



## To the Steadfast

*Briana Gaitan*

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## To the Steadfast Briana Gaitan

Resolute. Firm. Unwavering  
That was my love for him.  
Steadfast for as long as I can remember.

As my best friend's brother, he ignored me before noticing me. He protected me, bought me my first beer, but eventually became my undoing.

There was a time I would have died to get him to notice me, now I'd do anything to forget him.  
I'm not the one who can tame him, and he's not the guy who will change for me.  
This isn't a story about falling in love, this is a story about falling out of love.  
Unrequited love.  
And finding the strength to move on.  
Here's to the steadfast.

\*This is a first in a standalone series that crosses years from YA into NA genre, due to HEAVY subject matter this book is for ages 16 and up. This is not your typical love story.\*

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## To the Steadfast Details

Date : Published August 31st 2015 (first published August 13th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Briana Gaitan

Format : Paperback

Genre : Young Adult, High School

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# From Reader Review To the Steadfast for online ebook

## Bloggers From Down Under says

\*\* Provided on behalf of the author for an honest review \*\*

This is Cody's story.

A story about a girl who at sixteen attends school, gets amazing grades, who's home life isn't all that is seems to be.

A story about a girl who has an amazing best friend, Violet.

A story about a girl who parties too hard and gets herself into trouble.

A story about a girl who falls in love but knows it will never, ever be returned.

A story about a girl who's heart shatters, splintering into a million pieces, never knowing if it will ever be repaired.

This is Mischa's story.

A story about a guy who parties hard.

A story about a guy who's home life is a disaster.

A story about a guy, who at eighteen needs to step up and take care of his family.

A story about a guy who falls in love with a girl, but it can never, ever be revealed.

This is Killian's story.

A story about a guy who's home life isn't what it seems on the outside.

A story about a guy who to escape sits on the rooftop with his best friend and chat for hours.

A story about a guy who falls in love, but knows it will never, ever be returned.

This is their story.

Admittedly To The Steadfast isn't a novel we would normally read based purely on its genre, that being YA. But what we found was a surprisingly beautifully, well written novel that we couldn't put down. So full of emotion we were taken on a roller-coaster ride of emotion, finding ourselves laughing at the banter between characters and on the flip side finding ourselves overwhelmed with the hurt, pain and struggles that each character went through.

Written with such depth and description you couldn't help but be taken on their journey.

And the ending.....All we can say is this....It's damn explosive and you will never see it coming....We sure didn't.

A beautiful, heartbreakin, heart-warming read that shouldn't be missed.

A definite 4 star read.

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## Laura says

Thank you to the author, Briana Gaitan, for gifting me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest

review!

First off, now that I've read the book, I love the cover even more because it showcases specific meaningful things mentioned in the book. It really shows the story of Cody's love life and all the complications.

I'll just say this right away though: sometimes Cody infuriated me. She made some terrible choices and was really naive when it came to Mischa. She just needs to get her head on straight! She did pull herself together near the ending (sort of...) which was just what I needed!

Speaking of the ending, let's talk about that for a minute. I can't believe it ended like that! It's a complete cliffhanger - let me assure you. Think Crown of Midnight cliffhanger. Despite that, I really liked how the ending was done. It happened right as Cody is embarking on a new journey of her heart.

What I really, really liked about the structure of this book was how the author divided it into sections of Cody's life. So instead of reading through months and years of boring stuff that doesn't particularly matter, it just says 'one year later: new' or something of the sort. It really organizes the book and allows you to follow the storyline quite easily.

In addition to being a love story, this is really a story about Cody finding herself and learning to trust herself and her decisions. She doesn't exactly grow up in a loving household and a lot of other people's decisions are pushed on her from an early age. She has different ways of dealing with it from rebelling and going to wild parties to actually giving in.

#### The Final Verdict:

Such an enjoyable read about the journey of life and love and learning to trust in yourself. The ending is certainly memorable and the structure is so well done.

4.5 stars

#### Quotes:

"Are you two planning on getting married anytime soon?" my mother asks, continuing her interrogation.  
'Ummmm...' I look to Bassam who, for some reason, is amused by my mother."

"'To love,' I say, knocking my knuckles against his.  
'To infatuation,' he corrects, fist bumping me again.  
'No, to the steadfast.'"

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#### **Kristine says**

Original review can be found at <http://kristineandterri.blogspot.ca/2013/08/review-of-crown-of-midnight.html>

3.5 stars

\*\* I received an ARC from the author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!\*\*

Everything that is stated in the synopsis is true. This is not your typical love story at all. This book, in my opinion, is more about how obsessive young love can mess with a person's head and life. It is about the

destruction it can cause and the blinders it puts in place. In other words it is angst, more angst and then even some more.

Without giving away the story I do have a few things to say about the book. First of all, it did make me angry a lot. I wanted to reach in and give Cody a shake. I wanted to scream at her through the pages. She made a lot of stupid mistakes and was so blinded by Mischa that it was bordering on ridiculous. If nothing else, Gaitan was really effective in showing how misguided some young people can be when it comes to relationships and how unhealthy some relationships are. A great deal of the story was about Cody trying to break the misguided attachment she had to him.

The second thing that I have to mention is that I absolutely hated Mischa. There wasn't a single redeeming thing about him. I really wanted Cody to come to her senses because he was not worth any of the heartache that he caused her. No matter what the hand he was dealt, he was just selfish. The reader does eventually get to hear his voice at the end of the book which does give him a little more depth but it wasn't enough for me. There was more feeling and emotion in any one of Cody's rooftop adventures than any single interaction with Mischa.

As you can tell, I had some strong feelings about this book. It doesn't mean that I didn't like it, in fact it was quite the opposite. I liked that the story was about the more unpleasant side of some relationships. It showcased how obsession and infatuation can come into play and how it can mess with a persons life. It didn't necessarily play out the way that I was hoping it would but I think it is left with the possibility of another book. At least I hope it is. I'd really like to see what happens to Cody next.

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### **Philomena Callan Cheekypee says**

I've not read anything by this author before so this was a great surprise for me.

My heart broke for Dakota(Cody). I was really hoping she would find happiness and the love that she deserves. This is great coming of age story. I love how the author weaved her own uniqueness into it.

Great read. Although the ending had me moaning at my kindle I loved this YA/NA story.

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### **Jessi says**

3.5 Stars

This is a book about first crushes and growing up. In the book, as in real live, first crushes really work out. Especially if your crush is a man whore whose family business is drugs. But they are had to let go of. Cody learns over the years that Mischa is not meant to be hers, no matter what her heart tells her. This book was good, it deals with the true of love and loss and growing up. It isn't all happily ever after like other books. Great read.

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## **Amy says**

To The Steadfast is not your typical love story. To The Steadfast is a coming of age, YA to NA crossover. This story is broken up into three parts; Dakota at 16, Dakota at 18, and Dakota in the present.

When we first meet Dakota, she is only 16 years old and we see her friendship with Violet and Mischa. Violet and Mischa may have seemed like amazing friends, but really, they were anything but. Their family is toxic and heavily involved in drugs. Dakota spends a lot of time partying with Mischa and Violet, even after police raid their house. As the story continues, you begin to see that Dakota has more than friendly feelings toward Mischa. She wants to experience all of her firsts with him and gives him one of her most treasured firsts. Meanwhile, Dakota's life continues to spin out of control; making her parents take some pretty drastic measures to try and fix things.....Two years pass and Dakota is finally on the right path. Coming home for one last summer before college will prove to be a huge challenge. Once back home, Dakota is once again thrown into the lives of her old friends. As Mischa and Dakota grow close once more, a huge secret has the power to destroy everything.....Will Mischa always be her undoing? Will Dakota ever have the strength to move on?

To The Steadfast was different from the books that I normally read. There wasn't a typical HEA ending. To The Steadfast is full of angst and drama. It shows how blinding first love can be. How it can consume and destroy you. It shows just how toxic some people can be and the strength needed to break away from those people.

I found the characters to be unique and complex. They captivated me, sucked me and made me want to know more about them. Yes, they did frustrate me at times, but I think that was part of the pull in this story.

My only complaint was the ending. I don't mind that it wasn't your typical HEA ending. That type of ending wouldn't have made sense for this story. My issue was that little something placed just before the epilogue, that confused me. I felt like I was missing something. I also would have liked a touch more closure with the characters. I'm a big fan of closure.

Overall, I thought this book was a really great read. To The Steadfast had a really unique story-line. It flowed really well and I had the hardest time putting it down. This is my first book by this author and I'm looking forward to reading more from her in the future.

\*I was provided an ARC copy of this book, in exchange for an honest review\*

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## **Sherry Haynes says**

Gifted an ARC in exchange for honest review:

This book was different than most. It is about all the typical first loves and the terrible heart break but it is also more. It is about the why's as well as the struggle. There were several times I just wanted to scream and tell them to listen (of course they didn't listen). I really hope to see this book turn into at least one more book so I can see where Cody goes from here. This is not one of those books that will show a fairy tale of happy ever afters but more like real life.

Looking forward to reading more books by this author but definitely would love to know where Cody's story goes.

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### **Lorena Garcia -- Brittany's Book Blog says**

\*\*Received an ARC in exchange for an honest review\*\*

This book literally took my breath away. I found this book heartbreaking and sad. This is a story has brought so many emotions out in me. It was heartbreaking to see a girl go through so much in life at such a young age. Having parents that don't care about you and think that they only thing that will make you happy is giving you expensive things and money. It may be all good for some people (kids) but not everyone feels that way. All Dakota wanted was to be loved.

Dakota gets involved with kids from the wrong side of town and falls for a guy who does nothing other than break her heart over and over and gets her in nothing but trouble. Dakota doesn't care about his status even though he countless of times tells her that he's no good for her. But all she's ever wanted was to be loved and she actually thought that this guy loved her even though he continually kept breaking her heart. She was left mistrusting and couldn't find it in herself to give love another chance because of what she went through with her childhood love.

This poor girl went through hell and high water and what an emotional roller coaster of a story this was. I was left bereft at the end, wanting more. I wish this had a different ending but we can't always get what we want. There is not always a happy ending to every story. But this book did break my heart and left me an emotional wreck.

totally worth a 5 star read

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### **Katrina says**

Loved it review still to come

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### **Moon Love says**

2.5 stars

So here's the thing. The story is definitely unique. I don't think I've read anything like it. That's a plus point.

That being said, there weren't many more for me. There were multiple times where I thought about DNF'ing the book. The first was at 14%. The story was also very convoluted. I wasn't sure what was going on with Dakota "Cody". I didn't connect with her and so it was hard for me to empathize and sympathize with her

and the other characters. She wasn't very sure about what she wanted and the back and forth she did gave me rhetorical whiplash.

While this story is about first loves and full of drama and emotion, there's no resolution to this story and there's no hint that there's more to come. Now it would be very easy to say if you didn't like the characters or book, why'd you read it to the end? Well I kept hoping things would change and by the time I stopped hoping, the book was over. There was a twist at the end of the book that really took me by surprise and seemed to come out of nowhere. Briana Gaitan has since announced there will be a follow up novel and I'll probably read it to see how the story finishes.

Now just because this book and I didn't click, it doesn't mean you won't. I'd strongly recommend using the free sample if available before deciding for yourself. It might just have been me and where ever my head was when I read this book.

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### **Ebbie ~Author Groupies says**

Rating: 4.5 Stars

To the Steadfast is a great coming of age story. I loved that this story is so real, it's not a typical love story. I will say that their isn't a HEA but the ending is perfect for Cody's story.

I can't say that I loved the characters but they were very raw and real. I found it refreshing to read a story that felt real and not like a fairytale. Cody was very young and naive about a lot of things. I think that's why it was harder for me to connect with her but I do remember being young and in love and the stupid things we do for our first love. Mischa was a typical teenager who seemed to always find trouble. Most of the time he only thought about himself. Cody was so in love with him that she allowed him to use her and treat her badly. Killian was a great friend to Cody from the beginning but she was so hung up on Mischa she missed out on a chance at real love with Killian. Mischa had a hold on Cody; maybe it was because he was her first love but I'm sure that is what left her broken and with regrets.

I loved this story. It was so real and full of angst. I laughed and cried and in the end felt sorry for Cody. I think we have all had toxic friends or boyfriends and until they are out of your life you don't realize the affects they had on you. This book is different but definitely worth reading. Ms Gaitan's writing style is great; you will feel like you are part of the story. The ending leaves it open for a second book. I'm looking forward to the next book to find out what happens with Cody. I'm hoping she'll finally get her HEA but if she doesn't I'm alright with that too.

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### **Briana Gaitan says**

This story is pretty close to my heart. It's all about first loves and first heartbreaks. This is not a NA romance or a contemporary romance, this is a coming of age novel- prepare to get mad, throw your kindle or ereader across the room. Prepare to cry, laugh, and scream "WHY???" Prepare to relive firsts all over again. Oh, and there is a second standalone book to come at some later time.

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## **Tricia says**

<http://triciaciak.blogspot.com/>

My review: (ARC provided)

4 stars!

This book was very well done, but don't expect to get all warm and fuzzy. I'm struggling with this because I didn't get the ending I'd hoped for. This book makes you feel though and that's the purpose of reading right? to feel and ponder. Well this book definitely had me thinking. I'm so angry with Dakota (Cody) our heroine, she made some really bad choices and did so repeatedly. There were many time I wanted to jump into my Kindle and shake her. I know this book is a standalone but it feels a little incomplete. I can't spoil the ending but I was like WTF just happened? Not necessarily in a bad way but a I need to know more way. I would love to get a follow up even if it's a novella. I just want to know what happens to all of these characters. I wouldn't classify this as a love triangle but at points it certainly felt like one.

Mischa and Cody have known each other for awhile. Cody is Mischa's sisters best friend and Cody and Mischa have secretly pined for each other. Mischa is the town bad boy and "white trash" and Cody the town smart girl, the good girl, the rich girl. Circumstances bring them together and more tear them apart. I honestly have to say this is one of the first times I didn't root for the first love. Mischa pissed me off and Cody and him together pissed me off more. And then there was Violet, Mischa's sister who was just as bad and so self-centered.

Killian-he was Cody's crutch her childhood best friend the person she could relate to most. I loved him so much. I think he was my favorite and my heart hurt for him. One of my favorite scenes was the dinner scene between Cody and Killian's family. It put a little humor in the book just when it was needed.

Bassam- A boy Cody meets in college. I wish I got to know him more but what I did know I adored.

The problem is Cody couldn't see the good in any relationship because she was too scared from the past. She pushes everyone away until it's too late.

If you are looking for a book that is going to get you gooey and mushy then this isn't the book for you, but if you want a book that has you feeling and thinking then I say give it a try. This is more of a story about a character, her mistakes, her first love, her growth or lack thereof and everything in between.

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## **Judy Miracle says**

When they say this is not your typical love story they are not kidding. This was an amazing and emotional journey Briana took us on.

Cody (Dakota) has been in love with her best friends brother for a while. But he doesn't reciprocate those feelings. He basically uses her when convenient for him. She's always trying to tell him that he is better than his parents. But you can only tell someone so many times before you get tired of saying it. Cody doesn't want to love him she doesn't want to feel anything for him but at the same time there is nothing that she can do to stop it. Kellen is her next door neighbor who is 3 years older than she is and I swear he is in love with her. After getting sent to boarding school she comes back and tries to stay away from Mischa but like before

she cannot.

Cody is the girl who wants to make her parents proud but her parents are not those kinds of people they have a plan for her life to become a doctor like her father. That is not something she wants. She finally grows a backbone and tells her parents that she wants to be a nurse and not a doctor. At school she meets Bassam. she doesn't want anything to do with him but he's persistent. Can she let her heart go again? Will she risk it for him? What happens when she realizes a part of her was in love with Kallen and he's now engaged?

This book has heartbreak, finding possible new love and more heartbreak in it. It would be nice to see how Cody's story ends and see her get a HEA since she is only 20 when this book ends. She has so much to live for outside of finding love. Great read and cannot wait to see what more Briana brings to the table in the future.

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### **Paula Phillips says**

Falling in love with someone can be a difficult thing, especially when the love consumes you and your whole life starts to fall apart. *To the Steadfast* by Briana Gaitan is not one of those HEA novels where the teen falls in love and changes the guy and they realize that they can't live without one another, nope. *To the Steadfast* is an angst novel which will have you back and forth between the characters thinking why can't they make up their minds. We start off at Age Sixteen and meet Dakota aka Cody Lombardi, she has become best friends with Violet and her older brother Mischa. Violet's family is heavy on the drug scene and one of the first few chapters, the readers witness the police storming into Violet's house and arresting her parents. During this time, Cody becomes closer to Violet and Mischa and we discover that their lives seem to revolve around partying and getting wasted. About halfway through the novel, we read as Cody loses her V-card to Mischa and from there things start going downhill fast as her grades are dropping and she doesn't seem to care about much. Her parents aren't the greatest either and only has her next-door neighbour Killian to chat too about life. One thing leads to another and her parents get divorced and Cody is shipped off to boarding school. Two years pass and she is now graduating and is 18 years old and she is headed back home for one last summer before Columbia. Being at boarding school changed Cody and set her back on the right path, but being home and back in Mischa and Violet's lives sends her back to her old habits. We see Mischa and Cody getting close again, but lo and behold Mischa has a girlfriend and a secret. *To the Steadfast* is one of those New Adult Angsty novels, that shows readers how sometimes loving someone who can't give us their all can be destructive to our systems and it is a nasty cycle to fall into.

If you enjoyed "After" by Anna Todd, then you will find yourself at home with "To the Steadfast" by Briana Gaitan.

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