



Wild Child

Molly O'Keefe

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Perfect for readers of Susan Elizabeth Phillips and Rachel Gibson, this sizzling romance tells the story of a sexy small-town mayor and a notorious “bad girl,” who discover that home really is where the heart is.

Monica Appleby is a woman with a reputation. Once she was America’s teenage “Wild Child,” with her own reality TV show. Now she’s a successful author coming home to Bishop, Arkansas, to pen the juicy follow-up to her tell-all autobiography. Problem is, the hottest man in town wants her gone. Mayor Jackson Davies is trying to convince a cookie giant to move its headquarters to his crumbling community, and Monica’s presence is just too . . . unwholesome for business. But the desire in his eyes sends a very different message: Stay, at least for a while.

Jackson needs this cookie deal to go through. His town is dying and this may be its last shot. Monica is a distraction proving too sweet, too inviting—and completely beyond his control. With every kiss he can taste her loneliness, her regrets, and her longing. Soon their uncontrollable attraction is causing all kinds of drama. But when two lost hearts take a surprise detour onto the bumpy road of unexpected love, it can only lead someplace wonderful.

Wild Child Details

Date : Published October 29th 2013 by Bantam (first published October 15th 2013)

ISBN : 9780345533715

Author : Molly O'Keefe

Format : Mass Market Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Wild Child for online ebook

Alex ? Deranged KittyCat ? says

4.5 stars

Stars, I loved this book!

To everyone who has faked it... whatever "it" is.

Don't get me wrong. This is not the next American great novel. It just hit close to home for me. I could relate to the characters and their internal struggles.

First, there is Jackson, the young mayor of the small town of Bishop. He hasn't had sex in two years. He's the kind of guy who tries to make everything right for everybody... except for himself and his sister, Gwen. Well, the sister part isn't exactly correct. He tries to do what's best for her, while keeping her away from him. They lost their parents when Jackson was in law school and he had to drop everything and return to his hometown in order to raise Gwen. He resents the death of his parents for that (and himself for resenting it). And **that's just so incredibly human!** I don't buy all that selfless sacrifice in name of a sibling without a hint of resentment (see Sugar Daddy for that). I mean, yes, one sacrifices himself, and one keeps thinking what if I didn't have to do that. But Molly O'Keefe does something amazing for her characters. She gives them enough brains to realize that they act the wrong way sometimes, and, **what's more important**, she lets them grow. Jackson understands his mistakes/his flaws and does his best to improve.

Plus, he's really hot! Yes, they always are really hot in books... Where do all the hot, amazing men hide in the real world?

Then, there is Monica, the former *Wild Child* reality TV celebrity-turned-writer. She had an awful childhood (her mother shot her father in self defense), been a troubled teenager and a promiscuous young adult. Eventually, Monica started writing non-fiction. Now she is back in Bishop to try and write a book about that dreadful moment when her father died.

Monica has serious intimacy issues, generated by her sleeping around so easily in her wild years. Again, I'm impressed at how the author approached her problems. **There aren't many books who talk so openly about faking orgasms, self-destructive behavior and humiliating sex acts as this one.** In most books, women turn on with a flick of the man's finger, stay that way and finish without any troubles. Monica's first experience with Jackson is nothing like that. There's attraction, but her mind is hyperactive and things finish as soon as they started.

Also, Monica manages to overcome her becoming aggressive when hurt. I do that a lot and find it extremely hard to contain myself although I know what I'm doing is wrong. O'Keefe gives her character the **maturity** ability to analyze herself and move forward.

Also, the female friendships in this book are so good and hate-free. I love friendships between two women. I'm tired of them hating each other or bullying one another.

So, yes! Go read this book! It's worth it.

Keertana says

I've been finding it really, really tough to write a review for the Molly O'Keefe books I've read. Firstly, because the covers make this book seem like erotica or hard-core contemporary romance when it's more of a raw, realistic, and brutal look at life. It's an adult novel, so yes, it has fairly explicit sex, but the sex is only one aspect to the depth these books contain. Of course these characters are broken, but they're the kind of broken that passes for normal until it doesn't. And these are the kind of relationships, messy and unflinchingly honest, that we all sustain, at some point or the other, in our lives. I really wish I could articulate how perfectly O'Keefe writes really complex story arcs, with plenty of swoon to counter the dark places she takes her characters, but I can't. If you're one for realistic novels, ones that use sex as a means of empowerment, take characters out of the boxes we've labeled for them, and is downright un-put-downable, read Molly O'Keefe. I just don't think you can go wrong with her.

Also, as always, a huge thank you to Sarah for recommending this one. I'd have significantly fewer 4 and 5 Star reads under my belt if it wasn't for her. :)

Susan (susayq ~) says

I absolutely loved this! This was my first book by Molly O'Keefe and won't be my last. The main characters were so broken and vulnerable and easily relatable, because everyone has felt the way they feel at some point in their lives.

I found myself falling in love with Monica more than Jackson in this LOL She hid behind her fame, pretending to be something she wasn't cause she didn't know how to be anything else. And she was so lost and broken. The way she changed throughout the book was amazing! It was perfect :)

If you read my comments while I was reading this, I found out who the guy on the side of the road was, and it was definitely a shock when Shelby saw him again. All I can say, without giving away too much is, I wish he would have stayed on the side of the road ;)

ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley

Ksenia says

I read a lot of Romance. Recently I find it hard to fall in love with a book in this genre. Call it romance burn-out. Same tropes, same characters, same stories... But I longed for a love story that would make me feel deeply again. I want to say thank you to Molly O'Keefe for this book.

Wild Child is one of the best romance books out there. Molly took the same old trope, but wrote a beautiful unique and meaningful story. Now I have an urge to revisit my old ratings and change them, I gave away 4 and 5 Stars so freely.

I loved Molly's writing style. The most fitting word to describe it is delicious. Yes, delicious words... I read this book slowly, savoring every sentence.]

The author wrote complex multidimensional characters and I was fully invested in their stories.

And of course the romance. Deep, touching, at times sad and hurting, Monica and Jackson's relationship was such a delight to follow.

My only complaint is Shelby Monroe's story. This sub-plot was thrown onto the reader so abruptly and from nowhere, that I had difficulties with it. But it was a minor thing that didn't lessen my overall enjoyment of the book.

Beautifully written deep story with great characterization. Highly recommended to all lovers of romance.

You can find my reviews:

Michelle says

Ignore the cover. The cover is miles away from what this book actually is, which is fucking BRILLIANT. Not that it isn't sexy. It is. O'Keefe writes some seriously hot sex scenes. But the thing about this book is that she just claws her way right through the usual shallow, barely realized romance tropes to the stripped down core of her characters, and then she digs some more. She reaches in and digs around and pulls out great bloody handfuls of REAL. The kind of real you recognize because you've lived it yourself, so you know just exactly how real it is, and you know she knows it, too. This is seriously honest writing. It hurt to read it, so I'm pretty damn sure it had to hurt to write it. Bravo, Molly! This is the best thing you've ever written. I rarely give five stars. This deserved six.

Jonetta says

Molly O'Keefe is one of my favorite writers. You can count on her to create characters that will test you and take your emotions for a spin, one moment loving them the next wanting to give them a good shake. Well, she didn't let me down with this story!

The set up

Monica Appleby returns to Bishop, Arkansas to write her next book. She was the unwilling reality TV star growing up and labeled the teen-aged "Wild Child." Bishop is where her father was killed when she was five years old and she wants to reconcile her memories with those who witnessed the events. Meanwhile, Mayor Jackson Davies is preparing the town to show its best face in a contest to woo a major conglomerate to move their factory operations to Bishop. He's not sure the Wild Child fits into the scenario.

The issues

Monica has her own agenda and gets prickly when Jackson balks at what she plans to do. He can't afford to have anything (or anyone!) foil his plan to save this town because he plans to leave as soon as the town

recovers. Jackson hasn't had a chance to explore the world since being forced to return to take care of his much younger sister following his parents' deaths. His sister is rebelling and pulling further away from him every minute. He also doesn't want to give in to the obvious attraction he and Monica have for each other.

What I loved about the story

Having both Monica's and Jackson's individual points of view kept me in the romance because these two did a dance with each other that kept me off balance. They were so true to their emotionally battered selves when dealing with each other I thought it might take forever for them to come together. There was no instant love here but the lustng didn't hold them back. The dialogue is clever, the sexual tension high and the secondary characters/story lines pitched perfectly to add even more conflict. The writing is some of the finest I've seen in this genre.

But what I REALLY loved was the complexity of these two characters. Monica is really damaged and I liked how she didn't seek sympathy nor made any excuses for her past behavior. She owned her identity, flaws and all, and disarmed her detractors. It pained me sometimes to see her be so exposed while at the same time be incredibly private about the real depth of her pain and loneliness. Her prickliness with Jackson could be maddening at times. He, on the other hand, masked his pain and disillusion behind a pleasing facade..."I've got it handled" so no one ever saw the real Jackson. And yet, these two saw straight through each other and their relationship was as complicated as they were individually.

Why not 5 stars?

I usually complain about a book needing to be pared down, maybe 50 fewer pages and it would be a more nimble read. Here it was just the opposite. The story deserved just a little longer ending as I think the issues involving Monica and her Mom were resolved too quickly and neatly. It didn't ring true to the rest of their story and they deserved more time. I would have been thrilled with 50 more pages.

The bottom line

This is not chic-lit or some light and breezy romance. This is a serious story, meaning the writing is spectacular and meaningful, the story has depth and the characters EXTREMELY interesting and true to their designed nature. I make no bones about O'Keefe being one of my favorite writers and, even though I was prepared for a good book, I was blown away by this one. It's not a light read and it should be one you make a point to include on your shelf. Just make certain that you take the time to savor this story when you do read it. 4.5 stars

(I received an ARC from Edelweiss)

KatLynne says

3.5 Stars

Jackson Davies is the handsome, young Mayor of Bishop, Arkansas and his last hope of saving this town from bankruptcy is a National contest that would bring a new business into the area. The residents are all on board with his plan and willing to do their share to ensure a win.

The only hitch is the return of Monica Appleby. She's sexy, beautiful and a well known author of Wild Child, a bestseller which depicts the story of her untamed, youthful sexcapades.

Jackson is very afraid of what her presence will do to their wholesome town image. In addition, she's stirring up more ghost as she interviews the locals about an incidence that occurred when she lived there as a child. He would like nothing more than to see her leave, or at least stay in hiding until the contest is over. What Jackson didn't count on is their explosive chemistry.

Molly O'Keefe offers a cast of realistic, flawed characters along with a well written story centered around small town living. Both Jackson and Monica are dealing with a past filled with tragedy and years of loneliness. They're both closed off emotionally and neither believe or expect to find love. Giving in to a desire that cannot be denied, they each soon find themselves facing some important issues.

This is my first book by Ms. O'Keefe and I love her writing style. Monica Appleby is a complex, loveable young woman and easily grabs the limelight in this tale. They're both suffering from the effects dealt from their past and while I was sympathetic to Jackson and understand his issues, I found myself becoming frustrated with him in parts of this story. However, his redemption was gained with his understanding and patience with one of Molly's major issues.

I enjoyed this poignant, engaging love story and the small town setting was the icing on the cake. I'm happy to have found another author whose writing style I enjoy and I'm looking forward to more!

ARC courtesy of publisher via Netgalley

Melwasul says

2.5/5 L'intégralité de ma chronique ici: <http://lune-et-plume.fr/coup-declat-d...>

Je vais être rapide, je vais faire simple, je vais faire court, en trois lettres : LOL. J'aurais aussi pu dire : MDR. Bref, grosse, grosse désillusion avec cette nouvelle collection des éditions J'ai Lu pour Elle. Après avoir coulé la collection Romantic suspense, après avoir commencé le saccage de la collection Promesses, avec Love Addiction, j'avais l'espoir d'avoir enfin une nouvelle collection contemporaine qui tienne la route, j'en attendais des publications du style de la grande époque de la collection Promesses, du Julie James (est-ce qu'on va avoir un jour ses nouvelles publications ?), de Susan Elizabeth Phillips, de Kristan Higgins, de Rachel Gibson, Robyn Carr, Louisa Edwards (dont j'attends désespérément la suite) ... Avec Molly O'Keefe, c'est que l'on m'avait promis, une romance contemporaine, jeune, branchée, moderne ... Verdict, je me suis pratiquement ennuyée comme un rat mort. [...]

ShoSho says

From Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

I loved this book it was angsty and touching .

I started it thinking it was all fluff because of its blurb and cover but fluff was one thing that this book wasn't.

After a few pages I realised I was reading about two messed up people who didn't know what they wanted .Their thoughts were messy and I didn't like what they were thinking or how they were behaving .I had to read each sentence a few times to understand ,I started thinking about DNFing the book .

I'm not sure if it was the writing that changed after 20% or it was my opinion of what I was reading but I gave up even the thought of DNFing this book and didn't put it down until I finished .It was hard to get into the story ,I didn't like the characters or where they were in life at first but after I read a bit more ,I was hooked.

The way the 2 main characters were changed during this book was so beautiful and believable .I loved the secondary characters ,I hope to read more about them in the next books in the series.

It reminded me of one of Susan Elizabeth Philips books and one of Jennifer Cruise's .I don't want to compare just to give you some idea how it was like.

ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley

Saly says

Wild Child is a book truly about a wild-child, the heroine Monica is infamous for her wild teenage being years, for being a groupie but she has moved on and is trying to change, her location is the hero's town.

The hero Jackson, is the Mayor and he has had huge responsibilities on his shoulder, his young teenage sister and even the entire town and now he sees a light at the end of the tunnel and he just wants to leave it all and be wild and free and unencumbered and to do that he needs his town to win a contest and he thinks Monica and his image will stand in the way. All of this of course doesn't stop them from getting involved and their road to happiness is complex.

Now, the reason I loved this book was because of the characters because they all were so real and so flawed. We see Monica, her struggles with her past, the return of her mother and we see Jackson struggling to be a brother and a father in one.

For me the star of this book was Monica and I for one cannot wait for the next book. Molly O'Keefe remains a terrific author.

ARC provided by publisher through Netgalley.

Lye says

DNF and it kills me to say so...

BAH, I can't even begin to describe how frustrating this book is. The characters are very two-dimesnional and the writing is quite round-about. I am the type of person who once commits to a book in a series always reads it the entire way through even if I hate one (or more of the books), because I HAVE to know I gave it a fair chance. But this, no... just no. And it sucks because the book had a LOT of potentially and the cover is

just plain smokin'. This one was a skip for me.

Sarah says

4.5 stars

I really liked this one (no surprise, since I loved Molly's last series). Monica was a fascinating main character, with a lot of layers, and I really believed in her personal journey. I also really liked the subplot about Gwen, Jackson's sister, who was a very intriguing teen character (I would read an entire novel about Gwen). I wasn't completely sure Jackson was ready to be a fully functioning person (emotionally-speaking) by the end of this book, though he was on the right path and I wish the plot with Monica's mother hasn't been so tidy, but that's a complaint I have in most books involving fractured family relationships, so take that with a grain of salt.

Anyway, like the author's other books, if you're looking for a romance with nuanced female characters and sly subversion of traditional tropes/narratives, this is a pretty good choice.

I wrote a bunch of words about this one on my blog: [http://cleareyesfullshelves.com/blog/...](http://cleareyesfullshelves.com/blog/)

Jen says

3 Stars

I finished *Wild Child* over a week ago and I'm still not quite sure how to review it. On one hand I think Molly O'Keefe can write a decent story. On the other hand this book bored me to tears at times and I'm not quite sure how to reconcile the two.

Monica Appleby is known to millions of Americans as "The Wild Child." Monica and her mother had a popular reality show a decade and a half ago. **I'm thinking something along the lines of Lindsay Lohan and her mother had that nightmare become a show on E! *shudders***. When she left the show and her mother as a teenager, she ended up touring with rock bands and becoming the typical rock groupie, then decided to write a book about her experiences. Needless to say, ten years have passed, Monica's calmed down and tried to center herself, but all anyone can see is the Wild Child. When she's offered the opportunity to write a book about her mother and father's tumultuous past and the subsequent killing of her father, she accepts and returns to her mother's hometown of Bishop to get started.

Jackson Davies never wanted to be mayor of Bishop, Arkansas. When he was forced to quit law school and return home to take care of his much younger sister after his parents died in a car accident, he saw his future slipping away. His father was mayor and somehow (still not sure how or why) he became mayor. He vowed to turn the hard-hit-by-the-economy Bishop around, make sure his uber smart sister made her way to college, and then it was HIS TIME! Time to fuck all the random women he wanted, time to go to Vegas for the weekend and not give a damn, **TIME TO LIVE!** When a popular, but apparently foul tasting cracker company announces their plans to relocate their factory to a needy American town, Jackson sees this as his way out of the boonies. When he finds out Monica's in town to stir up trouble regarding the town's most infamous event, he knows he has no choice but to stop her. But wait! Monica might be a great way to get

some solid press! GAH!!!

My real problem with this book is the fact that EVERY SINGLE CHARACTER lived inside their own damn head! There was an instant attraction between Monica and Jackson. They liked each other, didn't trust each other, wanted each other, but never did they communicate! Even after they'd had sex, or at least what seemed some pretty satisfying mutual gratification, she was still wondering how she could kick him out without seeming cold so she could erect those walls around her heart again. This isn't new territory in romance land, but I'm used to at least a smidgen of the character's personalities showing themselves. These two argued and flirted occasionally then retreated inside their heads where the reader gets to know them, but I never felt the connection between the two because conversation was so minimal. All of a sudden she's in love and I honest to god couldn't understand how that happened. He wasn't a jackass by any means; I just missed the connection that should make this book a romance.

This same scenario happened between Jackson and his 17 year old sister and an art teacher dear to the community who ended up having an affair with the cracker dude. It did pick up at the 75% mark or so and I absolutely loved it! Monica and Jackson started communicating, Jackson began to talk to his sister and Monica and her mom at least had a few seemingly gratifying conversations. Unfortunately, I needed the connections and conversations to happen a whole lot earlier than they did.

The entire time I was reading *Wild Child*, I kept thinking "this could be such a good book!" I did enjoy it for the most part, but unfortunately it never quite got there for me. Molly O'Keefe is a smooth and talented writer and I'm definitely looking forward to reading some of her other work. I just wish this one had worked for me a little more.

ARC provided by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

Claire Robinson says

Wild Child – 4 Stars.

I must admit by the hot cover I thought this would be a fun and sexy read, but its actually a little deeper than that.

This book contains characters that have deep and painful pasts, unfulfilled goals, longing to belong and to be able to live life how you choose and not how you are directed, whether it be by circumstance or responsibility.

Monica and Jackson are both trying to make the best of their futures while striving to leave the nightmare of their pasts behind. Monica is also dealing with the grief of losing a trusted and loved friend, while Jackson is struggling with the responsibility he feels while being the town mayor as well as trying to raise his sister after the tragic loss of their parents.

This is a great book, if you are looking for some laughs, a little sexiness and a whole lot of well written story. Perfect vacation reading, or snuggled up in the warm winter reading the cast and characters are all likeable and the story is well thought out, develops at a great pace and left me wanting to look up more of Molly O'Keefe's books as soon as I had finished it.

ARC provided by Netgalley in exchange for the above honest review.

Feminista says

Rating: 3.5 out of 5.

The novel has a great heroine and a good plot. But I was really really disappointed with the hero. What started off as a sexy brooding man, he turned out to be the biggest user and whiner. What's worse is that he always played the victim. With his sister, with the heroine, you name it. If something went wrong, I'll play the victim. Also, I did not think it was cool how he treated the heroine. Ever since the first night he met her, he has been insulting and hurting her, and then turning around to apologise. What's worse was that the heroine keeps on accepting his apologies. We are not in secondary school any more, it's not okay to say hurtful things and then think that a mere sorry will help you own up to it.

I'll give you an example. There is this one part, where this infamous wild child opens up to this undeserving man and tells him that she keeps herself distant from everyone like an island. This so called hero throws that back in her face, not once, but twice! He says something along the lines of: oh, how would you know, being an island and all. He was such a child! Seriously, he had some growing up to do, and the heroine needed someone better.

Having said that, the rest of the novel was good, which is why I am giving it such a rating.

ARC Courtesy of NetGalley and Random House Publishing.
