



## The Rogue

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## **The Rogue** Jessica Bird , J.R. Ward

*Only one woman can get past his guard. The Moorehouse Legacy finale from New York Times bestselling author J.R. Ward writing as Jessica Bird.* Michael "Spike" Moriarty has had a thing for Madeline Maguire ever since she first walked up to him as if she wasn't the most gorgeous woman on the planet and asked to see his tattoos. But he knows that the attraction can only go one way—he could never be the man for her. He has a dark history that very few know about, and even worse, it's all about to come to the surface. Madeline's been burned enough in the past to know better, but Spike is the only man that has caught her eye time and time again. For some reason, he's determined to avoid her, but when she desperately needs help to ward off her scheming family, Spike is the one at her side. And even though he says they can only be friends, his actions speak a very different story...A reader-favorite story originally published as *A Man in a Million*.

## **The Rogue Details**

Date : Published October 19th 2015 by HQN Books (first published January 1st 2007)

ISBN :

Author : Jessica Bird , J.R. Ward

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Category Romance, Harlequin

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## From Reader Review The Rogue for online ebook

### Shawna says

4 1/2-5 stars – Contemporary Romance

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### Calisto says

So I borrowed this from a friend without paying much attention to the author but really liking the blurb. Well...as I was reading I started thinking... Wow, Spike really reminds me of Zsadist....Z!!! (swoon and 10 minutes of fantasizing later)...Z!!! Then I look back at the author. Jessica Bird. Why does that sound so familiar? DOH! Well of course Spikhe (:p) reminded me of Z! I lost my interest in the Brothers after Ward jumped the shark thru the ring of fire with a nuked fridge one too many times but Z will forever hold a special place in my heart ;)

So I kept reading. I cut my teeth in category romances but outgrew them and this just served to remind me why I don't read them anymore. The heroine - whatever her name was - should have been awesome. She is tall, athletic, smart...but it turns out she has the spine of a jellyfish and - OMFG STFUBBQ!- a virgin. Really?! Who does virginal heroines in their mid-20s in a contemporary without a damn good reason? Sigh. So as I continued to read, the heroine went from being potentially awesome to annoying and I was actually waiting for her to morph into some petite, fragile little thing that would faint dead away at the sight of a co\*k.

But I kept reading cuz there was a plot. Right? Yeah, I guess but really the corporate backstabbing/evil brother takeover blah blah felt like it was a rehash of an old Dynasty (yeah, the old 80s soap opera) episode. I actually had to check the date of publication cuz I really thought this was written in 1987. Yawn.

I also had a problem with the 'safe sex angle'. This is probably the category thing rearing its ugly head but the... 'Do you have a condom? - I'm a virgin. Are you clean? (clean? really? ewww) - I've always been careful and I just had a physical'...just sooo threw me out of the mood that when they started having sex I was looking at the clock and wondering if they were done yet. And even the awesome hero couldn't interest me anymore.

This is a category romance that if you are stuck in a deserted island, it might entertain you (at least it will give your eyes a lot of exercise from all the eye rolling) for about an hour - maybe three if you stop and go make dinner or better yet a stiff drink. I bet if I made a drinking game out of every time my eyes rolled in this story, I would have liked it a whole lot better because by the end I would have been too blitzed to read the words.

The only reason I don't give it one star is for the hero...or because I really loved Z ;)

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### Adrienne says

i really enjoyed this short romance:::infact i wished she'd been able to write more as the storyline had the

potential to go much further especially with the introduction of Jaynie(now there was a really good storyline in the making)::but i guess the publisher probably has restrictions in place re no. of words etc::i loved Spike and Mad (who reminds me a little bit of Xhex)::there was a nice balance of \*bedrooms scenes\*which were relevant to the storyline::and emotional scenes::can't wait to read Seans story in The Billionaire Next Door::

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## **UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says**

Ok, I LOVE this book and this is going to be the most bizarre review I've ever written, because I'm not ashamed to say that a big part of the reason I love it so much is that Spike is so obviously *somehow* related to Zsadist and Phury from the Black Dagger Brotherhood series (Which Jessica Bird writes under the name J.R.Ward). This was confirmed by one of the WARDen's moderators on her forum:

Posted by Lami on the WARDen's website.

*Somewhere in the deep dark past of this cell the WARDen did say something along the lines of "maybe Phury's cousin" and I remember because Spike is my absolute favourite of her SSE characters. And this isn't because Spike is big and tattooed and yellow eyed and gorgeous.*

*It's because Spike can cook.*

And back in *From the First*, Alex and Cassandra's story, we get this little interaction between Alex and Spike:

This scene takes place while Spike and Alex are sitting in the car, talking about Reese's death.

*"....Did you try and save him, Alex? Did you try and save him, and lose him in the end?"*

*Alex recoiled.*

*"Yeah," Spike said softly. "That's it, isn't it. You lost him out on that boat, didn't you?"*

*"How do you..."*

*Spike's eyes flipped across the seat. They seemed to glimmer, becoming otherworldly in their intensity.*

*"We've all got demons, man. Some we work through. Some are ghosts we foxtrot into the grave with. But here's the thing. Time's short. Life's shorter. A blink of an eye and you've missed what you wanted, what you needed." Spike looked back out into the night. "Death's damn cold and it lasts forever once it shakes your hand. So take the warmth now, my man. Take it where you find it. Forgive yourself just enough to let some in, okay?"*

*Alex stared at his buddy and frowned. "What the hell happened to you?"*

*Spike's dark smile brought chills. "Ah, but we're talking about your curse, not mine. Now, if you don't mind, I've got a party to get back to. There are a number of women dying to take advantage of my charms, and I'm in the mood to be used."*

*Alex got out of the car. "I just realized something. I don't know all that much about you. Where are you from,*

anyway?"

*Spike moved the gear shift back and forth in Neutral. His sun colored eyes flashed. "Oz."*

*Alex chuckled. "Which one are you? The lion, the scarecrow?"*

*Spike winked and put the car in gear. "The wizard."*

Now, repeatedly throughout the Moorehouse Legacy books, Spike's "otherworldly" yellow eyes are commented on. His shockingly large and impressive...ummm... yeah...is large and impressive and he also has this tasty little habit of lightly biting Mad's neck, then licking the spot. As I read it, it seemed like it was an instinctual thing for him to do, a compulsion... and who else do we know like that? Hmm?? The Brothers, of course.

\*sigh\* Ok, so see what I mean about a bizarre review? I should be reviewing *A Man in a Million* and instead I'm going on and on about how Spike *might* be related to other characters in a completely different series!!! Am I BDB obsessed?? YES!!!

So, truthfully, all BDB references aside, Spike is a great character all on his own. He does tormented so, so well, but at the same time, he's reasonable. He listens. He gets it when he's wrong. And wow, how refreshing is that??

Madeline "MadDog" Maguire is a great heroine, who's dealt with a lifetime of heartache and has had to do it alone. Always the one in the family who didn't fit in, even though she was happy with who she was – and who she wasn't – she knew that she could never measure up to what others expected her to be. When she finally meets Spike, she sees in him someone who is trustworthy, someone nonjudgmental, and even though they come from entirely different worlds, he's someone she can, in an odd way, relate to. And isn't it lucky for her that he is clearly attracted to her!

While I wish there had been a little less 'misunderstanding' and better communication, I can clearly understand why neither of them were comfortable sharing their thoughts or feelings, but when it came right down to it, they did what they had to in order to be together, and that's what counts, isn't it?

As always, The WARDen/Jessica Bird has given us amazing people to care about and cheer for. My only regret is that there's no follow up book to *A Man in a Million* to cover Spike's sister Jaynie's story. It has the potential to be a real tearjerker. Maybe someday the WARDen will find the time to tie up the loose ends.

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## Auntee says

This was a nice little read by Jessica Bird, aka JR Ward (author of the Black Dagger Brotherhood series). While waiting anxiously for her next **BDB** book and **Fallen Angels** book, I decided to delve into her category romances written as Jessica Bird. This one wasn't bad. No way did it come close to anything she's written as Ward, but as a category romance it was pretty good. There were hints of her BDB writing style (some humor, some name-branding, a to-die-for hero) which made it an enjoyable read. The hero, French chef Michael "Spike" Moriarty was a real sweetheart. Supposedly he was this "bad boy", but except for his tats and his riding a motorcycle and something he did in his past (no spoiler here), I didn't feel that he was all

that bad. I thought he was an incredibly protective, sexy, sweet guy, who looked out for his family and those dear to him. Because he had been stung before by a prior relationship that went wrong when he revealed his secret tragic past, he figured no woman would want him as a permanent fixture in her life. I felt bad for him that he had these doubts about his self worth.

The object of his affection, athletic, competitive sailor and supermarket heiress Madeline "Mad" Maguire was a good match for Spike. Mad came from this dysfunctional family, complete with an overbearing brother and a sister who stole all her boyfriends. Each got in the way of her relationship with Spike, which got kind of frustrating. Mad was used to being put down by her family, but during the course of this story she gradually stood up to them more and more, which was a pleasure to see. Mad and Spike had their ups and downs where they doubted and they pulled back...then came together (hot love scenes...OMG on the motorcycle!) and then had a 'misunderstanding'. This got to be a little tough to take for me, and had me wishing that Spike would just go after what he wanted--I thought maybe he was just a bit too cautious. There were times that I wished that he was a bit *more alpha* and would just take Mad and tell her how much he needed her! Yes Spike, you *do* deserve Madeline, you *are* good enough for her, and you deserve to be happy. Now go get her!

Where Bird/Ward shines is with her male characters and their POVs. Add Spike to the list of her truly memorable characters. I imagine most readers will fall for this sweet hunk and will be rooting hard for his relationship with Madeline to work out.

On a side note, while reading about Spike and his physical characteristics (yellow eyes, tattoos, sexy as all get-out) and his penchant for biting (while kissing) and then licking the bite, *and* the mention of his mysterious father who was no longer part of the family, but who his mother loved dearly...and the fact that this story takes place in the NYC and upstate NY area...I dunno, made me think that Spike could be connected somehow to the BDB. I sure would like to see him turn up in Caldwell one day.:)

So fans of JR Ward, if you've read everything she's written and are dying for a *fix*, check out her category romances. While they aren't exactly epics and do sort of follow a formula, they're well-written and rich in characterization. This is book #4 in a series called **The Moorehouse Legacy**--I haven't read the first 3 in the series yet, but I wasn't lost or wondering what I missed from the other books (although now I plan to check them out!). For the delicious Spike, this one rates a solid 4 stars.

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### **Julianna says**

Reviewed for THC Reviews

*A Man in a Million* was another awesome read from Jessica Bird (aka J. R. Ward). This is one of her earlier contemporary romances and is now considered the final, honorary book of the Moorehouse Legacy series, although all of these contemporaries have ties to one another and basically take place in the same world. In this one, we have Spike and Madeline, who were both previously introduced in other books of the series. Spike is best friends with Nate Walker (*Beauty and the Black Sheep* aka *The Rebel*). The two of them both invested in and run White Caps B & B in the Adirondack Mountains. He's also good friends with Alex Moorehouse (*From the First* aka *The Renegade*). Madeline is friends with Alex, too, and was the navigator on his boat during his sailing days, something she still does with the rest of the remaining crew. However, throughout most of this story, Madeline keeps her feet firmly planted on land, as she takes on her jerk of an older half-brother who wants to remain executor of her shares in their family-owned chain of grocery stores. But Mad is ready to start taking responsibility for voting her own shares at board meetings, something that doesn't sit well with her brother who tries to keep that from happening. Throughout her attempts to exert her

independence, Spike is there for moral support and this pair share an explosive attraction that leads to plenty of passion but also some misunderstandings.

As a woman who is six feet tall and larger than many men, Madeline has found it difficult to date. Most men either find her intimidating, think she's a lesbian, or simply see her as one of the guys. That's a large part of why she's been able to enjoy a successful sailing career as a woman, working with an entirely male crew. However, her love life has languished. The only two guys she was ever serious about both cheated on her with her half-sister, so Mad is still a virgin at twenty-five. She has a troubled and dysfunctional relationship with her two half-siblings and rarely sees them, but her half-brother has invited her to the family estate for the long Memorial Day weekend. She knows he's only going to try to talk her out of taking control of her shares of the family business, but she knows she has to go to prove her worth. Despite her physical size, Mad has a somewhat timid personality, so she knows it won't be easy to stand up to her brother. That's why she asks her friend, Sean, to accompany her. When he can't, he suggests Spike go instead. Mad has been crazy attracted to Spike ever since she met him at Alex's house, but she doesn't think he would ever give her a second glance. She harbors a lot of insecurities, so it takes her a while to accept that Spike really is into her. But when she misconstrues a moment she witnesses between her half-sister and Spike, she thinks history is repeating itself. As someone who is rather shy and retiring myself, I related to Mad quite well, and admired her for how she finally managed to take control of her life. Normally I'm not a fan of misunderstandings, but given her history, I fully understood why she thought what she did when she saw Spike and Amelia together, and she does gradually come to realize that something isn't right and makes amends for her lack of trust in him.

Spike is a celebrated French-trained chef who has worked hard to make it in the restaurant business. With his spiky hair, tats, large size, and motorcycle, he has bad boy written all over him. He's definitely not from the world of the rich and famous, but given his line of work, he moves effortlessly among their ranks. His outgoing personality helps, along with his attitude of not really caring what anyone thinks of him. However, he has a few of his own hang-ups to deal with. He's haunted by the knowledge of something he did in the past, but he knows he would do it all over again to save his sister. Because of his checkered past, he avoids relationships, as the only woman he ever got serious enough with to reveal the truth to turned her back on him afterward. He's every bit as attracted to Madeline as she is to him, but he thinks he's no good for her. In fact, he initially turns down Sean's plea to accompany Madeline to her family weekend, but later changes his mind and proves to be great moral support. He thought he could walk away when the weekend was over, but he finds he can't bear the thought of not seeing her again. However, when Mad is the one who splits and her brother leads Spike to believe it's because he revealed Spike's past to her, he doesn't have much choice in the matter. I really liked Spike and found that he reminded me of the boys from the author's popular Black Dagger Brotherhood world. In fact, he bears a unique physical trait that leads me to believe he does in fact have some vampire DNA somewhere in his ancestry. I love how he was there to support Mad, but he doesn't simply take over like she's a damsel in distress either. He allows her to find her own independence, while simply backing her up. Despite his violent past, he has a kind, gentle side and he's devoted to his sister, as well as to Mad, once she let's him in.

There aren't quite as many character cross-overs in this book, but there are a few. Nate shows up in a couple of scenes when Spike returns to White Caps. Although we don't actually see them, the opening scene of the book takes place at Alex & Cass's engagement party. When we meet Spike's sister, Jaynie, toward the end of the story, I couldn't help thinking that she would make a great heroine, and I would have loved to see her get a story of her own. Since she got a scene or two from her own POV, I couldn't help thinking that perhaps Jessica Bird was originally intending to write a story for her, but perhaps with the author having since moved on to bigger and better things, it got left by the wayside. The most prominent secondary character, though, is Sean O'Banyon, who is good friends with both Spike and Mad, and engages in a little matchmaking between

the two. This high-powered businessman who came from the mean streets of Boston gets his own story in *The Billionaire Next Door* aka *The Billionaire*, which is supposed to be the first in The O'Banyon Brothers Trilogy, but since that series was never finished and Sean has such close ties to the Moorehouse books, I can't help but consider it a spin-off.

Overall, *A Man in a Million* was a lovely, easy read that I greatly enjoyed. Spike and Mad were both wonderful characters, who were very likable and relatable. They each come into the relationship with a certain amount of baggage that creates some conflict, but it wasn't too intense, and even when they're working to get past all of that, I could tell that they were destined for one another. With Mad's dysfunctional family dynamics, I saw a few shades of the author's more recent Bourbon Kings series with a little less angst. The story is well-written and nicely paced, and the love scenes have just the right amount of steam, while also expressing deep emotions. There was nothing I didn't like, so this was a perfect little read for me. Now I'm looking forward to finishing things off by reading Sean's book soon. *A Man in a Million* was originally published in the Silhouette Special Edition line, but has since been republished under the new title *The Rogue* as a stand-alone ebook.

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### **Rosa Campanile says**

Un romance classico, scritto come si deve e praticamente perfetto che mi ha lasciato con il cuore gonfio d'emozioni :3

Non è un caso se J.R. Ward è la mia autrice preferita!

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### **Buggy says**

Opening Line "*Spike Moriarty raced down Park Avenue, legs pumping, arms swinging, black leather jacket flapping behind him in the night air.*"

This was my very first Silhouette Romance read but because I'm such a huge fan of JR Ward and the Black Dagger Brotherhood I wanted to give her alter ego Jessica Bird a try. It's a good story and I loved the two main characters. Madeline is well written as a strong, take-charge kind of woman and Spike is just lovely as her troubled, tattooed love interest. I did find certain similarities between Spike and/or Zsadist/Phury and that definitely wasn't a bad thing.

A MAN IN A MILLION is relatively predictable, following the standard romance recipe. Spike and Madeline meet at a party each is attracted to the other but misread their intentions as Mad has trust issues and Spike had a troubled past he thinks would scare her away. A mutual friend sets the two up, sending Spike along as back up while Madeline confronts her brother Richard regarding her trust fund. The two manage to fall in love over the next few days at the family mansion before several misunderstandings tear them apart.

Whether writing as JR Ward or Jessica Bird the writing here is top notch. I really enjoyed the fact that Madeline was an Olympic athlete and Spike was a tattooed, Harley riding French chef. These were different character traits then I'd read before and made for an interesting story. The conflict between Mad and her brother was also well done as was the eventual forgiving found with her sister Amelia. The secondary characters are also well developed and the banter between Spike and his friend Sean is as I'd previously enjoyed between the 'Brotherhood'. At times I did find myself irritated by the several misunderstandings our

duo had to endure before they found their HEA but all in all this was still a worthwhile read.

If you like tattooed, Harley riding romantic leads with troubled pasts and strong females then this is a book that you will enjoy.

Here's the correct reading order for the series

(The Moorehouse Legacy)

1-Beauty And The Black Sheep

2-His comfort and Joy

3-From The First

4-A Man In A Million

(The O'Banyon Brothers)Bird/Ward has never completed series

1-The Billionaire Next Door

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### **Manisha says**

5 stars for the sexy "yellow eyed" Spike.

Yup!! Yellow eyes!!! Ring any bells ;-)

I have been waiting for Micheal Spike Moriarty's story since he first walked into Gray's book with those impossibly yellow eyes, and incredible sex appeal.

***"It was not possible for a man to be sexier. Otherwise the laws of physics would collapse and the earth would implode into a black hole."***

And on top of it he drove a Harley Davidson and wore Leather Pants, had Tats running from his lower waist to neck and had this habit of biting Madeline on neck while making love.

Need I say more!!!!

He is one human being who could actually come close those sexy as hell Black Dagger Brothers and I loved him every way possible. And you know what he had tortured past too. :-D

Then comes Madeline Maguire. She was actually the kind of woman our Spike could fall for and not recover from it. EVER!! She was funny, smart, and tall (as in 6 feet tall) and hence incredibly sexy.

***"Her no-nonsense warmth was a total turn-on and the rest of her was just as enticing. She had thick, dark hair that fell to the middle of her back. Her sapphire-blue eyes were bright enough to qualify as spotlights. And her smile had enough voltage to shock him right into an idiot-coma."***

I loved their every scene together. Starting from Sean's party to Spike's apartment. I loved it all.

Am loving Jessica Bird's work as much as I loved J R Ward's. Cant seem to get enough of her larger than life heroes with their troubled past and a great longing of love. Be it Nate Walker, Gray Bennett, Alex Moorehouse, Spike Moriarty or our very own Brothers. There's this quality about them that their charms works each and every time. You feel me??

Oh and Sean O'Banyon!!! What a guy he is..don't worry you will get the gist.

My favorite scene from the story:

***"Best omelet I've ever had," Sean said, wiping his mouth with a linen napkin. "You wanna get married?"***

*Spike shot him that half-mast grin. “What kind of ring will you get me?”*

*“Cartier?”*

*“Try Harry Winston. Four carats, minimum. And I want baguettes.”*

*“Hard bargain. Very hard bargain.”*

*“Have you had my leg of lamb yet?”*

*Sean’s fist hit the table. “Rotten scoundrel. Plying me with inducements.”*

*“I make the mint jelly myself.”*

*“Fine. But I want you in a dress. No bride of mine’s walking down the aisle in combat boots.”*

Loved it. Didn't you?? :-D

Can't wait for his story now.

Enjoy reading. Ciao!!!

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### **Leggere Romanticamente says**

Recensione sul blog --> [http://www.leggereromanticamente.com/...](http://www.leggereromanticamente.com/)

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### **Erica says**

Mmmmm. Spike Moriarty...my kind of man ;)

I am biased with these reviews. Absolutely LOVE anything written by J.R.Ward/Jessica Bird. Whatever she writes...I'm gonna read. This series has definitely lived up to my expectations!

Didn't give it a full 5 stars because of the predictability element. :/

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### **Linda says**

\*Shades of Zsadist.\*

It was hard not to compare Spike's story with The Brotherhood minus vampires and shape-shifters. With tats, crazy hair, secrets and his deep attraction/internal fight with a woman he wanted, this was the final story in the Farrell/Walker/Moorehouse sequence. Also, we get our first good glimpse of Sean O'Banyon before The Billionaire Next Door surfaced. I was reminded more than once that A Man in a Million (The Moorehouse Legacy, #4) was published one year after Lover Awakened and there were several commonalities.

I liked Spike; his appearance and past never bothered me. I enjoyed Madeline with both her family insecurities and strength as an athlete. It was nice to see Sean O'Banyon link these two individuals together.

The reason I couldn't give the romance more than three stars was the lack of communication. Clearly without Sean's help, Spike and Mad never would have followed through with their feelings for one another.

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### **Elle says**

I LOVE it when the heroine is tall. Why? Because it adds an interesting insecurity. Often it's a given that he is tall and protective, etc etc. But with a taller heroine men aren't always so tall, are more often intimidated, etc etc.

In this book her profession wasn't modeling but it was sports related (tall women seem to be models or sports people) and apparently she had the looks of a goddess - but she was not aware and even know that theme was sort of beaten to death in here (how un-confident can you be?) I like the fact that she didn't feel lady-like or womanly (because of her size and muscle) and that was something she had to over come.

This is your classic J.R Ward book, with it's ridiculous dialogue. Not as bad as BDB and the constancy of the weird talk, but it was still there.

I NEED TO KNOW - do people actually say "What's doing?"

Bottom line with this book. There is still the Ward-isms, the story is very cookie cutter romance (meet, fall for each other, problem, resolution), and the characters are very Ward-ish in that they can be incredibly frustrating. But J.R Ward and her writing as Jessica Bird is good story writing. The woman can put together a story you want to keep reading. This book was no exception to that.

Since she only comes out with one BDB and one Fallen angles book a year, I sort of hope she well go back to writing contemporary romance with a separate series or writing under the name jessica bird again. it's just nice to read the different type of work (less fantasy) from her.

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### **D.L. says**

Before JR Ward decided to write paranormals about ass-kicking vampires, she wrote as Jessica Bird and wrote contemporary romances. I think I decided to buy this book based on a review over on Dear Author. I can't quite remember. I already knew JR Ward had previously written under Jessica Bird and I was willing to buy one of her books based on a good review.

A Man in A Million was a pretty straight forward read compared to some of the books in the BDB series, which can have up to five different plot threads running at once. While I often love multi-layered plots, it was also nice to just focus on the hero and heroine. Spike is a French chef with a tragic past that he keeps hidden. After getting dumped by his ex over the issue, he believes no girl would want to stay with him if she knows the whole story. He keeps things casual so no one gets hurt. Pleasantly enough, he doesn't come off as a womanizer either, but a nice guy who cares about his friends and sister. Mad is a competitive sailor, and though she's fierce on the water, she is still insecure after always having being verbally put down by her overbearing father and now her step brother. A lot of the book revolves around her learning to stand up for herself, which Spike supports her through.

One of my absolute favorite aspects of this book was comparing it to the BDB. To begin, let's look at the character of Spike himself.

"Spike was wearing a black leather jacket, a black-button down and a pair of black slacks. His jet-black hair was sticking straight up off his head in all directions, but instead of looking unkept, the jagged peaks emphasized the hard lines of his beautiful face. His big body filled the doorway. The hall. The whole apartment as far as she was concerned."

Oh, God, his eyes... Those incredible, impossibly yellow eyes were still hidden under heavy lids and thick lashes. And the tattoos... On either side of his neck, two elegant, curving designs marked his skin. In his left ear, he had a thick, silver piercing."

Let's see, does Spike fit the prerequisites of the Brotherhood? Wearing all black, including leather- check. A very large, imposing body- check. Tattoos and piercings- check. The only thing missing is a random "h" inserted into his name and then he'd be in Lesser-slaying business. A major difference between the two books, though, was that "combat boots" was used in place of "shit kickers". For some reason I get the feeling that Silhouette wouldn't have gone for that...

I would have rated this book a 4 just on the fact that Spike could have been a Brother, but I enjoyed it overall as well. It was fairly unique, especially for a Silhouette, which I don't usually go out of my way to purchase.

First off, Spike and Mad know one another before the beginning of the book, and are already crazy about each other. So in theory it should be smooth sailing to a happy ending (yes pun intended since Mad is a sailor), especially since their mutual friend is playing matchmaker. But of course the book has the Big Misunderstanding. And not only does it have the Big Misunderstanding, but it has quite a few little misunderstandings along the way. It was pretty easy to forgive Spike and Mad though because, unlike most characters, they didn't let the misunderstandings simmer. They actually bothered to go talk to each other! It was nice to see two characters repeatedly working things out, especially since communication is so important in believing the relationship will succeed. Also, the sex scenes were pleasantly steamy. I will never look at a motorcycle the same way again.

One touchy subject is that throughout most of the book Mad does have an eating disorder, which is not outright stated or dealt with. It seems odd that this isn't mentioned since Spike's profession is a Chef, ya know, food related and all. But by the end of the book Mad works out in her internal monologues that she's going to start eating again, so in a way it is dealt with. It just seems an odd part of the plot since it wasn't explicitly linked to her self esteem as other incidents in the book were, but rather lumped with her obsession with her training schedule.

Overall, I'd recommend this to any J.R. Ward fans, or any Silhouette fans who are looking for something a little different. It was worth going a little out of my way to find online (which isn't my usual m.o. for book buying) and I'm also considering looking up some other Jessica Bird backlisted titles.

Review cross posted at The Romance Girl's Guide to Fiction

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♥?elody says

**Spike..oh baby!**

That cornball cover does the characters in this book NO justice. Absolutely none.

I really enjoyed this! I personally would have liked more 'meat' to the story but I enjoyed it nonetheless. I LOVED Spike. He was just truly delicious. He made the story for me. He stood out so much in this I really wish I got more just to read more about him. His appearance and how he interacts with others was really entralling. I got totally stuck on the description of the guy. Tattoo decked with an earring, jet black hair and oh yes....yellow eyes. Sound familiar?? ;P I mean seriously, a misunderstood broody hero with a secrete tender heart, tattoo across his whole back and neck and stunning yellow eyes? Hello yummy! It was Zsadist in human form. GIVE ME! :D

If you are a fan of J.R. Ward's BDB series, in particular Zsadist and Bella then you're in for a treat with this one. It's the CR light fluffy version of Ward's dark paranormal angsty vampire characters. The pairing in this struck me as very similar to Zsadist and Bella. Maddie had a lot of characteristic similarities to Bella as well. I couldn't help but fall for Spike and Madeline's story. This is obviously way more tamed and a PG-13 version of that (minus the hot steamy scene on Spike's bike ;P). I was impressed how she managed to not let one curse word slip into this. Ha. lol But it's still filled with classic WARDisms and nice little nods and winks to her BDB series.

Great story. Loved the characters, couldn't put this down. Only negative was I wish the story was a little longer. Like I said before plot-wise it was pretty light and could have been pushed more.

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