



## Double Bound

*Nick Nolan*

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Nick Nolan's *Double Bound* reunites us with many of the characters introduced in his delightful *Strings Attached*: Jeremy, now in a committed relationship with fun-loving, hotheaded Carlo; Arthur, Jeremy's protector, confidant, and mentor; and Katharine, Jeremy's wealthy benefactress, still hiding a slew of secrets and hidden agendas. This sequel displays the same wit, verve, style, and sense of adventure that were so engaging and fresh in *Strings Attached*. And where *Strings Attached* playfully alluded to Pinocchio, *Double Bound* has fun with the Jack and the Beanstalk fable.

Just as *Strings Attached* was Jeremy's story, *Double Bound* is Arthur's, exploring his troubled relationship with disapproving parents and his precarious years as a troubled Marine. However, there's an added element this time out—the stakes are higher, the repercussions more dire, and the choices harder and more consequential. There is a darker feel to this novel, which not only adds depth to the characters but highlights Mr. Nolan's growth and confidence as a storyteller. We've moved beyond high school concerns into real-world choices, where outcomes are not always tied up in neat "happily ever after" packages.

## Double Bound Details

Date : Published May 25th 2010 by Lake Union Publishing (first published October 22nd 2008)

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Author : Nick Nolan

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## From Reader Review Double Bound for online ebook

### Nikyta \*Miss Forgetful\* says

I'm going to be completely honest here and say that this book was *really* good. I absolutely loved Arthur. Jeremy, not so much. Sure, I liked him but he just got annoying at times that I just wanted to smack him.  
\*sigh\*

I liked the Brazil setting and the suspense when it came to everyone being kidnapped. Hated the aunt with a passion but you know what? All these elements made a great book and the reason I'm not rating this higher is because of two things.

1. At times, I was annoyed and frustrated with the constant poem-like writing in places. Actually, I don't even know if it would be considered poem-like writing but, in some places, it was just an exaggeration of a detail. For example, (Chris gave me this one ;-)): "...Arthur moaned, as he felt himself brim with tears that were not tears, but rather the inhaled gasping of his soul that sometimes erupted during pieces by Handel or Copeland, whose fiercely beautiful passages transposed into song moments like these." Really? The writing was good but in some places like that one, it's just too much. Also, sometimes you just couldn't tell who the author was referring to, it was just He this and He that so you couldn't tell who the pov was talking about. Arthur, Jeremy, Carlo, Babalu, or even Fabiano?

2. The second reason, and this is a big one because before this I was at a 4.5, is it's not a HEA. Okay, some might consider it one because it does state that Arthur is with a 'lover' but who that 'lover' is? I have no freaking clue. This is where evasive writing comes in because there's no indication who that lover is. It could be Jeremy or it could have been the guy he just met while walking his dog. I was disappointed with this because throughout the whole book I was under the impression Arthur and Jeremy were going to end up together and I loved that because I love May-December relationships but in the end, Arthur tells Jeremy they wouldn't work and to go out, live his life and find someone his own age. \*shakes head\*

After all that, the max I can give this book is a 3.5 rating because I did really like the book. It kept my attention after you get past the first few chapters. I liked how we got a glimpse of Arthur's life before he came to work for Jeremy and Aunt Katherine. I just can't give it more than that because I was sorely disappointed with the unsatisfied ending. As it is, if there is a third, I'm not even sure I'd read it because I've been so unsatisfied with the endings of the books in this series so far.

But, if you don't mind a pseudo-HEA and have no problems with the on and off writing style, you'll like this book because it does have a good plot, at least in my opinion. :-\

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### RomanceLoverMA says

Second in this series  
this is such an amazing listen. like a telenovela  
Can't wait for the third , and sadly , last installment

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## **Diane says**

This is the second book I've read by Nick Nolan. I'm reading the books in order, as suggested, and they're amazing. The tension between adversaries runs throughout the book and the attraction between Jeremy and Arthur is so sweet and tender...and ultimately painful.

The events set in South America and so unbelievable, and yet, you find yourself drawn into a plot that you can definitely see taking place.

Just when you find something in Aunt Katherine to admire, she shows flaws that seriously undermine her worth as a human being! Jeremy just can't seem to catch a break when it comes to family and love!

I'm off to read the third book, 'Wide Asleep', and have high hopes for the drama to continue, and hopefully a HEA!

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## **Bubbles Huntly Honest & Direct Opinions says**

Not a very happy story but well written and entertaining

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## **Marc | Rainbow Gold Reviews says**

I loved book one, but it took me a while to get to the second book. I'm glad I finally continued this series.

In the beginning I was confused. While I hadn't 'visited' the characters in a while, I didn't know any of the characters in the Prologue and the setting was foreign. Probably a good thing that I didn't 'know' them and cared for them as characters yet, because even with strangers the events that take place were brutal and upsetting. It kind of sets the stakes very high and shows readers what monsters Fabio and his helper are and what danger awaits for the characters we have closed into our hearts.

Before continuing where we left off with book one, we first learn more about Arthur - one of my very favorite characters and his POV becomes much more important. We get to see more of Jeremy and Carlo AND more of Jeremy and Arthur, we get betrayal, murder, suspense, action, heartbreak and love. It's like a new fantastic season of your favorite TV show with truly evil characters, characters you love to hate and characters you love, even though they are not perfect and not all their decisions are really smart and proper.

In the end we are left with a bittersweet ending. It seems happy, but our heroes are still paired-off with the wrong people. It's like the season finale with a cliff hanger, but you know things are still unfinished and you can't wait to see what is next and hope for things to work out. Onto book 3!!!

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## Wicked says

\*\*\*Edited after reading book 3. Although I stand by my thoughts while reading book 2 and those immediately afterward, after completing book 3, the series overall was engaging and this book served a purpose that I didn't understand until the entire series was read. I came to the understanding that as a standalone, or even stopping after this book would do a disservice to the series as a whole and that these books should truly be all read (maybe even back to back) to be understood and appreciated.\*\*\*

This book made me rage for so many reasons I'm not sure that I even remember them all so I'll just highlight some of the reasons in a semi coherent manner. The only reason I finished it is because I'm vested in the characters (my own personality flaw that I can't just walk away when I'm vested. I'm going to get over that one of these days). The two stars were earned simply because the writer created the characters well enough to capture me and that alone was worth them.

There will potentially be spoilers ahead. Lots of them and for both this book and maybe book 1 as well.

I really liked Arthur in the first book even if I wasn't crazy about book one, I liked the characters enough to continue. This was supposed to be Arthur's book and yet it starts out putting me in the head of a boy in the process of being murdered. Yes it had to do with the main plot of the book but I didn't feel it necessary to be in his head at the time.

This was loosely based on Jack and the Beanstalk according to the author but there was so much mythology pounded into my brain that I barely caught the Jack references at all. It felt like the book was written that way so it could be shown how much research was done. My eyes started glossing over. Not such a great thing when you're listening on a commute. It was almost excruciating in detail. I could have picked up a text book if that's what I was looking for.

The characters...every single one of them from the 18 year olds to the 70 year olds and those in between show such amazing amounts of immaturity that it boggles the mind.

The writing (to me) felt smug. There were still way too many words, the never ending flowing descriptions that had me struggling to focus on just what was being described after a while.

The plot twists that weren't twists at all because the way it was handled (illogically) there could really be no other way something happened.

And my greatest annoyance of them all, I'm still interested in the characters and I will have to work my way through book 3 in hopes that my questions end up with some semblance of answers in the end because THIS particular book had an ending so awful I wouldn't even call it a cliff hanger, more like a big old middle finger to the readers. It was vague, ambiguous and completely unsatisfying. I am not a fan of "leaving it to the reader to interpret". Own your story for goodness sake. Some will love it; some will hate it but give it a damn ending.

I did not however, have a problem with the elements of romance or the particular romantic pairing that others seem to have found distasteful. There was very little sex in the book and what was there was not very detailed. I think this was billed as gay fiction so the minimal amount didn't bother me one way or another nor

did the previous relationship connection.

Although I can't in good conscience recommend this book to any of my friends, I am holding out hope that book 3 gives me a little closure at the very least.

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### **Juxian says**

#### **3,5 stars.**

I liked this one somewhat less than 'Strings Attached'. There were parts that really got through to me and the parts that didn't.

I loved Arthur's backstory, and I especially liked the way it was told. It focused on the things we didn't know about Arthur: his family, his struggling while a Marine, his depression - but we don't get the retelling of the things we already knew, for example, what happened to Danny. In the first book, from Jeremy's point of view, we see Arthur as strong and wise, always knowing what to do. Here we see more of him, his flaws and vulnerabilities, and it was heartbreaking and precious at the same time.

There are surprises about other characters as well - Katharine, for once... and Carlo whom I love so much it hurts. The adventures in Rio were fast-paced, and while for the most part of the book I was face-palming as to "how stupid can everyone be?" - in the end it all made sense, and it was good.

I had a bit of a problem with Jeremy-Arthur-Carlo love triangle, though. It is not that cheating is a trigger for me, I understand that people make mistakes and put themselves into situations that are not pretty in any way... it's human. But while it's human and it happens - I don't think it's okay to be okay about it. The way Jeremy behaves - (view spoiler) - I expected more integrity from him. It's like the author is so enamoured with the god-like beautiful Jeremy that it doesn't cross his mind to apply common norms of morality to him. Okay, it was resolved... kinda quickly and too easy, I think, but whatever. The bucket of angst certainly was poured in a different place.

I'm also not sure what to make out of the ending. (view spoiler) Well, there is the third book, of course, but the ending really made me shrug and that's it.

But I did enjoy the book and can't wait to read the next one.

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### **Robert Helms says**

5.0??. POV - ARTHUR story (Jack In the Bean Stack story). Follow on of the Nick Nolan series. This is the best of the Tales from Ballena Beach series! THIS SERIES IS BEST IF READ IN ORDER!

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### **Martin Belcher says**

Double Bound is the sequel to the first book Strings Attached where we are introduced to the beautiful young swimming hunk Jeremy Tyler and the rags to riches story of how he ends up living with his very rich Aunt and mysterious Butler, Arthur in a sprawling mansion in Ballena Beach, California.

Double Bound begins with Arthur Blaufee and his early years and how his first relationship with Jeremy's

father influences how he feels towards Jeremy. Arthur is a multi faceted character and it is wonderful that Nolan can spend time in this second book filling us in on his background, his disastrous relationship with his own father and how this rebounded in him joining the US Marines.

The story itself revolves around a fated trip to Rio in Brazil by Jeremy, his boyfriend Carlo and Arthur as bodyguard to oversee a high security island resort being part financed by his Aunt Katherine for the super rich worried about terrorism. The resort is being managed by Dom Fabiano "el gig ante" a Brazilian mobster up to his ears in shady dealings and illegal practices. What begins as a carefree vacation mixed with work ends up in a surprise kidnap and a double cross.

The book ends with a few question marks and I do hope Nick Nolan can continue both Jeremy Tyler and Arthur Blaufee's story in a third book.

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## **Kassa says**

A few months ago I read Nick Nolan's first book, *Strings Attached*, which is a warm coming of age, rags to riches story about a young gay man that comes to find acceptance and happiness. *Double Bound* picks up exactly where the previous book leaves off instead the focus is now on Arthur, the bastion of strength, guidance, and care from the first book. Now the story becomes a look into the complicated, rough life of a middle aged gay man struggling with serious bouts of depression and inappropriate feelings for his young friend and pseudo son, Jeremy. Throw in a complicated murder mystery plot and this book is tough to put down.

The plot is tightly paced and combined with clean writing makes the pages fly by. Although there are some holes and leaps in the plot, the speed of the story and the characters make this a fun book to read. I didn't always like where the book was going, there is a huge foreshadowing event at the very beginning that had me almost scared about what would happen, but that's a credit to the author and story that it sucked me in so much immediately. The story has some definite over the top moments and ridiculous turns but in the style of fun, high action, creepy mysteries this didn't bother me too much. I was easily able to sink into the story and go along for the ride.

Part of this is due to the superior characterization. Arthur is a very different creature from the first book, although be sure to have read *Strings Attached* before attempting *Double Bound*. Here Arthur is somewhat of a tortured mess. The reader follows his past through losing his first love Jonathan – ironically Jeremy's father – to enrolling in the Marines and struggling to survive in the Don't Ask, Don't Tell environment, then to the FBI before his current position with Jeremy's family. Again the progression and leaps don't always make sense and come across as believable, as well Arthur seems to be a totally different character from the first book with some details that don't add up. If you can get past this then his complicated personality, dealing with severe depression and self worth issues, create a fascinating leading man.

Similarly the return of Jeremy, Carlo, and Katherine rounds out the cast with their well crafted and in depth personalities. Again, these characters felt like a departure from how they were presented in the first book, which isn't bad per se but made me wonder since the changes felt manipulated by the story sometimes rather than natural and authentic. One of the best aspects though is the triangle between Jeremy, Carlo, and Arthur. It's resolved mostly painlessly but creates an interesting dynamic that keeps you reading alongside the mystery. The complex web of emotions here feels honest as they make mistakes, stumble, and reach for happiness.

The mystery portion is well researched, involving creepy Brazilian rituals and some truly hair raising scenes. Again there are some obvious stumbles and the incorporation of the Jack and The Beanstalk theme never came across for me. The author explains this but I still found the connection absent and rather weak, if even there. But this doesn't affect the actual story and the ease of writing makes this entertaining and fun to read. This is an author whose stories I enjoy reading quite a bit, regardless that there may be problems with the plot. The crisp writing is fresh, descriptive, and interesting with a flair for pace and dialogue.

Double Bound is a good sequel and engaging to read. It's not a story I'd necessarily read again but Nick Nolan is an author I'd read whatever he wrote. There's a third story planned and honestly I'm eagerly looking forward to reading that one and hope that it shows more of Jeremy's advancement and development. The side trip into Arthur's background makes for a nice story but Jeremy remains the star of the series. I'm curious what he'll get up to next.

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### **Tami says**

I really wanted to like this book. The writing was great and the beginning really caught me. Arthur was a very interesting person at the start, and his depression was described very well.

But then the story went down the drain for me.

I didn't like the sexual tension between the father figure and the son of his first love - that felt wrong to me.

Then the age difference: A 39 year old and an 18 year old? I don't buy into the "I had a hard childhood and therefore mentally I am MUCH older than my young and sexy body looks like"...the old guy had a hard youth as well, how old does that make him now according to this logic?

I think that **especially** young people who have a unstable or difficult youth are even more vulnerable. I never really believed in this "hard experiences make you more mature and strong". It might be true for some people, but my personal experience with pretty much everybody I ever met, says clearly different. I think it is kind of a nice idea that you get maturity and wisdom out of a shitty childhood, but in real life? I am not so sure.

And the relationship doesn't prevail. So the whole "I love you so much, can't live without you" is more or less pointless, because they stay "only" friends in the end. Would have made a better story imo if they didn't fool around with each other in the first place - the whole Daddy-re-live-first love-issue was a bit much, especially with the physical similarities between father and son. I don't know, but in Jeremy's place, I would not feel so special and cherished and loved for myself, if I found out my lover was the first love of my Dad's, whose spitting image I am...

As I said, I enjoyed the very good writing (some even poetic phrases in between), but the story and characters were not really interesting to me and hit some sore points with me.

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### **A says**

There's something a little manic about my love for Nick Nolan's writing. He continues to captivate me with his characters that I, in equal parts, adore and despise. In this follow up to Strings Attached, we get a glimpse



inside the life of Arthur, who managed to break my heart -- just completely obliterated it to pieces. Arthur and Carlo and Jeremy travel to Brazil to check on a family investment there. While there, they get mixed up in some messed up shit. And when I say messed up, I mean deliciously, horrifically messed up. In the meantime, Arthur and Jeremy explore their feelings for one another and Carlo goes off to find a sick cousin.

The thing about this book, along with *Strings Attached*, is there is never a dull moment. Again, I listened to this on audiobook, with the incomparable Luke Daniels as narrator, and I was completely captivated by it. Maybe it gets to be a little much at times, with the over the top antics and the purple prose, but I find it entertaining as hell. But also gut-wrenching and exciting and terrifying and sweet and arousing. All of those things plus more.

There are some books that, when I'm finished, I mourn. I sit there with little grabby hands, wanting another. . .something. . .to take the place of the void that has been left in my heart. This is one of those books, and it is because Nolan creates characters that, love them or hate them (or, more likely, love them and hate them), they leave you changed. And they become a part of you. It's not just a book. It's an experience. An experience I will not soon forget.

Warning: This is not your typical romance. It's not your typical anything. And the ending could really piss you off (though I found it smart and sweet). It's not a feel-good novel. Be warned!!!

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## **Carl says**

### **Good follow-up novel**

As gay novels go, this is one of the best I've ever read. Good character development is pretty rare in these kind of stories, but is well done with these multi dimensional characters. All in all, it's a very nice time spent with some interesting people.

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## **Benjamin says**

Following close on the heels of the appealing *Stings Attached*, which centred on the young Jeremy Tyler's rise to the fortune to which he was entitled, comes *Double Bound*. The central character here however is Arthur Blauefee, ex-Marine and more recently ex-FBI agent and now butler and estate manager to wealthy Katherine Tyler, and protector and unofficial surrogate father to Jeremy. Here the story is told very much from his perspective and as such it steps back in time to provide some insight to his upbringing, earlier career and his previous love life.

The account then picks up where *Strings Attached* left off, and we are taken on an escaped to Brazil where Arthur accompanies Jeremy and his flamboyant lover Carlo as carer and bodyguard. Jeremy has been charged by his aunt Katherine with responsibility for investigating an investment opportunity the Tylers are investing in; an adventure that will involve corruption, double dealing and betrayal upon betrayal, and prove life threatening for all three men.

The few days in Brazil also provide other opportunities. Importantly a chance for Arthur and Jeremy to explore their true feelings for each other, feelings it seems are equally shared - perhaps the predominant

theme of the story. It's also chance for Arthur to put into practice his training as a Marine, and for Carlo to prove that he is very much more than just a beautiful sissy boy. Events in Brazil will form the making of each of these central and most likable men, especially in view of the further troubles they will have to face on their return home.

Double Bound, based on the fairy tale Jack and the Beanstalk interwoven with old Brazilian beliefs and superstitions (as the author fully explains in his Notes at the conclusion) is a much darker tale than Stings Attached. In fact the opening chapter sets the scene with a seemingly unrelated sinister and tragic account involving a couple of American boys in Rio de Janeiro, but in fact does have a direct relevance. We get to know Arthur very well, his strengths and his weaknesses along with his failures, and we will no doubt become very attached to and feel for him as he faces dilemmas and difficult decisions. As such it is at times a very moving tale, especially when the real crunch comes towards the end; but it is yet a positive story.

I really enjoyed this book, possibly more even more than Strings Attached, it has greater depth and explores the characters more fully, with no holds bared. It is also a story of the meaning of true unselfish love. There are just a couple or so explicit sex scenes, but these are essential to the story, and one of these even keeps the reading tantalisingly guessing. Although I read this shortly after Strings Attached, it is a book that can stand very well on its own, providing enough information on relevant facts from Strings Attached for those that have not read that, but not to the extent that readers of it will feel they are being served up old information. Highly recommended.

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## **Diane says**

This is the second book I've read by Nick Nolan in this series... Luckily I'm reading them in order!

There was so much depth to the mystery... So many characters that pulled you into the action. The myriad of feelings felt by Arthur, Jeremy, and Carlo caused me to wish there could be a happily ever after for each of them. The ending was so heart wrenching, and yet perfect, that I had to read the last chapter and epilogue twice.

The details given about the beliefs of some people in Brazil really 'fleshed' out the plot line. I loved the line; 'I should learn the difference between what I need and what I want.' Also the description of the woman in the coffee shop; 'She's actually living her life in the here and now, and she's happy with what she has.' The best part was probably their discussions in the epilogue; about their futures, them being square pegs and how you knew if you were in love.

I loved this book.

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