



Her Best Laid Plans

Cara McKenna

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Experience Ireland—the dramatic beauty, the warm hospitality...and the smoking hot local guys!

Imagine nursing a pint in a cozy, authentic country pub, far from Cork's busy city pulse. Getting here took you a plane, bus, taxi and...um, bicycle. But just as you're resigning yourself to drinking beside grey-haired farmers, you see him—a man with the looks and charm to soothe any heartbroken girl.

He's your bartender. Your really, really gorgeous bartender.

For American Jamie Webb—recently dumped and housesitting for two weeks—Connor Kelleher is like a six-course feast after a 23-year starvation diet. But it's gotta be casual. She's just begun rerouting her life after a three-year man-related detour. Still, a sexy romp (or twenty!) with Sexy McBartender?

But what happens when Jamie's best-laid plans for no future plans with any man begin to change?

Her Best Laid Plans Details

Date : Published April 15th 2014 by Cosmopolitan Red-Hot Reads from Harlequin (first published January 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9781460328248

Author : Cara McKenna

Format : ebook 85 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Novella, New Adult, Adult Fiction, Erotica

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From Reader Review Her Best Laid Plans for online ebook

Amy | Foxy Blogs says

****3.5 Flirty and Fun stars****

Cosmo Red-Hot Reads are short fast-paced romances that feature fearless females. **HER BEST LAID PLANS** is set in Ireland with an American single college student taking a solo vacation to the Emerald Isle. A flirty encounter in a bar leads to two weeks of a passion filled romance for **Jamie** and **Noel**.

Standalone

****Complimentary copy courtesy of Cosmo Red Hot Reads from Harlequin via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.****

Rose says

Initial reaction: Now this is the kind of romance I like to read - cute, flirty, funny and hot. Cara McKenna's an author I will definitely pick up more in the future.

Full review:

Now this is the first time I've fully swooned over a romantic hero in a while, and I promise it's not just the fact that he's Irish (...that might be part of the reason). He's incredibly funny and easy to like, and I liked his chemistry with the heroine in this story as well. "Her Best Laid Plans" is the second story I've read from Cara McKenna, and it impressed me.

The novella starts with Jamie Webb housesitting for two weeks during a visit in Ireland. She meets a sexy bartender named Connor, and the two hit it off quite well almost instantly. I didn't feel like this was insta-lust or insta-love because they did quite a bit of getting to know each other and had some humorous exchanges in the mix, while also talking openly and honestly about their relationships. It felt real to me, and the sensuous scenes were hot. I loved watching their relationship develop, even in so brief a time, and I was rooting for the both of them to work.

It's a light, quick read overall - one that took me less than 30 minutes to read, and I enjoyed it immensely. Definitely recommended, and certainly a read that makes me anticipate more of McKenna's work.

Overall score: 4.5/5 stars

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley, from the publisher Harlequin.

Baba says

3.5 stars. Review posted April 20, 2014

A quick review for a quick read.

In a nutshell

Jamie Webb, a student from Boston, is house-sitting for her mother's best friend in Ireland for the next ten days. While nursing a Guinness in a pub she makes the acquaintance of Connor Kelleher, a hot Irish mechanic bartender with aspirations to become an engineer. The attraction is mutual and they start flirting. One thing leads to another and they're entangled in a vacation fling...

My thoughts

I'm actually not a fan of insta-anything but when you're on the lookout for a little holiday fling and when you're on the rebound as well, then I guess it's required that you have to feel some kind of insta-lust to get to fourth base. Going into this I knew it wouldn't be McKenna's best work to date. Thus, don't expect anything too deep or special. Just take it for what it is; Her Best Laid Plans is a nice read, a rather light and easy one, just something pretty short and good for in between. It's solidly written and definitely better than all those Harlequins I've been reading during the 80s and 90s. I felt entertained and that's what matters in the end. Again, I must point out how well Cara McKenna writes her steamy scenes. They are sexy and arousing. The man is considerate, generous and demanding all at the same time; he takes care of the woman and knows how to get her off. Really well done.

"(...)And we've both picked the worst possible time to fall for somebody."

"And we've both picked the worst possible person to fall for."

"Don't blame me for that--I was just minding my business in the proper hemisphere. You're the one who came poaching." He kissed her temple.

Overall an enjoyable read but it didn't provide an intensity or emotional pull that would have justified a higher rating. If you are on the lookout for something short and light then give it a try. I also think that fans of Cara McKenna will like it.

All quotes are taken from the pre-published copy and may be altered or omitted in the final copy

ARC courtesy of Harlequin via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

<http://baba.booklikes.com>

Wendy Darling says

3.5 stars I discovered Cara McKenna back in January, when I was holed away in my house for several weeks. I'm glad I was sick and didn't have any other commitments, because that allowed me to speed read the surprisingly emotional, dark Curio--and then I proceeded to devour pretty much everything this author had written in just a few weeks! That's how good she is. The stories are unusual, the connection is intense, and the sex pushes a lot of boundaries.

Her Best Laid Plans is a short, flirtatious novella about a girl named Jamie who's getting over a rough break-up. Her last relationship ended because she was sick of following her boyfriend around and putting her life on hold, so what better way to forget about that than a fling with a hot bartender in Ireland? No strings attached, no danger of putting your heart in danger, right?

The thing I like best about Cara McKenna, who says she writes "smart erotica—sexy stories with depth. A little dark, a little funny, always emotional," is that she almost always manages to surprise me, which is hard to do if you've read a lot of romance books. This one, while fun and light-hearted, felt like a bit of departure for this author, because the story is pretty straightforward and things turn out pretty much the way you'd expect. Maybe a little more on the safe side, similar to the romances she writes under Meg Maguire?

Still, this is a fun, quick read with some seriously sexy bedroom scenes, with one of those perfect McKenna endings. I may nitpick a bit because I've felt so pushed beyond my comfort zone and more deeply invested in this author's previous books, but I'm not going to hold it against her if she wants to lighten things up every now and again. I'll read anything she decides to write.

An advance copy was provided by the publisher for this review.

Blacky *Romance Addict* says

This book is like a sweet, romantic new adult, just with more explicit sex scenes. Wish it was longer, though.

***J* Too Many Books Too Little Time says**

3.5--Sweet and Sexy--Stars!!

This was a fun read....and for being a novella I thought it was pretty good. Obviously there isn't a lot of story and character development but it was still entertaining. A great in-between book.

Bonus...it was

Jamie is in Ireland vacationing. She's just moved back to Boston after being dumped by her boyfriend. The boyfriend that she moved to California with so that he could follow his dreams.

Her first day there, Jamie ends up in a pub and meets Connor. Connor's dad owns the bar and he helps out. They flirt and have fun....share a kiss and make plans to see each other again.

They spend the rest of Jamie's time in Ireland together. They have a great connection, great sexual chemistry. If circumstances were different maybe they could even have more. Jamie won't make the same mistake twice though and follow after another man.

They part ways at the end of Jamie's trip with promises to keep in touch and hopefully see each other soon. Too bad they are both miserable and sad and lonely.

So will Jamie throw her best laid plans out the window and go after Connor?

I really liked Connor and Jamie. It was definitely insta-lust but there was no profession of love, which was nice. Jamie and Connor had fun banter between each other and they lit up the pages. Overall, an enjoyable, entertaining read!

Mo says

3.5 stars

I did enjoy this one once I got over one or two “Irish” *tings* that annoyed me!!

Short and sweet, it portrayed Ireland well – although a lot of those country pubs in the back arse of nowhere have closed down in recent years due to the strict “drink/driving” laws that were brought in and also the “anti-smoking” laws.

“I love your voice,” she murmured.

“You want to hear me?” Even that question was doing the job, like liquor snaking through her.

“Yeah.”

“Sweet or dirty?” he asked.

“Whatever you’re thinking.”

He obeyed without hesitation. “I’m thinking I can’t remember ever wanting someone so badly. Being this hard. Wanting so badly to taste a woman. Taste you. Make you come. Make you ready—make you wet, and...what’s the word?” He bit her softly. “Lush,” he concluded.”

And as we say in Ireland....

NOT

Sara says

3.5 Hot Irish stars

Jaime was coming out of a long term relationship with a guy who didn't put her first. She moved to support him while he went to med school, putting her education on hold. After 4 years, he just dumps her. She heads back to Boston to regain her life. Go back to school. But before school starts she and her friend Kate have plans for a 10 day trip to Ireland. Only Kate had to back out for an internship so Jaime goes on her own.

Walking into an Irish pub her first night she meets a handsome bartender. There is immediate physical attraction and flirting. He knows the score, she's their for ten days. No more no less. So they decide to hang out and take advantage of those ten days.

Things heat up pretty quickly and Connor turns out to be a generous lover. Something she was missing from her previous relationship. They are both shocked by the intensity of their connection, but Jaime refuses to dig too deep. She's given up too much for a guy before. So Connor decides to just have fun, and say goodbye at the end.

Connor wore his heart on his sleeve and was very honest with Jaime. He wishes they had an opportunity to go beyond her visit. On the eighth day it kinda spooks her out and she puts a wall up. She's just scared to loose herself again for a guy. There's a bit of an awkward goodbye and a promise to stay in touch. Texts are shared but she's too scared to look him up online afraid to see that he's moved on in his own life.

Will they see each other again? I had sure hoped so. I really liked Connor. He was the right kind of soft and sexy. Quick read with a shot of Irish steam.

Jess-i-ca ~Sometimes a Gif Witch~ says

3.5- SEXY FLING - STARS!

Anyways, *Her Best Laid Plans* reminded me a ton of Frenched. I mean they are in Ireland in this one and she's not on her honeymoon but still....Anyways that's not a bad thing just similar.

Jamie has wasted two years of her life moving to be with her boyfriend to California only to be dumped. She takes a trip to Ireland. On her first day there she goes to the bar. She meets a cute bartender named Connor.

And they have some chemistry.

She decides what better way to enjoy Ireland than to have a fling with an Irish hottie?

so they decide to get to know each other better....

And they really enjoy getting to know each other

they do it like some energizer bunnies...

they gotta get all the sex in before she leaves..

But now its time for her to head back to Boston only never to see him again.

What is gonna happen with them? Will she decide to stay? Will she come back? Are they ever going to see each other again?????

?Yasmine? says

SOOOOO GOOD

Sweet, hot, fun, interesting... with loveable characters.
One of my fave short stories this year.

Christy says

3.5 stars!

A short, sweet and sexy novella. Cara McKenna knows how to turn up the heat. This is a little less risque than some of her other reads, but just as steamy!

10 days. That's how long Jamie is on her Ireland vacation for. She meets local bartender, Connor on day 1. 10 days is enough for a fantastic fling. It might even be long enough to start falling....

Jamie and Connor have strong chemistry. They put it all out there. Their feelings, wants, desires. Knowing they only have these precious 10 days makes their time more intense, more valuable. I wanted more time with Jamie and Connor in those 10 days. There was too much time that was skipped over. I liked the story a lot, the ending was a somewhat predictable, very sweet.

Her Best Laid Plans was a fun and flirty read I enjoyed. As always with a lot of novellas, I wish it were longer and I got to know the characters a little better. But still - a solid 3.5 star read!

ARC kindly provided by Harlequin via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

♥Rachel♥ says

Her Best Laid Plans was a satisfying romance and one HOT novella, but I didn't expect any less from Cara McKenna.

Jaime's life plan derailed after her long-time boyfriend broke up with her. She was to support him through med school and then he was to return the favor when he finished and she went for her degree in architecture. Now that Jaime's put her life on hold and delayed college, she's two years behind with nothing to show for it. Loser ex!! With the summer off and no plans until she starts college and a new job in the fall, Jaime travels from Boston to Ireland determined to have a good time. Things are looking up when the gorgeous Irish barman, Connor serves her a Guinness at the local pub. Yet, what Jaime thought of as a vacation fling turns into something so much more. Connor has found a place in her heart and settled in deep.

Connor works at the family's pub saving every dime to go back to college for his engineering degree. He's wasted years on a misspent youth and plans on correcting that in the fall. When Jaime walks into his bar he falls hard for her and starts imagining a future:

"I fell harder for you in a week and a half than I have for any girl I dated for ten times that long," he said. "If this isn't worth turning my life inside out for, I can't imagine what is."

This romance ticked all the boxes for me in 85 pages! Even though Jaime and Connor's relationship happens in ten days it didn't feel like insta-love to me at all. They used every free minute getting to know each other. And oh, I liked some of the ways they did that:

She sucked in a breath, back arching.

“Good,” he murmured. “Let me figure you out.”

She smiled at that, unseen. Of course he’d want that—to mess around and discover how she worked, how to make her respond.

Oh my, and yes, please!!

This was HOT! Connor and Jaime’s time together was intense, passionate and yet so very sweet. I was desperately hoping they could work things out in spite of living on two different continents. A HEA is a requirement for this romance junkie, and let’s just say I had a smile on my face by the end.

A copy was provided by Harlequin via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

aksana - 4 - 8 - 15 - 16 - 23 - 42 - says

4.5 Stars

After a painful break up with her ex-boyfriend Noel, Jamie planned to make a 10 days trip to Ireland with her best friend Kate. Unfortunately Kate ditched her last minute and Jamie ends up attending this trip alone.

In Ireland she stays at her mom's best friend's farmhouse that is surrounded by nearly nothing. Well, except of a pub.

She ends up at this pub her first night because sometimes a girl really **needs a beer**.

And she is also looking for a possible vacation fling.

That's when sexy bartender Connor gets into the game.

They instantly hit it off and are also very attracted to each other. They both decide to get to know each other better the next few days..

There was absolutely no drama or angst, just a cute, hot and flirty story with a surprisingly good ending for such a short novella.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

"Her Best Laid Plans" was a sweet, flirty novella about a whirlwind romance between an Irish bartender and an American on holiday after a breakup. Honestly, this wasn't what I was expecting from this author, who is usually much edgier with her stories. In fact, one might call this a wee bit pedestrian. However, once I got over the fact that this was going to be simply a charming contemporary romance, I enjoyed the story.

This book was pure romantic escapism. It was fun without being groundbreaking and a very nice way to spend a few hours, especially if you have a thing for guys with accents. The one thing I would change about this story? Get a spare helmet for your motorcycle, Connor! Brain damage isn't sexy! **Steps off soapbox**

Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review

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Ash Wednesday says

2 STARS

Half-hearted and boring. I imagine this was written while the author was writing another book, baking ten pies and doing her taxes. I have such faith in McKenna's knack for writing that I believe she can do all that and still come up with a coherent, albeit lazily imagined, snoozefest of a romance where nearly everybody's a bartender because, duh Ireland.

After sacrificing her college plans for her boyfriend's medical school education, Jamie got dumped. No, the exact details on that deal weren't clearly presented. As jilted girlfriends from Boston tend to do (apparently) she goes to Ireland for a holiday, intent on rebounding by having some Irish Fling on the side. She meets Connor (sidebar: are all hot Irishmen named Connor?) in a pub and they makeout on the snooker table, have stick-shift driving lessons and having the best sex ever. According to them. The crux of the tension comes from the intense and unexpected emotioning involved from both parties (in less than 10 days of knowing each other!) and how they would reconcile their whirlwind trans-atlantic romance with their plans and realities: Connor plans to get into a decent college after being a wayward slacker and Jamie is finally starting her life anew.

I found both protagonists rather dull and depthless, had there been any chemistry between them, I probably missed it on account of being distracted by everything else outside this book. Seeing as this is a novella, I expected this to focus more on making either Jamie or Connor atleast likable if not charming.

"What's his name anyway?" Connor asked. "This ex of yours?"

"Noel."

"Noel... was he born on Christmas or something?"

She smiled drily, "Christmas Eve. You can't be jealous, can you?"

Connor made a great show of his reaction, every frown and wave suggesting her accusation was preposterous.

As if its not enough that the conditions of how they met sound a lot like a desperate woman's rose-tinted alcohol-hazed recollections (the kind that you regret the morning after), I am not entirely sure Connor's got enough swoon factor in him to merit the label of a "hero". I'm not even going to factor in the obvious effort to make him as Irish as possible by throwing every stereotypical jargon in any dialogue he's involved in. And Jamie as a heroine, didn't really come across that broken over by getting dumped by Christmas Boy in the first place. By the end of this short, sorry attempt for a romance, no matter how lovely the ending sounds conceptually, the pragmatist in me refuses to concede the hopeful ever after this was trying to sell.

Review Copy provided by the publishers.

Also on Booklikes.
