



Taking Chances

Loni Flowers

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Turning her back on a life she can no longer deal with, Clair Davidson has been on the streets for six months wandering aimlessly from town to town. But when a hitchhiked car ride lands her back in a familiar town, and a terrifying encounter puts her in the arms of someone too good to be true, Clair almost starts to feel like she could belong somewhere again. Almost.

Alexander Frazier knew what it felt like to live on the streets, up until he received a helping hand from a stranger. After saving Clair from a vicious attack, it's not long before he realizes she's a lot like he used to be—lost. Alex soon learns he will risk everything to keep her safe and get her life back on track... even if it means his heart.

But fresh starts are new to Clair and not something she's certain she's ready for. Clair's had her share of people walking out of her life and she doesn't trust her heart in Alex's hands. Can his love give her the second chance she never saw coming?

Taking Chances Details

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From Reader Review Taking Chances for online ebook

Katrina Marie says

Anyone who has ever been to my blog knows I do not read very many contemporary novels. It has to really grab my attention. I'm so happy I had the opportunity to read Taking Chances. It was a great read, and hard to put down.

Clair and Alex have had a few bad things happen to them. Clair finds it hard to trust people and believes all guys are the same. They lie, use her, then bail. Even worse, she feels abandoned after her father left their family when she was 13. Alex has had his heart broken in the most terrible way, but can't stop thinking about Clair.

I loved these characters. They are stubborn, but their individual weaknesses is what made me fall for them.. I haven't gone through the same things as Clair per say, bu some I have. I can remember being confused and wondering what the hell I was going to do. It's a pretty scary time, especially at 21. It was also nice to see a confident male character that has a vulnerable side. While things moved quickly they weren't instantly in love upon first meeting. They both had insecurities to work through.

It didn't take me long to finish Taking Chances. There is romance, heart break, love, loss, and a little twist thrown in. I was in tears off and on while reading, going through their joy and pain.

Misty Baker says

Of all the trials and tribulations that life can throw at you love is one of the most difficult. It can make you, break you, confine you or define you. It's what we all search for, and most certainly what we all need. Whether it be the selfless love of your parents, or the understanding love of a best-friend; it remains the most challenging of circumstances to accept, and more importantly the hardest to let go of.

A few years ago I had a bit of a hiccup in the love department. This hiccup (and by hiccup I mean nuclear bomb) included every member of my family (mom, dad, hubs, brother... etc.) I had lost faith in them, and even sadder, I no longer trusted them. Then one day, while looking through a few of my old journals (yes..I'm that girl.) I ran across a quote I had written down the last time love had stabbed me in the back.

“Love me without fear. Trust me without questioning. Need me without demanding. Want me without restrictions. Accept me without change. Desire me without inhibitions.” – Dick Sutphen

Finding this (and re-reading it a hundred or so times) helped me to understand something. If you want love, you can't be afraid of love. A pretty important message (if I do say so myself,) AND one that Loni Flowers explores in her contemporary romance “Taking Chances.”

“At age twenty-three, Alex has had a hard life. His parents died when he was quite young, leaving his grandparents to raise him. Right before his high school graduation, his grandparents passed on too, leaving him all alone. After losing everyone he's ever loved, Alex turns to the streets in a self-destructive pattern until he finally ends up in Springhill, where he tries to make a new life for himself.

Clair's childhood was normal until age thirteen, when her father left the family and she never heard from him again. Consequently, her mother went into a deep depression, forcing Clair to grow up quickly. After finishing high school, Clair's heartache over her father's absence as well as her unbearable mother drive her to strike out on her own. But having nowhere to go and no family to speak of, Clair wanders aimlessly from town to town, homeless, and without purpose. Looking for work wherever she goes and living hand to mouth on the streets is tough, Clair discovers, but living with her mother is worse.

Now twenty-one years old, Clair has found her way to the last place she and her family took their final vacation as a family—Springhill. While in town, she crosses paths with Alex and their ensuing relationship grows faster than expected. Soon Clair wonders if coming back to Springhill and meeting Alex was the best decision or the worst decision she ever made.”

For those of you out there (in the land of the literary Gods) that tend to lean towards Contemporary Romance (ala Roberts, Garwood, Wiggs) as your genre of preference you probably know (better than most) that romance novels often follow a formula.

Guy meets girl/they want each-other/they don't want each-other/mayhem issues/the need each-other....yada yada. The end.

This formula is a good one. It's worked for YEARS (without fail) and I'll be damned if I stand in it's way. (I happen to enjoy the predictability of it...I'm assured a happy ending.) BUT, sometimes it's important for authors to shake it up.

“Taking Chances” is a very formulaic book, and for 90% of the readers that will purchase this novel, that is going to be just fine by them. Me? I was a little disappointed. (cue dramatic music.) Flowers is clearly a writer. And because I saw her spark shimmering right below the surface of the first several chapters of this novel I expected more from her. (Not fair, I know. Boo me.) I expected her to write outside of the box. To dig deeper than she did and splay her characters out for the whole world to see. Open those wounds up baby and let your characters bleed! But instead she bottled Alex and Clair up and only allowed them to express emotion through tears and hand gestures. I understood the characters, (there's no doubt about that) and in some parts their interactions were expertly written, (for example all of those lovely “sexy time” scenes) but the intensity I felt radiating from the characters (specifically from Clair) in the beginning of the book (as Alex was “saving her”) felt almost like a supernatural entity for the remainder of the book.

Clair didn't want to “take a chance” on love. She had her reasons, I respect them, hell...I even understood them. But after a few smoldering glances and 1 heavy petting session she cast her misgivings aside and says “let me have it?” This is where I think Flowers faltered. Clair's emotions were very high-strung in the opening of this novel, and she should have kept them that way for a tad longer to increase the intensity the reader would feel once Alex finally “convinced” Clair that he wasn't just in it for the booty. (wow...that was very un-eloquently said.) In short...there needed to be a tad more push and pull for the the “mini mine fields” to have more of an impact later in the story.

So what about the “story?”

It was fine. It wasn't anything I'd phone home about, but it was a quick read that kept me entertained (in spite of my unreasonable expectations) and would make a very nice beach read for those of you gearing up for a summer in the sun.

Could it have been better? Yes...I think Flowers has a lot more to her than she let us see this time. That

said...I look forward to seeing what she puts out in the future.

A solid start for a new author. A cheap (not cheesy) read for romance fans, and it taught an important lesson. I guess it's what you would call average, and there's nothing wrong with that.

Happy reading my fellow Kindle-ites and remember:

“There is never a time or place for true love. It happens accidentally, in a heartbeat, in a single flashing, throbbing moment.” – Sarah Dessen

Stefne Miller says

I was sucked into this book from the very first chapter and read it all the way through in one sitting.

The characters grip your heart and you can't help but hope that they will get their happy ending.

Loni Flowers says

I'm the author...of course I love it. And **Thank You** all for reading it!

Steph at Starry Night Book Reviews says

I'm more of a paranormal book reader 90% of the time but WOW I loved this book I started this book in the morning and I finished the same night all 367 pages. I could not bring myself to put this book down. What a beautiful story, heartfelt and real, you can really picture yourself right there with the characters and feel what they feel. I laughed and cried a few times, the things Clair & Alex have been through and how strong they are and willing to make things better amazes me. Also their strength to learn to trust and love again and the way they care for one another and the women who saved them both in ways you can't imagine. I really can't say enough good things about Taking Chances Loni did one hell of a job writing this book. I highly recommend this book if you are a romance fan!

Phowpence says

I know I suck giving reviews but I so love this book. I swear I read the book in just one sitting. Once you got hold of this book, it will be hard to put it down. I totally adore Alex. *dreamy sigh* It totally deserved a **FIVE STAR** rating. :)

Cami Hensley says

<http://myaddictionisreading.blogspot....>

I haven't read many books about homeless people or the situations that put them there. This is the heartbreak yet heartwarming story of two people who both have many demons in their past. You would think a relationship between these two is impossible, I mean, 2 wrongs don't make a right... but their chemistry and love is undeniable from the start.

From chapter to chapter I fell more deeply into this story. Clair is such a loveable character. You just want to give her a big hug, thank the Lord Alex was there at just the right moment every time. I found it amazing how much of a knight in shining armor he really was for her. He had such PURE feelings for her and is really just a stand up guy!

I loved the revelations in this story! I seem to always gravitate towards characters with issues and I love when they come to terms with their lives and their pasts. I just really enjoyed this story!

Tana says

Taking Chances by Loni Flowers

I really enjoyed Loni Flowers writing, Taking Chances is her debut novel; Loni's writing is good, the story was easy to follow, character descriptions were great. This is a good romance novel and I have to say the author's writing makes you feel for both of the two main characters. It's one of those books you cheer for Alex and Clair hoping it all ends with a Happy Ever After ending.

Alex and Clair meet under some disturbing circumstances, and Alex bring home Clair and invites her stay till she can find a safe place to live. Clair has been living on the streets moving from town to town. Alex also came from the same kind of background but someone gave him a chance and now he is doing well for himself. Knowing how hard life can be Alex offers to help but of course being independent and not wanting to trust or owe anyone Clair leaves. When offered a job and a place to stay Clair decides to hang out for awhile.

This is a romance novel of two people who grew up in similar situations both having to depend on themselves and deep down not trusting anyone. This novel is about two young adults learning to trust, deal with some difficult issues and learning to love again.

I really enjoyed this novel, and I have to say Loni Flowers has done a terrific job writing her debut novel. I would recommend this novel to anyone who enjoy romance and loves to read a good story. I have rated it a 4 out of 5 and would say go purchase Taking Chances now!

DISCLOSURE – Please place somewhere in the post for all reviews!

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Shannon says

I really love the time I spent reading about Alex and Clair. Their story was a contemporary romance that had the charm of a young adult book but the feel and content of a more grown up story. There are some sexy times since they are in their early 20's but they are well written and sweet, not too graphic.

Clair is a brave girl who is living on the streets and moving from place to place. When she gets to Springhill, she intends to just pass through but something unpleasant happens to keep her there long enough to meet a few people who truly want to help her. I was heartbroken for Clair, she really had some hard knocks in her life and that made me root for her to have a happily ever after even more. Alex is a guy that was in a bad place in the past but now has his life pretty much together. . He has a good job and people that care about him. I think he is the perfect match for Clair, someone who can understand her but is also in a position to help her.

Just because they are perfect for each other does not mean it is smooth sailing though. They both have some important issues to deal with in the story. I also loved that this story did not feel generic, I was constantly surprised by the things that happened. I found myself shocked several times and that is what I love about reading!

BOTTOM LINE: Interesting characters and a unique story, I really enjoyed it!

* I do know the author from twitter but I have never met her in real life. I accepted the book for review because I think she is fabulous but I am praising the book because IT is fabulous!

Dianne says

It isn't easy to take another chance on love for two people who have a ton of emotional baggage to haul around. **Taking Chances** by Loni Flowers follows the heart-warming story of Clair and Alex as they meet under the most awful of circumstances at a time in their lives when the last thing they are willing to believe in is love. For Clair, lost in her own anguish, escaping from her past, if something or someone is too good to be true, as Alex is, there must be a downside that is going to further shred her heart. Alex sees something in Clair that he wants, but can he convince her that he means her no harm? Will Clair overcome her fears or will she push Alex away?

Loni Flowers has created three endearing characters in her contemporary romance, Clair, Alex, and their own personal 'Fairy Godmother,' Roz. Trust me, you are going to love that big-hearted woman! Ms. Flowers writes with a smooth flowing style full of emotional 'hooks' and believable twists that make her characters come alive.

Are you looking for a romance that will leave you with a smile? One that's not too heavy, not too dramatic, but with just enough tension to pull you in and hold you through the end? **Taking Chances** would be a great choice for that escape into the world of all things romance.

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My Rating: 4.5 Stars

Available from: Amazon / Barnes & Noble

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Caitlin Audet says

Taking Chances was such an enjoyable read and I am so very happy for having come across this title. Thank you Amazon lol. This story starts with Clair's POV, the girl who left home after her mother completely checked out and has been on the streets for years. She ends up in the one place she shouldn't but ends up being the only place she should be in. Here we meet Alex(the second POV) and it didn't take long to meet him which I appreciate. He and Clair have an immediate connection but both are wary for different reasons. No that doesn't mean insta love so readers who aren't fond of that will be very happy. I loved taking this journey with Clair and Alex. We learn a lot about both of them and what they have gone through to get to this point in their lives. I felt every emotion the characters felt and even cried during a scene. This book will tug on your heart and also compel you to keep reading til you hit the last page. Definitely an amazing read.

Pasha Riddle says

Have you ever thought to yourself 'Can I or should I'? We examine life with these questions everyday in different situations that alter our lives in the present and the future. Taking Chances battles this ubiquitous question throughout the entire novel. Clair having seen hard times since her father left abruptly leaving her with a mother drowning in depression. After wandering from town to town she meets Alex also battling with his past. This book follows two characters as they battle through new feelings, emotions and decisions to explore. As each page turned the book excelled as the characters adjusted to each other and those around them. There are ups and downs with pieces of surprise both intriguing and somber. There are times of sentiment for tears, laughing, grief and joyous smiles. Loni took an idea and transformed it into this heartfelt novel that will leave you with heat running through your veins and rethinking life's possibilities.

Christina says

This was such a *precious* story! I loved every minute I spent with the characters, their journey, and the chances they took. It made me laugh and it made me cry, several times. Loni Flowers did a remarkable job on this debut novel and I look forward to reading more for her in the future! Full Review Coming Soon!

L.J. Kentowski says

Get ready for a roller-coaster ride of emotions in Loni Flowers' debut novel. You'll fall in love with Clair and

Alex from the very first chapter and won't be able to let go. This page turner will have you smiling, crying, yelling, and taking cold showers from how hot it becomes. *Taking Chances* is a heart-warming novel about learning to love unconditionally after overcoming life's hardships.

Flowers has set herself up with a hard act to follow, but I look forward to reading much more from her.

Mae Clair says

Remember all those wonderful Hallmark movies . . . the kind that make you want to curl up with a bowl of popcorn and settle in for a good tale? You know there's going to be conflict, emotional ups and downs, tears (some of them your own) but, in the end, you expect to walk away with a warm, glowing feeling. Well, *Taking Chances* is the equivalent of a Hallmark movie.

Clair is running away from her past when she happens into a small town and encounters Alex, who is carting around emotional baggage of his own. He comes to her aid (the man is a knight in shining armor!) when he saves her from some thugs. Though she's not immediately smitten, unwilling to trust enough that someone could care about her, it lays the foundation for a sweet and sensual romance. There are several underlying plot threads and two highly likable secondary characters, with everything tying together neatly at the end. After doing my fair share of sniffling, I walked away with a warm fuzzy feeling that only a heart-tugging book can invoke. Get some popcorn, have the Kleenex handy and settle in to enjoy. This was a pleasure!
