



Facing the Music

Andrea Laurence

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In this sizzling and hilarious contemporary e-book romance, pop sensation Ivy Hudson returns to her small town to face her ex. Only trouble is, she made her Taylor-Swift-like career with the hit song “Size Matters”—and the football hero has had to live it down ever since.

Five years ago, high school sweethearts Ivy and Blake's relationship imploded and both their lives were changed forever. Ivy became a rock star and Blake lost not only his dreams of a successful NFL career, but his reputation. Ivy's angry song about their breakup, called “Size Matters,” hit the top of the charts and Blake became a national laughingstock. He's salvaged his career and returned to Rosewood to be the high school football coach, regaining his status as town hero and leading the boys to the state championships.

When a tornado whips through town and destroys the high school gymnasium and stadium, a committee is formed to help rebuild and plan some charity fundraisers. Blake's grandmother requests that Ivy return to Rosewood for the events. Forced back together for the good of their hometown and their careers, Ivy and Blake have no choice but to put aside their differences, stop running from their pasts, and finally face the music.

For fans of Kristen Proby and Colette Auclair, *Facing the Music* hits a perfect balance between small-town romance and big-time success. Follow Ivy and Blake as they fall back in love and figure out what *does* matter in the end...

Facing the Music Details

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From Reader Review Facing the Music for online ebook

Lynne Delisle says

I just finished reading Facing The Music by Andrea Laurence. This story is about a current pop star who returns to her hometown and comes to face her ex-love. I enjoyed this story very much and had a hard time putting it down. The story takes from the couple meeting again, through the ups and downs of fighting their real feelings for each other. I look forward to more stories by this author especially the rest of this Rosewood series.

If you enjoy small town romance - reunited love - try this book. You won't be disappointed.

I was given a copy of an ARC to read for an honest review and I did love it!

Gokce ~Muslin Myst~ says

I always get a little more excited when I start a new series that takes place in a small town. I think it's a sign that one of these days I should get in my car and leave for such a town, one that's named something like 'Harmony', or 'Happiness', or, you know, 'All The Sexy Men Are Here'. Something simple and just for my needs. For this series though, I have to make do with *Rosewood*, hometown to one famous singer named Ivy Hudson, who caught the fame train for her well known break-up songs, and one ex-NFL player, now coach to the local team, Blake Chamberlain. I'm not a big fan of second chance stories, but this one was different. Not only was the story funny and the characters likable, but the whole second chance plotline takes place years away from the first one. So I was able to make my peace with that. And you know, because this is a small town where everyone knows everyone else, people stick up for each other, and there's a big family line with potential heroes for future books. Plus, the town festival. I'm a sucker for those.

I had a lot of fun reading this. It was surprising how fast I liked the characters, it normally takes me a few chapters to get the hang of things and make a connection. But with everyone in this one there was an instant kinship. I laughed out loud a few times, shamelessly enjoyed the hard time Blake had with Ivy's best known song-the one she wrote after him-, constantly imagined myself in Ivy's shoes, and not just the designer ones too, and simply wished I lived in a place like that. Alas, this one's taken too, so I should now take a map and start playing 'point your finger anywhere'.

I strongly recommend this book. If you like small town romances like me, and when I say 'like' I mean get super excited when you see one, and you don't mind having your fun and laugh in the expense of the heroes and heroines' hard times-they *do* get their happy endings after all-, then this one's for you. Even though the ending was just a tad-and I can't believe I'm going to say this- *too* romantic, it still was a great read that I immensely enjoyed. Do yourself a favor and pick this one up, you never know, you might find yourself wanting to bake a pie, enjoy your local diner with a hottie or even be tempted to write a song of your own for one of your exes. It's worth a try, right? My only problem, I may not be as talented as Ivy, but all I can think about when considering writing my own song is Phoebe's *Smelly Cat* from *Friends*.

Smelly cat, smelly cat

What are they feeding you?

Smelly cat, smelly cat

It's not your fault

Catchy, isn't it?

Terry says

Facing The Music is a beautiful, funny, heartwarming story that brought out all kinds of emotions in me. That's what I love most in a story, to really feel. Every page of this story was so enjoyable & I never became bored or lost interest. Such a beautifully written story. Andrea Laurence is an amazing & talented author.

SoWrongItsRANDI {Bell, Book & Candle} says

(Arc provided by Net Galley and Pocket Star in exchange for an honest review)

Bell, Book & Candle | Facing the Music Review

I had my reservations about this book, but I am glad to say that I really enjoyed this book. The chemistry! Oh my, it was like....wow. This may be just a book, but I could see the fireworks go off every time Blake and Ivy were in a scene together.

Romance? Check.

Sexy and sultry guy? Most definitely check.

Drama? I could do without it, but yes..check?

And everything else inbetween the sheets? Check and check.

The plot was very captivating. I have never read a book where the woman humiliates her love interest, but it was amazing!...in some ways. I wish Ivy's character wasn't the fictionalized equivalent to Taylor Swift. I'm not really a fan of hers, and I feel that she plays the victim way too often for a woman in her mid 20s. Yeah I said it!

Anyways, it's a little hard for me to believe that Ivy "didn't know" the public would think her song "Size Matters" was referring to Blake's size, if you know what I mean. What did Ivy expect the song's title to allude to? Height? Countries? A T-Rex?

Blake is probably my favorite part of the entire book. He's so swoon worthy, with the exception of his past

transgression. It's a bummer the Ivy's song acted as a catalyst for all things to go wrong in his life. His brothers are totally awesome as well.

Lydia was just a conniving little wretch. She's like a raccoon, she gets into everyone's business and just won't leave. Ivy let Lydia get under her skin too much. The Grandma was like all nosy grandmothers: they think they know best, and probably do. I didn't like how she kept chastising Blake for some of the things Ivy was at fault for. Then again, maybe she was trying to get him to man-up. Towards the end, I felt like Ivy should have done some of the chasing. She was the one who fled without hearing reason. You don't run away and hide from your lover; you fight for him. At least that's my opinion. There aren't many love scenes in this book, but it doesn't take away from the story at all.

Susan Parkes says

If I could give this book 6 stars I would. Well, what can I say - If you like your books not far fetched and one that could be a true life story then - THIS BOOK IS A MUST BUY. I have not read anything by this author before and I am sorry its taken me this long to find her. The story is about a rock star (with a bad press), a retired football star, childhood love, enemies and second chances. The great mix of nice and nasty characters all gel well together in this book and make it what it is - which is a fabulous read. I can not wait for the next Rosewood series book which is out in Spring 2015, and I am wondering which of the characters they will be about as I think this will be a great series of books as the characters all need their stories told.

I know I have said it before but I really could not put this book down, I read whenever I got a spare minute as it is a fantastic feel good love story, one where you are rooting for the main characters to get their 'happy ever after', I am now waiting in anticipation for the next instalment. Facing the Music

Kathy Davie says

First in the Rosewood romance series with the couple focus on Ivy Hudson and Blake Chamberlain. Based in Rosewood, Alabama, and six years later.

This ARC was provided by NetGalley, Pocket Star, and Simon & Schuster in exchange for an honest review.

My Take

Laurence has really twisted the revenge-of-the-woman-wronged trope. It'll make you laugh even as you start off feeling bad for the guy. Of course, once you hear his side of things, you're likely to think he got what was coming! He made his bed, and now he's lyin' in it. I don't feel sorry for him a'tall anymore especially with some of the dimwitted moves he makes. It did surprise me how well his grandmother knew him. Lucky thing for these two!

This is mostly a fluffy feel-good romance, except that Laurence has some nice switch-ups — besides the twist I mentioned above. And Laurence keeps you wondering just what that song does refer to, 'cause I know what I was thinking, ahem. When you do finally learn what Ivy/Laurence is really referring to, well, it just makes sense and is so well done, you can't help but laugh while you shake your head.

It's rather tacky of Ivy to date guys just to use 'em as she does. And I think Malcolm hit the nail on the head

as to why this emotion is the only one she can write about. Ivy is missing out too, as it sure doesn't lead to a happy life. She ticks me off with her feeling of entitlement; that scene where she locks her keys and phone in the cabin comes to mind. She sure is accident-prone, probably 'cause she hasn't got her head on straight. Nor can she take what she likes to dish out.

I do like the sound of Ivy's family; it sounds as though the three of them have always been there for each other. As for Blake's family, if you discount his dad, the rest of them sound terrific as well.

Ivy must have had a really easy time of building her career as thin-skinned as she is. She does a nice job of lobbing most of Lydia's zingers right back at her, but there are a number that just crumple her up. And they don't make sense that they have that reaction. Ivy *knows* about Lydia's antics, and Ivy's childish reactions irritate me. I'm just not buyin' it. Laurence needs to work on those Ivy-Lydia interactions to make them believable. It's the only weak point *Facing the Music* has.

As for Lydia, I'm surprised no one has called that witch to account yet. She's a selfish, self-entitled nightmare. If she behaves this way with people she wants, how does she behave with the "riff-raff" in town? Why hasn't she been taken out yet? No, no, this should have been developed more with people's reactions to make it believable or toned down. Instead, it's as if Lydia is an invisible person in town. No one reacts to her except Blake and Ivy. I know, I'm whining. It's just that Laurence has gone so over the top with Lydia, that I don't see how anyone could possibly not notice her.

Huh, I like the point Blake's grandmother makes about why all these publicity events are so important to rebuild the gym. I never thought of it this way. She sure makes a good point about the town's sense of intimacy dying out. She'd be agreeing with Kevin about the press: use them even as they're using her. Yank that attention they're paying in the direction you want it.

Oh, crack me up!! Ivy's so worried that the locals would chase her out of town with pitchforks, that when I read how the townspeople rally against the reporters, well, I can't help but laugh. Makes you wish more "decent" people would react this way!

That message Rex delivers...I see his doing this as a loose thread...

Blake realizes he's missing the end of Ivy's show, so why doesn't he simply turn around and go back for the end of it? It is *such* a no-brainer as to what she's up to, and I've only known her for a few hours. And Ivy has her usual, lame reaction.

Laurence does do a good job playing on my emotions: Ivy's reactions, Lydia's actions, Blake's thoughts, the story Grandmother told about meeting Charles and his fits of courting, that one taunt of Lydia's that actually sounds as if it could be true.

"It's the long, winding road..."

The Story

Thank god Rosewood contacted Ivy — again — about doing a charity concert in her old home town. Lord knows the town needs it after that last disaster, and Ivy is desperate to get some good publicity after this last fiasco, even if this will be her first trip home since the song that launched her career. The one about her break-up with the town hero, "Size Matters".

Now her manager is requiring all sorts of PR stunts — in her old hometown — but also demanding she change the types of songs she writes.

All she has to do is get through these next two weeks and avoid Blake...

The Characters

Ivy Hudson has a reputation as a sweet-but-unlucky-in-love Grammy-award-winning singer. **Kevin Lynch** is Ivy's manager, who knows what he's doing to Ivy's chagrin. **Malcolm Holt** is one of her best friends, and she's been linked to him romantically. Lucky for Malcolm, the action film star... **Dominick** is her bodyguard.

Sarah Hudson is Ivy's mother and owns a beauty salon, **Curls**, gossip central. Ivy's dad, **Trent**, is the high school band teacher. *Sounds like Ivy got quite a bit from her dad.* **Pepper Anthony** is Sarah's only, very insightful, employee and a former classmate of Ivy's. *Pepper's being set up for a Grant romance.* **Brian Green**, the former chess geek, manages the electronics store and is dating Pepper.

The **Chamberlains** are the town's royalty, and **Blake Chamberlain** was the town's golden boy and is a former NFL quarterback whose career was cut short. Now he's coaching the high school football team.

Adelia Chamberlain is Blake's imposing grandmother and the family matriarch. **Norman** is his lawyer dad, and it seems that Blake may be taking after his daddy's inability to keep his pants zipped. His mama is **Helen**, and we don't know if she's dead or alive. **Maddie** is one of Blake's sisters, a snotty one, and she works at the town bakery; **Mitchell** is Maddie's twin brother, and he's going for a medical degree; **Grant** is a younger brother and a local fireman with some great insights; **Simon** is the youngest and a policeman in town; and, **Hazel** is his book-lovin' baby sister. **Winston** is their houseman; **Cookie** is their cook.

Lydia Whittaker is the town rich mean girl who also went to school with Ivy. Her family owns a huge horse farm and two of the local restaurants: **Ellen's Diner** and **Whittaker's** where she's an *executive* chef. She's best friends with Maddie. *Tells you what Maddie is like...* **Thomas** is her little brother. **Angus** and **Willow** are the horses the Whittakers provide for the parade.

Francine Doyle does a nice casserole. **Dorothy "Dotty" Baker** is too old to care what she says, and she says anything she likes. **Miss Vera**'s mac and cheese is to die for, and she always wins for her pies. **Sheriff Todd**. **Emmett Sawyer** is the new bar owner and bartender at **Woody's**. **Jesse** and **Curt** are a couple of guys with whom Blake had gone to school. **Mayor Otto Gallagher** has been the mayor all of Ivy's life; **Marilyn** is his wife. **Mrs. Gloria Everett** is Ivy's favorite history teacher, although she's now the high school principal. **Miss Beverly Perkins** owns **Dressin' Up**, the go-to shop for ladies needing a nice outfit. Such as tea with the town grande dame. **Ruth** is a waitress at Ellen's Diner; **Fred** is the cook. **Miss Twila** runs the B&B. **Mr. Osbourne** is the bank manager. **Arthur Jackson** owns the gas station. **Miss Phyllis** owns the antiques shop. **Clark Newton** is with the *Rosewood Times*. **Petal Pushers** is the local flower shop. **Cheryl Buckman** is a middle-aged lady working behind the counter of her daddy's ice cream store, **Scoops**. The same protective daddy who was a decorated sniper in Korea. **Estelle Townsend** owns **Rosewood Cakes & Cookies**, the local bakery. **Josh Baldwin** is the kicker on the high school football team, and the way Blake handles him is just beautiful. I'm curious what **Rex Campbell**'s motivation was; he's another student on the football team.

Nash Russell is a tabloid celebrity reporter for *Hollywood News*. He's made a career out of uncovering every inspiration behind every one of Ivy's songs. Yeah, he's a not-nice guy and a disreputable journalist. **Larry** and **Ted** are from *Celebrity Weekly*. **Jimmy** is the talk show host.

Sterling Marshall is the jerk of a teen idol Ivy is in trouble over. **Perfect Harmony** was his boy band.

The Cover

The cover is sweet with a relaxed-looking Ivy and Blake lying on the green, green grass, each lying in the opposite direction with their heads touching. Ivy's guitar is off to the side, and they appear to be relaxing into the day.

The title means different things to Ivy and Blake. Ivy's music is for the release of her emotions while Blake is *Facing the Music* for what he did so long ago.

Ella Janine says

Originally posted at The Not-So-Literary Heiresses.

Facing the Music is one of those contemporary romance novels that's easy to read and get into. I've read a lot of contemporaries that made me laze around and dragged days before I finish it but this book was not one of those. Though the story was not new, **it was captivating and it made me love the idea of "second chance love" more.**

Blake and Ivy had their first chance five years ago, but because of Blake's inability to be patient he drove Ivy away making her write a song that no one imagined would be famous. Who would have thought that a calamity would reunite them and made them face what happened in the past five years.

Ivy was compared to Taylor Swift in this book because of her song "Size Matters". She gained instant fame because of her song that describes Blake's heart but was misunderstood as describing Blake's manhood instead. I think this is the first time I came across a character like Ivy. **I like that she used her broken heart to achieve her dreams**, although I do not really approve some of her foolish decisions to date jerks just so that her past feelings for Blake would ignite again and in turn inspire her to write another song. **Even if I did like her character I find it quite ironic that she thinks of herself too much of a victim after humiliating her ex-boyfriend through a song, in front of millions, or billions, of listeners.** Haven't she gathered enough courage and strength after five years of being famous?

He may have been a jerk and a coward but Blake definitely made it to my book boyfriend list. It was a total bummer that it took him five years to realize that Ivy was the one, but anyways I like him. His dreams of being an NHL superstar were crashed and yet he didn't blame it on anyone else, especially on Ivy despite her song that totally blew his reputation. He realized his wrong doings and did everything he could to take Ivy back. **He did not hold grudges and I think his character was more mature compared to Ivy.** He loves his family and he has an adorable granny that helped him and Ivy get back together. His granny reminded me of *The Bet* by Rachel Van Dyken, because I like it when grandparents intervene in their grandchildren's love life. And I meant that in a positive way.

The story wasn't new at all but *Andrea Laurence* had her way of making readers want more. **The characters weren't whiny and did not dilly dally at all. She wrote honest characters that didn't beat around the bush and I love that she did that.** I started this past midnight just before going to sleep and later after a "few" chapters the sun's already rising. It was very hard to put down once you get into it. **The new relationship she built around Ivy and Blake was convincing and it didn't matter that the concept of the book wasn't new.**

There are times I think the conflict went overboard, but **I think Lydia as the antagonist prove her worth.** This little b*tch was so annoying I wanted her gone and eaten by monsters, Arum, aliens, whatever. I just want her gone, and **looking back I think she did her job well as a big fat conflict because she annoyed me like hell.**

Although I love the story to bits and liked the way this was written, **the ending disappointed me.** I was already feeling their love, their passion and their desperation for each other but somehow their “final” getting back together seemed so weak compared to how they were picking up their relationship before the big fight. **It felt rushed and I wish it was more convincing because it didn’t seem enough for me.** We’re talking about a girl who lost her trust to the only man she ever loved, and them getting back together through a declaration of love seemed petty. I know the author tried to put some elements that would make it look like they didn’t jump into it immediately but I hope she put something more to make it more convincing and realistic.

Overall, I loved the story and the way the author executed this except for the ending. You know that feeling when you’re riding a rollercoaster and you feel excited with it just going up and then suddenly feel disappointed because you found out that it will just be going around and not roll down like you expected? I felt exactly like this. But don’t fret, it was still a good read and I don’t regret reading this because I totally loved it despite the disappointing ending.

Devon Ashley says

Ivy Hudson's song "Size Matters" had nothing to do with Blake's package size, but that didn't keep the world from thinking it so. Humiliated, poor Blake screwed up his Heisman moment and blew the big game, earning him a nice, cushy bench seat in the NFL. Didn't matter anyways, as a bad hit blew his knee out indefinitely. Now back in his home town heading up the football team, he was finally getting his life on track. Until Mother Nature was a bitch and took his field, and the town thought it'd be a great idea for the woman who made Blake a world-wide laughingstock to come home and help with a two week fundraiser to help rebuild. Bad part was, no one told either one of them they'd been paired to co-host the entire event, from riding in the parade to being the queen and king of a second-chance prom-themed dance. Love hurts. Especially the love of two people who had never completely given up on the other, but with humiliating betrayals on both fronts, who should have to suck it up and apologize first?

This is just your typical NA novel; quick and predictable with some definite cheese in the end. You've got your ridiculously successful, yet totally insecure, leading lady, the lover who broke her heart and the other woman who just can't seem to keep from playing interference. That said, I still really enjoyed it. I think most people will, provided they don't expect to be wowed or given anything truly original to read. There are definitely some funny moments, and the characters did keep me intrigued despite their predictable actions and emotions. It's a good, light read if that's what you're in the mood for. So go ahead, give it a go...

Copy provided by Pocket Star for honest review.

Lauren at Live Read and Breathe Reviews says

3 Predictable Stars!

Source: eARC for Honest Review Courtesy from Pocket Star via NetGalley

I will admit I'm a sucker for rockstar books and I thought it would be refreshing to have the girl be the rockstar for once. Now, it could have been refreshing but instead the book turned out to be mediocre and very predictable. The highlights for me were the mischievous meddling grandma and the vindictive bitch who I wanted to throat punch through out. How the hero and heroine honestly didn't see what she was capable of blows my mind.

Here is the crux of the book.... Ivy the struggling artist who gets burned by highschool sweetheart. Turns that heartbreak into a song which gets her where she needs to be and is now a top charting popstar where she takes her heartbreak and channels it to music publically. Remind you of anyone?

Blake the star quarterback who had it all but not a pining girlfriend by his side so he decides to open his horizons only to have it thrown in his face. He not only lives with that regret but the humiliation of the aftermath of her painful song.

After both returning home, Blake after he loses his career with a knee blown out and for Ivy to recover after another public relationship gone bad. She's home to lick her wounds and try to make up by doing charity to get the public to like her again.

Boy and girl reconnect by the meddling ways of grannie then all is well but some spiteful jealous bitch trying to destroy everything for it all to work out. Yada yada yada. The idea was sweet but way to predictable to get you hooked completely into the book.

For more reviews, visit Live Read and Breathe

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Charlotte says

This review first appeared on Thoughts and Pens.

The premise of Facing The Music screamed of “Cliché” but it didn’t stop me from hitting the request button. The thing with this book is that the synopsis has reminded me of Taylor Swift and how she uses her music to vent out her anger for her ex-boyfriends. Plus, I have this crazy fascination about characters that use their musical talents to ruin their exes. If you have read Tracey Martin’s Another Little Piece of My Heart, then it has the same premise with this one. I enjoyed Martin’s work but it needed more polishing so I was hoping that Facing The Music will deliver. Well, it did and it didn’t.

How so? All was well and good until the reconciliation part. Basically, Taylor Swift Ivy Hudson became an international Rock Star after she released her first song, Size Matters, a single that clearly conveyed her contempt for her asshole of an ex-boyfriend. While the song propelled Ivy’s career to the top, it did the opposite to Blake’s.

There was nothing new when they met again as it followed the same lines of those other romance stories about exes seeing each other after so many years. Drama was aplenty but there was humor and some thought-provoking issues here. Humor and thought provoking issues can sometimes save a story from flopping completely. Indeed, it rescued Facing The Music.

Facing The Music made me wonder whether I would resort to what Ivy did if any of my exes cheated on me. The story of this book certainly revolved around the “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned” saying. Naturally, I expected that the reconciliation part is going to be mindblowing or at least, realistic considering the kind of damage Ivy has inflicted to Blake’s life. What I got instead is a hastily done resolution and the next thing I know, our characters are already kissing and eventually, having sex. I am not a relationship guru but these people have been hurting for over 6 years and just like that, they magically made up? I am at a loss for words. @_@

And then, here comes another conflict which didn’t actually help the plot evolve but rather it made things redundant. Please, the story is already clichéd enough as it is, why not seek for a new avenue to keep the story going?

The characters were likable enough. They acted true to their age and owned up their mistakes. I must say that Blake has impressed me in the end as he really matured from being a jerk to someone who is worth rooting for.

I’m so close to giving Facing The Music a 2-star rating but luckily, I had fun reading it. The characters and the picturesque setting, Rosewood, were also additional reasons why this book managed to scrape a passable rating and possibly, a follow from me. To conclude, if you are looking for a quick fix to your contemporary cravings, then consider picking up this one.

Andrea Lovette says

When I first started reading, the story immediately made me think of the movie "Sweet Home Alabama" and quickly pulled me in since that is one of my fav movies! This was a sweet love story about Ivy and Blake and second chances. I couldn't help but get caught up in their lives to see if they would find their way back to each other. I enjoyed the verbal sparring of Ivy and Blake as well as the rivalry between Ivy and Lydia! It wasn't the usual heated love scenes I'm used to reading, but it worked for this book. This is one I couldn't put down for dear I would miss something! Thoroughly enjoyed!

Freda Mans-Labianca says

Fast-paced!

The dynamic in every character, the different settings, and the going-ons, made for a quick-paced read. Rosewood is such a sweet town, and the residents are just as charming. Ivy and Blake have some super intense chemistry throughout that will warm any romantics heart. I'm so glad they got their happily ever after. Now I need a copy of, Feeding The Fire. Got to find out what else happens in this cut little town. Will it be more of Ivy and Blake? I do like them and hope to know more. Or will it be new people? I don't know, but look forward to finding out.

4.5/5

Carol-Ann says

I received a copy of this book by NETGALLERY, A fantastic read i personally really enjoyed this story and chemistry!Loved the humour of the story it was beautifully written,"A Book Not To Be Missed" Ivy Hudson returns to her small town to face her ex-boyfriend Blake whom she wrote a song about (size Matters) after she felt humiliated by him and you know what they say a woman scorned will allways get her own back in the end,He had a football career but he hadn't been able to get over the humiliation of the song his ex-love had wrote about him,He has salvaged his career returning to rosewood to be the high school coach, ivy and Blake have no option but to put the past where it belongs and help with the fundraising for there high school after a tragedy,hopefully move forward with there relationship and to a new-start! Lots of twist and turns and plenty of humour to this story!

Deanna says

Rating: 4/5 Stars

The books that always end up catching my attentions are the ones with the funniest book blurbs, and *Facing the Music* had one that made me laugh so hard, I was wheezing.

I *love* reading books about scorned heroines, I *love* reading books about redemption romances, and I *love* reading books about musicians, athletes, actors, or anything that's extremely far from the ordinary. What I normally don't love are books with both scorned heroines and redemption romances, because most books end up as a hit or a miss with both those factors. Either the heroine just abruptly goes from hating someone to wanting to have his children, or the redemption arc falls *flat*. Which was why I was surprised that I enjoyed this book. Especially since it contained factors that would normally make me run far away from the book as possible. There was a cheating hero (don't worry, the cheating happened prior to the novel) and a love triangle (partially, since it technically isn't a love triangle--but it has the schematics of one anyway), both two elements I'm not fond of. I tend to let it slide if the author handles it gracefully without blowing it out of proportions.

Here's the thing. I **hate** cheating heroes. Most authors tend to gloss over it, making the heroes put the blame of their infidelity on the female/significant other. I **appreciated** how Blake came to redeem himself in a realistic manner. He knew what he did was wrong. He knew what he fucked up on. I *liked* that even though others were trying to defend Blake to Ivy, he owned up to it himself.

Also, as much as I enjoy plots revolved around scorned women--I tend to dislike it when authors drag it on for too long, making the characters whine excessively just for the sake of angst and more drama for the plot. It's why I really appreciated and was pleased to see how Ivy was willing to move on from the past. They both have hurt each other (in two different ways, of course), but they still carry torches for each other. They still want each other, and the chemistry is there. Chemistry doesn't lie, people. [wink wink nudge nudge].

And most importantly, I **loved** how the two of them were willing to move on. Especially since what he did hurt both of them badly in the end.

This book was **charming** and **funny**. I **loved** the secondary characters. I loved Blake's brothers: Grant and Simon. I loved Pepper, who was an amazing friend to Ivy (There's nothing I love more than amazing/realistic portrayal of friendships between girls). I loved Blake's grandmother (and her meddling). And I loved Ivy's best friend, Malcolm (who should team up with Blake's grandmother, because these two are the best meddlers I've read in fiction).

What I also found to enjoy was the **chemistry** between Ivy and Blake. It was *sizzling*, and Blake managed to prove to be sweet and swoon-worthy.

What I didn't really enjoy was Lydia. She was one piece of work, and she kept getting on my nerves because she was hellbent on shaming and being rude to Ivy. [No man is worth all that cattiness, no no no].

Either than that, this book was definitely a hit for me. There were lots of funny moments, lots of witty banter, and lots of amazing characters that just made the entire book sweet, charming, and fun.

I'm excited to read Grant's and Pepper's book next.

Kathy says

Facing the Music by **Andrea Laurence** is a such a fun read! A wonderfully unique storyline, delightful characters and laugh out loud humor are just a few of things that make this romance such an outstanding read.

Ivy Hudson's relationship with Blake Chamberlain ended when she discovered him in a compromising position and in the aftermath, she channeled all of her hurt and anger into the song that launched her singing career. In the years since, her numerous breakups have continued to inspire her most popular songs but her latest breakup song results in a major public backlash against her. Needing a retreat from the public eye and generate some positive publicity, Ivy reluctantly returns to her small home town to use her celebrity status to help raise much needed funds for the high school's new gym. Much to Ivy's dismay, Blake figures prominently in the upcoming fundraising efforts and the passage of time has done nothing to dim her hurt or diminish their smoking hot desire for one another.

Ivy is a wonderful character and it is such a joy getting to know the woman behind the successful career. She

has never forgotten her humble beginnings and she is still very down to earth. Her anger and hurt over Blake's betrayal have not lessened with time but she is able to put aside her feelings for the sake of the fundraiser. Despite her successful career, Ivy has a few insecurities that a nemesis from her childhood exploits at every turn.

Ah, poor Blake. His mistake in judgment all those years ago indirectly destroyed his career and he is just now finally beginning to bounce back when Ivy returns to town. He readily admits that Ivy's anger and hurt are justified but he also unfairly blames her for his football career crashing and burning. When he and Ivy can no longer avoid one another, they have a long overdue discussion about their notorious past and agree to leave the past behind.

The reconciliation between Ivy and Blake does not happen overnight and this makes the resolution of their past more believable. In the beginning of the story, they are both a little immature but over the course of the story, they each do some much needed growing up. This leads to a deeper connection between them as they get to know one another again. Their romance has a few bumps along the way when an adversary continually sabotages Ivy's self-confidence and Ivy reverts to old behavior instead of talking things out with Blake. The part of the storyline with the vindictive foe takes a little too long to resolve and eventually becomes repetitious.

Facing the Music is a very entertaining novel with an all star cast of engaging characters, plenty of Southern charm and an exceptional storyline. The romance between Ivy and Blake is playful, flirty and quite sensuous and their banter is quite humorous. Overall, it is a thoroughly enjoyable story and fans will be thrilled to discover **Andrea Laurence** plans to revisit the small town of Rosewood in the very near future.
