



Back To Us

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Abandoned by her parents at fourteen, Jessica knows what it means to struggle. She's vowed that getting her degree is the only thing she has time for, until a summer internship brings Justin into her life.

But Justin has scars of his own. A tour of duty in Afghanistan has left him with wounds. A medical discharge from the Navy leaves Justin struggling to make sense of his new reality. Then he meets Jessica; but can the two of them leave their pain in the past and make a future together?

Back To Us Details

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From Reader Review Back To Us for online ebook

Tanya (Girl Plus Books) says

3.75 STARS

Jessica and Justin are both dealing with scars from their pasts - some obvious and some hidden. Justin is struggling to adjust to a life he never imagined. With his military career over, he tries to find a new path while still dealing with the aftermath of his previous life. College student Jessica is focused and determined to lead a better life than the abusive childhood that left her abandoned and living in a group home. A summer job spent tutoring kids at a community center introduces her to fellow staff member, Justin, and a friendship starts to blossom into something more. But her insecurities and his struggle to forge a new life make for a rocky path to a possible future together.

I was drawn to Back To Us because of Justin's military background and the topic of PTSD. My husband is a veteran who served 20 years in the U.S. Navy and stories that honor our servicemen and women, while showcasing their sacrifice and the aftermath of their service, are near and dear to my heart. Roman did a wonderful job of portraying Justin and his struggles in a realistic way. My heart ached for him as he tried to come to terms with his new reality. He was angry and bitter at times, at both his situation and the life he imagined but would never have. Jessica was also a likable character, one who had worked hard to overcome a horrible childhood. While she was independent and hard-working, she still carried insecurities from years of emotional abuse and the parents who basically abandoned her. I loved seeing these two characters get to know one another and start to open themselves up to a new relationship even though they were both hesitant to take a chance. While I would have liked to have seen more depth to both their characters, this was still a heartfelt and emotional story that I enjoyed and recommend.

This review was originally published at GIRL PLUS BOOKS.

Jess says

full review!

<http://princessicaofbooks.wordpress.com>

I received a copy for review from the author. This in no way has affected my review.

Two things-- I don't usually read eBooks or novellas so I was kind of out of my comfort zone on this one. However, I tried not to let that effect my review. I actually quite enjoyed *Back to Us*. At first, I thought it was kind of mediocre, probably a solid three. There is some insta- love but not much. I finally got into it about 50 or so pages in. I found the second half more enjoyable. There was definitely a lot of character growth; basically the whole point of this story. I like how they each grew separately then together as a couple, overcoming their pride.

For such a short book, *Back to Us*, has a lot of feelings. I didn't get too caught up in it but it was cute and sad and joyful. I definitely recommend this if you want a short but feeling-packed story.

Because it was so short, it lacked some imagery as well as explanations and details. That's probably one of the few parts I did not enjoy. I couldn't get attached to the characters or story itself. A lot was dialogue but it moved the story along at a good pace.

Overall, this is a fairly enjoyable novella. I am giving it 4/5 petunia petals.

Ann Omasta says

My heartstrings have officially been pulled! Honestly, it took me a while to get into this book. This was likely because I've been overly distracted and shouldn't be taken as a poor reflection of the author or this work. I kept reading and before I knew it, I was looking forward to sneaking in an extra chapter on my lunch break to see what happened with these two damaged, but likable characters. Both of them have troubled backgrounds, and the demons of their pasts cast a dark shadow over their current relationship. As they struggled to overcome their issues, I couldn't help but root for them to get "Back to Us." This book is another excellent pick from the Kindle Scout program.

Maggie says

Pulls on the heartstrings

Can two young people aged beyond their tender years overcome their early adversities and risk it all for love? That's the story question Kindle Scout winning author Teresa Roman poses in her new book.

Jessica and her brother were abandoned by their parents in the US. Their parents literally left them here and went back to Croatia. Jessie went through the "system" and managed to reconnect with her older brother after high school. On top of her abandonment, she endured years of belittling verbal abuse from her father, and one incident where he became physical with her. Consequently, her dating radar is all messed up and she attracts the wrong kind of guys. But she's determined to beat her father's soundtrack in her head and work her way through college. Dating isn't a priority for her.

Justin comes from a close-knit, white collar family. Handsome, athletic, smart – the world was his oyster to crack, but he didn't want what his parents wanted and joined the military. A few months later he returned from Afghanistan missing two legs. His fiancé moved on and he turned inward. Finally, finally, he comes out of his shell to volunteer at a community center near his Manhattan home. After a year there, he gets hired on as a staff member. He doesn't tell new people about his missing legs because of his prosthetics, but he still has horrible nightmares.

That's where this story begins, at the Community Center where these two meet one summer. There's an intricate dance of attraction, miscommunication, hurt feelings, and stonewalled secrets that drive the plot. I kept turning the pages and read this book in one sitting. Well done!

Maggie Toussaint and Rigel Carson for Muddy Rose Reviews

Pearl Angeli says

4 Stars

Back To Us is a story about two broken characters who started as strangers and who eventually became friends until they realized that they fell in love with each other. Things were not that easy for **Justin** and **Jessica** though, because these characters have inner battles they're fighting and their issues were the main reason why getting into a relationship was difficult. Jessica's parents abandoned her and her brother when she was 14 and since then, she has been living independently. Justin's life, on the other hand, changed when he came back home with a broken soul after he experienced an accident in the military.

This book is not your typical love story with broken characters. It has something more than romance. It was emotionally-driven and it narrated true-to-life situations. I loved that it tackled family dilemmas and life after horrible accidents, too.

What made this book remarkable was the **strength of the characters**. Jessica awed me. She's very dependent and tough and despite everything that happened to her, she didn't lose hope.

"That's what happened when your parents decided to dump you before you even started high school. Sink or swim, and I was one of the best swimmers I knew."

And although Justin was vulnerable at the start (He constantly wallowed in self-pity), he developed in the later parts and decided to stand up on his own which made me teary-eyed.

It's also quite amazing how Back To Us reminded me of the book Me Before You. You know, stories with physically and emotionally scarred heroes. :'(

When it comes to the ending, it was emotional and beautiful. I just wished that things between Jessica and her parents were settled. It could have been better if there was a resolution with her family in the end. As a whole, it was a great and a heartfelt read and full of life lessons, too. I loved the author's writing which was simplistic and easy. I definitely recommend this book if you love emotional romance stories like Me Before You or Nicholas Sparks books. And oh, before you start wondering if it has a sad ending, nope. Your heart is safe. :)

(Thank you to the author Teresa Roman for sending me a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review!)

Christine says

2.5/3 Stars

My opinion and may have a few spoilers.

Here is what I liked:

The characters and the story. I loved that this story was not insta-love. Great premise.

This is what I did not like:

There was TOO much detail. It took me awhile to get into the story. I almost DNFed the story because there was no point to some of the extensive detail. Not sure if an editor points that out to an author.

For example:

- The heroine had to describe in great detail about the Chinese takeout her brother got. (loc 4%)
- Then the heroine explains in great detail about her cat, Buddy. (loc 4%) A simple I have a cat and this is how I got him would have worked.
- The paragraph about her sitting and feeling bad about not having anything to do but getting paid could have been one sentence. It did not detail about how if she knew she would have brought a book, etc. (loc 5%) Too much inner dialogue.

There are a bunch more. These all felt like fillers. I do not need to know every detail or every thought that went through the heroine's head.

The ending felt rushed and unbelievable especially the part about the mother and the heroine. Instead of so much detail about the cat, the AC (loc 8%), or about Melanie's family, more detail should have been spent explaining how Justin's mother came to "like" Jessica. I mean they went from hating each other to the happy epilogue. HUH?!?!? Maybe the author should have added Justin's POV (one chapter or two) about he was changing during their "off" time. That would not have been a filler.

The middle part of the book was good. I mean I thought "wow, it got better", but the author wrote that quick, unrealistic ending. I rather have a realistic ending without a full HEA. Not everything had to end in a HEA.

Heather says

BACK TO US is what I'd call a "real" romance with great, realistic character layering. Jessica and Justin are pretty much perfect for each other, but they are far from perfect individually. They each have intense pasts to deal with, and they have to learn, together, how to let each other help. Author Teresa Roman did a great job of developing Jessica and Justin's characters as they learn to focus on the core of what drew them together in the first place.

Mariela says

Thanks to Xpresso Book Tours for the review copy!

For some reason it is difficult to write long reviews when I really liked a book, because there is nothing wrong in it to point out, you know? And this is the case, I absolutely adored this book, it is about trust and learn to love your other half not matter what. Justin and Jessica were made for each other.

Mike, Jessica's brother, was a great character, it surprised me how wise and mature he turned out to be. He and Mel were great together.

Justin's mom was the 'villain' in this book, I disliked her a lot.

My requests to Teresa Roman:

1- I would like to read a book about Mike and Mel.

2- I also would like to read a small story about Justin and Jessica's HEA. I would love to read about them being parents.

3- I liked Jeff (Justin's brother) a lot so I would love to read a book about him.

Great book!

Elisabeth says

I liked the story of the 2 main characters struggling to overcome the hardships imposed on them by life. I liked their romance, and the honest and honorable nature of their affection for each other. But I have to admit that the aspect I liked the most was the setting. I lived in NYC for many years as a teenager, and the description, the setting, the actions of the characters through the city, it all felt so real. I can imagine that the author really lived there. I also think that in this day and age of so many YA books having misogynistic undertones, it's nice to read one in which the main character upholds her self-respect and her love interest is good to her. They have their troubles, clearly, and of course they hurt each other because that happens in relationships, but through it all they are loving to themselves and to all the people in their lives. It's a very touching story.

Cheryl (I Heart Fictional People) says

Review originally posted on my blog I Heart Fictional People

INITIAL THOUGHTS

The title and the cover intrigued me from the start. And after I read the synopsis, I knew I had to read it. I'm a sucker for two damaged people with their own haunted pasts who come together, fall in love, and make each other's lives better.

WHAT I LIKED

Oh where do I start? I loved everything about this book. It was one of those feel-good books that you just can't put down because you just HAVE to know what happens to these characters you grow so attached to. I read it in almost one sitting. If I didn't have a job and a toddler to take care of, I would have devoured it in one day. But, let me get to the specifics...

The romance. Let's just jump right into it. The romance was the heart of the story. Pretty much instantly, you feel for both Jessica and Justin. Jessica had a horrible childhood and is still affected by her poor excuses for parents. Justin, on the other hand, had a great childhood, but is still suffering from what he went through during a tour in Afghanistan. I just wanted to reach in the book and hug them both. But that was the best part about this relationship. They not only had to learn to love each other, but they had to learn to love themselves. They taught each other that they are good enough just the way they are and they're worthy of having that type of love that neither of them thought was possible. And that makes this a beautiful story.

The different family dynamics. I loved the different relationships in this book. Jessica and her brother are close, and I see them as this team that has faced a lot of bad times together, but they were there for each other and will always be. The mother-son relationship between Justin and his mom is unique as well. While she loves him and only wants what is best, she may approach things in a hurtful way. And those are just two examples. I really liked that family was such a focal point of this story, and the many different types of relationships was explored, which was so realistic.

The writing. The writing was so good! This is definitely an author I will keep my eye on. The pace was perfect. Jessica and Justin gradually got to know one another, and the time it took for them to fall for each other was believable. I'm so glad it wasn't one of those instant-soulmate-let's-get-married relationships. And the characters were just so real to me. I always tell myself that when I care about the characters enough to lose sleep over because I just have to know what happens to them, then I know I'm reading a book written by a brilliant author, and that is exactly what happened here.

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE

Okay, this wasn't a huge, huge deal, but I kind of wanted a bit more depth, maybe some more raw emotions from the two lead characters. Don't get me wrong. This book definitely gave me the feels, but I just wanted more, especially because these two people have gone through so much. BUT, that is really the only complaint I have.

OVERALL THOUGHTS

Awesome book! I would definitely read this one again. It was this sweet romance between these people who deserve to be loved but don't know how to love themselves, and it was just so enjoyable to see these characters grow individually and together. Trust me. You will have a hard time putting this one down. I am now a Teresa Roman fan, and I hope to see a lot more books by her.

I received a copy of this book from the author via Enchanted Book Promotions in exchange for an honest review

Hanna says

Such a real take on a relationship with two very damaged people.

Eleanore June says

I couldn't get enough of this book. I really loved it. In fact I didn't get anything done today because I was reading it.

The reveal was so well done. I loved both Justin and Jess. And the brothers - all of them!

I also loved the timeline this book took. It wasn't a whirlwind 2 weeks and we are in love thing. Believable relationships take time. I'm glad this one took the time and showed more complex issues with parents. It made it very real and enjoyable.

I hope this author writes more!

Dawn says

I was given a free copy of this book as part of the Kindle Scout program. I was torn between 3 and 4 stars. This was a sweet easy read love story. Justin is a damaged Navy vet, Jessica was abused as a child and left by her parents. They connect because of their broken parts. I was leaning with 3 stars because it really was just a quick easy read. Not a whole lot of depth to it. No big surprises. I decided on 4 stars because once I started reading it I couldn't put it down. I enjoyed Justin and Jessica both. Would be a good beach book. Enjoy, I did.

Laurel Osterkamp says

Back To Us is an emotional romance that I highly recommend. It's told in the first person POV; Jessica has had a hard life but she describes her struggles in a strong, warm voice. I understand that this is Roman's first novel but reading it, I never would have thought so. She uses specifics and vivid details to draw us into the romance between Justin and Jessica, and the character development was great. I particularly liked Jessica's relationship with her brother, Mike, and the contrast of their personalities. It is a quick read, but as you turn the pages, there are constantly revelations that add to the plot and lead to a satisfying resolution. Well worth the time!

Poulami says

Originally posted on Daydreaming Books.

I received a digital copy of this book from Xpresso Book Tours in exchange for an honest review.

Back To Us was a light read, it had a lot of potential but it felt flat for me. It had a promising start but somewhere towards the middle the rhythm got lost. Nonetheless I did enjoy this book, I just didn't fall in love with it.

The story is about Jessica and Justin. Jessica's financial condition is not so good. She had a pretty rough childhood and now she lives with her brother Mike. She got a summer job in a community centre where she meets Justin for the first time. The two of them connect because of their tragic past yet trust remains an issue between them. As things heat up between them, they have to decide if they want to leave things as they were or take a chance on each other and move forward.

The plot leans towards the poor girl rich boy storyline which is usually not my thing. But still the story started slow and steady which I liked. But I would have liked a few more interactions, heart to heart conversations between them before they decided to take things on the next level but nonetheless I enjoyed their relationship. **I was glad it was not insta-love but I didn't feel any depth in their relationship either** which was a bummer. It took a lot of time for Justin to trust her back, of course his issues were much bigger being an amputee but still, it was like he was forcing her out of his life because of the guilt he felt when she repeatedly tried to tell him it didn't matter. It was frustrating, it felt the plot was moving back and forth without moving towards any conclusion. The ending felt rushed, they got back together so fast, it felt unrealistic and we were just told the other things which happened at the end when I actually wanted to see those incidents play out.

The characters were okay for me. I didn't feel much attached to them. Jessica had a pretty bad childhood, her father practically disowned her and her brother. Since then she had been living on her own. **I liked Jessica's strength and independent nature and also that she didn't easily quit and fought back.** Justin worked as a medic in the navy but after a tragic incident he lost both of his legs. He struggled very much and lost his self confidence. But with Jessica he wanted to be better and more but most of the time his insecurities won. I wanted to see his character evolve but unfortunately we didn't get to see that because the ending was rushed. But I did love Mike, he had quite a few bad habits but he was a great big brother and he was always there for Jessica.

The writing was simple and easy to read. This book wasn't too long, so I easily finished it in one sitting. **The pace was even throughout the book.**

Overall, *Back To Us* was an okay read for me. The plot was clichéd, the starting was good but it didn't manage to keep me interested throughout the book. The characters were somewhat okay and I enjoyed the romance but I wanted more depth to it. The writing was smooth and the pace was even throughout the book.

Recommend it?

Maybe if you like this kind of plot.
