



First Time, Forever

K.C. Burn

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Derrick and Trevor used to have an incredibly passionate relationship, full of spontaneity and sizzle. Now that their son is off to college, they want to put their days of routine, vanilla sex behind them and bring back some of that spark.

Realizing that they're empty-nesters, Trevor begins to notice their age difference. He suddenly feels old and unsure of himself, and isn't confident Derrick still desires him. When Trevor decides to keep his health issues and gray hairs *down there* to himself, Derrick is hurt by his partner's secretive behavior and thinks Trevor must be having an affair.

Nothing could be further from the truth, but Trevor doesn't know how to communicate his fears to his partner. He desperately wants to reconnect with Derrick and rev up their sex life, but will it be enough to reclaim their marital bliss?

24,000 words

First Time, Forever Details

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From Reader Review First Time, Forever for online ebook

Karen says

4.5 stars

This novella is almost painfully real in capturing how quickly, in certain circumstances, a relationship can experience misunderstanding, a breakdown in communication, and suppressed sexuality. (For those who like sex scenes, don't worry. They're still there.) The author does a great job at explaining the situations and feelings each character is experiencing. As new empty-nesters, the younger man is working long hours and is unavailable, while the older man is stressing about his upcoming 40th birthday and signs of aging.

The story deals well with things we withhold from our partner due to fears, worries, and assumptions. It also addresses how much a child naturally becomes the focus of daily routine and how a void of uncertainty can open up when the child moves out of the household. Ultimately, it's about thinking beyond oneself, reaching out, and reconnecting with one another.

Just as a number of m/m romance readers don't like insta-love and other shortcuts that *undermine* the believability of a relationship, I appreciate it when the believability is *enhanced* by sidestepping some of the genre tropes and dealing with non-standard issues. In this case: the stresses encountered when a relationship appears to be crashing and burning, and the damper placed on one's sexual self-image by the angst of aging.

Some readers without children and some readers who are still far from middle age may not be able to relate to some of the dynamics and themes of this book. Even knowing there would be a happy ending, it was still a little hard to read--but only because it captures real life a little too accurately!

mw138 says

Married couple, Trevor and Derrick, just sent their son off to college and are now experiencing an empty house for the first time in years. While they miss their son, there's no denying the fact that years of extra caution can now be thrown out the window and they can act like the wanton couple they once were. However, increased health issues, a few stray hairs and being weeks away from turning 40 causes Trevor pull away from his younger husband.

Confused by Trevor's behavior, Derrick tries to do small, romantic things to put the spark back in the relationship. Unfortunately those gestures are either ignored or shot down. Due to their busy work schedules they barely see each other at home and when they do, their interactions are tense, cold and awkward. At his wit's end, Derrick's insecurities begin to get the best of him. As both men deal with their fears, their relationship slowly starts to unravel.

I enjoyed this story because it featured a well-established, married couple. It's full of angst, mostly brought on by a lot of miscommunication from both Trevor and Derrick, but it was nice to be inside each man's head throughout. My heart broke a little for Derrick as he tried to salvage his once strong relationship, and I empathized with Trevor as he struggled with aging and fearing that that love of his life might leave him. *First Time, Forever* was a touching and poignant story from start to finish.

Sadonna says

[made a last ditch effort that kicked Trevor in the ass

Lenore says

This is a novella about a married gay couple who tries to reconnect sexually after their son leaves home to go to college.

It wasn't bad, in general. It's just that, even though the MCs came across as hot and caring for each other, I couldn't connect with their emotions. The major suspension of disbelief I had to exercise didn't help either. I know men have no real skills in communication but this was too much. They both walked around in a permanent state of arousal, wanting each other like crazy, but they couldn't find the time to be together or talk even once for weeks and weeks, until the miscommunication almost ruined their marriage? It made me wonder how they had managed to stay together all these years.

Also, the major sex scene (the one that really happened between them) wasn't what I expected. After what they had gone through, after all the pent up sexual frustration, I expected to see wild, swing-from-the-chandeliers sex. It didn't happen.

But anyway. It was a perfectly decent story, compared to other similar stuff I've read. And I wasn't bored or tempted to skim.

R * A Reader Obsessed * says

3.5 Stars

The blurb isn't lying. This book is all about non/miscommunication.

I admit I typically do not like this kind of set up if it's thrown in as a trite plot device, but knowing that the entire story IS about the lack of proper communication, I was completely fine with it.

This was well written and had in abundance what I typically like my angsty romances to have - longing, want, doubt, insecurity. Make no mistake these poor guys go through all of these emotions in spades. Both Derrick and Trevor's love for each other was impressive, but one instance of no communication rapidly digresses into a shit storm of assumptions, frustration, and hurt. A myriad of excuses from avoiding embarrassment to sparing the other's feelings to being inundated with real life responsibilities, are all reasonable scenarios to not talk about something, since often it is easier to not say anything at all.

Despite situation after situation of not connecting, the feels were realistically portrayed. Bonus points to some sexy reminiscing, a hot improvised home made video, and a tender claiming finale, all of which tied this up in a nice package for you to enjoy the happy ever after.

Lasha says

2.75 stars

I've read a number of KC Burn's books, and have enjoyed them all. Which is why I was very surprised when *First Time, Forever* did not measure up to her previous novels. The story tells the tale of Derrick and Trevor, a married couple who just dropped their son off at college. Feeling free for the first time in years, the two men hope to explore the steamier side of their sexual relationship now that their son is out of the house. However, misunderstandings, a bad wax job and long work hours might interfere with their plans.

In *First Time, Forever*, we get 40 year old Trevor, who runs an antique store and his thirtysomething husband, Derrick. In the early days before Trevor's son (Luke) moved in with them, they were adventurous in the bedroom, then parenthood took over and staid, vanilla lovemaking became the norm. Now that Luke is off at college, both Trevor and Derrick cannot seem to keep their minds off of sex. In fact, all they do is think about sex: tying each other up, spankings, sex on darkly colored sheets. However, there is no actual nookie with Trevor and Derrick in the same room until 91% into the novel. (Although there are a couple of solo sessions with each man.)

I had two main problems with *First Time, Forever* that stifled my enjoyment of it. First, Derrick and Trevor were walking erections. All they ever did was talk about their boners, hard-ons and how erect they were when thinking about each other. At first, it was enjoyable, but by the time the 10th erectile moment came, I was a little frightened they might have a medical issue. I get that the author was trying to ramp up the UST before the big reunion, but after awhile, I just couldn't read any more about their penises.

Second, the Big Misunderstanding; which kept Trevor and Derrick from getting it on until much later in the book. It did not work for me. Yes, the bad wax job that Trevor got that prevented him having sex with Derrick in the back yard was funny, but everything else seemed too dramatic and I wanted them just to sit down and TALK with each other and get their relationship issues sorted out — which they did 88% into the book.

For me, what could have been a fun, sexy romp of two men re-exploring each other and their sexuality turned into a cliché of the Big Misunderstanding plot to keep them apart. While *First Time, Forever* is well-written and edited, it was not in my estimation KC Burn's best work (I think *Cop Out* is.) Now, I really wavered between 2.75 and 3 stars for this review, but in the end this May-December romance's slow pacing, constant repetition and raging boners ultimately dragged the rating down for me.

Reviews by Jessewave

Jayhjay says

This review was originally published on my blog Joyfully Jay

First Time, Forever opens up with Trevor and Derrick dropping their son Luke off at college. Luke used to live with his mother, but after her death Trevor gained custody and Luke moved in with the two men.

Although Derrick was relatively young at the time to be raising a then 14 year old, the men had a solid relationship and were both ready and enthusiastic about being full-time parents.

Having Luke around definitely took a toll on their private life however. The men were used to having lots of sexual freedom and having a child in the house obviously restricted some of their activities. In addition, they had to fight Luke's grandparents for custody and, as a result, felt the need to keep their sex lives especially low key. Plus, both men's work schedules are crazy and their time together somewhat limited.

Now that Luke is out of the house, Derrick and Trevor are hoping for a chance to bring back the spark from their early days together. Yet complications keep getting in the way. Trevor finds out he has high cholesterol, injures his shoulder, and discovers some grey hairs. At 40, he is six years older than Derrick and he worries that Derrick will no longer find him attractive. He becomes quite insecure and afraid to share his aging anxieties with Derrick, thus avoiding some intimacy. And Derrick keeps reaching out to Trevor only to be rebuffed due to Trevor's insecurities, making him think Trevor no longer wants him either. Instead of becoming closer, the guys are drifting apart and both fear that this is the end of things between them.

So this book grabbed my attention after I read the blurb because it features two guys who are empty-nesters after their son goes off to college. I liked the idea of exploring the changes that come into your life when you have kids, and how things would readjust once again when they are out of the house. When you have a baby, your life totally changes overnight. And when your kids are gone, in many ways it totally changes again. As the mom of two elementary school aged girls, I can relate to the fact that relationships evolve when kids are around and I was really interested to see where the author took things with the story. Unfortunately, I felt the book got stuck in sort of an endless loop of misunderstandings and never really took off for me.

My biggest issue was that Trevor and Derrick are constantly assuming the worst in every possible situation. I am not a fan of the "big misunderstanding" plots, but I felt like this was death by a million little misunderstandings. Virtually every single thing that happens is misinterpreted by the other. Luke comes home for dinner? It must be because Trevor doesn't want to spend time alone with Derrick. One has to work? Must be avoiding the other. Over and over again throughout the story. And I couldn't understand where all this insecurity was coming from. I totally get their lives have changed, but I had a hard time understanding why they both suddenly think the worst in reaction to every thing that happens.

It doesn't help that both are freaking out about all these relationship issues, yet never actually talk to one another about them. I get that they are busy, but instead of addressing it they just feel miserable. Which leads me to a secondary issue, which is that the guys are virtually never together throughout the book. I didn't really realize it until the end, but we are in the heads of one or another the whole time, and we hear their thoughts about what is going on, but we rarely see them interact directly. Amazingly, even two of their three sex scenes occur when they are not together. So as a result, I felt like there was a lot of "telling" going on, and not as much seeing things develop.

Another issue I had a hard time with was accepting that their sex life had to be virtually non-existent with Luke around. Ok, I have kids. So I COMPLETELY get that it is hard to have a lot of spontaneity when there is a child in the house. But come on, they can only have sex on Saturday nights when Luke is asleep? He was in high school; he is never out of the house for a few hours? Never sleeps at a friend's house? Again, I so get that having a kid around forces you to dial things down, but this just seemed so extreme as to be unrealistic.

Last thing, I promise. Ok, forty is not dead. There was so much discussion on Trevor's part about how he is practically falling apart now that he is 40. He is fit, relatively young, and pretty healthy. And Derrick is only 6 years younger. So I did feel that an awful lot is made of the age issue unnecessarily.

Ok, so boy that sounds like I hated the book, doesn't it? Well, I really didn't. There was a lot about it that I enjoyed and that did work for me. I liked the set up and I liked both Derrick and Trevor. I thought they were interesting characters that had me rooting for them to work things out. And I really enjoyed the ending and loved how it all got resolved (especially the very hot store sex scene). I wish that I hadn't had so many issues because I feel like there was a great concept in there, it just didn't all come together for me the way that I had hoped.

Ami says

While it's a little bit hard to believe that Trevor and Derrick never had 'date night' for five years after Trevor's son moving in with them (I mean, really?? Not once?! Not using the benefit of hotel and that teens would love to spend the night at their friends'??); but I find this story quite cute, actually.

I always like stories about established couple and their problems. Reading how both men struggling with their issues (Trevor thinks he's getting too old for Derrick; Derrick wonders if Trevor is looking for the next new adventure now that Derrick is not a 'twink' anymore) is pretty moving for me.

I know it's easy to say to the characters that "communication is the key", but even in real life we have failure to communicate. It's just a fact of life. So I enjoy the miscommunication, the angst, the lack of confidence, the trying to get things right, and the wonderful ending. Sweet without being overdone.

Beck says

This was a DNF for me ... I had a couple of problems with this story which kept me from finishing ... firstly, I resented the implication that turning 40 was old!!! ... I'm in my mid 40's and despite the odd ache, twinge and pain, I don't consider 40 (or 45) the end of the world! Trevor's constant harping about his age and the changes occurring to his body, just annoyed me ... try giving birth to 4 kids and then we can start talking worn out mate! ... My second issue was that I found the reading experience dragged my mood down ... I don't mind reading the odd angst-y novel or even a book that has me weeping till the snot drips off my chin, but this story just depressed me ... I persevered till the 40% mark but then I decided to give up before I decided I needed to enter an old-persons retirement facility because of my advanced age!

Victoria love books says

Overall book rating: 3.5 Stars

Audio book: Narrator - Charlie Belmont 4 Stars

Book cover: 3 Stars

This was sweet and sad rolled up into one. It made me think...

Alex says

Overall

This tale of two empty-nesters trying to reclaim the passion they once had in the bedroom while each thinks the other is no longer interested relies solely on the characters to carry the story. Although there is little plot and all of it is relatively predictable due to the nature of the story, this is a nice exploration of two men who love one another but let life and fear get in the way. This is neither a bad story, nor a great one. It's enjoyable, but mellow.

Strengths

The driving strength in this story is the depth of emotion these struggling men evoke. Initially I didn't really *feel* their pain, but as the story continued and they attempted again and again to fix the relationship, I was sucked into their quandary and ached each time they *thought* the other wasn't interested. What is especially nice about this story is that it is written from both character's perspectives, so while we suffer while each suffers, we also get to see the opposite perspective and understand why what happened happened and how the other is feeling. The majority of the novella is bitterly sweet, but thankfully ends on a happier note.

This is definitely a character-centric story, and the two men are strong enough for this length of work. While they are both independent businessmen, they are also basic men with urges, insecurities, and assumptions. Although the situations are emotionally dramatic, for the reader there is also a tinge of humor as they keep screwing things up for one another. They are just people behaving like people, in a sweet, sometimes frustrating, way.

Weaknesses

Although there is nothing I would pin strongly against this novella, there were a few points that kept it from scoring higher.

The writing wasn't bad, but because the story is so dependent on voice, there were moments where the writing was a weakness, although overall I wouldn't say that's true.

By the nature of the style of story being told here, and the dual perspective, there are very little surprises plot-wise, although some of the events are surprising. Some people may find this boring and unimaginative, but I found it a nice "slice of life" type story. A romantic comedy of sorts.

Trevor's feeling old seemed a little forced, since he's not that much older and he's in great shape, but maybe being an empty-nester makes you do crazy things.

Requested this book for review.

Be sure to check out my other reviews on my blog.

Candice says

This was a cute book about a couple who have been together long term and all of a sudden are alone again after their son has left for college. They both are having issues with who they are now that they are older and alone again and how to rekindle their relationship. I enjoyed the story and it is full have a lot of miscommunication and misread situations which make you feel bad for each of them. Yes, clearly if they

would just talk, things would work out, but life doesn't always work that way. The book was a the perfect length and would have gotten annoying if longer. All in all this was a sweet story of two people connecting and reaffirming what brought them together in the first place and realizing life isn't always clear without communicating.

Kaetrin says

Very readable book about a couple who've been together for 9 years. Their son goes off to college and they try to reconnect. I don't usually like "big mis" stories but this didn't annoy me as much as they normally do because both were trying to fix things even while they were not talking and being jerks and because (thankfully) the timeframe was short. The sex was pretty hot too and I enjoyed the experience of reading the book.

The problem I had was that I found it difficult to believe that this couple would have only had vanilla, Saturday night lights out after-the-kid-is-in-bed-and-asleep sex for 5 YEARS and not imploded. I also found it hard to accept that after so long together they would be so bad at talking to each other. Those questions about the set up made it hard for me to completely buy the story. I get Trevor's concern about his son and the custody issue, but surely he would have relaxed a bit after 5 years? Surely Luke had sleepovers from time to time? I had a bit of trouble accepting that those 5 years would not have caused problems in itself.

I do like this author though, she has a great voice.

Rachel Emily says

If people would just sit down and talk things out...well, I guess we wouldn't have a large percentage of the books we do have, right? Fun story, but it's frustrating reading about The Big Misunderstanding over and over.

Chris says

3.5 stars. Good m/m romance about a couple in a long-term relationship who, after seeing their son off to college, hope to reconnect with each other, but... they don't talk to each other about it, both too afraid that they're losing the other. Sometimes I'm frustrated by stories in which the major conflict could be solved by a simple conversation, but with this one, I could see myself behaving exactly as did the main characters, so it felt realistic to me.
