



His Convenient Husband

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NFL football player Isaiah Blackwell lost his husband three years ago and is raising their teen son alone. He lives his life as quietly as his job allows, playing ball to support his family but trying not to draw unwanted attention. His quiet life is shaken up when a mutual friend introduces him to Victor, a visiting principal ballet dancer who is everything Isaiah is not.

Brash and loud, Victor Aleksandrov has applied for political asylum to avoid returning to Russia, where gay men are targeted and persecuted. He's been outspoken about gay rights in his home country, and if he doesn't get asylum, going back to Russia is a death sentence.

Their one-night stand turns into a tentative friendship, a relationship they both agree is temporary...until Victor's denied asylum. Isaiah can't offer Victor a happily ever after, but he can propose something that'll keep Victor in the US and safe...marriage. He just doesn't expect his new husband to dance away with his heart.

His Convenient Husband Details

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From Reader Review His Convenient Husband for online ebook

Ariana says

I love the 'fake-relationship' trope. Yes, it is pretty predictable what's going to happen (because of course the two people are going to fall for each other, aren't they), but it is all the delicious in-between, that appeals to me. How can love bloom in what is basically a 'business' arrangement?

Isaiah and Viktor meet by chance and hook up in what's supposed to be a one night stand not long after. We get a heavy dose of insta-lust at the beginning, but that didn't bother me too much because sexual attraction often just happens in a very superficial and instantaneous way. However, there is also the suggestion that they feel 'more', which, at this stage, seemed a bit far-fetched to me.

The marriage happens soon after this and puts both guys into a predicament on their own: Viktor starts having serious feelings for Isaiah pretty early on. He loves his family, in particular Evan (Isaiah's son) who he bonds with easily over art and gay issues. Viktor has never had a family, a home that feels like one and above all a guy who is hot, kind and a good person.

But while Viktor is falling pretty quickly Isaiah has no intention to break down the walls he has erected after his previous partner's death. He doesn't want to go through the same pain again. Even though he likes everything about Viktor, right down to the make-up. Isaiah behaves pretty badly towards Viktor on a variety of occasions.

Tbh, I couldn't understand what his problem was. Yes, he was wary of love and what it might do to him, but I didn't buy that this alone would make him push away Viktor again and again, when he so clearly wants him. Isaiah is happy to ignore what he feels and makes a great effort at convincing himself that their relationship is nothing but convenient.

All this could have added up to a good amount of angst and a gripping story, but it never got that 'heavy'. No doubt the blurb promises more than the plot delivers which was on the disappointing side.

On the whole though this will be an enjoyable and easy read for most, and perfect for those who look for something that's not overly emotionally involved or something light to ease the mind.

ARC received from author via Indigo Marketing And Design in exchange for an honest review.

Joey says

I am floored, stunned and slain by this beautiful book. The feelings and tension between Viktor and Isaiah were palpable and so so very real. I love how the author took things that are happening in our world and wove them into the story. The relationship that these two build, along with Isaiah's son is a true thing of beauty. This book hit every point for me. Good writing, steamy smexy times and an important message.

Anything with ballet is going to be an auto read for me, I love dance, I love dancers and I love dance stories.

SheReadsALot says

2.75 HEARTS--Mixed bag.

From now on (until I find something else that amuses me) this is my mixed bag image of choice!

Go read that blurb and look at that cover. That cover is sit on face worthy, man. I'd scoop that cover model up and butter my biscuits. Consider my basement flooded, if you catch my drift. And I think you do.

The blurb is trope city (and I definitely **don't** hate on that). Between the cover, the blurb, I was stoked. So stoked, I ignored the buzz book potential and requested this sucker.

I tied on my reading bib and dived right into this sucker. And from the first chapter, something was off. So I kept reading, because I'm stubborn and hopeful (what a combo) with books. I don't like to DNF and hope the author will turn it around.

His Convenient Husband is a mixed bag and I got mixed emotions while reading this. On one hand I got happy with certain things: the mention of LGBT issues and activism (hold that thought), interracial romance when the POC isn't written as a kink (I'm not a fan of that). However, there were issues as well: characters that said the right things but didn't back it up, telling rather than showing and not having a true grasp on either main characters' character. They could've been anybody.

Hence me:

The category romance (it's cracky fluffy on speed) is a fluff tale of a one night stand meets fake marriage. It was a meld of some of my favorite tropes. Chechen ballet dancer Victor is world famous and out. The reader is told how much he stands up for gay rights, how he's loud and brash. (Not really) He applied for political asylum assuming he was going to get to stay in the States. On the world's worst set up through a shared agent, gay football player and widower, Isaiah invites the dance to his house since Isaiah's teen son is a huge fan of Victor (and Isaiah's agent wants them to get together)

So they do. Very hotly out in a pool, but I didn't see a connection between either guy other than insta-lust.

The time jumps weirdly in this where the one night stand meant something to both men. So when the political asylum falls through, Isaiah offers to marry Victor to save him.

You would potentially go to jail (should anyone find out about a fake marriage) and if the person who was denied gets married the next day, I would expect this country's immigration agents to flag the fuck out the entire thing and personally fly Victor back to his country.

But no mention of worry. In fact the couple blab to friends and family it's a fake marriage to keep Victor in America. After searching high and low to see if this was an alternate reality, no such thing. Unfortunately,

I've read this plot written stronger with defined repercussions earlier this year.

The pair have really no connection. Consider me crossing the bridge leaving reality.

The secondary characters are used heavily to tell the read how much the two can't take their eyes off each other, how much of an activist Victor is. This is a pet peeve of mine, using secondary characters to get the romance and plot across. I liked that the author had a character bring up social issues, I just wish it didn't read like a suit being put on to look cool.

Besides the info dump and heavy telling, I think I figured out what the main issue of the story was: the characters had the potential to have depth. I've read fluffy romances where the main characters have difficult backgrounds and still make some impact.

The first half of the story was weak. It wasn't until the last third where the story gained some ground but I wasn't invested in the characters. They talked a good talk but I'm not buying what they're selling.

Funny thing is, even if the characters were hovering the two dimensional mark, the sex scenes were rocking. Hence my mixed emotions. If this was pure erotica - **3.75-4 Hearts** easy. I read a lot of erotica, the smut was pretty good: dirty talk, outdoor sex (pool/porch), some possessive inclination, rimming, lots of oral. Nice.

Alas, this is a romance and the meh characters have to be counted in my rating.

And a few times Victor rubbed me the wrong way with his view on being different or gay due to wearing makeup. I expected a different stance from him. It's more than just makeup. This could be from me reading better written activists in previous romances.

Eh, he tried. And I'm looking for depth in a fluff piece. So I'll just wrap this up now.

Loved the tropes, not a fan of the execution or characters. But I liked the sex and the premise potential.

This face sums it up just about right.

I'm not going to write this author off either. There were a few moments when it wasn't so bad. There were other sports characters that have lead potential. The author is not a newbie to writing romance, but still fairly new in writing MM. The intimate scenes (sexual and non sexual) didn't read awkward or like used to be MF. I've read worse, so it's a step in the right direction.

I might try something else from this author.

Maybe, if I'm in the right mood.

Ugh, mixed bag.

smh

A copy provided via Netgalley for an honest review.

Ami says

3.5 stars

Let's get to the things I like first.

Robin Covington is a new-to-me author, and I assume this is her first foray into the M/M romance genre? On that matter, I like her writing just fine. I noticed a couple of missing words and weird sentences, but I figured since this was an advanced copy everything will be edited better on release date.

The characters are likeable enough -- especially Victor, Evan (Isaiah's son), and a couple of secondary characters. I have (not-so-good) things to say about Isaiah, and I'll get to him later. Victor was such lovely man -- my heart went out for him whenever Isaiah said the things that hurt Victor; because clearly Victor cared for both Isaiah and Evan. I also thought that Evan would be a wonderful man when he grows up.

And despite the premise of Victor denied asylum and a touch of current real issues with how Russia deals with homosexuality, the overall tone of this book is angst-lite. In fact I thought the 'conflict' that drove Isaiah and Victor apart could need more substance since whatever reasons that Isaiah had felt weak in my opinion.

Which I guess now I had to talk about Isaiah...

I definitely did NOT like the way he was treating Victor... his reason about not wanting to put Evan in the spotlight and everything that happened was Victor's fault was pretty lame. Dude, you PROPOSED to him, and you're the adult here, so maybe you SHOULD consider Victor's reputation and attitude first before using your son as your defense speech.

Also, with Evan's tendency to embrace his feminine side, wearing make-up and dress, being flamboyant and unapologetic, for Isaiah to NEVER for once think that his son would get bullied or taunted in school is either naive or stupid. No wonder Isaiah keeps saying that all goodness that comes with Evan is all his late husband's doing *hmp.

That grand gesture in the end is nice, and I'm all for grand gesture, but in my opinion, Isaiah needs more groveling!

I also need to note ONE thing. I requested this ARC because initially, in the blurb, Victor was described as brash, loud, and *gender fluid*. I know that it can attract readers looking for gender-fluid representation, including myself. I read this *expecting* a gender-fluid ballet dancer. Unfortunately, just because Victor likes to wear make-up does not immediately make him one. It was a misleading description and I was rather disappointed at that. However, I also found the "gender fluid" description has been removed from the blurb (I checked Amazon while I was writing this review). So, I thought it was a good decision.

In overall, while I may have problems but it's not so bad that it ruins my reading experience. And I am adding extra star-rating for Victor and Evan, of course.

PS: Self-musing, I wonder if it's a "rule" for MF authors trying to dip their pens in M/M romance to include solo-shower-jerk-off. Because really, I've been reading this genre for almost a decade. I'm SO over that scene! *eye rolls*

The ARC is provided by the publisher for an exchange of fair and honest review. No high rating is required for any ARC received.

Cadiva says

Victor is amazing, Isaiah is a dick and lots of bits of this book are a hot mess but I still mostly enjoyed it.

I note from friends reviews that the blurb changed at some point to remove references to Victor being gender fluid and that's probably a good thing as I didn't really read anything within the text which gave that impression.

Evan, Isaiah's adopted son on the other hand, did seem to be pushing boundaries and I loved him and his fierce attitude and determination to be himself.

Victor was awesome too, did I mention I loved Victor?! Dancers are a weakness for me, the power and grace and artistry and sexuality, vulnerability and their ability to convey emotion just ticks all my boxes.

It's one of the greatest joys and biggest regrets of my life that I didn't keep dancing past my mid teens, especially when I was dancing with some of the finest contemporary dancers who went on to found Phoenix Dance Theatre.

I wanted Victor to kick Isaiah to the curb after he hurt him through his foolish words and unthinking actions. I did understand where Isaiah was coming from, having lost his first husband, but he was still a dick.

There is some good groveling though and a very public declaration of feelings once Isaiah gets his head out of his own way and realises he's being a coward and the epilogue is super sweet.

It's quite a short story, longer than a novella but not full length story mode and I think that is what caused a bit of the messy plotting. Isaiah's change of heart and willingness to actually be with Victor as a proper husband just felt a bit too quick, even with Evan's calling out of his behaviour.

Still, kudos for the MCs being a POC pro footballer and Chechnyan dancer rather than the more commonly portrayed Caucasian males.

#ARC received from the publishers via NetGalley in return for an honest and unbiased review.

BWT (Belen) says

Wow. There are times when I'll pick something up because the buzz about it is so great and the reviews are all raves and I'll be so excited...only to read the story and wonder what everyone else was reading.

I like a good fake marriage trope, and this one even has a twist with one of the MCs Isaiah being a widower and the other being a dancer and activist who is sure to be put to death if he returns to his homeland. It's current, relevant, and even has some quite passionate encounters to spice it all up.

But this bored me. Profoundly. I almost chucked in the towel and marked DNF on three separate occasions, only to keep going because *damn it* what was I missing that everyone else loved?

This sort of thing makes me feel broken.

I don't know...The set up, the characters, it should have worked for me. But it didn't.

Unfortunately, it was just a whole lot of did not work for me.

Obviously, YMMV.

Mirjana **DTR - Down to Read**** says**

*****4 Stars*****

"...one prince had everything and lost it, and the other prince had nothing but was willing to fight for the right to have it."

This is my first time reading Robin Covington and it 100% certainly won't be my last. I was sucked in and connected to these characters from the very beginning.

Isaiah and Victor are complete opposites.

Isaiah is an out gay man, however he's quiet about it. He doesn't feel the need to march in parades or publicly speak out about his personal life. He's a widower (his husband died 3 years ago in a car accident), a father, and he plays football. Those are his priorities.

Victor is vocal about what he believes in and feels that his somewhat celebrity status as a popular professional dancer gives him a platform to fight for the rights of LGBTQ+ members around the world. Especially in his home country of Russia.

The attraction between these two is instantaneous. And one night together is enough to calm the desire, but not enough to keep either man far from the other's thoughts. When they decide to marry it's a little quick and jarring, but I went along with it.

It's clear that the two men share a connection, but Isaiah is determined to keep Victor in a box. He can't afford to have emotions tangled up in this convenient arrangement.

"Sex leads to intimacy and intimacy leads to feelings, and this is not about feelings."

However, he plays hot and cold with Victor for a good portion of this book and well, that got frustrating at times. He also has a couple asshole moments (principal's office anyone?) where I wasn't sure if I'd ever fully believe that he'd move beyond his hang ups. Don't worry, he did and I believe!

Victor was impossible not to love. He's lived a difficult life and so much of what he'd dreamed for himself comes in the package that is Isaiah. His desire and longing for the man was a constant need, and in the beginning he'd take whatever Isaiah was willing to offer.

Victor knew how good they could be together, and while he knew they would walk the razor's edge between emotion and pure physical indulgence, he was willing to risk it. If he fell, then he'd embrace it.

But he knew he'd be falling alone.

The push and pull was delicious angst along with hair-pulling frustration. For my tastes, Robin Covington walked this line with fragile precision. The scale never quite tipped into the negative. Just when I wanted to throttle either man, a small breakthrough would come and the scales would balance.

...it would be everything; it would be life changing. A risk of his heart, one he wasn't sure he was ready to make, but might not have a choice.

And Evan (Isaiah's son)...he shines so bright in this book. A boy who's lived a rough life, seen the ugly side of people, and still isn't afraid to speak up and to fight for what he believes in. He's strong, he's brave...and he hugged my heart so tight in this book!

"I'm just like Victor, Dad. We don't have to come out because we wear it on our skin. You're huge and athletic and a macho professional football player, and if you don't tell people you're

gay, they never know, and even when you do tell them, they don't always believe you. If you wanted to, you could pass as straight. So, don't talk to me about me creating risk. I'm at risk because I can't hide who I am."

However, as much as I loved this book, there were a couple of things that kept me from rating this higher...because let me tell you...this book had some SERIOUS 5 star potential for me.

1. Certain scenes weren't included that I felt could have really added some depth and emotion to both the characters and the story arc. For example, I would have loved to see the morning after Isaiah and Victor's first night together, or their Vegas wedding, or the couple of days after they got married. Especially that last one. The author glossed over their first few days back home with a time jump and a throwaway sentence that they'd settled into a warm, homey and domestic routine. Isaiah, Victor, and Evan easily became a family and I really wanted to have seen that transition.

2. I wish the author would have went all the way with how committed Victor was about speaking up. I didn't need anything big, but just some mention of what he was doing. It was such a big part of his character and the big conflict between him and Isaiah...yet I felt it was something that was happening waaaay back in the background. Not too much mention of it.

Overall, this was a book that I really liked and if real life didn't get in the way, I would have easily gobbled this up in one sitting. I was drawn in by the characters, engaged in the story, and rooting for everyone. And damn it, I love me a nice grovel...and Isaiah delivers beautifully!

"To watch him dance is breathtaking. To hear him speak is uplifting. To observe him playing video games on the couch with our son is joyful. To have him smile at me is...a gift. To have him love me is priceless. To love him is humbling..."

Highly recommend this book! Pick it up and fall in love.

Pre-Review Thoughts:
(view spoiler)

**I've been informed that the "gender fluid" identification has been removed from the blurb (this was originally how Victor was described) so I am also removing it from my original posting saying that Victor is a "gender fluid ballet dancer."

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

Elsa Bravante says

Voy a ver muy sincera, siento que una vez más caí en la trampa de Twitter de la creación de expectativas sobre un libro que después de leerlo tengo muy claro que no lo merece. No es la primera vez que me pasa, pero va a ser la última, por supuesto no es el caso de todos los que les ha gustado el libro, hay gustos para todos, pero sí es el caso de muchos que se han guiado por amiguismos para vender un libro como algo que no es.

No lo he odiado, para nada, pero esto es lo que pasa con las expectativas, con los blurbs equivocados, etc..., los libros no sobreviven a ellas y sientes más la decepción que lo que podrías haber disfrutado. Uno más del montón, que prometía ser más y no tiene nada de especial. Es más, no tengo ningún problema con el comportamiento de los protagonistas, lo entiendo, pero podría entretenerme con algunas situaciones ridículas que se plasman, lo facilonas que son otras, todo el asunto del asilo...

No lo recomiendo a no ser que quieras una lectura fácil y que se te olvide a la media hora.

Hollis says

So, like many other folks in the book community, I got all a-twittah when I saw this book rec'd on Twitter, doubly so after reading the synopsis. However none of my expectations were met, and they were fairly low considering Covington is an another I have never heard of or read before, and I actually feel slightly.. misled.

First of all, I want to get the good out of the way : representation. It's there. What with a lead who is African-American, with an adopted biracial son who is also bisexual, and the romance between two men, I mean, that's pretty solid. Not to mention a lot of dialogue around human rights, queer activism, and speaking out against hate. Secondly, the trope. Who doesn't love the fake marriage/married for [insert reason that basically means avoiding sexytimes for most of the book to ratchet up expectations] trope. Delicious. Also there's a snarky Brit bestie who I enjoyed quite a bit.

However, the actual execution, the pretty mediocre writing, overexplanation of things that didn't need a simple explanation much less a complex one, glaringly obvious flubs or lack of proper set-up in some scenes (like, the big "okay fine we love each other, lets get married for real" moment happens in front of a giant audience and there's no mention of a microphone being turned off for the moment to be private. you want me to believe no one will make a stink over the fact that they just admitted their marriage was done for the sole reason to keep someone from being deported? that no fuss was made? I'm all for grand gestures but nope), some instances of corny dialogue (you're cute, no you're cute, no, youuu), stupid actions/reactions just to make the plot move (or not, as it were, two steps forward, four hundred back), and the total lack of a genderfluid character (as promised/described in the synopsis), left a lot to be desired and negated any potential fun or deliciousness.

The upside? This is novella length, so you won't be forced to invest much time in getting to the inevitable happily ever after. But sadly this felt like the rough draft of a good idea that should probably have a lot more time devoted to it. And maybe some actual effort to make a genderfluid character more than just an effeminate gay man who wears eyeliner.

1.5 "sex doesn't have to lead to feelings, I have conducted several experiments on this, and I can assure you

it's true" stars

** I received an ARC from NetGalley and the publisher (thank you!) in exchange for an honest review. **

Ele says

As a cis het woman, I don't think it's my place to say how a gender-queer character should/could/must be. However, I read Victor as a slightly effeminate man who identifies as male, and by the time I write this review the word "gender-fluid" doesn't exist in the blurb anymore, so take that as you will.

Now that this is out of the way...I really liked this book. And I LOVED Victor. Loved, loved, loved him. On one hand, Victor is loud and bold regarding gay rights in Russia. I loved his activist side. On the other, he's like a quiet force. Very put together and kind, but forthcoming and honest too.

Isaiah is the polar opposite. He hates confrontation and chooses to live quietly, without provoking others. Thumbs up for the great POC representation too. He's also a widower and pretty hung up on his late husband too, which is where most of the conflict comes from.

"It was truth time here in the moonlight, standing on the deck of the home he'd shared with the man he'd loved, and the truth was that he was looking at a man he could love just as much if he let go.

And that scared him."

I know that a lot of readers will want to smack Isaiah's head upside down. He really, really, REALLY pissed me off at some point when he started lashing out and blaming Victor for things that were really not his fault. But you know, I can see where he was coming from. He led a peaceful life, trying to provide a stable environment for Evan, and Victor came and changed all that. Add the fact that he started developing serious feelings for Victor and there you have it.

There is **a lot of tension and the relationship angst** that I adore. The fake marriage trope doesn't do much for me, normally. I always have to suspend disbelief, and although I felt the same here too, I found that it was done way better than most of the stories I've read.

The problem for me (thus the one star deduction) was that I felt that Isaiah's change of heart, or rather realisation of his feelings, wasn't that smooth. He went from pushing Victor away to "I love you" way too fast for me. Had the story been longer, there would have been more page time for Isaiah to redeem himself and come to terms with his feelings for Victor in a more natural way.

That said, I loved the grand gesture and the lovely epilogue, **a strong HEA**. The story is **very steamy**, and the sex scenes are scorching!

The side characters were great. Evan stole the show and I'd really love to read his story in the future. And Ian is begging for a story as well.

Overall, I liked the story. Looking forward to more MM from Mrs Covington.

.Lili. says

Overall, I enjoyed Isaiah and Victor's story. I loved the characters' connection to each other. I loved Isaiah's son, and Victor was easy to love- BUT Isaiah I had a hard time with. I understood where he was coming from but his argument started to feel weak, and his hot and cold behavior towards Victor started to grate on my nerves.

Not a slam dunk for me but saw lots of potential in the writing. I would try this author again.

3.5 Stars

Rosalinda *KRASNORADA* says

Sadly, this one didn't blow me away...

Boy, this book had potential. I hated the first 17% of the book but that's because I don't like the MCs getting together after at least 35%. Anyway there was a reason why they needed to get together when they did so the good part (for me) started at 20% aprox and it was working well despite the fact that there is no mention of Victor being fluid-gender (this didn't bother me at all to be honest but some readers were excited about this part as it's mentioned in the blurb).

I think I never connected with Isaiah and that was my main issue, he started being an idiot and until (view spoiler). I didn't feel the connection between them (view spoiler) and the only character I probably liked the most was Evan, Isaiah's son.

This being said, the book wasn't bad, I enjoyed the writing but the story didn't work for me.

J *deep in the heart of Texas* says

4.25 Stars!

I was a bit hesitant to read this one, but I can hardly say no when it comes to sports related books. And I'm really glad I gave this one a go.

I found this one to be rather angsty. Angry in that there were times I got that nervous feeling in my gut.

No doubt, at times Isaiah was 100% asshole. And when he was it completely gutted me for Victor. I really felt for him. In a way I got where Isaiah was coming from, he had a son to protect. And Victor was an easy available target. That didn't make it right. And it still made me rage.

But you could see Isaiah really cared about Victor, he just didn't always handle his feelings in the best way.

These two lit up the pages. They were super hot together. Off the charts chemistry.

I loved Victor. And I loved Evan (he definitely needs a book someday). I even loved the two best friends - Ian and Alan.

Not sure if this is this author's first foray in to MM, but I'm definitely impressed and hope we get more.

ARC kindly provided by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

~Mindy Lynn~ says

OUT TODAY 10/9/17

4 Stars!

Oh Victor, how I adore thee. He was the star of the book for me and I really loved his character. He was bold and brave. He was loud and proud. He was an activist who spoke out about his country, Russia and all of the awful horrible truths they do to their LGBTQ people. Then there was this other side to him; the dancer. The way he radiated passion and grace on the stage. The vulnerability he shows when he admits he wants to be a part of a loving relationship and a family. He is quite the diverse character. He stands strong in what he believes and isn't afraid to speak his mind. I really liked him. He was a very fleshed out character.

Isaiah was the complete opposite of Victor. He is quiet and private. He doesn't speak out for the LGBTQ community. He doesn't want the confrontation. He likes living his quiet life while raising his son, Evan. He's also still missing his husband who passed away 3 years ago due to a car accident. He's built his walls pretty high and doesn't want another relationship. He doesn't want to be tethered to another person who could leave him in the kind of heartbreak he has already suffered. But then he meets Victor. The attraction is there and they share a steamy night, but that is all Isaiah will allow because his attraction to Victor is too strong and it scares him to where that kind of attraction and connection could lead. All he knows it's to a place he doesn't want to go again.

Isaiah and Victor share an agent in Ian. Ian is meddlesome and loves to put himself in their business. So when Victor is denied asylum he calls on Isaiah to help him out and to fetch Victor from a bar where he's drinking his disappointment away. After sharing a few drinks together Isaiah figures the best way to save Victor's life and to help is to marry him. They don't think too long about this before they are bordering a jet to Vegas.

From here on throughout the book it gets pretty angsty. I went back and forth to liking and disliking Isaiah for his dickish treatment of Victor when he got upset. I understand as parents we can get pretty overprotective and lash out before we think when our kids are involved. But it didn't make the hurtful things he said to Victor right. Every time when I knew one of those moments were coming I literally cringed for Victor and just wanted to hug him. But Isaiah redeemed himself near the end of the book. He made a swoon worthy effort and it paid off.

Evan is an amazing character. I loved how vocal he was on his beliefs and how strongly he felt about who he

was. I loved when he had that big talk with his father. I felt proud of a 13 year old fictional character. I adored him. He was fierce.

I'm sucker for a sports book and even though this lacked actual sport play, I still really enjoyed it.

Happy reading dolls! xx

****I received an ARC by Netgalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review****

Judith says

2.5 Stars.

The blurb definitely had me excited. A gender fluid ballet dancer and a NFL player....just my thing. Unfortunately this did not live up to expectations.

The Story.

Victor is a Russian ballet dancer currently seeking asylum in the US. He's very vocal and passionate about gay rights, something he's not prepared to change.

Isaiah is a NFL player, preferring to live his life away from the public eye as much as possible. He lost his husband three years ago and is raising their adopted 14 year old son, Evan. He's terrified of going through the pain of loss again.

The two men hook up one night but Isaiah makes it very clear that's all it will be. When Victor is denied asylum Isaiah makes him an offer.....they will get married and have a marriage of convenience. No sooner said than done and off to Vegas they go!

Despite my rating this isn't a bad story but there is one issue that couldn't be overlooked. But, I'm going to start with what I liked,

-I really liked Victor, I thought he was a beautiful character inside and out and I absolutely loved how he bonded with Evan.

-Evan, I found him quite fascinating and would love to read his story when he's older.

-it's my first read by this Author and the writing style definitely worked for me.

Negatives,

-Victor is described in the blurb as being *Brash, loud, and gender fluid*. Firstly I really didn't consider him brash at all. He was loud in respect of his opinions but all he was doing was standing up for his beliefs. If I hadn't read the blurb for this there is absolutely no way I would have thought Victor was gender fluid. Wearing make up and one reference to lingerie DOES NOT make someone gender fluid. And his gender identity is never mentioned or discussed in the book. He came across as a slightly effeminate man and that's all. This is definitely a major issue as I'm sure a lot of people might be drawn to this book because of the blurb.

-I never really warmed to Isaiah and hated his treatment of Victor at times, he does redeem himself in the end but it was just a bit late for me.

Conclusion:

The blurb promised a lot but definitely didn't deliver.

Arc received from the publisher, via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.
