



Island House

Bru Baker

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Unable to move on after the death of his lover, British expat Niall Ahern clings to Nolan's dream of living in the Caribbean by moving to Tortola. Once there, he finds that not even the beauty of the island can fill the hole in his heart. Broke and spent in nearly every way imaginable, Niall wants out of the lonely, miserable, guilt-ridden life he's carved out for himself.

When Ethan Bettencourt, a wealthy tech guru, shows up in British Virgin Islands looking to purchase a second home, he gives Niall hope that he can move on. Both men fall hard and fast, but Niall finds piloting his yacht in the midst of a hurricane is nothing compared to weathering life's simple misunderstandings. As their troubles come between them, Niall is left to wonder if he and Ethan are over before they've begun.

Island House Details

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From Reader Review Island House for online ebook

Nikyta *Miss Forgetful* says

This review can be found at The Blog of Sid Love.

4.5 stars

Niall Ahern is just existing. After the death of his partner, he moved his life to an island they were supposed to eventually move to. Since then, he's been trying to fulfill the dreams he had with his once partner, Nolan. It's been four years and he still hasn't been able to move on... until Ethan Bettencourt arrives. Ethan's looking to buy a house on Tortola and hired Niall to show him homes. The attraction is instant but not only is Niall unwilling to sleep with a client but Ethan is giving off mixed signals. When a hurricane blows through the Caribbean, it brings the two closer together but when it's over Ethan leaves without a goodbye. Hurt and depressed, Niall goes on with his life but he can't seem to let Ethan go. When Niall goes to the States to see his sister-in-law, that gives him the perfect opportunity to find out why Ethan left in the first place. Was there something real between them or did Niall imagine the feelings he thought Ethan had for him?

Bru Baker is quickly turning into a favorite author of mine. There's just something about her writing that draws me in with each story I read by her. I loved the flow of this story. There's a few hiccups and readers might get annoyed with "the big misunderstanding" (although it wasn't huge, IMO) but it worked for these two because of the past they unknowingly share. It explores the connection Niall and Ethan develop and the feelings they can't get rid of but also shows them after they work things out from "The Big M"... at least with a little help from two great female secondary characters, Stephanie and Clare.

This story is solely from Niall's POV so you get to know Niall pretty well. My heart ached for him. He's still grieving for Nolan but he has an underlining of guilt he can't seem to get rid of (and not for why you're thinking either!). I just wanted to hug him and keep him safe. He's sweet and kind but emotionally, he's bruised. Ethan is different in that he loves his life. He's confident, blunt, and a thrill seeker. The two have more in common than they originally think and I absolutely adored the connection they create. It's seems a little fast at times but it's sort of sweet and intense. I couldn't help but love it and THEM!

I think my only issue was that the ending left me with a lot of questions. The boys deserve their happiness but now I'm left wondering where they go from here. Will Niall leave Tortola for Seattle? What about his business? His job? What will he do now? Will they have a long-distance relationship? Or will they move to Tortola? There are just so many questions I have that I really wish it had been longer so they could be answered!

In the end, I adored this story. Niall has a lot of depth to him as does Ethan, although Ethan is still somewhat mysterious. I liked the conflicts they go through and how they were handled but I found the writing amazing. Ms. Baker knows how to spin a tale that I'll enjoy and I can't wait to read more from her.

Helen Shaw says

As with other stories I've read by this author, there was some frustration at what seemed to be lack of detail in the initial interactions with the two MC's. I should know to be patient. She always comes through and fills

in those details as the rest of the story progresses. Also, unlike her recent offerings from Dreamspinner, this had all the angst I can handle and then some. But I'm an angst slut so really the more the merrier. Looking forward to getting back to the island and catching up with the some of the other characters we were introduced to.

Aniko says

3.5 stars

Before the death of his partner of eight years, Nolan (an ex British Royal Marine who had died four years previously whilst trying to prevent a violent mugging), Brit Niall Ahern had been an estate agent back in Kingston upon Hull. During Nolan's service, he had dreamed of the two of them spending their lives running a fishing charter on Tortola in the Caribbean's British Virgin Islands once his tour of duty was over. After his lover's death, a grief-stricken Niall endeavoured to fulfil what he believed was Nolan's dream in an effort to keep it alive. So Niall purchased the Orion and moved into the house Nolan and bought on the island.

Even four years after Nolan's death, Niall has no interest in another relationship. He and his partner had known each other since young boys and Niall couldn't imagine being with anyone else. Then Ethan Bettencourt entered his life. The six foot three handsome Seattle-based American millionaire made an impression on Niall the first time they meet.

Island House, overall, was a sweet, gentle romance with complex and endearing characters. There was an interesting twist later in the book that I thought was quite well done. I liked the resolution between Niall and Ethan and would have liked to see an epilogue to soften what ended up being a rather abrupt ending. The writing was good, if a little uneven at times and, ok, it may not be the kind of book that stays with you months later, but you know what? There's nothing wrong with that. Not every book needs to (or even should) be full of hard-hitting emotional impact. It was a pleasant, enjoyable read from an author who I'd be happy to read more from.

Read the full review at [Live Your Life, Buy The Book](#)

Lily says

4 stars. A very well written book which focuses on characterisations and conveying emotions - a winning combination in my opinion. It thoroughly engaged me, touched my heart with sadness and happiness, leaving me quite satisfied at the end. I say 'quite' because the ending felt too abrupt after such an emotional and nicely laid out journey.

Curtis says

Niall Ahern moved to Tortola after the death of his lover, Nolan, to live out Nolan's dream. And while the island is beautiful and he gets by, there's just so much missing that leaves Niall feeling unfulfilled. When a client, Ethan Bettencourt, comes to the island to enlist Niall's help in finding a vacation home, Niall has no idea just how many waves Ethan is about to make. The two hit it off, and Niall wonders if maybe he's found

what's been missing--but life isn't easy, even in the Caribbean.

An easy, entertaining, and engaging read. These are two likable characters, and the story of where they each come from and where they end up together is definitely worth a read.

Becky Condit says

Please see Jules Lovestoread's complete review at <http://mrsconditreadsbooks.com/index....>

Favorite quote: “*...And then you opened your mouth and started babbling in that accent of yours, and I was absolutely lost. Do you have any idea how gorgeous you are, Niall? How completely charming you are, or how endearing I find your awkwardness?*”

Brandon Witt says

A completely charming romance, complete with a little surprise twist at the end that I didn't see coming. Very enjoyable!

Andrea says

Blurb describes the book but the fantastic writing makes it so much more. This is one of those stories you see in your head as much as you read it on the page. Strong but vulnerable characters who had bumps on the road to their HEA, fantastic settings, loved it all. This is the first book of a series but can be read as a stand alone.

Diverse says

This was a sweet read. There were a few teary moment but love won out in the end... as it always should. Bru Baker writes a story with great substance and plot. Her character are well thought out and I love how they grow right before your eyes. How Niall and Ethan are when the story begins are ions different by the end. It's gradual, realistic and lovely

LiveYourLife BuyTheBook says

3.5 Stars

A "Live Your Life, Buy The Book" Review

Before the death of his partner of eight years, Nolan (an ex British Royal Marine who had died four years previously whilst trying to prevent a violent mugging), Brit Niall Ahern had been an estate agent back in Kingston upon Hull. During Nolan's service, he had dreamed of the two of them spending their lives running

a fishing charter on Tortola in the Caribbean's British Virgin Islands once his tour of duty was over. After his lover's death, a grief-stricken Niall endeavoured to fulfil what he believed was Nolan's dream in an effort to keep it alive. So Niall purchased the Orion and moved into the house Nolan and bought on the island. Unfortunately, the business never really took off and after two years of struggling, Niall returned to real estate, founding his agency although selling houses was never anything he particularly enjoyed. But it paid the bills, right?

Even four years after Nolan's death, Niall has no interest in another relationship. He and his partner had known each other since young boys and Niall couldn't imagine being with anyone else. Then Ethan Bettencourt entered his life. With business slow and a sizeable boat loan, Niall was hoping to land the large commission that came with a large sale, and when tech tycoon Ethan contacted him looking to buy a holiday home, Niall hoped this was an answer to his prayers. The six foot three handsome Seattle-based American millionaire made an impression on Niall the first time they meet. Admittedly it wasn't necessarily a good one when Ethan's reputation of having a hair-trigger temper and exacting standards appeared to be true. It didn't take too much time in Ethan's company, however, before Niall also saw a fun, teasing side and couldn't help but warm to the charismatic man. Even so, Niall was managing to remember his hard and fast rule of never mixing business and pleasure. Right up until a storm that had brewing is upgraded to a hurricane and Niall and Ethan are left stranded on the Orion. Alone. Together. In a sheltered cove on one of the nearby islands while they wait it out. The shared experience brings an intimate connection to their tentative friendship, especially after Ethan's care of him when Niall suffers a head injury from being thrown around by the storm, and suddenly Niall can see the possibility of a relationship with Ethan. The pair return back to Niall's home on Tortola safely during a lull in the weather. After preparing the house against the hurricane, Ethan volunteers to assist Niall's next door neighbour on her community help rounds. Niall succumbs to the tiring events of his day and his aching head, falling asleep before Ethan returns with Mrs. Jim. When he wakes, there's still no sign of Ethan and Mrs. Jim tells Niall that Ethan had already left.

Two months later, Niall has heard nothing from Ethan, either personally or professionally, despite repeated attempts by Niall to contact him. When Niall is informed by his loan company his boat loan's balance has been paid in full and no, it isn't a mistake, he heads to Newark where he originally got the loan and is also the home of Nolan's sister and her husband. After being assured it's not a clerical error, Niall decides to confront Ethan, as he is the only person Niall knows who could afford to pay out a \$400,000 loan.

This is where the 'Big Misunderstanding' comes in. I found this whole set up fairly unbelievable and somewhat farcical that two intelligent men couldn't see how their wires had become crossed. It just felt far too convenient and not an organic part of the story. I also found that, while this story started off very strongly (and I happily admit I did enjoy it the whole way through), it did start to become a little over explained and repeated information already given just prior. Having said that, I thoroughly liked like the characters and it continued to keep me interested enough to hold my attention. There was an interesting twist later in the book that I thought was quite well done. I liked the resolution between Niall and Ethan and would have liked to see an epilogue to soften what ended up being a rather abrupt ending.

Island House, overall, was a sweet, gentle romance with complex and endearing characters. The writing was good, if a little uneven at times and, ok, it may not be the kind of book that stays with you months later, but you know what? There's nothing wrong with that. Not every book needs to (or even should) be full of hard-hitting emotional impact. It was a pleasant, enjoyable read from an author who I'd be happy to read more from.

Fehu says

A great story, the cover is a bit misleading, since all is not well and the sunny beach hides secrets and hurts. This is a well written story about finding ones way again after overcoming grief and second chances at love and life. Very fitting for the season if you get tired of all the fluff and sweetness!

Niall lost his partner and his best friend before their life together could really begin. Now he is living on an island in the dream house of his dead lover and tries to live the life they had planned before his lovers' sudden death. After sinking all of his savings into this new life and buying the boat his partner always wanted. Niall found out the hard ways that the fishing business was not something he could be successful in and so he fell back on what he knew - selling houses. A tropical island is quite the popular area to buy property and sell property and if Ethan wants to stay in the business, he has to impress Ethan Bettencourt, an internet mogul, who wants to buy a house and approached Niall's firm. A storm helped bring them together and Niall thought about trying something new, but Ethan left before anything could truly happen between them and didn't return to the island. Now Niall has a choice of letting the man go or find out if the spark he felt could be more.

Even after more than 3 years after the death of his partner Niall is still not over the loss and grieves for all the dreams that they lost. It was easy to feel empathy for him and so get into the story and follow him through the book. I liked Niall and he was an easy character to like, Ethan was a bit more complicated, what with his short fuse of a temper.

Ethan and Niall had an instant attraction, but I loved how the author didn't let them give in to it! No, this did not turn out to be a story about a stormy and hot romance on an island, which made me very happy. I love a story that has layers and this one had them, the character had secrets, their past was shown in a different light and it felt a bit like unwrapping candy, with a delicious offering at the end.

Aarati says

Island House was an okay read for me. It was nothing exceptional and the concept was not new either. I did not find the story all that engrossing either. It did not really bother me if I missed something or forgot some prior scene. I just wanted to get it over with.

Niall is living on an island, in a house he chose with his long time late partner, working as a real estate agent. Though this isn't the life he wanted, it's the only way he can feel close to Nolan. In the 5 years since Nolan's death, Niall has forgotten how to live. He is just going through the motions. The only time he feels something other than loneliness is when he meets Ethan, his latest client.

Ethan is a multi-millionaire, looking for a vacation home on the island. Even he feels the attraction toward Niall at first glance. It was pretty much a case of insta-love. Usually I don't really like insta-love stories, but here it didn't grate me so much. Their relationship did evolve over a period of time.

Stuck in a hurricane together on Niall's boat, the heat between Niall and Ethan comes to head. I really enjoyed the scenes where Niall and Ethan were together. Their chemistry was really good and that made all the difference in the book for me.

Though most of the book they spent apart, when they came together it was amazing.

Niall did spend a lot of time reminiscing about the past. He was really broken by Nolan's death. But I liked how he opened up to Ethan without much provocation. There were times when misunderstandings tore them apart before they even got together. But they got over it and gave each other a chance at life and happiness.

I also loved Nolan's sister, Stephanie and Niall's friend, Claire. They were fun and amazing and they encouraged Niall to move on with life and find happiness again.

Though I started off not liking it very much, I did end up almost loving it due to Ethan and Niall's relationship. All the time they were together made the book worth the read.

GayListBookReviews says

B+

I really liked this one. There was a little bit of unnecessary drama that stemmed from misunderstandings due to a lack of communication, but overall it was a sweet and fun story.

Niall is so very sad when we first meet him. I wanted to give him a big hug, then a smack, then another hug. There is a quality of penance to his move to and life lived on this beautiful tropical island. Something has held him back from really embracing life since the death of his lifelong best friend and partner, Nolan. He is living another man's dreams with little success or happiness.

Then he meets Ethan and it is like the sun parting the clouds after a long and seemingly endless storm. He feels full of life and certain parts of him wake up and take notice. Not just his libido, but pretty much all of him is engaged. Laughter, teasing, flirting, joking, anger and annoyance flood him in turns. He is alive, and even more importantly, for the first time in years he is living. It was marvelous.

Everything happens at once and both men are swept up in this whirlwind of fun, flirting, and danger. They go through a lot together in a very short amount of time. And both of them are freaked and completely smitten.

Then come all of the misunderstandings, miscommunication and just plain stupid. They each start to panic and overreact to everything. Which of course leads to more of the same. This was definitely smacking time for them both. Luckily they have some people in their lives who help them with this.

I had a really good time with this book. There was a good level of angst and drama. There were a couple things that stretched the credulity of the reader, but not too far. It was sexy, romantic and fun, with some sad and achy. A very good read.

Reviewed by Nina

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Teresa says

There were parts that I really liked; the storm, Claire, them getting to know each other on the island. Then there were parts I didn't - Ethan leaving, Ethan's irrational jealousy and anger toward Nial, the I love you's after knowing each other a total of 5 days over several months!!!

It seemed like they spent more time together than they did, but it boils down to 5 days (give or take one) Deep attraction, yes, some beginning feelings - the possibility of more, I could see, but saying I love you?? Especially after Ethan's behaviour.

However, if I over look those things, I enjoyed the rest.

Dawn Sister says

I really enjoyed this story, whilst it would have been a very good romance without the added character of the setting this certainly added to the atmosphere of the book.

This story had everything and sometimes I found it all a little too much to take in whilst some things seemed to be skipped over that I would like to have seen explored a little more. It had the feel of the beginning of something rather than the conclusion. I will be reading the other books in this series although I understand they follow the progress of some minor characters from this book rather than carrying on with Niall and Ethan's story. I would like to read more about them but look forward to reading more about Niall's friend Ian in the next instalment "Finding Home".

In conclusion, Island House was a very enjoyable read and one I will definitely go back to and read again.
