



Even Odds

Elia Winters

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Geeky meets kinky in this first deliciously sexy novel in the Slices of Pi series by RITA-nominated author Elia Winters, which follows the romantic rendezvous of the employees at PI Games, a gaming company based out of sultry Florida.

As a design manager at PI Games, Isabel Suarez is no stranger to the struggles of being a woman in a male-dominated industry. But when her team attends a gaming convention on the other side of the country, she figures there's no harm in putting aside her professional demeanor for one weekend to participate in a risqué scavenger hunt. Why shouldn't she let loose and have a little fun?

A careless romp soon turns into more, however, when Isabel ends up having a fling with Caleb Portland, an artist and animator, without knowing he has just been hired to partner with her at her company—and Caleb can't bring himself to tell her. When they end up coworkers a few weeks later, they need to find a way to work together and keep things strictly professional. Caleb doesn't want to take on a relationship and risk failure. Isabel doesn't want to risk ruining the professional reputation she's worked so hard to develop. But when faced with the undeniable sizzling chemistry between them, will either of them be able to resist temptation?

A sexy and witty tale of romance and modern workplace politics, *Even Odds* is the latest winning entry in Elia Winters' unique and well-loved erotic novels

Even Odds Details

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From Reader Review Even Odds for online ebook

Maria Rose says

Elia Winters new series, Slices of Pi, starts off with Even Odds, a sexy tale of two people who connect over their love of gaming but then have to face real world consequences. Isabel left her previous job in the gaming industry due to a sexual harassment complaint that was never properly addressed. In a male dominated world like that of video games, she's had a hard time being taken seriously (even though she is a kickass player) and at her current workplace, PI Games, she plays down her sexuality. She dresses in nondescript clothes and is careful to stay out of conversations that might lead to discussions about her personal life. When she travels with some of her work colleagues to Boston for a conference, she decides it's time to let loose a little, and when the guys tells her about a little extra contest they like to play (that includes some sexual antics on the side), she's determined to make up for her dry spell and play the game too. Meeting Caleb, a fun and smart designer gives her the chance to follow through on some of the sexier antics on the contest card, but without the worry that it will come back to haunt her when they return to Florida. But, as luck or fate would have it, Caleb turns out to be their new hire at PI Games. Stuck between her attraction to Caleb and her determination to keep things under wraps at work, Isabel finds that it's not so much fun to have to hide their affair, especially as things take a more emotional turn. Can Isabel find the right balance that will make them both happy, personally and professionally?

I really enjoyed this story! At its heart it's definitely an erotic romance as the scenes where Caleb and Isabel first hook up together at the conference are super sexy and plentiful! Part of the appeal of the situation for both of them is that they know it's just a weekend thing. Caleb has some issues with commitment, after being cheated on by an ex and keeping his heart guarded as a result. Isabel has a very strict policy of not getting involved with someone at work after a previous relationship meltdown and being harassed by a former colleague. This chance for both of them to let loose and have a little fun is a long time coming and they definitely make it worth their while! But at the end of their time together things go a bit awry and they don't part on the best of terms. When Caleb shows up unexpectedly in Florida as the newly hired art designer for PI Games, Isabel can't decide if she's freaked out (that her secret sex life is going to be outed!) or turned on by the idea that she and Caleb could have something just as fresh and exciting as their time in Boston. Fortunately, Caleb is just as decent a guy as he was in Boston – he has no desire to make Isabel's life uncomfortable and he's not going to share anything about their affair at the con. As they start to work together, they find their attraction to each other is still very strong and it's not long before they take advantage of it to continue where they left off. But Caleb wants more than to be Isabel's dirty little secret – though he still fears the big C (commitment) he discovers that just sleeping with Isabel occasionally is no longer enough. And Isabel's feelings for Caleb are growing stronger too. They'll have to work together to find a compromise.

While the super sexy romance is the main focus of the story, the reality of Isabel's difficulties working in a male dominated industry are not overlooked. The sexual harassment case that resulted in her leaving her first job changed her character and her approach to things. She's much more conservative and sometimes uncomfortable with some of the conversations around her. And it's not until Caleb joins their staff that she realizes she's been the target of some subtle harassment from her co-worker Lloyd. Some of his words and actions make her uncomfortable but she didn't want to rock the boat, fearing the same kind of consequences that she got the first time, where her human resources department was very unhelpful. It was great to see her finally standing up for herself and making her expectations of treatment as a professional colleague clear. It's a serious side topic in this story, but one that works well with the setting and the plot. Caleb is quick to defend Isabel and he's definitely on her side from day 1, making him definite hero material. Overall I found

this to be a really entertaining story, one that will appeal to gamers and romance lovers alike. 4 stars!

Note: a copy of this story was provided by the publisher via NetGalley for review.

This review appears as a blog post at: <https://straightshootinbookreviews.co...>

Shawnie says

3-3.5 stars, but bumping it up since the mains are gamers, work at a gaming company, and competed in a StarCraft tournament at a gaming con. :) My husband and I never would have started dating if we didn't game together.

Veronique says

3.5

Another good romance. Perhaps I should stop being so surprised...?

Isabel Suarez is a design manager at a games company, dealing with the struggles of being a woman in a male-dominated industry, which translates in her downplaying her femininity and donning a strong professional demeanour to keep everyone at bay. That is until she attends a gaming convention where she decides to let 'her hair down' and participate in a scavenger hunt. She meets Caleb and they have a wild fling. Little do they know that Caleb is going to become her new colleague...

Nothing special so far apart that I'm geeky and a story with geeks would interest me :O) No, what I really liked was the characterisation. Both protagonists were interesting, each dealing various issues and their attraction for each other - Isabel with her fear of ruining her career, Caleb mistrusting going into a relationship after a bad experience and a series of failed endeavours.

Winters adds the theme of sexual harassment at work as an undercurrent throughout the story. One of Isabel's colleague continually makes jokes about her, but is it friendly banter or something worse? It is insidious and difficult sometimes to pinpoint. Yes, to the reader, it is clearly unacceptable, but after Isabel's previous experience where she wasn't defended properly by her then employer, it makes sense that she would be unsure. I did appreciate how this was addressed, Caleb supporting Isabel but letting her fight her own battle. It was perhaps a little 'too easy' in its solution but the book deserves brownie points just for bringing the issue to the fore.

A light and entertaining story, well executed, and with likeable characters.

Jaime Fiction Fangirls Book Review says

3.5 Stars

I love the premise of this book and I liked the characters but I didn't fall in love with them. I just feel like I didn't really know them well enough to form a connection and it then made it hard for me to

believe in them as a couple. I don't feel like I got to see them grow into a relationship other than a sexual one.

I liked the authors writing and enjoyed the book for exactly what it was and I would definitely read another story by her. I just didn't fall in love with this one in a way that would make me want to read it again.

*I received an ARC from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

Michelle says

This was my first Elia Winters' book and I have to say I was mighty impressed. In Even Odds, Isabel lets loose while at a gamer convention and finds herself indulging in a few days of frisky behavior with Caleb. It was only supposed to last a few days and it wasn't supposed to affect the way her co-workers saw her. But that was all about to change when the latest employee at PI Games turns out to be her convention-fling, Caleb.

One is afraid of being made a fool of (again), while the other is worried that a relationship will affect her career. In a battle of wills and sexy good times, Caleb and Isabel discover that staying away from each other isn't an option.

I really, really enjoyed this fun and quirky romance. I have been reading far more erotic romances lately and this was so refreshing. Although I'm not a geeky girl, I do have to say that I am sort of in love with the nerdy heroines. There is something about the underdog getting the guy that I just adore. I loved that Caleb was a bit gun shy about jumping into a relationship as well. Sometimes we all need a break from the alphas and settle into a sweet romance.

Very excited to continue on with this series.

Silvana [The Book Voyagers] says

When you find out the main character is Cuban, this is me: SHJHDSADHSDS YES PLEASE. I totally freaked out and I was super excited to start this.

So...

- ✓ Isabel, our MC, is Cuban and she works in a gaming company to create new video games *yeas*
- ✓ Caleb, our male MC, is one hottie and he totes falls in love with Isabel first
- ✓ Male-dominated world of gaming, we have our protagonist, Isabel, who kicks butt designing new games for the dumb boys who think girls can't play video games *cue eyeroll*
- ✓ The dirty mouth MCs are on fiiiiire in this book ok
- ✓ Sex in the office because why not

Full review on the blog soon, I hope lol

Michelle says

ARC provided by publisher in exchange for an honest review

A geeky romance that was loaded with lots of fun, humor, love, banter, and kink!!!! Elia Winters has designed an office romance that was programmed to have readers saying who knew smart romance can be so erotically sexy and steamy!!!!

“Why hadn’t she let him explain? He couldn’t keep being jerked around like this. Either she wanted him, or she didn’t want him, but this on- again, off-again situation wasn’t doing either of them any favors. He wouldn’t hide.”

Even Odds is the second book that I have read from Elia Winters and definitely won’t be my last. Ms. Winters has delivered an office romance that was loads of sexual tension, passion, and steam. When Isabel Suarez goes to her first gaming convention to help promote a new game that she is working on as well as the company that she is working for, she never expected to find herself tangled in the sheets with Caleb Portland. This weekend away with Caleb was supposed to be her way of letting loose and having fun. But what Isabel didn’t expect was Caleb to be the newly hired designer that she will be working with on a project. In a male dominated profession, will Isabel be able to keep her focus on the project and not lose sight of her job or will she find herself being tempted by Caleb? And will Caleb be able to keep everything professional with Isabel? Or will these two discover that you can’t mix business with pleasure? Or can you?

Even Odds is a sexy, smart modern romance. This book had just the right amount of steam and sexual chemistry to keep readers entertained and at the same time, the right amount of tension to keep the story line intriguing. I love that Ms. Winters was able to showcase a strong heroine in the back drops of a male dominated profession. So if you are looking for a story where modern romance meets geek with a kink then this book is probably for you.

Review can also be found on Four Chicks Flipping Pages: <http://fourchicksflippingpages.weebly.com>...Elia Winters

Jessica Alcazar says

I love Elia Winters more later, I've got blogging to do LOL

Christi Snow says

My Review:

This book is unlike 95% of the books on the market right now and I really liked that about it. This is about a girl who's making it in the male-dominated gaming industry, but that success hasn't come without costs. She's found to make it, she can't be seen as a sexual being, so she works really hard just to be one of the guys...something that comes back to bite her after a week-long Dice Con.

I liked Isabel. My only quibble with her was that I hated she played the scavenger hunt game at the Con. I realized that mentally the game gave her permission to do something she normally wouldn't do, and I think that could have worked if Lloyd hadn't been on the trip. But I just couldn't see her playing that game with someone like Lloyd who she didn't trust in the first place. She had to know that would come back to bite her. He was just that kind of jerk.

But otherwise everything about this book worked for me. It's a huge coincidence that Caleb and Isabel end up working together even though he's from Chicago and she's from Florida, but I imagine the gaming industry is a pretty small group overall when it comes to jobs within the various companies.

I also really liked that Caleb's work history isn't all sunshine and roses. It's not often that you find a hero that's failed at his job like Caleb did with his start-up company. That's been a blow to his ego, too, and it made him feel more real especially when his feelings for Isabel developed so quickly. I loved that he was thinking long-term fast, but he was still so completely commitment shy when Isabel would challenge him. Despite his emotions his default was no-commitment which I think helped the little bit of insta-love/lust that the story had feel more right.

Overall I really enjoyed the book. I loved the geeky setting. The gaming scenes were fun and I liked that Caleb and Isabel had so much fun beyond the bedroom too. (Although, whew, I did enjoy their sexy times, too.) The IKEA scenes had me giggling. Overall I thought it was a great start to the series and I'm looking forward to more books in it.

I received a complimentary copy of this book in return for an honest review.

XxTainaxX says

As a gamer myself I was really looking forward to this. I did enjoy the gaming references and the setting. Where I found myself wanting more was in the romance. Caleb and Isabel meet at a gaming convention and hit it off. Isabel does something that is out of character for her and has a fling with him only to later come across him after he gets hired at PI Games. I liked them together but I didn't feel they got a chance to grow and gain depth to the relationship beyond physical. They had some very sexy moments. There definitely wasn't a lack there. I liked Isabel's personality. She knows her mind and what she wants out of life. Caleb was still trying to settle his place in the world but seems to find it at PI. Safety: No OW/OM/Sharing. They use condoms. Neither are Vs. No rape/abuse. There is pushing away.

ARC received in exchange for an honest review.

Ptiteaurel says

Si vous cherchez une lecture détente qui vous permettra de passer un bon moment de lecture sans aucune prise de tête , alors ce roman est fait pour vous. Les scènes sensuelles y sont bien présentes et ne tombent pas dans la vulgarité , ce que j'apprécie vraiment dans ce genre de lecture.

C'est simple, efficace et cela nous permet de passer un bon moment de détente. Même si les thèmes abordés restent en surface , les personnages nous proposent une intrigue simple et intéressante

Chronique complète <http://thelovelyteacheraddictions.blogspot.com/2014/08/review-even-odds.html>...

Lindsay says

I read romance, but I rarely review it unless there's something that's well done or stands out from a crowd. This has both.

Isabel Suarez has a senior role at a game development company, but is looking forward to blowing off some steam at an out-of-state gaming convention that she's attending with some of her co-workers. They're there to run a booth, but they're also expected to have fun while not acting in a professional capacity. She does something a bit out of character for her and joins in with a scavenger hunt with her male co-workers with some of the items involving hooking up with people at the convention. This provides the impetus for her to act on her attraction to a man she's met at the con, an artist named Caleb Portland, and they end up having a fling, but both of them have far deeper feelings.

However, Caleb hasn't told her that he had applied for a job at Isabel's company (he doesn't think he's got it; he has though) and Isabel hasn't told him that she basically hooked up with him for a bet (the scavenger hunt). The other thing that hasn't come up is that Isabel has had a past very poor experience with workplace sexual harassment resulting from a previous work relationship gone bad. So this pair have started their relationship by sailing into a sea of icebergs. (I'm sorry, don't hit me).

Bad puns aside, this is really well done. The gaming references are pretty good, the convention is a pretty good representation of what they're like, and the workplace is done well, particularly with the HR issues. The sex scenes are also pretty hot; for someone who doesn't really do relationships, Isabel knows what she wants. The book also turns some common romance tropes on their head. It's normally the man that gets with the woman based on a bet, and it's normally her pride that gets hurt when she finds out. It's also normally the woman that joins a company only to find out that she's slept with someone there already. You also normally never see any sensitivity to workplace sexual harassment in romance books, and this one explores it as much as a light romance is going to.

Once Upon a Twilight says

The story: Even odds is the first book I've read from Elia Winters and the first book in her "Slices of Pi" series. Even odds is a nerdy yet sexy book wrapped together in one. The story starts out with Isabel Suarez working on a brand new game. She goes with some coworkers from her company to promote this new game at a large, well known gaming convention. She tries to be "asexual" to keep her focus on her work and be

taken seriously and that's working at her current job for now. Then Caleb Portland comes along. She wanted a weekend to let loose and let her hair down but she never expected her weekend fun to follow her to her job as the new hire!

The likes: I was happy with this book from the start. Right at about the time when Isabel packs her hitachi. At that point I knew I would love the book and that Elia was a girl after my own heart! I love that Isabel is a bad ass female in a male dominated profession. I love that this story line is fresh and original. The "geeky meets kinky" theme worked well for me and I was definitely entertained! I like that the book was written in dual point of views. It gave me a chance to get to know both characters better and their back stories.

The dislikes: My main issue is that there was a bit of predictability to the story line. I felt like after the first few pages, the story was already mapped out in my head how it was going to go. While there were many HOT scenes, some of the interactions and chemistry between Isabel and Caleb felt forced.

The rating: I give this story 3.5 stars because I enjoyed the book and thought it was funny, smart and unique. I'm interested to see where the rest of the series goes.

<http://www.onceuponatwilight.com/2016...>

Chris C - A Midlife Wife says

There's nothing like a hot steamy book to get you wound up and thoroughly sucked in to the story. This author has totally hit the mark with this spicy book.

When it comes to work, sex with coworkers and relationships are pretty much off limits so when you find an author that creates a story around this type of situation you get a book full of awesome sex scenes, delicious descriptions, a hot steamy man, and a pounding heart when you trying figure out how they're going to make it work without all of the drama and work issues that can come right along with it.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. The story line and the basis of the book were interesting and different from the normal run of the mill romance. This led to an entertaining and engrossing book that will wrap you up until the very end. Elia Winters gave us a winner in this sexy story!

Elizabeth GlamShazam says

Ugh, this was so frustrating. All the conflicts were telegraphed in the first 20% of the book. The author clearly mapped out what, precisely, I was supposed to feel about everyone and everything.

Why not trust your readers? Instead of telling me how I should feel, why not let me make my own decisions?

Sometimes this kind of book is okay, but this one really wasn't okay. It could've been good! Instead, it was just irritating.
