



Angelina's Bachelors

Brian O'Reilly

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Sometimes the shortest distance between two people is the length of a kitchen table. . . .

Far too young to be a widow, Angelina D'Angelo suddenly finds herself facing a life without her beloved husband, Frank. Late one night shortly after the funeral, she makes her way down to the kitchen and pours all of her grief and anger into the only outlet she has left—her passion for cooking. In a frenzy of concentration and swift precision, she builds layer upon layer of thick, rich lasagna, braids loaves of yeasty bread, roasts plump herb-rubbed chicken; she makes so much food that she winds up delivering the spoils to the neighbors in her tight-knit Italian community in South Philadelphia.

Retiree Basil Cupertino, who has just moved in with his kindly sister across the street, is positively smitten with Angelina's food. In a stroke of good fortune, Basil offers Angelina (not only husbandless but unemployed) a job cooking for him—two meals a day, six days a week, in exchange for a handsome salary. Soon, word of her irresistible culinary prowess spreads and she finds herself cooking for seven bachelors—and in the process discovers the magical power of food to heal, to bring people together . . . and maybe even to provide a second chance at love.

Filled to the brim with homemade warmth, *Angelina's Bachelors* is a sweet tale of overcoming grief, redefining family, and following your heart—through food.

Angelina's Bachelors Details

Date : Published August 9th 2011 by Gallery Books (first published January 1st 2011)

ISBN : 9781451620566

Author : Brian O'Reilly

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Fiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Romance, Food and Drink, Food, Foodie, Contemporary, Adult Fiction

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From Reader Review Angelina's Bachelors for online ebook

Addictive says

Angelina's Bachelors' is a moving and heartbreakng story that will have you munching away on a piece of pie while turning the pages. Honestly, I think I gained ten pounds just reading this book, the recipes and the way the author describes how Angelina is cooking will make your mouth water and make even the undomesticated goddess among us want to run into the kitchen and start whipping up a soufflé.

Angelina has just lost her beloved husband of five years to a heart attack; the last thing he ate was a piece of her chocolate cake. Days later, she finds she is without a job as well; you would think this would make a woman cry foul and give up but one lonely night she decides to cook a thanksgiving style meal in hopes that will release all her anger, after all when does cooking not distress a woman? But the next day finds, her refrigerator stuffed and no way of eating it all by herself before everything is spoiled so with the help of her mother in law, she delivers the baked goods around the neighborhood.

Soon enough, Angelina's doorbell starts ringing the next day from single men around the neighborhood who would like Angelina to start cooking for them because either they can't cook or their mother can't cook like Angelina. And so Angelina's bachelor club is born, where five single guys ranging in age from 18 to 80 come together for dinner five days a week and get homemade fare.

But not soon after, a surprising revelation is made and a calamity ensues that finds Angelina owning her own restaurant with the help of the bachelor's. And it just wouldn't be a stunning read without a little bit of romance now would it? Yes, Angelina finds love again with one of the bachelor's.

I just loved this book, not because cooking is my second passion after books but because of the message Angelina's Bachelor's gives. When one door closes, another opens. You just have to be ready and keep your eyes open.

Gina says

Such a comforting and delightful read! Angelina's husband dies suddenly, leaving her in a state of complete sadness and worry for the future. After a bout of mass cooking to comfort herself, she is asked to host her first bachelor for breakfast and dinner. More soon follow, and she ends up with seven bachelor's paying for her to cook the best foods of their lives. It brings her joy and peace after such a terrible loss. And, of course, there's recipes. I doubt I would actually make any of them myself, but I would certainly eat them if someone else did. The story is full of hope, humor, good banter, and an overwhelming feeling of family. Loved it so much.

Parismaddy says

“The power of food is only second to sex.”

~ Brian O'Reilly

(I couldn't agree more with the author's quote.)

Angelina's Bachelors by Brian O'Reilly (Executive Producer of Food Network's Dinner: Impossible) centers around young widow, Angelina and the men who flock to her South Philly neighborhood to sample her wares...but, I'm getting ahead of the story. Angelina starts cooking after her husband, Frank, passes away. Her neighbor, retiree Basil, loves her food and hires her to cook meals for him. She needs a job and he needs good food so it seems like a win-win match.

Word of her skill in the kitchen spreads and Guy, Basil's nephew, along with other eligible bachelors join in on Angelina's dinner club get togethers.

The story is as tasty as the Gorgonzola Beef Tenderloin in a Barolo Reduction or the Frangelico Chocolate "Dream" Cake recipes that are included in this delightful book. Warm and interesting characters, filled to the brim with emotion and fun, make this an enjoyable read.

Seasoned just so and peppered with the love of a huge Italian family at Sunday dinner--- a must read "love" story. Come hungry, Leave Full.

Brenda Audiobooks Only says

Narrated by Xe Sands - Narration 5*s!

Reviewed for AAR's Speaking of Audiobooks - <http://www.likesbooks.com/blog/?p=7644>

From the moment I started listening to Angelina's Bachelors: A Novel with Food, I was totally engrossed. Narrator Xe Sands brings this Italian neighborhood in South Philadelphia completely to life with her skilled narration of this moving and delicious storyline.

Frank and Angelina are blissfully happy in their marriage and with their life when Frank suddenly dies from a heart attack, leaving Angelina a young widow, adrift in a life without him. Vocally, we experience every emotion Angelina experiences – warmth and love, a wrenching grief, sadness mixed with determination that turns to hope, and then delight as she builds a very different but once again happy life for herself. This takes place over time with the help of family, friends and food.

Angelina uses her cooking ability as therapy and as a way to make ends meet, while filling a spot in several men's lives. Angelina's Bachelors moves at a fast pace with something new around every corner as the cast of characters builds and grows together with each artfully created and mouth watering meal.

Ms. Sands gives each character throughout Angelina's Bachelors a beautifully defined voice, which is impressive considering the fact that there are multiple main characters, each with a vivid personality that shows through when they speak. I particularly enjoyed hearing the Italian accents prevalent throughout the story.

There is an HEA, but it was far from the focus of this wonderfully written book brought vibrantly alive with Xe Sands' excellent narration

Rebecca says

After Angelina's husband dies at a young age, all she has left is her close South Philly neighborhood and gourmet cooking. Almost by accident, she sets up a small business cooking breakfast and dinner for several neighborhood bachelors, who become more like a family over the months. As Angelina's life goes through ups and downs, her bachelors are there for her, and one may even offer her more than just friendship. The book is filled with descriptions of wonderful meals, and apparently the audiobook comes with a PDF of recipes, but since I can't cook, I didn't bother to check it out!

This book was pretty much predictable from start to finish, which some people would probably enjoy (I enjoy a predictable book often enough, myself). A lot of it was depressing, naturally since her husband dies (there's a fairly graphic description of his death by heart attack that I could have done without), and some other things are also described too graphically for me. What I enjoyed most about the book was the description of the food. I thought other things didn't work so well. When Angelina has a baby (which I pretty much knew would happen, and that was graphically described as well), it's amazing how little work it ends up being for her, because her husband's family is so eager to take over all baby care for her. I don't even have kids, and I know it's not so easy to drop all your child responsibilities so you can get on with your life.

I also knew from the start that the bachelor who'd dropped out of seminary and was attracted to Angelina would not be the one she'd end up with; there's some unwritten rule that in books/movies/etc. sympathetic to the Catholic church, once someone is involved with the church (in seminary, as a priest, etc.), there is only one way out. By the end of the story, they must either return to religious life, or die. Witness Ballykissangel. It's like a street gang; once in, you can never get out with your life. 100% predictable. The last one who got out was Maria Von Trapp, and I think that was only because she managed to get herself seven children without ever having sex.

Swanbender2001 says

This was a rewarding and comforting read about finding solace and rebuilding one's life after suffering a great loss. I really enjoyed every character and side story

Jennifer says

Quaint novel. Delicious sounding recipes. Worthy of a road trip listen if you like easy stories with happy endings.

Brian says

As much as I wanted to like this book, it was a birthday present, but I couldn't get into it. It was very sappy, cheesy, and not very well written. The main character just lost her husband, who dies while he is trying to get a piece of cake of a heart attack. She then is depressed but decided to relieve that depression by cooking for

the single men in her neighborhood. Scattered throughout this novel are very complicated recipes that I would never make. This book got great reviews on Amazon, but as far as I am concerned, it's mostly fluff.

Maureen Ann says

To begin, I must disclaim that I won this book as part of a Goodreads giveaway. This has not in any way influenced my review.

I have heard the old saying that you should never judge a book by its cover and I have read far too many books to rely exclusively on that method of judging. But, the sole reason I entered the Goodreads giveaway was because I was drawn in by the cover. I can't say exactly what it was, but I found it intriguing and I wanted a copy of this book. Within the first few pages, I was drawn into the story of Angelina and her grief. I read the book in two days, while simultaneously reading another book, because it was too good to put down.

Angelina, like so many women, used food to comfort her in her grief. But she did not simply consume the vast quantities of food she was making - she reached out to others and shared what she had created. In doing this, she found a way to support herself, both financially and emotionally. Overall, the characters were well drawn, though there were times where I would have liked to ask the author a few questions about a particular character.

I did check a few times to make sure I was remembering correctly that this book was written by a man. His grasp of the female perspective was excellent. This book was definitely a good read, though I fear that my waistline expanded as I read. I was inspired to make several favorites (lasagne) and try a few new recipes as I went along. It says on the cover that it is a novel with food. I misunderstood and thought the author intended for me to read the novel with food always available...

There are a few predictable plot lines throughout the story, but they are not really a negative impact on the entire book. The story moved well and the characters were likable.

I would wholeheartedly recommend this book to absolutely anyone who was looking for a great summer, or fall, read.

Sarah says

I thoroughly enjoyed Angelina. Many romances involving second marriages add emphasis to the new relationship by denigrating the previous one, even in little ways, and even if it was a good, happy marriage that ended in tragic death instead of bitter divorce. This one avoided that miserable trap quite beautifully; basically the first 80% of the novel was the love story of Angelina and her recently-deceased husband, with the new relationship being something of a sub-sub-plot brought in to round off the end. I was grateful for the high view of marriage expressed here; more Christ-honoring, with one significant exception, than a great many "christian romances". The food aspect inspired humility, fear, and most of all my creative juices; I'd love to try some of those elaborately elegant recipes, though others not so much! They really did bring the narrative together in a special way. Such a fun idea, and a delightful execution.

Elise says

I got this as an ARC at work, intrigued by the plot and the integration of recipes into the narrative. Unfortunately, the book didn't deliver on its promises. The characters were dull and predictable, the plot boring and the recipes completely ridiculous. Above all, I felt like the author was part of a very conservative, staid generation that can't actually relate to modern life. None of the relationships felt real enough for the 21st century--that is if, as I assume, it was supposed to be a contemporary story? Not to mention that Angelina's grief at the death of her husband seemed to disappear early into the novel. Don't waste your time, folks.

Carrie says

I was really disappointed in this book. It should have been a nice story: A young widow begins cooking for the unmarried men in her neighborhood in order to make ends meet.

The problem is that there's no character to these characters. Angelina has no personality of her own, no opinions, very little back story. Everything (and supposedly these are nice things, it's not anything bad or anything...) just seems to happen to her, while she happily, mindlessly, goes along with the flow.

I just couldn't get over how patronizing it all was. Angelina has no control over her life. All the decisions, including resolving a potential love triangle, are made by the men. She's just a place holder.

The author has probably noticed that food novels are quite popular right now. But, Mr. O'Reilly, there's more to a good novel than a few overly complicated recipes. We need to care about the characters. And it's hard to care about these.

Christina says

This book was a fast read (it took me about a day to finish) because a large percentage of the pages are filled with recipes. The book feels a lot like the movie "Tortilla Soup" did... a love letter to food and the power that it has to unite people and to bring them through hard times.

The story was fairly easy on the brainpan. Happily married woman loves her husband and loves to cook. Husband dies of a sudden heart attack. Newly widowed woman rebuilds her life and sense of purpose by cooking amazing meals for neighborhood bachelors. This "Bachelors Club" becomes her new family.

Each chapter ends with the recipes for the food that Angelina cooks for the Bachelors, including preparation and presentation instructions. Droooooooooool.... I wish I'd bought the book in ink-and-paper instead of kindle so that I could use the novel like a cookbook. The kindle version does come with an index of recipes, which is nice, but the ink-and-paper version would probably be easier to cook from.

A nice, light read that made me hungry... mmm... food....

Dawn says

This was a lovely book about resilience, friendship and the ways we make our own family. I found this book hard to put down. And don't forget the food, it was awesome!

Andrea says

A fun read, one that even as certain things bothered me I felt compelled to keep reading during any free time.

The things that bothered me: it says explicitly on the front cover that it is "A Novel, with Food," and food plays a really significant role in the storyline, but man I got kind of tired it after a while. Really, don't read this if you're not at all interested in food. Each meal is described - the ingredients, the process, etc, and then characters comment on each meal, and then after everyone is finished there is an actual recipe. So every meal is covered at least twice, sometimes three times. Also, many of the recipes occur mid-chapter, and thus mid-action, which I felt was awkward (she leaves the kitchen - recipe - she goes upstairs)

The other thing that bothered me is that Angelina is treated as an Old Maid - a woman who missed her first round of opportunities, who sadly didn't have kids during her marriage and is now alone without any, etc. But I did the math, and I think she's just in her early 30's. So, really? I'm nearly 30 and I don't feel nearly so out of time as everyone seems to think Angelina is. Although, who knows in what decade this is set?

Anyway, clearly some complaints, but overall it is an enjoyable easy read, comfortable.
