



# High Risk

*Vivian Arend*

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**High Risk** Vivian Arend

**LIFELINE: an elite search-and-rescue squad based out of Banff, Alberta. Specializing in high-risk rescue missions, this team goes wherever the job takes them...**

Rebecca James was once revered for her devil-may-care attitude and backcountry survival skills. But ever since she lost her partner in a fatal accident, patches of her memory have been missing. And until she can recall those final, tragic moments before the accident, she can't move on.

Since Marcus Landers was permanently injured during a mission, all his energies have been focused on his Lifeline team. When Becki—whom he had an intense affair with seven years ago—arrives in Banff, he's inspired to reignite the spark they once had. Their mutual ardor slowly awakens Becki's dormant, haunting memories.

New truths surface until Becki must at last confront her greatest fear. Remembering the past might mean a future without the man she loves...

## High Risk Details

Date : Published March 5th 2013 by Berkley

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Author : Vivian Arend

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# From Reader Review High Risk for online ebook

## Maria Rose says

This first book in the Adrenaline Search and Rescue series introduces us to Marcus, head of the Lifeline S&R team, and Becki, once a student of Marcus's with whom he shared a brief sexual fling and now a search and rescue professional in her own right. Becki has come to Banff to work with Marcus's team and has never forgotten their passionate affair. Both Becki and Marcus struggle with PTSD from traumas in their past, in which Becki lost a climbing partner and the memories related to the accident and Marcus lost a co-worker - and part of his arm. Their passion re-ignites easily but their new emotional wounds threaten their chance at happiness.

I found this book to be a thrilling read, combining pulse pounding action scenes with hot and steamy sexual encounters. It was refreshing to read of an amputee who is still wholly male, confident and dominant, in the bedroom and out. Marcus's emotional side comes through well and the author has done an excellent job at not having the reader pity him for his injury but rather admire his strength and courage. Similarly the portrayal of a heroine who is strong and confident on the outside while dealing with the internal emotional effects of the climbing accident is pulled off well in Becki. As the story progresses and the details of the traumas they've individually experienced emerges, it becomes clear that the two main characters are perfect foils for each other. Fast paced, sexy and suspenseful with humorous dialogue and entertaining secondary characters that round out the story, this contemporary romance delights on all levels. 5 stars!

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## Sandra says

**"I want to be in you again, Becki. Wrap your sweet cunt around my cock and let you squeeze me like that as you go off."**

*Becki James used to be praised for her devil-may-care attitude and back country survival skills. But that changed when she lost her partner in a fatal accident, an accident she can not remember. Until she can recall those final and tragic moments, she can't move on.*

*Permanently injured during a mission Marcus Landers returned to Banff, Alberta and formed his own rescue team – and they're the best at what they do, but because of his condition, he is not truly a part of the team. When Becki reemerges in his life Marcus realizes that the spark that ignited between them seven years ago is still there.*

*As haunting memories and new truths resurface Becki must confront her greatest fear. But remembering the past might mean a future without the man she loves.*

"You're going to come for me. Standing, your legs ready to give out, but you won't fall because i've got you baby."

### **My Marcus**

### **My Becki**

*High Risk* was my first ever book by Vivian Arend. I have wanted to read her other series (Six Pack Ranch) since forever but i never picked it up, because the series is pretty massive. So when i heard about her new trilogy i was eager to give it a go.

This is a pretty good contemporary erotic romance. I must admit to being more engaged with the secondary characters than with the primary ones, who seemed a bit flat to me (he's perfect but wounded, she's fun-loving but wounded). The sex was hot with tiny overtones of BDSM, but there was a frustrating lack of plot.

Even though all the beginning was about was Marcus and Becki lusting after one another, i still liked it, it was decent. But the book dragged from the middle. It was so boring i had to force myself to keep reading. There was too much sex. And i felt like the characters were both using each other for pleasure and distraction. I felt like Becki was using Marcus because she couldn't sleep at night, and Marcus was using Becki because she helped him forget.

A groan. A swear. When it came, she shivered with delight.

"Suck me. Get me wet, and cover me with your mouth." She obeyed eagerly, reaching forward with her tongue to catch the first taste of him, the salty essence spreading through her system like ambrosia.

Thoughts of Marcus: I actually liked Marcus. He is very dominant in the bedroom as well as outside. He has a cocky attitude and i love how self confident he is. I absolutely ADORE how he took care of Becki and gave her strength. Even though he had his own demons to fight, he helped Becki fight her own first.

Thoughts of Becki: I really liked her at first. I loved how confident, playful and how strong she was. But that was our Becki in the past, before the accident. We have a new version of her in the present. She has, like, these panic attacks when she starts climbing, and she literally freezes there. She also has nightmares. If not for Marcus, she would have gave up the career she always loved.

"I see your clit bar wiggle every time i fuck into you." He moved again and hummed in approval. "It's all wet and shiny with your juices. Makes me want to pull out and eat you alive."

Overall, *High Risk* was a good read. I personally didn't love or really, really like it, but it was decent. Nothing amazing. I will definitely read book 2, because my fav characters are in it and i want to hear their love story.

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### **Francesca the Fierce (Under the Covers Book Blog) says**

I love, love, love this author. Then I saw the cover and HAD to have it. Of course, you may know this about me already. Other than judging a book by the cover I usually don't read blurbs of books from authors that are auto-buy for me. This was the case with HIGH RISK.

Problem number one, I thought this was romantic suspense. Once I quickly realized it wasn't I was very intrigued with the idea of the series being centered on the rescue teams in the mountains. The idea for this series breathes fresh air into an otherwise saturated contemporary romance market where everything seems to blend together and you can get authors and series mixed up.

That being said, I think this book suffered a bit of first book syndrome for me. There was a lot of attention put to the actual physical activity (in long detail sometimes) and a bit less on the development of the characters.

So in quick recap, Rebecca lost her fiance, but she can't remember much from that accident. She takes on a job as part of the Lifeline where she tries to get her life back in order and get back up to speed working. She also runs into her old HOT flame Marcus. Marcus has had his own ups and downs and is also dealing with his issues. But they soon realize what they had back then can be just as good and even better now.

Becki and Marcus were really hot together. For a contemporary romance I'd say this was scorching! But also as they reignite their passion, their relationship deepens and they help each other get through their mental blocks. I think I would've liked to see more of that. To me, they were such complex and interesting characters and I would've enjoyed to get to know them a little bit better.

Nevertheless, I think this is a series to watch for! I know Vivian Arend will probably have another hit in store for us with the next one because I'm already anxious to read about them from the little bit we got to see in this book.

\*ARC provided by publisher

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### **Hbeebti says**

I won this here on Goodreads. I received the uncorrected version so I'm not sure what's the same in the ones that are out in the stores.

That being said I would give this a 3.5. I thought this was RS, but in fact it lacked the suspense part really. There was very little action which for me was a huge disappointment. I really liked the H/h though. Loved controlling and possessive Marcus. Becki was strong not just in mind but also in body. Those two were always working out. I thought they were great characters. I even liked all the sexual tension in the beginning. Of course once they gave in it seemed like there was more sex than anything for awhile. I just wish that there had more of something, I don't even know. Maybe something that I could grab onto because other than the nightmare it just seemed to kinda drag for me after awhile. The whole reporter thing I thought this is it, now there will be some kinda action and drama but sadly no. The side characters Marcus team were great and at times funny. I really liked them. When they walked onto the pages I would smile and look forward to their banter. Would I read the next book? Probably.

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### **Angela James says**

I liked this book quite a bit. The sexual tension was very well drawn, and the book is unique in its story & characters. Though it did make me feel like a fat slob, because the characters are always doing some form of exercise!

My only minor issue was that I felt a bit distant from the relationship for some reason I can't put my finger on. Maybe the heroine felt somewhat standoffish? She was supposed to be written as strong (she was) but that may have made me feel a distance from her. Not sure.

But honestly, it didn't stop me from thoroughly enjoying this book. I don't hesitate to recommend it to fans of contemporary romance looking for something unique in the genre. I'm definitely looking forward to the next book!

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### **Angela says**

DNF at 26%

There's nothing *wrong* with this book, I'm just not feeling it. There's a lot of sexual tension, and a lot of good teamwork, and I can see how they're going to get to an HEA, but I don't care.

I just don't care. About any of them.

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## **E\_bookpushers says**

Review originally posted here: <http://thebookpushers.com/2013/02/28/...>

Publisher: Berkley Sensation

Publish Date: Out now

How I got this book: ARC from the publisher via Netgalley

**LIFELINE:** an elite search-and-rescue squad based out of Banff, Alberta. Specializing in high-risk rescue missions, this team goes wherever the job takes them...

Rebecca James was once revered for her devil-may-care attitude and backcountry survival skills. But ever since she lost her partner in a fatal accident, patches of her memory have been missing. And until she can recall those final, tragic moments before the accident, she can't move on.

Since Marcus Landers was permanently injured during a mission, all his energies have been focused on his Lifeline team. When Becki—whom he had an intense affair with seven years ago—arrives in Banff, he's inspired to reignite the spark they once had. Their mutual ardor slowly awakens Becki's dormant, haunting memories.

New truths surface until Becki must at last confront her greatest fear. Remembering the past might mean a future without the man she loves...

This blurb came from the author's website.

As you might have noticed if you are a regular visitor on the blog, I am a huge fan of Arend's writing. When I received word that she had signed a contract with Berkley for some contemporaries based on Search and Rescue (SAR), I knew that I had to get my hands on them. I have climbed three times in my entire life, once with family, once with a significant other, and once because I HAD to for my job. I decided after the first time that I was done so as a result three times is about four too many. What I did gain was an appreciation for the equipment, commands, danger, and the combination of strength and skill required to climb let alone climb well in a variety of conditions. Add in the requirement to provide emergency first aid, lug packs, maneuver people who can't assist with a clock counting down and you have some pretty impressive individuals who do SAR. Arend has taken a group of those individuals each with their past experience prior to or while doing SAR and placed them in close proximity and let us watch the fallout. I am certainly enjoying the view.

Rebecca is a haunted woman. She is an expert on climbing, teamwork, and getting the most out of people but she is suffering from PTSD and partial amnesia caused by the death of her SAR partner and lover during her last rescue. She has returned to Banff, to the training facility and school that certified her years ago as an

instructor trying to regain her sense of self. While there, she encounters Marcus, a former instructor/flipper who is dealing with his own wounds from life. I enjoyed Rebecca. She was strong mentally and physically. She did not back down from anyone yet she could also admit her weaknesses and allow someone else to care for her when she needed it. I also liked how she kept pushing Marcus and refused to let him take his angst out on her yet she also cared for Marcus and allowed him to nurture and care for her. No she wasn't perfect because she did leap to conclusions sometimes, had a hard time in helicopters, and believed the worst about her missing memories far too easily. Her faults simply helped me enjoy her character so much more.

Marcus was a bit more of a contradiction but still a lot of fun to get to know. He and his brother David were bedrocks at the Banff training facility even though Marcus took his climbing skills in a different direction. When Marcus is injured on the job he focuses his attention elsewhere and forms an elite SAR team, Lifeline, able to handle air insertion, water rescues, and the usual land-based climbing rescues. The press recently spotlighted Lifeline and as a result, of the publicity they have become bit complacent. David mentions that Marcus should ask Rebecca to help train his team while she waits for the next course to start. Marcus really likes the thought of getting close to Rebecca again now that they have both matured. He had some extremely fond memories of their time together and decided that this time their relationship would not end.

I absolutely loved the character interaction if it was Rebecca and Marcus, Marcus and David, the internal Lifeline team dynamics, Rebecca and the team, you name it I liked it. Not that all of their interactions were happy ones and more than once I felt for Rebecca as she dealt with her nightmares and nebulous fears about her actions and their result on the profession she loved. I also felt for Marcus and he dealt with his own trauma and intense need to help Rebecca, which sometimes backfired. The occasional flashbacks Arend included for their previous relationship and their lives over the years since served to really flesh out their characters while providing me a glimpse at how they had changed over the years.

Rebecca and Marcus' interactions were always intense. From the first glimpse of their mutual sexual attraction through their time together at the end of the story. I was completely sucked into their arguments, laughter, tension and I thought the smexytimes were smoking. I also liked how Arend worked within the limits of Marcus' injury during those times and both did not allow it to hinder him nor did she allow him to cheat. I found myself rooting for their relationship just as much as I rooted for their individual healing. I think they will continue to deal with the lingering affects of their traumatic life changing events but they will also continue to refuse to let that limit them.

I really enjoyed reading High Risk and I am seriously looking forward to the next installment. The sparks continue to fly on Lifeline and I am a hooked observer. Arend delivered everything I could ask for in the first book of her Adrenaline series and I am confident that she will continue to provide the same high quality story in the installments to come!

I give High Risk an A

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## **Maria says**

Passionate and strong characters, an unusual setting and a good plot make "High Risk" a delightful reading. The sex parts were exaggerated (I've skipped some of them), but the author counterbalances that with an alpha hero that is also very tender, always touching, embracing and cooing the heroine.



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## **Mandi Schreiner says**

When I first heard about this book, there were a few things that drew me to it. First, it's about a team of people who climb mountains and rescue people. I love this premise. Also, the hero only has one arm. You can't expect me to pass up a hero like that. And finally, it's set in Banff which is in Alberta Canada. Awhile ago, the talk show Regis and Kelly did their show from Banff, and I just thought it was the coolest town. So this series excites me, but this first book didn't quite do it for me.

Becki lost her climbing partner in an accident about a year ago. Dane was also her partner in bed. They weren't in love necessarily, but she had feelings for him and his death was a shock. She also can't remember the details of what happened that day, and she now suffers from bad nightmares. Trying to move forward with her life, she accepts a job with a very well known climbing institute in Banff, brought on to structure some specialized lessons for the students who attend. Becki used to attend the school, and it was there she had a brief and passionate affair with the brother of her new boss, Marcus. Marcus lost an arm years ago, but has come back with a highly trained team and leads rescue operations now. Marcus suffers from episodes where he blacks out and can't leave his apartment for days. His past swallows him up sometimes. His team, while having notoriety as being the best, isn't working as well as they should be together, so before classes start he asks Becki to give his team some insight. Becki has to prove to herself she can get back out there and climb again and Marcus is there to guide her.

Marcus is more of an intense, cranky hero which for the most part I liked. Him and his brother give each other a hard time, and Marcus is somewhat feared for his crazy and intense training methods. He doesn't let his disability hold him back. From page one when he learns Becki will be coming back to his school, there is a ton of sexual tension, and I'm just going to say it – it's too much. It's spilling out of this book. Sex is on Marcus and Becki's mind constantly. And then when they finally break down and do it, there is a lot of sex. I almost found myself skimming through the scenes – although I ended up not skimming because there are some pretty dirty scenes in this one. I have to give the author some props for spicing things up.

So there is a lot of sex and a lot of thinking about sex and it wore me out. There is also a lot of Becki struggling to remember what happened on the mountain when Dane died. She slowly starts to remember through her dreams. Marcus too suffers from blackout type episodes, yet his woes kind of get forgotten about as Becki's trauma takes center stage. The end where we get the reveal about what really happened on the mountain with Dane and Becki and also how Marcus lost his limb – didn't do it for me. I just didn't like how it played out.

The team mates are fun to meet, as the next book in the series will continue to feature them. I feel like the author takes the tedious, technical mountain climbing procedures and makes them fun to read about. However, I kept waiting and waiting for something big to happen, and I finished the book still waiting. There is some drama at the end, but I wasn't a fan of what happens (don't want to go into details because it's a bit spoilery).

This is definitely a series I will follow because of its premise. We'll see how book two goes

Rating: C

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## Carey Baldwin says

My son is a wilderness first responder and avalanche safety instructor. After reading the prologue, I'm already on emotional tenterhooks and wondering if I'll have any cuticles left by the end of the story, or if I'll be able to stop myself from calling my son every ten minutes to make sure he's alive. But I'm already hooked on the book, so here goes...

OMG. This is the first Vivian Arend I've read and I am LOVING her voice. So fresh and fun. Great character development. Great read so far!

There are so many things I love about this book. First of all it's smart. The reader is drawn into the world of an elite search and rescue team and given a detailed, authentic insider view into a world where they will likely never set foot- at least I know I won't! So props for a smart story, where everything, including the sex, flows organically from this high octane world.

Next I love the protagonists. The hero and heroine are both kick-ass yet flawed and very relatable. The hero lost one arm a few years before the story opens. His disability does not stop him from being an amazing athlete and team leader, nor does it stop him from being one the hottest heroes I've read.

There's a lot of explicit sex, which is neither good nor bad in and of itself but readers should be aware. I thought the intimate scenes were well integrated with the story and really showcased the developing emotional connection between the main characters. For example, after one very hot session, Marcus encourages a worn out Becki to fall asleep, telling her, "I've got you." Of course, in their world this is more than just a trite phrase and truly symbolizes the trust placed in another person.

Arend's voice is young, fun and fresh. An inside look into an elite world, kick-ass heroes, hot sex, and great storytelling- I think that makes for one fantastic read!

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## MaggieReadsRom says

3.75 stars

I really liked Vivian Arend's first MMPB release.

For one it gave me the opportunity to enjoy her writing for 300+ pages and that is a very good thing! Her easy, clean and crisp writing is just as enjoyable in a full length single title as in her digitally published shorter novels and novellas.

I enjoyed HIGH RISK a lot but I have to admit I sometimes zoned out at the technical climbing and rescue stuff. Also these characters worked out a lot! Understandably of course, but it made me feel like a lazy bum :)

I loved the heat in the story. The sexy scenes were genuinely sexy and really well drawn. Ms. Arend didn't pull back which made for some explicit and beautiful scenes. And this made me a happy reader.

As usual I had to become utterly enthralled by a secondary character: this time it was David, Marcus' brother. He is awesome and I loved the banter and bond between him and Marcus. I'm also really looking forward to the next book in the series as it will feature two members of Lifeline as the main couple.

Fave scene:

- the bondage/rope-play scene > awesome
  - the scene in the "theatre box" at the fund-raiser > the poem stuff had me LOLing, the rest was HOT!
  - the scene in the car going to and at the cabin > Ms. Arend knows how to turn up the heat!
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## **Jane Wheeler says**

This book was H.A.W.T.

I'm a sucker for the "old lovers thrown back together" trope, and the tension for this one got ramped up and up and up. When it finally boiled over, they had some of the hottest sex I've read in a long time.

What made it so good was their complete intimacy. Marcus was so tender with her, even as they did it hard. And he could be that way because he really KNEW how she felt.

I really liked how the conflict for both of them stayed completely internal (or at least within their own relationship). There was no mustache-twirling villain or terrible misunderstanding that got in the way, and that helped keep the focus tight on their action.

There are a few things I saw in this book that I never, EVER see in m/f romances, even with erotic or BDSM themes. First, Becki had a number of piercings in naughty places. That was neither here nor there for me (though I know some people might not be into it), but I really loved how they were just a facet of her personality and not some gigantic symbol of how wiiiiild and messed up her past was. She seemed pretty normal to me, which was nice.

The other two... well, they could potentially count as

**SPOILERS!!!!**

1. She gets herself off onscreen with a vibrator. It's pretty hot.

But the REALLY surprising thing is that

2. They have anal sex. Just once, but it's goooood. You never, ever, EVER see hetero couples do this in a mostly-mainstream romance. In this one, it's an example of just how close they are, how deeply they want to touch each other, and most importantly how very much they trust each other.

If you don't like that stuff, I hope you'll at least try this anyway, because it's done in such a loving way.

**END SPOILERS**

Overall, that's the theme of the book, and its most enjoyable element. They have to trust each other in their training, and nobody EVER lets another person down (although that's certainly her main hangup with the incident in her past). The scenes where they're training really build up the tension almost like a D/s relationship; generally, I don't like those kinds of themes unless there is an *\*exceptional\** amount of trust and care for the submissive partner, and while I can't consider either of them submissive (except for one scene),

Becki both needs a little extra care and is willing to take his suggestions.

And it pays off in VERY hot ways.

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### **Joyfully Reviewed says**

Marcus Landers runs Lifeline, an elite search and rescue team based out of Baniff, Alberta. Marcus used to travel the world saving people, but after he was injured he has trained his team to be the best search and rescue team in North America. When his ex walks back into his life, Marcus is not surprised to feel the heat still arching between them.

Rebecca James recently suffered a terrible loss. Her partner died during a climb and unfortunately Becki is having trouble remembering the events that led to the tragedy. So she has left her previous job to come to Canada to teach others for a bit. When she is reunited with the man who gave her the best weekend of her life her focus becomes centered on experiencing the gift of Marcus again.

As Becki and Marcus get reacquainted will they heal the wounds still haunting them both or will tragedy take the chance at love away from them?

Vivian Arend hits a grand slam with High Risk!! Arend combines strong emotions, stimulating characters, sexy passion and adrenaline filled action to High Risk creating a phenomenal romantic firestorm! Arend has developed her characters brilliantly. It's obvious the author immersed herself in the search and rescue world. She draws the reader in with her vividly written scenes. I literally felt like I was on the side of a mountain with the characters. I could feel the intensity of the situations imagined by Ms. Arend.

Reviewed by Miranda for Joyfully Reviewed

High Risk feels real because it's doused in characters that are human, they have faults and disabilities but they are true heroes. Marcus lost part of his arm in an accident. I think we need novels that share stories like Marcus'. Men and women that have suffered such loss can be sexy and heroic. We need to start seeing them as a whole and not only seeing what they have lost. Ms. Arend does a wonderful job at making Marcus into one hell of a dreamy hero. Becki is suffering a tragedy and its intense and intriguing watching as she slowly begins remembering what happened. The scenes between Marcus and Becki drip with combustible lust. It's obvious from the beginning that it's only a matter of time before these two hit the sheets but can it be more than sex? High Risk is a novel full of healing and heart!

One thing that has always drawn me to Ms. Arend's work is her ability to create great secondary characters. Ones that you really want to come back to in the next book. She blows it out of the park in High Risk! There are so many outstanding members of Lifeline! I absolutely cannot wait to read about them. I really hope High Passion comes out soon because I think I'm going to go through Adrenaline withdrawal!

High Risk kicks ass! This is the best romance I've read this year!

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### **Mskyck says**

I won this book via First Reads through Goodreads. I have read a couple of other Vivian Arend books from

the Granite Lake Wolves series, so I was expecting this book to be similar in feel to those. I was not expecting as much sex in this book, nor was I expecting it to be as explicit and graphic. There was a lot of sex in this book! Either they were doing it, otherwise they were thinking about it. It was a bit much, actually. When I started skipping the sex scenes because I couldn't get into yet another one, that when I knew this book was completely doomed for me.

I liked the premise of a man running a rescue team, and a climber who'd had her own trauma, reuniting after a weekend of hot sex years ago. . There was some mystery thrown in, as to how Becki's climbing partner died during the accident that she has lost her memory of. The mystery was unraveled in a way that I definitely didn't expect, but by the time I found out the answer, I was so sick of her recurring PTSD dream of the event that I just wanted to be done with it. I also agree with other readers that both Becki and Marcus each have their own traumatic events. Marcus lost his arm in a military snafu, and had his own PTSD he was struggling with, but his issues are pretty much ignored by Becki in the second half of the book, which just made me mad. It's not all about you, Becki!!

I felt that the depiction of Marcus' rescue team, supposedly the cream of the crop & called in when other Canadians wilderness rescue teams just won't do, was not realistic. If they are really that good, then their interpersonal issues aren't going to be so out of whack. Nor is a relatively basic instructor going to be able to teach them so much and find so many problems in what they are doing. I found myself very dubious of the whole story by the 2nd chapter, and the further I read, the more I didn't buy into it.

I will not be trying the second book in this series by Arend. The underlying premise was good, but the execution too shaky, the mystery tepid, and the unrelenting sex sex sex sex SEX was off-putting.

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### **Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says**

In a brand new series by author Vivian Arend, HIGH RISK starts off the Adrenaline series with a pulse-pounding romance and a taste of the big, wet wild!

There are many things that set this book apart from what's out in the market today. Firstly, it's set in Banff, Alberta -- a setting that is unique and original and hasn't been done very often. Secondly, the series follows an elite search-and-rescue squad called Lifeline. Already, the possibilities are endless and I suspect that Arend can breakout with this series.

HIGH RISK feels more like a Contemporary Romance with action and suspense elements. Fans of Jill Shalvis's Wilder series will very much enjoy this series.

HIGH RISK fuses together passion, danger and excitement in what promises to be a highly unique series!

**Read this review in its entirety at Fresh Fiction**

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