



Crushed

Lauren Layne

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Lauren Layne's latest novel about the healing power of redemption tells the story of a crush gone wickedly wrong, proving that what you want isn't always what you need.

Growing up in New York, Michael St. Claire never expected to spend his twenties wearing cowboy boots. But that was before he learned about his real father, a total stranger with a family in Cedar Grove, Texas. Once in the Lone Star State, Michael meets Kristin Bellamy, who is exquisitely refined and everything Michael always thought he wanted in a woman. The only problem is that Kristin is dating Michael's new half brother, Devon.

Kristin's mouthy, curvy sister Chloe has always been in love with Devon Patterson. So when Michael offers to help Chloe break up Devon and Kristin, Chloe agrees to a deal that seems too good to be true. Before long, Chloe finally gets her man, only to make a startling discovery: She no longer wants the guy she had to fight for—she wants the one who stood by her side.

After all he and Chloe have been through, Michael swears he's damaged goods. Can Chloe convince him that love is worth the risk?

Crushed Details

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From Reader Review Crushed for online ebook

**Patty Belongs To Kellan~Jesse~Lautner~Miller~Jack~Racer~Rafe~Liam~Prince
Nicholas~Hayes~Simon~Gianluca & Archer says**

*****4.5 STARS*****

(ARC Provided by Random House Publishing Group- Loveswept via Netgalley in Exchange for an Honest Review)

{BR with Dee and Mel}

"I don't think it's about who loves you first. It's about who loves you best. And that's me. I love you best. More than I love anyone. More than you've ever been loved." ~ Chloe

I'm a really huge fan of Lauren Layne's works. I've read just about all her books and am lucky in that I usually get approved on Netgalley for her ARCs. Sometimes her stories can be just "okay" but when she gets it right, she knocks it out of the park!!! Well she's definitely done that with "**CRUSHED**"!!!!

Usually I fall in love with the main male character in the story, and while that did happen here with Michael, I was also **HEAD OVER HEELS IN LOVE** with Chloe. She was just so unexpected. I never thought that Michael would fall for a woman like her. I mean he was madly in love with Olivia and she was walking perfection. Chloe was a **REAL** woman with curves, and crazy, curly, out of control hair. AND this girl had the most **FABULOUS** sense of humor ever. I lost count on how many times I laughed out loud reading this one. When I read the first book in this series, titled "**Isn't She Lovely**", I thought that was Ms Layne's masterpiece, but this one definitely rivals it.

Michael moves to Dallas after having his world turned upside down when he finds out the man he has called "Father", his entire life, actually is not his biological father. His mother had an affair with a man, who currently lives in Texas and has a wife and son. Michael ends up working as a tennis instructor and personal trainer at the country club that his real father is a member of. He comes up with a plan to get close to the Bellamy sisters, who have close relationships with his half brother, Devon.

He sets his sights on the pretty sister, Kristin, but soon meets the delightful and slightly chubby Chloe. He quickly deduces that Chloe has a major crush on Devon, who happens to be dating her sister. Michael offers to help Chloe get her man. During their time spent together, both start to realize they are developing feelings

for each other. I really loved that Michael was attracted to Chloe with all her curves and wild hair. When she starts losing weight and tries to change her hair to look more like her sister's, Michael is the first to declare that he prefers her normal look and that she shouldn't change a thing, except for maybe her wardrobe. Since she was always wearing really bulky clothes in order to hide her body.

I was going insane just waiting for these two to get together. Michael was the stubborn one who kept pushing Chloe away. He believed that she was crazy in love with Devon and that he was just her second choice. He was already in a situation like that and it didn't end well for him, so Michael is more than a bit gun shy of putting himself out there again.

Eventually, and I mean you have to wait until you get almost 75% through the story, they finally give in to their physical attraction to each other and I'd give the scene a PG-13 rating. The author normally doesn't get too descriptive with her sexy time scenes, but I think it had just enough spice.

My only issue was with Michael being so stubborn and sometimes stupid, towards the end of the story. I wish that he had realized sooner that Chloe was worth the risk. But I guess that's the angst part of the story that we usually need in a good romance.

I loved how it all comes together in the end. It had to in order for Michael to truly heal from his past. I kind of wish the epilogue gave us a deeper look into Chloe and Michael's future, but it was still a sweet ending.

MELISSA *Mel Reader* says

4.5 Yummy Beefcake Stars!
(ARC provided by Netgalley)
(BR with Patty & Dee)
<http://www.amazon.com/Crushed-Redempt...>

Michael St. Claire aka Beefcake is a 24 yr. old guy who grew up on the Upper East Side of New York. Six months ago he learned his whole life is a lie, and that his dad isn't really his dad at all. He leaves Manhattan and walks away without anything but his car. He wants a fresh start & to get some answers about his real father, so he heads to Cedar Grove, Texas.

Michael gets a job at the Cambridge Country Club as a tennis pro & personal trainer in hopes of crossing

paths with his half brother or his girlfriend. He thinks they can possibly lead him to his father. Michael is also trying to escape his memories of Olivia, the only girl he's truly ever wanted or loved. He's decided love isn't for him anymore, but he can still enjoy women, and his new brother's girlfriend Kristen Bellamy is just his type. It also doesn't hurt he can use her to get to his brother Devon.

While Michael is giving Kristen tennis lessons, her sister Chloe begins tagging along to watch. She's loud, and not little miss perfect like her sister. Chloe is real. She speaks her mind, and is hilarious. Michael quickly realizes the way she looks longingly at his brother who is also her sister Kristen's boyfriend. He figures if they can break them up, then he can have Kristen & Chloe can have Devon, and maybe he can also stick it to his brother in the process. They decide to work together, and Michael begins training Chloe, & helping her perfect her image.

-Michael makes no secret of the fact that he's checking me out as he moves toward me. I narrow my eyes at him, and he grins.

-"You are such a guy."

-"I am. You shouldn't forget it."

Michael & Chloe spend time together, & they actually become great friends. At the same time, Michael is starting to realize he is attracted to the quirky, curvy, Chloe. He starts to lose focus on their plan, and realizes he just may want Chloe for himself. As he's around her, he grows to care for her, & sees just how shallow & superficial her sister is. Chloe is genuine & just a great girl. She's sweet & funny & what you see is what you get.

-Michael kisses me.

-It's a man-to-woman I want you kind of kiss.

-His mouth tastes familiar. And the way we kiss is familiar, too. Like we've done it a hundred times, as though we belong here. Belong to each other.

All of the sudden Michael is feeling very possessive of Chloe & at the same time other guys are all noticing her as well. He has fallen for her, but doesn't quite know what to do about it. We get some angst as these two try to deal with and admit their feelings for one another.

I thought this was such a cute, sexy story. I would highly recommend this one! As usual Lauren Layne writes

books I just adore! :D

Beverly says

This series and characters keep getting better and better. When I finished this one I was really debating on which couple is my favorite and so far I am at a loss. However, I can say without a doubt Chloe is my favorite heroine.

Chloe Bellamy is different. And I mean that in an I could strangle her way, not I'm intrigued.

If you have been following the series Chloe is a new character and we meet her when Michael moves to Texas to get more information regarding his dad. Michael has given up his family's money and is in Texas on his own. In need of a job he begins working at the local Country Club. He is working as a personal trainer and tennis pro, that's how Chloe and Michael meet.

This isn't your typical boy meets girl and they fall in love story. No, Michael is actually giving lesson's to Chloe's beautiful sister, Kristin, and pursing her. See Chloe isn't your typical country club girl, she is a little overweight, refuses concede to other's expectations and is outspoken.

As I read all this my heart was breaking for my crazy, *say it like it is* heroine. But we quickly learn that Chloe is actually interested in Devon, Kristin's boyfriend. See how the plot thickens and this is just the beginning. Chloe and Michael both have something the other wants. Chloe wants to get healthy and for Devon to finally see her as more than his girlfriends nerdy sister. Michael needs to get closer to Devon's family. They decide to work together to accomplish their goals.

It isn't a surprise that real feelings begin developing between Chloe and Michael, but the way things play out is. I love how the story progressed and the characters continue to grow and develop. Most importantly I love the message of this story. This isn't a story about an ugly duckling turning into a swan it's a story about loving yourself for who you are.

She laughs again, and it's genuine and bold, and suddenly it hits me: Chloe Bellamy deserves better. She deserves better than what I got.

I found Lauren Layne because one of my great friends is a HUGE fan. The more I read of Lauren's work the more I love her, too. I had my doubts and fears about this one. Mainly because I loved Chloe so much I knew

I would be more sensitive to her hardships, but in the end it was perfect! My only complaint and it's a small one I wanted more couple time, but you all know I am greedy when it comes to my favorites.

I highly recommend this story and series if you haven't started it. I have loved them, but Chloe made this story extra special.

ARC kindly provided in exchange for an honest review.

Jo ★The Book Sloth★ says

4,25 I Wanna Be Besties With Chloe Stars

Michael never expected to lose in short time his best friend, the girl he was in love with and his family. Now, the once golden boy of Manhattan is working his ass off at Cedar Grove, Texas, to make enough money to pay for a shitty apartment and a shitty new life, hoping he will get to meet his real father.

Enter the Bellamy sister. One is every guy's wet dream and her name is Kristin, the other one is not exactly what fashion magazines would call beautiful and her name is Chloe. One of them is a bitch, the other one is one of the most interesting people one could ever meet. One of them is dating his half-brother, Devon, the other one has been in love with him since she was a kid. So Michael makes Chloe a deal, he will help her get Devon from Kristin, but his reasons aren't exactly what he lets Chloe believe...

You know how sometimes you tell yourself, "Self, you will not like this character. He doesn't deserve it.", but then you totally go against your own advice and like him anyway? That's what happened with Michael for me. He was an ass until about 60% in the book and I never really understood why he wanted to steal Kristin from Devon, but he was also kind of sweet sometimes and nice to Chloe, even if he did mess things up... Oh well, I'll just say it. He was a jerk and jerks are my thing!

Chloe on the other hand was all kinds of awesome. I liked how she made fun of herself and how even though she felt the pressure of her weight she didn't let it drag her down. Did she have insecure moments? Yeap, and having that bitch Kristin for a sister didn't help at all. But she always got over it and when the time came she had the motivation to change what she didn't like in herself. I also liked how kind she was and the fact that the author gave us examples of her kindness. How she would always talk to people that other people ignore, like old ladies or the odd guy at a bar, or how at holidays, she would bring home people who were lonely and sad. And her quirky sense of humor helped a lot too.

There were a couple things I didn't like about the book but for the love of me, I can't remember anything right now. LL's writing was as always great and spell-binding, the characters had depth and I had a couple of "I wanna cry for your trouble" moments. Generally another success for the author. I'm so glad I requested this book!

PS. I can't wait to see who the next character will be.

Hear me fangirling? It's because I have my ARC!!!

Catarina says

4 "Ugly Duckling" Stars.

Michael did some mistakes on the past and now he's trying to let go. He switches his charmed life in NY for cowboy boots in the country. There he meets Chloe, the sweet girl that is often underestimated because she's a little chubby. Chloe is in love with his best-friend since forever, the same who is currently dating her sister. And her sister recently caught Michael's attention so they decide to make a deal: pretend to date to catch their attention. But as their friendship grows other feelings starts to appear, but how can one guy that doesn't believe who will ever be chosen first and a girl who doesn't believe she'll ever be chosen at all, let go of their fears and be happy together?

As ever, this was a very well written and heartwarming story that will leave you wanting for more. It was romantic, sweet and with some sexy moments. It was (too) slow in the beginning, but once it picked up it was a great book. If you like NA, you should really try this series. They are refreshing and get away from the traditional clichés, which is great. And this book had an epilogue! If you know me you know that my only bone with Lauren Layne is the fact that she rarely writes epilogues and I'm a sucker for them. And although this epilogue was small, if it symbolizes the beginning of an epilogue era for Lauren, I'll be a very happy girl!

Rating: 4 Ugly

Characters Development: The amount of "push & pull" was too much for me in the beginning, which meant that both of the MC's annoyed me at the beginning. As the story progressed I ended up really liking them both. They wised-up, especially Chloe. Kristen, her sister, was a bitch. Devon was a clueless idiot. I loved how all of characters from the three books got together in the end, definitely best part of the book.

Steam: Some heated moments.

Sensible Subjects: (view spoiler)

Love Triangle: (view spoiler)

Cheating: (view spoiler)

HEA: (view spoiler)

Brandi says

Crushed is Michael St. Claire and Chloe Bellamy's story. Michael is broody and a little lost, while Chloe is the witty, chubby girl who has lived most of her life in her gorgeous sister, Kristen's shadow.

'Fat yet clever girl patiently waits for the guy of her dreams to realize that he'd rather have a lifetime of laughter and conversation than a lifetime of great sex with a who doesn't appreciate him.'

Michael is in Texas for one reason, and while trying how to handle the secrets he recently discovered, he and Chloe become friends. He is interested in Kristen and Chloe is crushing on her sisters boyfriend, Devon. Friendship grows into something a little more complicated, and Michael and Chloe struggle with how to deal with their feelings.

These two were tons of fun, witty banter and great sexual tension filled the pages. I really enjoyed this cute read.

***"Duckling...swan...who cares.
With the right guy, it's all happily ever after"***

ARC kindly provided by Netgalley in return for an honest review

Geri Reads says

4.5 stars!

Lauren Layne is fast becoming an auto-buy author for me. This is the second book from her that I've loved.

After Michael St. Claire learned of the devastating truth about his parentage, he runs to Dallas to find his father. For those who have read the previous books in the series, you all know about Michael's feelings for Olivia and the eventual fallout he had, not only with Olivia but with Ethan as well.

Not only that, he just found out a monumental family secret that had him questioning his identity. It upended his life. Everything he knew about himself were nothing but lies. In other words, Michael's life was a mess.

Chloe Bellamy is the opposite of everything Michael wants in a woman. She's mouthy, extroverted and unrefined unlike her sister, Kristin, who was more of Micheal's type. Chloe has been in love with her sister's boyfriend for years even though he never really noticed her.

When Micheal found out about Chloe's feelings for his half-brother, he offered to help. His motives were not

pure though. Aside from wanting Kristin, he also wants to get to know his biological father. But the more time Chloe and Michael spend together, the more they realize how much alike they are, how much they need each other and how much they are attracted to each other.

Their progression from enemies to friends and then to lovers was simply delightful to read. Their banter, their camaraderie that later on became little flirtations had me turning the pages, and I didn't stop until I reached the end. This is the kind of book you can read in one sitting. Once I started I couldn't put it in. I was thoroughly engaged.

I loved the chemistry between Chloe and Michael. And despite Michael's issues and hang-ups, I truly saw him fall for Chloe. I understood why he didn't aggressively pursued her. He's been there and done that and got burned. All he knew was Chloe was hell bent on getting Devon, and he didn't want a repeat of his relationship with Ethan and Olivia.

Little did he know that Chloe was also falling fast for him. I loved Chloe. She's feisty, funny and real. You can relate with her insecurities because she wasn't burdened by it. It's there and she has it but she knows how to deal with it.

The only reason this one didn't get a five was the ending disappointed me a bit. It's good. It's believable but instead of (view spoiler) So that took points off of my rating a bit. But it's a small thing and the epilogue was still sweet.

So definitely, I'll recommend this one. The great writing, wonderful characters and an engaging storyline made this a winner for me.

ARC provided by the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Jeanne says

Loved this! So cute, my favorite of the series:)

This has been such a great series, and imo, each book has been better than the last. I love everything about Lauren Layne's writing! I wish there were more heroines like Chloe. She was funny, real, and sarcastic. At the same time, she was so genuine and really cares about people. She was exactly what Micheal needed! I loved the friends to lovers slow build, it's my favorite kind of romance.

I know this seems like a shallow thing to point out, but I also bond with Chloe over the hair struggle. I get teased about my messy bun or ponytail habits, but let me tell ya, you don't spend an hour with two straightening tools to go to the grocery store. I think I spend more money on my hair than books, and that's saying something, Lol.

Sure, there were a couple of times I wanted to smack Michael, but overall, I ended up really liking him too. I mostly appreciated the growth in his character as the book went along. I think it's kind of cool that in this book and well as the last one, she took a character I didn't think I could possibly like and changed my mind about them. In some ways this was more of a 4 star read, but because Chloe was such an unusually awesome heroine and I think L.L's storybook theme is clever, I rounded to 5. I highly recommend any of her books, she is truly one of my favorite authors, I've never been disappointed!

*arc provided by Netgalley, thank you!

[~Ami~]♥Sexy Dexy♥ says

4 stars

Enjoyed this! Great characters, fun banter, no insta love. The main characters frustrated me a little but it was tolerable.

Michael wasn't as moody as Paul (from the previous book) which made him more likeable but IMO he goes on my Not-Enough-Grovelling-List alongside Ansel (@Jeanne yes he is still there! Lol)

I especially loved the last 10% of the book. A sweet romantic quick read.

P.S. I Love Stephanie

ARC provided by NetGalley

J *deep in the heart of Texas* says

4 Stars!

I'm not going to lie, I was really surprised I liked this one. Especially because it had almost ZERO sex. ZERO people!

Not to mention it took the hero and heroine the whole book to get together.

The story reminded me a lot of The Do Over by MK Schiller. Two sisters, one's curvy and one is a stick. Curvy is in love with Stick's boyfriend. Enter Michael who wants Stick, but not for the reasons you might think. Michael is going to help Curvy get her man which will only benefit Michael.

Anyone want to guess what happens? Anyone?

Curvy, aka Chloe, was a fantastic heroine! Really! She was so sarcastic and self-deprecating. And just plain awesome! I wanted to hug her and at the same time I wanted to be her best friend.

With a plot like this a lot of things could have gone wrong, but gah for the most part they were great. I was sucked right in from the get-go, curious to see how everything would all play out.

Yeah...Stick, aka Kristen is a total bitch!

Not a shocker!

And yeah, I've read this story-line before.....but this one was fun. It made me laugh, a lot. And it gave me the feels, which is hard to do.

BUT...yep there's a but. I didn't love the end. I didn't like (view spoiler)

And Michael was just an idiot.

So despite the lack of sex and the not so stellar ending, I would still totally recommend this one!

ARC kindly provided by NG in exchange for an honest review

Lana ✩Dirty Girl Romance✩ says

4.5 Stars

I don't think it's about who loves you first. It's about who loves you best."

There's a reason that Lauren Layne has become one of my favorite New Adult authors. There's just something about her writing and her characters that never fails to reel me in and keep me glued to the pages. It also never fails to give me that warm and fuzzy feelings right in my tummy that I've come to adore about New Adult. There's no insta anything and her characters are far from perfect and watching that progress and develop through the story is the best feeling in the world. I have to admit that I wasn't too keen on Michael after first meeting him in Isn't She Lovely. But then right around Broken that changed. My heart hurt for him and I couldn't wait for the guy that fell in love with his best friend's girlfriend only to be devastatingly rejected by her in the end to get his HEA.

Michael's world changed forever right around the time his heart was shattered into a million pieces. First he

gets rejected by the girl he's been in love with for years. A girl that just so happened to be his best friend's girlfriend at that he cheated with. So in the span of one kiss, he lost the girl AND his best friend. Then his world gets rocked when he finds out that his whole life has been a lie and his father isn't his father. In the hopes to get to know the man that is his true father, he moves to Texas, but he's no longer the boy that he was. He's broody, he's disenchanted and jaded. He no longer believes in love, but working as a tennis pro for the rich and the bored, he has no problem being the boy toy to the spoiled housewives. But he has ulterior motives to working there. He has his eye on a girl that happens to be his half-brother's girlfriend. A half-brother that has no idea he exists. And while Michael has his eye on Kristin, the gorgeous and spoiled rich girl, her frumpy sister is in love with Devon.

***On a good day I'm curvy. On a bad one, I'm plump.
Most of the days are bad ones.***

Chloe is honestly what truly made this book for me. Her ability to laugh at herself and this lighthearted presence she had to her was a breath of fresh air. She's so fun and quirky and just this girl next door that could be anyone's best friend. Being the frumpy sister to the perfect skinny one is no easy feat. It's also twice as hard being in love with her boyfriend for as long as she remembers. But Chloe knows she has no chance. So when Michael offers her a chance to make Devon "notice" her, she may be hesitant at first, but she takes it. What ensues is an unwilling friendship that slowly begins to turn into much more.

***Michael might be sick of being "second choice." But the rejected-woman part of me?
SHE'S tired of being the platonic sidekick.***

These two were polar opposites but yet made perfect sense together. And the banter between them? Absolute perfection.

***So, what's the problem?" he asks.
"I just...it's never like it is in the movies."
Michael makes a strangled noise and turns toward my nightstand, opening a drawer.
"What are you doing?" I ask.
"Looking for a gun," he mutters, before shutting it again. "Are you fucking kidding me?
You're one of those girls waiting for the movie kiss?"
I scrunch my nose at his disbelieving face. "They do exist."***

But then somewhere between the personal training and just hanging out together, their plans shift and it begins to turn into something much more.

With Chloe, it's easy to forget that I'm nobody. Because she makes me feel like somebody.

I loved the slow burn element to the story. It's truly brilliant when the reader discovers things right along with the characters. Chloe and Michael didn't lust for each other at first sight, and that was evident. But somewhere along the way their feelings shift, and you get to experience that with them.

It was perfection.

It's not often that this self proclaimed smut slut enjoyed a story that basically has zero sex this much. But to

be honest, anything more would have been plain filler. The one and only scene is filled with so much feeling that it's satisfying all on its own. Immensely so.

Did I also happen to mention the fantastic banter?

"...at the lesson, the other day, she was...forward."

"FORWARD? I swear to God, Beefcake, every now and then you slip in a word that makes me think you're a nineteenth-century butler."

"Yeah? You like? What if I slip a British accent in there?"

"Don't you dare. I'll swoon. I mean it."

I adored this book. My only quibble was the somewhat cheesy-ish reunion at the very end, but then at the same time I was hoping for one, so I can't complain much.

If you're a fan of New Adult that has a witty heroine, a broody hero, a slow burn romance and incredible writing, this book is simply a must read!

ARC courtesy of publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

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♥ Jx PinkLady Reviews ♥ says

4.5 ROMANTIC & SWEET Stars

It's Live! * Amazon US * Amazon UK *

I very much enjoyed this New Adult friends to lovers story richly themed in the true beauty lying within our souls. It gave me the full on sweet book butterflies and here's my reasons why....

Michael St. Claire and his sexilicious six pack are metaphorically damaged by his heartbreak past so he goes to Texas for the summer in search of redemption. Michael has an ulterior plan, a plan to use people to get to someone who doesn't even know he exists. What he doesn't figure in is a girl named Chloe, a girl he slowly becomes friends with, the way their relationship develops throughout is utterly enchanting.

Curvaceous Chloe is smart and funny and bubbly and beautiful. I LOVE her quirkiness and individuality. She lacks a little confidence from being made to feel second best to her sister but this doesn't hold her back from showcasing her fierce determination, a quality that helps in her attempt at becoming a healthier person whilst under the training wing of Michael. Her goal is to seek the attention of her forever-crush, Devon and make him see that she's the one for him.

Michael sees something in Chloe, she's not the girl he first sets his sights on but their friendship develops

nevertheless and they devise a mutually beneficial plan..... What if what you wish for isn't actually what you really need? *How will it all work out?*

I love the lighthearted comedy value and self deprecating humour in the writing. It's totally unexpected and driven throughout much of the dialogue and thoughts of the protagonists. In contrast to this, some of the situations that they naturally become entwined in are downright heart melting.

I swooned and smiled and laughed. Chloe's personality is in every ounce of the writing; she has an immensely strong identity throughout the prose. The family issues concerning Michael are emotional and touched my heart in the way it evolved. My only wish is that the author didn't skip along weeks. I understand this moves time forward and allows for story development but on a couple of occasions I wanted to read about some of that missing time. Sometimes sweet stories can be a little twee for my personal tastes and there are a couple of pushing my twee-borderline moments, if I'm honest, but on the whole it didn't detract from the loveliness of this story.

Crushed is rich in history, layered with emotion and teamed with angst levels that are set to perfection for the mood of this piece. I felt anticipation and so looked forward to the climax and result of this story as I was reading the final chapters.

Note: **Crushed is a Standalone story** narrated in first person and alternates between Michael and Chloe's perspective with each passing chapter. The hero, Michael St. Claire, is a secondary character from the first novel in this series, *Broken Redemption*, and although this story has an impact on *CRUSHED* it's not necessary to have read it in order to enjoy the *Crushed* reading experience.

I highly recommend to all readers of sweet loving and ROMANTIC love stories.

Complimentary copy received from the publishers, via NetGalley, for my honest review thoughts

♥Sharon♥ says

I know I have said this many times I just adore this author! Lauren Layne has become my go to author when I need a fun, sweet, steamy with a bit of angst read. Her books always leave me with a stupid grin on my face.♥

In *Crushed* we get Michael St. Claire and Chloe Bellamy's story.

Michael has become a bitter man. Piece by piece his life has fallen apart. He lost the only girl he has ever wanted and his best friend at his own doing. But that isn't the only thing that crushed him. When he learns of a sordid family secret, there really isn't anything left for him to care about. He is angry and heads down the "I really don't give a shit about anything" path.

Michael ~ He had that dreamy face and sexy body that any woman would fall for. But beneath all that

goodness was a guy that could be a real arse. It was going to take a special woman to find the goodness in him that is buried.

Chloe ~ I instantly fell in love with her. She was funny and sarcastic and oh so real. She saw herself in a simple light which made her beautiful on the inside and out.

On the outside looking in, Michael and Chloe didn't belong in the same circle. You wouldn't put them together as a couple but Michael's reasons for "befriending" Chloe are not that pure. But no matter how hard he tries to keep Chloe in a certain light she manages to get under his skin.

Michael's ulterior motive when it comes to Chloe involves her oh so bitchy sister Kristen and her boyfriend Devon. Ruining their relationship is just a means to one end. It was a way to get to the one person that has brought him to Cedar Grove.

But Chloe's intentions are not all that clear either. So much changes for her and she becomes more confused when she begins to realize who she wants to give her heart to. How much damage will this cat and mouse game cost Michael and Chloe?

Overall this one was an enjoyable read even with a bit of quirkiness at the end. The epilogue was sweet too!

I'd definitely recommend this one to anyone that love Lauren Layne. I'd also highly recommend her Sex, Love & Stiletto's series too!!

ARC generously provided by the publisher via Netgalley.

Lisa Jayne says

FIVE CRUSHING ON YOU STARS

"Is love worth the risk?"

From the hilariously relatable heroine to the gloriously romantic ending this book hit the jackpot in every single way for my reading tastes. When a book makes your heart thump ridiculously fast and your toes curl in delight then you know with every certainty that you have read a book that's worth talking about. Lauren Layne is my number one contemporary author she has the Midas touch on all she puts her hand to and I don't mind one bit that I gush and get a little ridiculous over my love for everything about this gorgeous authors

writing. 'Crushed' is yet another book that I can add to my love you forever and ever shelf and it's only given itself as proof that I'll never be getting over my own Lauren Layne girl crush.

What's it all about?

Chloe has been living under the shadow of her perfect sister for as long as she can remember. The girl has it all perfect hair, fabulous body and most of all the boyfriend that Chloe has wanted since the first time she met him. Under no illusions that she will ever be able to catch the one she loves Chloe has unhappily resigned herself to the friend zone corner. But friendship and love can creep up unawares and now she has a new distraction in her life the handsome but annoying Michael St Clair. But secrets and heartbreak are just around the corner and Chloe and Michael have to get over what's holding them back and realise that love can appear when you least expect. 'Crushed' is a fabulous tale of unrequited, hilariously perfect love.

What did I love?

I've asked myself a slightly ridiculous question here (as I loved just about everything) but just so I can put some reviewing thoughts together I'll answer. Without question I cherished every little thing about this contemporary novel. The whole kit and caboodle screamed 'love me Lisa' and I can admit that I was thoroughly lost in the book and the story of Chloe and Michael. 'Crushed' had all the elements that I love about reading romance bundled into one book. You want the ugly duckling theme? this book has got it. You love a friends to lovers story? it's here. You can never resist a perfect happy ending? then you will be more than gratified. Yet again in perfect Lauren Layne style this author has wow'd me with her gorgeous story telling and provided the perfect book to escape with, what more can a romance addict ask for? You won't find a sweeter romance story in my opinion and predictably so I was sold lock, stock and barrel by this heart squeeze of a novel.

Final thoughts ...

There was zero I can tell you about this book that I didn't love, adore and want to gush about with my book friends. I've read all there is to read from this author so far and I can guarantee I won't be missing any future releases from my favourite. 'Crushed' is a hilariously, wonderful tale of finding love when you least expected it and it whole heartedly deserves to be loved and read by all romance fans. A huge five star read for me, bring on the next release. Enjoy ... Kisses.

ARC generously provided by Random House publishing via netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Jennifer Kyle says

"Nobody ever falls in love with me."

Michael St. Clair was the third wheel from book one that fell hard for Olivia Middleton and broke up his friendship with Ethan Price. In book two, he went the step further when Paul lead him to believe that Olivia

texted him, he flew all the way to Maine just to get shot down and crushed yet again. His world gets further rocked when his paternity is revealed and so he is in Texas stalking his biological father while working at a posh country club.

Michael has his mark all set on Kristin Bellamy, the pretty and perfect Olivia lookalike who is dating his half-brother, Devon. What Michael doesn't count on was Chloe Bellamy, Kristin's sister who has had a crush on Devon for over eight years.

Chloe and Michael's banter was fantastic. Chloe was a wonderful heroine (loved that bikini) and although Michael offers to be her personal trainer to get her healthy, she's the one that shows him a thing or two.

”With Chloe, it’s easy to forget that I’m nobody. Because she makes me feel like somebody.”

Overall this was a fun read that had a great ending and endearing heroine!

”...I don’t think it’s about who loves you first. It’s about who loves you best. And that’s me.”

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