



## **Reckless Hope**

*J. Leigh Bailey*

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*What's life without a little risk?*

Or a lot of risk, if you're Sebastian Carlisle. He'll never live up to the legacy of his dead brother, so why try? Being the wild child in a family of stuck-up rich snobs suits him just fine.

Until he meets Micah Burke, and everything changes.

Micah's got too much going on for a relationship. Even if he could trust Sebastian, a distraction—a sexy, reckless distraction with a death wish—would only derail his carefully scheduled life. If it were just Micah, maybe that would be fine, but his mother and sister depend on him, and he can't let them down. Or at least that's what he tells himself.

A hot moment leads to a hot night leads to a connection neither of them are ready for. And when a crisis hits Micah's family hard, Sebastian will have to shed his bad-boy image and decide whether he can be the man Micah needs—and Micah needs to decide whether he'll let him.

## Reckless Hope Details

Date : Published August 24th 2015 by Carina Press

ISBN :

Author : J. Leigh Bailey

Format : Kindle Edition 193 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, New Adult, Lgbt

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# From Reader Review Reckless Hope for online ebook

## Love Bytes Reviews says

4 Heart Review by Amber

I really love J. Leigh Bailey as an author...like really, really love. These books, this series has affected me more so than the average series. I think it's because these books start off with essentially young characters. So, normally my thinking changes, I choose to gear my judgment towards more immature characters. But what I've realized even though her characters are younger, teens essentially they are more mature and seasoned than average every day adults of age. These characters that this author has created are so complex and so much more than they originally seem. I love reading about the complexity and the layers involved in the story.

Micah Burke was dealt a pretty crappy hand when his parents chose to drive drunk and change their lives. Now taking care of a permanently disabled mother and a sister he has guardianship of he struggles. Knowing that getting his degree and becoming a nurse is his dream he also knows that he has to make sure his little sister makes it too. So he struggles with two jobs and school while trying to have some fun for himself.

Sebastian Carlisle doesn't do responsibility. Coming from a wealthy family he tries to do any and everything to garner disappointment and shame. Until he met Micah...Micah makes things clear for Sebastian and he isn't ready for that.

These two are the reason why I love M/M so much. The whole dynamic of them getting together and the need to keep it casual lured me in and made me want more. Knowing as a read that things were anything but casual between these two, they were friggin smoking together....HOT, HOT, HOT!!!

Family drama on both sides and usual things that happen in new relationships transpire. All of these things keep you reading....keep you wanting more...and I did...and you will!!

Love this series...totally enjoying these book...absolutely recommend!!!

*This book was provided free in exchange for a fair and honest review for Love Bytes. Go there to check out other reviews, author interviews, and all those awesome giveaways. Click below.*

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## Pjm12 says

So while Sebastian and Micah took way too long to get their act together and start talking, I wasn't surprised or frustrated by their stuttered journey. Yeah, it was off and on, yeah Micah was a stubborn jerk, and Sebastian was too passive, but look at the age they are.

Look at what life's dealt them. They are still so young and so unguided, that there was lots of reasons and justifications for their behaviour and their inability to work through the issues.

Getting both points of view helped us to understand the pain of their teenage years. Micah, over-burdened and full of unresolved feelings towards his parents, particularly his paralysed mother.

Sebastian has his grandfather yes, but that Conrad was a nightmare, and how is Sebastian supposed to open up to his grandfather after he leaves him to suffer indignities at the hands of supercilious Conrad?

Anyway, it's a process, one I am sure they are still on, even after their satisfying resolution.

I enjoyed this sort of companion novel to Nobody's Hero, and wonder who will be in the next book. Could it be Jace?

This copy was provided by Netgalley, and is due out on August 24th.

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### **Ele says**

Well, I was late to this party. Scratch that, I didn't know there was a party at all.

You must check out Todd's fabulous review. It says it all.

I really liked this and I truly loved Sebastian. Maybe I was supposed to like Micah more, because man....he was shit out of luck, while Sebastian was the poor little rich boy. BUT, it was the exact opposite for me.

Sebastian ADORED Micah, he worshiped the ground he walked on. And I ADORED Sebastian.

Great characters, great story from a new to me author. Check it out!

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### **Kade Boehme says**

I have to say, I was surprised because I see a lot of people were the opposite of me. I was apparently supposed to like poor Micah and despise that gosh-darn "playboy" Sebastian. Meanwhile, Micah was SUCH a jerk and while I understood his hardships, he really made this more of a 3 star read for me, but I just adored Sebastian so much, and REALLY didn't understand at all why he hung in there, but who was consistently just a great character.

Overall a good read. Can say I liked the first in the series better, though.

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### **Veronica of V's Reads says**

This is the second book in a series, but is fully enjoyable as a standalone.  
4.5 Stars.

Micah Burke is 19 going on 62. He is the guardian for his 14 y/o sister and caregiver to his paraplegic mother. Two years ago his alcoholic parents were responsible for a car wreck that killed his father, paralyzed his mother, and killed three others. Since then he has had to take on two jobs and the role of parent. He

barely makes ends meet and only goes out one night a month--one night of dancing--where he meets Sebastian Carlisle.

Sebastian Carlisle is as rich as they come. He's a sophomore at Northwestern and an entitled prick with a sad history--his twin died of leukemia four years ago. His parents have pretty much moved to Europe and his only remaining family is his wealthy, but strict, grandfather--who absolutely does not approve of Sebastian's risky life choices. Since then, Bas has lived his life on the edge, never showing his tenderness or vulnerability to anyone. Something about staid and sober Micah calls to Bas, reminds him of his conscientious and caring brother. The closer Sebastian gets to Micah, the more Micah tries to push him away--at first.

Micah has no time for a flighty boyfriend, but he can see that Sebastian isn't a relationship guy. This is (at first) a problem--Micah doesn't do casual, but then again Micah doesn't do...anything. The close contact Micah and Sebastian have while working at the Carlisle Gardens Nursing Home (Micah as a CNA and Sebastian as a volunteer) keeps tempting Micah to take Sebastian up in his offers of fun. And casual sex...

This is a definite hurt/comfort story of two lonely young men looking for a partner who can be a support, not a burden. Micah is the first guy Sebastian has met in a long while who wants nothing from him--not money or contacts or anything, except a bit of fun now and then. Micah is sure being with Sebastian is a mistake--that he will let Micah down, just as everyone else in his life has. He's so sure that he continually pushes Sebastian away, even when he truly needs his help.

I did like when Micah opened up, and asked Sebastian for help. And Sebastian's response was way past stellar. I loved how Sebastian just meshed with the most difficult people--cantankerous old men and wild teens. He saw pieces of himself reflected in others and decided that he didn't need to live up to his brother's memory--rather he could behave like someone his brother would have been proud to know, and love. It was a very touching coming-of-age. These guys are young for all the tragedy in their lives, but the end speaks of happier days and a brighter future together. Expect a bit of angst and a decent amount of sexytimes.

I received a review copy of this book via NetGalley.

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## ? Todd says

**I completely loved, loved, LOVED this story.**

Nursing student **Micah** has been acting as the adult in his family since his alcoholic parents were in a drunk driving accident, which killed his father, leaving him to care for his younger sister and now-quadruplegic mother.

But Micah allows himself to put aside his two jobs and responsibilities **once a month** to go dancing to release his stress (and possibly hook up,) which is how he meets a **handsome and rich playboy named Sebastian**.

But their dancing at the club is cut short, when his mother calls to say that his **little sister has been arrested**. Then, through a twist of fate, Micah later runs into Sebastian again. **In the same jail cell as his sister**.

Their paths continue to cross, but Micah has **put Sebastian firmly in his "no fly zone,"** due to the drinking

and driving that landed Sebastian in jail the night of their first meeting. That's the last thing he wants or needs in his already-complicated life.

The **cat and mouse action** in this book was so much fun to witness, as Sebastian continues to find ways to worm his way into Sebastian's controlled existence.

Micah finally agrees to a "**friends with benefits**" arrangement with Sebastian, which is then tested when **family emergencies force Micah to rely on his 'unreliable' lover.**

I loved seeing Sebastian prove to Micah that he was **capable of being 'more'** than what had been expected of him in the past, **becoming a stabilizing force and easing Micah's considerable burden**, when the exact opposite was the most likely outcome.

This was a **fairly sexy and hot read**, when Micah would allow himself to be distracted and there were **plenty of genuine 'feels'** as well.

If you've read the first book in the Letting Go series, **this book is completely unrelated, so both can be read as standalones.**

Book 2 was definitely another worthwhile read and a nice addition to the Letting Go series, so **kudos to Ms. Bailey** for another job well done.

I highly recommend **both books** in this series, with "Reckless Hope" clocking in at **4.25 \*regaining-control-of-your-life\* stars for this very entertaining read.**

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My copy of the book was provided by the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for a fair, unbiased review.

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**BWT (Belen) says**

3.5 Stars

**This is a sweet love story with a little bit of steam, a little bit of hurt/comfort, and whole lot of hope.**

My heart broke for all Micah's responsibilities that he is drowning under and the unrealistic expectations he has for himself.

I felt sorry that Sebastian is pretty determined to live up to none of the expectations his grandfather has for him. That when his "good" twin died years before it was like he decided it would be easier to be a reckless disappointment he believes his family and friends see him as rather than trying to be "good" and possibly tarnish the memory of his brother.

I pitied both characters. Sebastian for his too bright smile covering up his pain. Micah's too-young adulthood.

The fact that when Micah's father died and his mother was paralyzed in a car accident years ago he felt obligated to be the one his mother and his little sister could always count on to be responsible, to handle it all, at the expense of the rest of his childhood. I was so sad that he works two jobs, goes to school part time, takes care of his mother and his sister and only allows himself one night a month, one night, to let go of a little steam, go to a club and dance and act like a normal nineteen year old.

*There was no one else. Everyone who should have, could have, been in charge, was gone.*

The night he meets Sebastian, and decides that letting off a little steam is exactly what Sebastian seems good for, was pretty hot and starts the ball rolling in this sweet hurt/comfort love story.

Micah is so stubborn...It was frustrating at times seeing all he had on his plate and wishing he could let loose a little and ask Sebastian for a hand. Until the more time Micah ends spending with Sebastian leads him to believe that *maybe* Sebastian could be counted on for more than a good time...maybe he could *trust* him?

*"You're putting a lot of pressure on yourself."*

*Micah made a show of looking around the room. "There's no one else. It's got to be done and I'm the only one who can do it. Everything's falling apart. No matter what I do, it just keeps spiraling out of my control." "Maybe life is like skydiving. Once you jump, you can't stop the fall. You'll hit the ground one way or another, but you can control how you fall. You can fight and struggle, but no matter how hard you try, you'll never pull yourself back into the plane. Or you can work with the wind, take advantage of the currents and enjoy the ride."*

Seeing their relationship develop, almost against Micah's better judgment and Sebastian's unintentional self-sabotage, was sweet and, ultimately, worth the trip.

*Micah snuggled in closer, resting his hand over Sebastian's heart. "I'm glad you're you. I like the you version of you." He rocked his head and let out a huff of quiet laughter. "I'm not even making sense." Sebastian pressed a kiss into Micah's hair. He shouldn't, he knew, but he couldn't help himself. "When I'm with you," he whispered, "I feel like I'm me. I'm not the devil to contrast Zac's angel, or the reckless grandson of Carlisle Properties. I don't have anything to prove. I'm just me." "I like the just you," Micah muttered thickly before falling into sleep.*

NOTE: I increased the star rating on this one full star just for the ending. (view spoiler)

*Advanced Review Copy generously provided by Carina Press in exchange for an honest review.*

*This review has been cross-posted at Reviews by Jessewave*

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## **Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says**

For those of you who haven't been keeping track obsessively like me, Carina Press has been publishing some of the best LGBT romances for a while now. They have amazing editors and seeing their name on the cover is a guarantee of my enjoyment. Letting Go series by J. Leigh Bailey is no different.

I've read Reckless Hope twice since I received the advanced copy three months ago, and as much as I enjoyed it the first time, I loved it even more the second time around. Knowing how it all ends allowed me to truly savor the emotions, to experience everything alongside Sebastian and Micah and to appreciate the smallest details that made the story richer and that much more beautiful.

Micah has been alone for far too long, abandoned and betrayed in some way by every adult in his life. Now, with a dead father, a disabled and depressed mother and a younger sister in need of an attitude adjustment, Micah has no one to count on but himself. It's not only that he doesn't trust easily, it's that he doesn't trust at all, and why would he? Life has taught Micah many lessons, and very few of them have been good. As much as he might want to at times, Micah doesn't let go, he doesn't relax, and he certainly doesn't rely on other people. So when he meets Sebastian who is his exact opposite, a gorgeous, reckless rich boy who seemingly has no regard for others or even for his own life, Micah doesn't understand why his heart keeps pulling him back.

Sebastian has many faces, but none of them are honest. He is a very good actor with a shattered heart and no one to see him for what he truly is. Micah intrigues him for so many reasons and for the first time, Sebastian truly sees himself with someone for more than a night. But Micah refuses to play along, making Sebastian pull all the stops.

The journey of these two boys and their respective families will make your throat constrict due to injustice each of them suffers constantly. They are both products of circumstances, tragedies and events other people caused. It was so very painful to see them struggle with things like trusting someone and having someone to rely on, but every happy moment was so much more rewarding because of all that pain. Both Sebastian and Micah are fantastic characters with very complicated backgrounds. The birth of their love is something you'll have to discover for yourselves.

I loved the first book in this series, but Reckless Hope really stole my heart. I would recommend it even to those who rarely read M/M fiction.

*A copy of this book was kindly provided by the publisher for review purposes. No considerations, monetary or otherwise, have influenced the opinions expressed in this review.*

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**Jennifer Y. says**

3.5 stars

Review soon

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**Tracy~Bayou Book Junkie says**

\*copy provided to Bayou Book Junkie by author/publisher via NetGallery in exchange for an honest review\*

Although this is book two in the Letting Go Series, the book can definitely be read as a complete standalone. This is Sebastian and Micah's story. Micah always the good and responsible one. He works two jobs and



goes to school part time as a nursing student. He is the caretaker for his mom and the guardian of his 14 year old sister.

Sebastian is the bad partyboy. He has suffered his own losses in life, but hides it behind a good time mask. Always laughing and smiling.

This was a really good book. The characters are well developed. The story pulls you in and doesn't let go. I read this in one sitting. I had to get to the end to see what was going to happen. This was a slow burn book. Although there is instant attraction it takes time to get these two into bed, but once they hit it, they sizzle and smoke. The chemistry was astronomical between the characters.

I loved it and highly recommend it!!

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~☆~Døni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

~4.5~

I would not have read this book had it not been for Todd's fantastic review. Todd usually has more tolerance for YA/NA than me, but he assured me this was a "fairly sexy and hot read," and indeed it was.

Micah and Sebastian are both so lonely, it hurts. Micah takes care of his rebellious 14-year-old sister and quadriplegic mother, works two jobs (one at a nursing home), and takes courses to earn a nursing degree.

Sebastian parties and chases adrenaline to escape. He's charming, reckless, and wild, but as soon as he lays eyes on the serious, intense Micah he can't let go.

**These MCs have both been through more in their 19 years than I have in twice as many.** Both have suffered loss and heartache. They are, in many ways, two sides of the same coin: they bury their emotions and put on a brave facade, even as they wither away inside.

Micah, scared to count on anybody but himself, pushes Sebastian away again and again. But Sebastian won't give up.

**This book has serious feels. I cried unabashedly at the end.** (view spoiler)

I particularly liked gruff Charlie, a Korean War veteran, who gives Micah such a hard time at the nursing home but takes an immediate liking to Sebastian who's willing to stand up to him.

Charlie gets it.

*"Eventually the mask will crack. When you play a role for too long, it's hard to know who you are. If you take off the mask of your own will, you'll finally fly free."*

Trust, family, make-out sessions in the front seat of an orange mustang, and HOPE, no matter how reckless:

these things matter; let go and fly.

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## **Didi says**

3.5 stars

What does it say about me when reading eating cost \$80 got me:  
"What!?! You could get a Kindle with that much money!!!"

Now that I had it out of my chest: this book is both touching and exasperating for me. I loved Sebastian even with all his flaws - or because of it. Micah... Well. Having difficult situations (having paralysis mother, rebellious baby sister, part-time nursing school and juggling two jobs) didn't appoint you holier than thou human and being callous with your judgements and presumptions.

So I guess I had no sympathy for Micah. For the situations he's in, yes. But not at him and his not enough apologies to Sebastian.

And what the heck with that Conrad person? I hope there's some story there to tell.

Lastly, this could be read as a standalone as I didn't see any connection at all Nobody's Hero.

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## **liz says**

This book is a mixed bag for me. I really liked Micah, and I started out really disliking Sebastian. I can understand how Micah appears too serious or too mired in responsibility, but every time Sebastian or even Jace told Micah to lighten up or relax or act his age, I wanted to kick them in the shins. This is a 19yo with TREMENDOUS pressure and stress. It's not imagined. It's not manufactured. It's real life, this sucks stuff. And the people in his life decide to tell him to do more fun stuff. If that's a person in my life struggling, I don't tell them to relax. I show up in ways to help or be supportive.

Ultimately, Sebastian realizes that Micah needs support and being available and reliable is the best way to be there for Micah. The second half also finally gives some help getting past Sebastian's selfish and irresponsible behaviors. He needed a kick in the butt to stop ignoring his own grief and focus on real healing. His grief is what finally brought me to tears in this book. I kept right on tearing through some scenes with Micah. Credit once again to this author for finding ways to move me while I still wasn't sure I wanted Sebastian to be redeemed.

*I received an ARC of this book from the publisher via Netgalley.*

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## **W.S. Long says**

**Cute romance with a Cinderella-type HEA**

4.25 stars! Great characters made this story. Micah and Sebastian are quite opposite from each other, from starkly different backgrounds. The physical attraction they have for each other is palpable but their emotional tango through ups and downs propels the story.

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## **Diana says**

Micah Burke has the weight of the world on his shoulders, at least it feels that way. Being the guardian to his 14 year old sister, as well as the sole caretaker to his mother who was severely injured in a car crash where his father was killed, takes a lot out of a 19 year old kid. To support his family, he works in a restaurant as well as a nursing home. Somehow he also finds time to go to college part time to study nursing. So when he has his 1 night off a month, he likes to go dancing, where he meets the drop dead gorgeous Sebastian Carlisle. What could a little stress relief hook up hurt? Of course things didn't go as planned, and Micah has to run off to help out his sister, but Sebastian cannot get the adorable Micah out of his mind. Eventually Sebastian tracks down Micah, hoping to spend more time with him. But once again, Micah has responsibilities and feels like he cannot even start a relationship with the fun-loving, happy go lucky, Sebastian. But Sebastian has ghosts of his own, and he is struggling to be the person everyone wants him to be. Micah once again, pushes Sebastian away. How much can Micah do on his own without any help? Can Sebastian take one more rejection?

**Reckless Hope** is book 2 in the *Letting Go* series. I enjoyed this book, but I did have some problems with the back and forth between Sebastian and Micah. Also the constant reminder of Micah's responsibilities was getting on my nerves.

I would recommend this book if you are in the mood for a quick read with a slow burn romance. I am looking forward to the 3rd book in the series *Hero's Return* due out in January 2016.

*I was provided a copy of this book via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review*

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