



Checkmate

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What's an alpha shape-shifting wolf to do when the woman pre-destined to be his mate no longer trusts men? After returning home from an eight-month security job, Eli Graham is ready to claim his best friend's little sister as his mate. He'd put it off for years, thinking he was doing the right thing by waiting. Instead of the stubborn, independent, carefree girl he left behind, Eli finds a shell of the woman he once knew. Having lived through a near fatal attack, Nikki Taylor has hidden herself away from the world. Now the time has come to face head-on the one man who could devastate her completely, Eli Graham. She's loved him forever, craves him, body, heart and soul, but he's never treated her as anything but a little sister. When Nikki witnesses a murder, she has no choice but to rely on Eli's expertise. While guarding her from the man bent on wiping out a witness, Eli shows Nikki that he'll not only protect her body, but he'll show her just what it means to be a wolf's mate. Warning, this title contains the following: hot, explicit sex, graphic violence and language, and is not for the faint of heart!

Checkmate Details

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Author : Annmarie McKenna

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Farah says

The whole thing felt very forced and disconnected. I didn't feel much chemistry between Eli and Nikki and there was absolutely nothing creative with the villain. Eli being a werewolf didn't seem to influence or contribute to the story in anyway , I wasn't convinced with him being a werewolf , nothing in his character or even his abilities made him seem any different than a normal human being **minus the shape shifting** , this detail could have been easily pulled out of the book and the book would remain the same **just delete the parts where they discuss him being a werewolf or shape shifter as Elli claims and nothing would change in the plot itself.**

Nikki's character was inconsistent and the attack on her didn't seem to influence her character that much , we were told she wasn't comfortable with men anymore and a few rare times she'd recall the attack or show a little sign of being afraid but overall I wasn't convinced , the portrayal of her character felt weak. And what's up with Nikki's brother Derek , he simply vanished from the story , considering what was happening to his sister one would assume he'd never leave her side or at least he'd pop up every now and then , but we never saw him again after the hospital scene which was very early in the book , he was mentioned a few times but that was it , it seemed as if the only purpose he served was being the reason Elli knows Nikki and for someone to deliver the story of Nikki's attack to Eli.

The Characters were very one dimensional and they didn't click together , their relationship lacked depth , **the book was very weak.**

Laura says

Nikki is nearly killed not once but twice and she has the scars to prove and the man of her dreams is home and she can't face him ever again...

I am of a mind that Nikki may be one the strongest women characters I have come across, after everything she has been through of course she took a knee but when she stood back up she was ready to reclaim her life. Thankfully she had her Eli there to help her regain her self. The evil villain was so well written that you could feel the evil coming off the pages when the story focused on him and you will be looking forward to seeing him get his when he finally gets caught.

If you are in the mood for the terror ride from hell, then the beginning of Checkmate will deliver and keep you hooked. Don't get me wrong the book does come with a few rather dull, long winded moments but they are short lived and move onto the next action packed moment that leaves you gripping your e-reader and yelling "get that dirty son of bitch" or "that's it punch the fucker again" your choice one or the other will fit. The bedroom scenes though not overly detailed or heated were well written and enjoyable.

I originally posted this review here <http://lauralusbookreviews.blogspot.c...>

Steff says

It was unrealistic and the plot was weak and predictable. I'm starting to think that the author needs to pick a genre and stick with it. I'm glad that the heroine was stranger in this book but she was an idiot. From the description in both books it is hard to differentiate between the lead male characters, which shouldn't happen.

The plot was weak, the killer didn't fit the profile earlier described and the romance was non-existent again. It's the same as the first, they just want to jump each other all the time and nothing else matters. I wonder the why the author even include the other plot or even other scenes. I thought because they knew each other it would be different. And the rape was downplayed. I didn't feel her emotions or pain. She was disappointing and Eli was none the better. He just found out she was raped and all he wanted to do was "claim" her (cause that sounds more supernatural). After reading two books from this author I have given up.

The only reason it has two stars was because I enjoyed the banter (that wasn't sexual) more in this book than the first so it should be 1 1/8 of a star. I left it at 2 to show which book I preferred but if I could go back in time, I would read neither.

Dina says

Another good story by Ms. McKenna, even though there wasn't really any conflict in Eli and Nikki's relationship (everything went very smoothly between them) and I didn't care much for the scenes with the killer (he was too cliché). Nevertheless, I really enjoyed this read. I guess I was in a good mood, LOL.

Holly says

The last eight months for Nikki Raine have been hell on earth. One evening she is attacked and nearly raped by three men in a deserted parking lot. It's every woman's worst nightmare but she manages to get away. While driving away from her attackers, they follow her and drive her off the road. Eight months have passed and she's still fighting to stay in control of her life and is just beginning to emerge from her self imposed solitude. She joins her friends for what used to be their weekly girl's night out and ends up interrupting a killer who has just finished butchering her friends. He notices and chases after her, managing to shoot her in the shoulder. While in the hospital, the police are concerned that the killer will come after her and they recommend protection. Luckily, her brother's friend Eli Graham has just returned from a security post overseas and he and his twin are on hand to protect her in case the killer attempts to silence her.

Eli Graham has been in love with Nikki Raine since she was a little girl. He's run away from her because he doesn't know how to tell the lovely, human Nikki that he's a werewolf and she's his predestined mate. He goes away for eight months for a security assignment and promises himself when he comes back he's finally going to claim her. When he arrives, he has no idea of the horrors his mate has gone through during his absence. He is furious that he wasn't there for her and that no one told him. Nikki didn't want anyone to tell Eli because she's afraid that one, he won't want her now that's she's an attempted rape victim, and two, her face was scarred in the accident. He could care less about any of that and when he gets to her side, Nikki knew instinctively that she'd been waiting for him all this time and that only her mate could make her feel safe and protected again.

Eli and Nikki Raine have loved each other from afar for a very long time and when they finally get together it's very sweet and passionate. Annmarie McKenna always writes such take charge, yet tender lovers and intelligent, slightly wounded heroines. The way her heroes always bring their ladies back to life is so romantic and appealing. Nikki goes through so much trauma in such a short amount of time in the beginning part of the book that I honestly didn't know how she was going to recover. With Eli by her side she goes through a believable recovery and faces her attackers and the killer of her friends. The sex in Checkmates is graphic but not raunchy. The supporting characters are all from the first book in the Mates series, Seeing Eye Mate, but they are introduced in a way that doesn't detract from the main story. There are some definite references to the first book, but it's not essential that you read them in order.

Julie (jjmachshev) says

Red alert! Hot Alpha werewolf tale!! If you enjoy werewolf erotica, then don't miss Annmarie McKenna's 'Mate' series. "Checkmate" is the second book and "Seeing Eye Mate" was the first. Her weres are uber-hot, uber-sexy, and uber-Alpha!

Eli is ready to declare himself to his mate. He's known she was his for many years, but waited for her to mature. After six months away on a pack security assignment, he's ready to get home and claim his mate! But it turns out someone's been keeping things from him, and his mate is traumatized and in danger. His instincts kick in...

Nikki has loved Eli for what seems like her whole life. But how could anyone love her now? After being attacked and then run off the road, she has scars...both external and internal. She'll have to overcome her fears and a deranged killer before she can commit herself to Eli.

Loved this book, and the first one. The suspense is good, the plot is handled well, and the sex is fabulous! What more do you need from paranormal erotica?

Erika says

3.5 stars

This lower rating is mostly due to the length of this novel. It was pretty good, but probably would have been better full length.

I was in the mood for a book where the hero is 100% devoted, possessive and protective of the heroine, and I definitely got that here. Those are my favorite type of heroes!!! :-)) The sexual chemistry was good, as it typically is with mates.

Shelly says

Eli Graham's just come back from being on an 8 month assignment. He's come back to find the woman he's had his eye on for years is in a world of trouble. Nikki Taylor is having the world's worst luck, she's

witnessed a murder and the bad guy knows who she is.

Eli and Nikki's story is really fast paces. Now I didn't read the first story about Eli's brother and his mate so I don't have context but I really enjoyed this story. Eli's from a family of shifters but they live amongst non-shifters and have kept the secret for century without incident, so far. Nikki doesn't know about this 'other' life; she suspects something but after years of asking her brother, he's not telling.

When Eli comes home to find Nikki in the hospital he rushes to her side to find out what's going on and how to protect her. There're a few different things going on with Nikki, none of it her fault just being in the wrong place at the wrong time kind of thing. But those things add up. The connection between Eli and Nikki goes back to their younger days and he's been trying to do the right thing by his best friend's sister for years but it's finally come to the place where he's either going to man-up or let her slip through his fingers. He decides to man-up.

The chemistry between these two was kinda...well...hot...sparkly...fun...funny...sexy...all the right things that kept me interested all the way through. Nikki's angst about Eli attraction to her when she's been in love with him for years was really touching. She's got a few things about her body she doesn't like including a new scar on her face. I felt for her because that's a hard one for anyone to get over. Then there's the change in the dynamics of their relationship; every sane woman questions both herself and the other person intentions.

Eli was a good guy. He absolutely wanted to help Nikki and keep her safe especially knowing that she's his mate and what his life would be like without her in it. But even without the whole mate-thing Eli wanted Nikki and he wanted her with a passion that read very well.

Even the bad guy was pretty awesome; he was pleasantly crazy and I had no clue who he really was so for that suspense, kudos. If you're squeamish about violence, beware that this has quite a bit.

Happy Reading Folks!

Rating: B

Posted at www.redhotbooks.com

Hillary says

This is the second book. The first being Seeing Eye Mate. Though I would suggest reading the first one; you could just read this one, and it would make total sense.

Eli is an identical twin, and his twin brother just happens to be Prime of a wolf shape-shifter pack. So that makes him the second. He has wanted one particular girl for a long time and has been waiting for the right moment to go after her considering he has known her for almost forever and she just happens to be his best friend's little sister.

Nikki has been attracted to Eli for a long time she just never worked up the guts to go after him. She is just about ready to make a move when one night she is violently attacked and then run off the road. She struggles for her sanity and peace of mind from the moment she wake until she finds peace in the arms of the one man she doesn't believe can truly love her.

She couldn't be more wrong and so begins the fight for Eli to make her believe that she is his and that he loves her no matter her flaws and battle scars. Not to mention that she has a run of bad luck and walks in on a murder in progress that puts her life in further danger. Now it is Eli's turn to make sure his mate doesn't end up dead. But will he be able to protect what he claims is his from a man out to make her pay.

I loved this book even more than the first. I just felt closer to all the characters and the struggles and obstacles were bigger and more heart wrenching to me. If you read the first you have gotta read this one, and if you didn't read the first one you should still read this one. Another great read.

Wishing you many hours of terrific reading.

L M says

I have a few books by this author and this series is probably the one I like least.

This is the story of Eli, the brother/twin from book one. We know in that book he has a mate but has not even told her, let alone claimed her yet. He plans to do this after the mate killer has been caught.

For some reason this book starts 8 months after that has happened. Eli has been off working on a case for all this time.

In this time Nikki has been attacked, nearly gang raped and driven off the road. Then she witnesses a murder. Don't get the feeling he really cared about his mate during this time frame as he never took any means to keep in touch or have her looked after.

Of course once he is back it is all sex and gung ho alpha male protective crap.

Though I wanted to applaud Nikki for being strong, I just didn't feel she was. Too wrapped in her own self pity, she has wallowed and allowed her attackers to keep her a victim.

Though she stands strong and does eventually point them out in a line up, her actions with the killer are once again those of a weak victim. He grabs her and says he is going to kill her anyway but she allows him to unclothe her in an attempt to rape her. I am sorry but I would not be going down without a fight and letting him get his jollies before he killed me.

Once again I find this could have been so good but it really needs more to make it a great read.

I have seen there is a third book after many years but I don't think I will be bothering to pay out what is asked to just be annoyed again.

Had read and reviewed this book and book 1 many years ago. My reviews have disappeared.

Yona says

I was looking for a good shifter's book for a while now, and although this one was more romantic suspense than paranormal I still liked it. There was very little about the shape-shifters - Eli turned into a wolf once, he roared a bit and the bite connecting him with his mate forever and a sentence or two about how the pack works and that was all. The other part was about how Nikki "saw" the murderer and he targeted her and etc. But still a pretty good read.

Trisha says

I had never heard of this author until I saw this book in a used book store and picked it up. I'm glad I got this book BUT some things are a little misleading from what the back cover says. Nikki is scared of the world but she is never scared of Eli not even for a second and he's a security expert but all he does is hide her at his ranch there's not a moment when Eli is doing anything to find out who is after Nikki. Nikki trust Eli from the moment she sees him when she wakes up in the hospital so he never has to worry about earning her trust. I liked the book but looking back I didn't feel like I got to know any of the characters in the book. You never get to meet the rest of the pack which was kind of disappointing. I found the ending very predictable you have the cops saying they got the killer and Eli went along with it when his gut was saying it was wrong. Then she leaves and puts herself in the killers hands because of some very stupid ideas to catch the killer and Eli once again goes along with it. He was supposed to be a security expert and goes along with a plan that really wasn't a plan at all. If you don't take this book to serious and don't mind alpha males and their female mate just being stupid at times you will be ok with this book. The up side is the book has smoking hot sex scenes.

Cindi says

Checkmate is my first book by Annmarie McKenna, and I hope not my last. It was a good story, very quick read, and I had no problem buying into the existence of shape shifters and Ms. McKenna's world.

Actually, this book would have been just fine without the inclusion of shifters and in fact didn't really stress it as part of the plot. The twin shifters, Caelmon (featured in Mate 1) & Eli, live together in the wonderful kind of home that is split for privacy and joined together for communal eating. Eli shifts only once, to show his mate (Nikki). Otherwise, their "wolf" only comes out in their possessiveness and dominance of their women.

The premise of this book is also its failure, however, IMO. Nikki has been in love with Eli forever; he's been around her because he's best friends with her brother, Derek, and has only seen her (she thinks) as "the kid sister". Eli has been out of the country for most of the past year, but has thought about her and realized that she is his mate. While he's gone, Nikki is attacked by 3 men and gets badly hurt escaping them. She begs her brother not to tell Eli and thinks that the remaining scars will scare him off. She is also now terrified of men. And to top it off, while Eli is coming home from his mission, Nikki discovers her three best friends horribly murdered and mutilated (by weres?) - and the murderer sees her.

The problem I had was that Nikki's attraction to Eli overshadowed her fear pretty easily. So all the build-up about her fears, of walking to her car for instance, are quickly deflated by Eli's hotness. That just wasn't believable. Also, even though we're led to believe the two should be and will be together, it happens just a little TOO easily. Like, Derek smacks Eli in the jaw while driving him home - and after asking him to help protect his sister - when Eli admits he's planning to mate with Nikki. But that's it, just a smack. No tension before or after.

I think that Ms. McKenna has a great imagination and can be a great writer someday with a bit more time to learn some of the art of writing. And I look forward to that time!

Jane Stewart says

Very enjoyable. Good suspense.

I always enjoy this author's alpha-type guy who is focused on only one woman, he has to have her, he wants to protect her, he is totally possessive about her, and he treasures her forever. It was a good story about wolf/shape-shifter Eli who leaves town for 8 months. He knew Nicole was his mate, and he planned to tell her so when he returned. While he was gone, she was attacked by three rapists but barely escaped. Later she witnessed a murder. The murderer wants to kill Nicole because she is a witness. Eli returns and tries to protect her from the murderer's attempts.

Sexual language: strong. Number of sex scenes: six. Setting: current day St. Louis, Missouri. Copyright: 2007. Genre: erotic paranormal romantic suspense.

For a list of my reviews of other Annmarie McKenna books, see my 5 star review of "Finding Strength" posted 7/12/08.

Ti says

*** contains spanking and wording about submission. Also, two scenes of attempted rape. *** Decent plot. Would be a way better read with out the submission and hitting. Lack of understanding of post-trauma sex.
