



Ashes

Taisha S. Ryan

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Life changed for Zara the night of her 21st birthday. Her best friend, Trish, was killed in a drunk driving accident. And it's all her fault. Burdened by guilt, Zara lived a life of drugs, sex, and destruction. Now 5 years later, she is sober, free and on probation. Ready to turn her life around, she calls up the one person she could trust, her sister, Reyna, who offers her a place to stay until she gets back on her feet. There's only one thing. Trish's older brother, Vance, who is also the best friend of Reyna's fiancé, is staying there as well, after a house fire renders him homeless. It's been years since the accident and he still hasn't gotten over his sister's death. He is full of rage. And will do anything in his power to make Zara's life a living hell. Just her luck. Now she has to endure months under the same roof as the man who hates her with every piece of his soul. Not to mention, the same man she's loved since her teenage years.

Will Zara ever find a way to make him forgive her for his sister's death? Will she ever learn to forgive herself? Or will the demons of the past destroy them beyond repair?

Ashes Details

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Author : Taisha S. Ryan

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Daisa says

Rating: 3.75

On a scale of 1 to will I read another book by Taisha S. Ryan. That will be a definite yes. Ashes was an entertaining book with a semi-complex storyline, characters I enjoyed and there were only very small things that I found to be problematic.

Zara is your typical black sheep of the family. She's a difficult kid, turned fast teen, turned troubled adult. Burdened with the guilt of being responsible for the death of her best friend because of one stupid decision, leads her to a path of money, sex, and drugs. Ashes begins with Zara wanting to turn her life around, stay clean, and be a better human being. The first step to her achieve those goals is to reconnect with and move in with her older sister Reyna and her fiance Rodney... The only thing is, her best friend's brother Vance, the man Zara has been in lust with since she was a teenager, the same man who hates Zara with every fiber of his being for taking his sister away from him, is also temporarily, living at Reyna and Rodney's house *dun dun dunnn*

I'm not going to lie, I'm a sucker for the hate to love trope. I love seeing a relationship blossom from one of contention and enmity to intense passion and love. What I ALSO love is reading books with a storyline that I have absolutely ZERO faith can be even remotely believable, and having the authors prove me wrong. For example, a few years back, I read a book about a black woman and a White Supremacist falling in love because I thought there was no way in hell, the author was going to make me believe that something like that could happen, even in a fictional world. Not only that, but I was also confident that the author would in NO way succeed in making me root for the two characters as a couple. I was proven wrong on BOTH fronts.

I went into Ashes with the same approach. I wanted to see how and if Taisha was going to make me believe, that a man could fall in love with a woman whose senseless stupidity, caused an accident that resulted in his young sister's death. Did Taisha succeed in making me believe? For the most part, Yes.

Though at times it seemed forced, the interactions between Zara and Vance were convincing. The conflicted emotions they both experienced as their feelings developed and their relationship progressed, was plausible. I bought it...I just wished there was more to their story than those conflicted emotions and feelings. I would have liked to read about the time they spent with one another that made those feelings of hatred that Vance initially had, dissipate. I would have liked to read about the moments they had with one another that made Zara's feelings for Vance progress from just lingering feelings of teenaged lust to love. I just wanted MORE.

Besides Zara and Vance, I enjoyed the rest of the characters and their roles in moving the story forward. I appreciate the fact that despite all that they went through Zara's sister Reyna always had her back and was there for her when she needed her. I loved the relationship between Vance and Rodney and the rest of their friends. The moments of bantering and ribbing between them was fun to read.

But this leads me to the "problematic" issues. Issues that are presented not only in this novel but other books, in movies and on television as well. I see it all the time, men and their friends are always depicted as these close-knit, ride or die, loyal units, which is fine. The problem I find is that in the same exact stories, our women are depicted as catty, manipulative, sneaky and untrustworthy. There isn't a single female relationship in this novel (besides Zara and Reyna but they don't count because they are sisters) that was not

shadowed by some form of negativity.

I know that not everyone in the universe gets along and that goes for both men and women. However, I feel like the perpetuation of the stereotype that women can never get along or be friends needs to stop. Especially when the author is a woman themselves. I find it hard to believe that these authors and movie/tv show writers don't have a single healthy and thriving relationship with another female to draw inspiration from and include in their work. Two of the closest people in my life that aren't related to me by blood, are women and I have no doubt in my mind that they would never do anything to betray or hurt me. These relationships exist and if we are going to show the men in these books as loyal and supportive of one another, there should be a balance the same should be shown for the women.

All in all, Ashes was definitely a book I thoroughly enjoyed and was able to finish it in a little over 24 hours. Taisha Ryan as a few other novels in her catalogue and I definitely intend to check them out.

Shanie B. says

Classic book

I read "Cuffed" by this same author and I liked it. This book showed her growth as an author and I absolutely loved this book. I loved Zara and Vance's journey and I felt every emotion they experienced. The book felt so real and raw. The harsh reality of love after loss and heartbreak. And learning to forgive those that have wronged us because no one's perfect.

Nicole says

Really good read! I enjoyed the love/hate between Vance and Zara because it really held my attention. I was rooting for him to forgive her but the road was rocky and I felt bad about the people that got hurt in the process! The hateful words people spewed toward one another in this book would make me want to punch them in the throat and render them speechless! And poor Sean! Everything he said about a damaged woman not being able to accept love was sooooooooooooo true. I don't want to give any spoilers but read it and you will see that this is a really good book.

Daphne says

Hurt people hurt people

Wow Zara had issue after issue. She had to live with losing her friend for the rest of her life. She had such a heavy burden to bear. Vance was broken as well, he wanted to blame Zara for his pain instead of facing it and moving forward. How they came together was crazy, I didn't want that for Zara. She was looking for love in all the wrong places, not realizing she had to love, and forgive, herself first.

Nee says

Omg!!!! This book was Soooo good! Plz read it! This book need a part 2

Paulette L. Jones says

Second chances....we all deserve them. This was a great display of how life does exactly what it wants and we are just along for the ride. Good read.

Tamara says

3.5 Stars - This book was kind of heavy and dealt with many issues from:: addiction, death, prostitution, guilt, suicide, miscarriage, family issues, etc.

There was plenty going on and plenty for the author to work with, so much so, at times it felt a bit overwhelming. Almost to the point, that I wished that she had focused on just a few of the issues above instead of lopping them all together in one book that was essentially a HEA.

I remember saying "WOW, whew! I'm glad that's over!" not because it wasn't a good book, but because I wanted so much more for Zara and Vince... Even if that meant that they couldn't be together.

This was my second book by this author and overall, I enjoy her themes, so I would definitely give her another try.

Pamela Johnston Ward says

This was a great read. It had me on the edge of my seat wanting more. It could be real life the way that it was written. It depicts a lot of emotions that are involved with love, lust, hurt, heartache and pain. It goes from pure hatred to true love. This is a must read for any and everyone who has ever gone through anything in their life including substance abuse. It shows how you can hit rock bottom, but still end up on top. This was my first read by this author, and I am looking forward to reading more of her work.

Shakeria Sharie says

I enjoyed this read. It was great from beginning to end. I'm glad I gave it a chance!

Maxine J. says

I saw the reviews and this book's high rating but I did not think it was going to be that good! It was very well

written and at no point was I bored because the writer was adding words for the hell of it. If you get the chance to read this you should; I can't believe my luck that it was a Kindle Unlimited novel.

Andrea Williams says

Wow!!!

This book was great! First I love that it was a STANDALONE and second I love the ending. Zara went thru and lot but turned it around at the end. I would recommend this book to any one especially some one struggling with an addiction. 5 star book!!

Tonii Tonii says

Very Very Very Good

This was a very good book. I loved the whole storyline. The character Zara and Vance was very relatable. This is going down as one of my favorite book. I will definitely be reading more from this author.

Sylvia says

Good book

I give this a four the way Zara never give up on love or believe she deserved a second chance . I love the loyalty from for sister.

Mirrlees says

The emotions I went thru reading this book was well worth it. Excellent read. Zara went through some trials but only to find herself not 100% but some peace in the end.

Elle1986 says

3.5 stars
