshes with him perfectly and he kept pushing him away saying they were too different because Emery was Negative, he was doing to Emery

what other men had done to him... rejecting someone for their HIV status. I mean yeah you can see where he is coming from and that his fears are valid, but damn he was irritating at times. Emery is fantastic and you root for him to break down Sean's walls, but the best moment in the book for me was when Sean was sat on his bed collecting his courage to make that phone call and he has an epiphany about what he truly wants and needs. The relationship between both men was wonderfully written and the fears are very real, but sometimes you have to take a chance and Sean nearly loses Emery before he can take his wholeheartedly.

I have to recommend this to those who love overcoming obstacles, breaking down walls, accepting love, protecting children, great characters and the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

Yvonne says

Reviewed on Hearts On Fire: Hearts on Fire

I'm more likely to run across an m/m romance book about a blind, psychic gay man who's a part time shifter than I am to read one about the dating life of an HIV positive man. For this reason alone this book interested me. Turns out, the story is pretty good as well.

Sean is tired of getting rejected due to his HIV status and makes a decision to only date people who are also HIV positive. That decision is immediately tested when he meets social worker Emery who arrives at the Middle School to discuss a domestic abuse incident. Sean is the school principal and the case involves one of his favorite students Lamar. There's an immediate attraction between the two men even as they try to deal with this disturbing incident.

Sean and Emery find themselves spending a lot of time together due to the ups and downs of Lamar's case. They also have a lot in common so their growing feelings for one another is believable even within a very short timeframe. We get to see both men's point of view which is something I wish more m/m romance writers would utilize as it helps us to empathize & cheer on both characters.

Emery is a total sweetheart while Sean, who's perfectly charming in many ways, is nothing but difficult when it comes to the idea of a relationship. I did understand Sean's conflicted feelings & behavior. The book is very optimistic in tone about living with HIV and rightly so, but it also doesn't sugarcoat some of the issues.

While on the one hand, as Sean pointed out, he's probably a lot healthier than the average person due to the care he has to take, he also worries about the what ifs.

Like what if the medication stops working or what if he puts his trust in Emery and he decides it's too much for him to deal with and leaves. There's also the reality that because of Sean's status, Emery would have to undergo the inconvenience of being tested more often himself. On top of all that, Sean's work in the education field means he has to be very careful about what gets out about his health. I couldn't get too irritated with Sean because his fears and cautions are reasonable even with Emery being a good guy.

Overall, this book is well done. The subplot involving Lamar & his consequent actions seems realistic for a teenager in his situation. The Foster parent was a very nice & amusing character.

I did sometimes feel like the story could use a little extra oomph . Emery is almost too good to be true with

his endless patience with Sean. I think story wise, it would have been good to have Emery act out a little and not make it so easy for Sean to come and go at will. I also still had my doubts about Sean's commitment even at the end. If he ever got bad medical news would he bolt again? I think I'd have liked to have seen Sean maybe even try dating other HIV positive men just to get that thought out of his system. However, these are minor quibbles that did not stop me from enjoying this story or recommending it. It has wonderful characters who manage to find love while dealing with true to life situations.

Kazza says

The characters behaved ridiculously for their professions and ages. A serodiscordant relationship and the characters, especially given why they were thrown together, should have made for an excellent story but didn't.

multitaskingmomma says

This was one of those books that made me laugh, and get mad, get irritated, laugh again, get frustrated until the end where I had a big sigh of relief and said, "Perfect!"

Beautifully written, beautiful story, I want more.

Dallie P says

This book was honestly so disappointing to me. This is a book about two male characters. Yet somehow, the entire book, I felt like I was reading about two teenage girls. I was excited about the story line, but holy crap. It was ridiculous.

jules0623 says

2.5 stars. I don't often say it but this should have been shorter. There was a lot of waffle in between the real plot/character development that could have been easily left out.

Tame says

4.75 Stars...I really couldn't put this down...2 real men with real flaws, one who happens to be HIV +, and struggling to not be defined by that status, either by a potential partner, on or ultimately himself. I could see Mr. Starr's experience in the educational field shine throughout this novel, in both MCs, and the +/- status was handled realistically IMHO. Bravo, Mr. Starr!

Jeff Erno says

This touching, inspiring, sexy, and beautiful story was an absolute gem. One of the best books I've read this year, Perfect for Me was indeed perfect for me.

This is the story of Sean and Emery. Sean is a middle school principal and Emery is a social worker. They team up in order to help a troubled student and in the process fall in love. The only problem is that Sean is harboring a ton of self doubt. He's HIV positive, and Emery is negative, and Sean can't get beyond the notion that Emery is just too good for him.

I applaud this presentation of an HIV-positive character as a lead protagonist. It felt realistic to me and far more hopeful than the books of the 80s and 90s when a positive status was equivalent to a death sentence.

The romance was awesome, and I loved how Emery got more dominant in the bedroom toward the end. The sex scenes were sizzling hot, which was an added bonus. But the strength of the story was the romance. It was just beautiful.

This is the 4th book I've read by this author, and this was by far the best. Five-plus stars!
