



Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs

Kathryn Albright

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Back in the officer's arms

Four years ago, Tom Barrington shared a connection with Elizabeth Morley that was like nothing he had ever experienced. But as a solitary soldier, he knew marriage was out of the question.

So when he strolls back into her life, Elizabeth can't believe it. He once broke her heart, and now he's back more irresistible than ever! And when the dangers of Tom's lifestyle catch up with him, the question remains: can he be the safe harbor she craves?

Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs Details

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From Reader Review Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs for online ebook

Robyn Echols says

A Delightful Romance

Sometimes time and distance cannot kill love. Thanks to an army assignment and an interfering, controlling family member, Tom and Elizabeth's budding romance is crushed. Four years later, they meet again. The story dealt well with the concerns of this pair as they dealt with current challenges, balanced the attraction they still felt for each other against the goals and obligations each had. Characterization was excellent, good description of locality and enough action to keep the plot interesting and the reader engaged. Several circumstances kept me guessing exactly how it would work out in the end. Definitely recommend this book. Sweet Romance.

Harlequin Historical says

Miniseries: Heroes of San Diego

Lynn Spencer says

“Favorite Trope” month is always a fun TBR Challenge for me – there are a few tropes out there that are like catnip. This time around, I was craving a second-chance-at-love tale, so I pulled **Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs**, a 2016 Harlequin Historical, out of the stack. This one is a sweet, charming Western with an HEA I was happy to see. Definitely a successful read.

Tom Barrington and Elizabeth Morley first met in La Playa, California, when Tom was stationed nearby for the army. He and Elizabeth flirted and shared an unforgettable kiss. However, just when he thought they may have hope of a future together, his unit was pulled out of La Playa with little notice. Led to believe that a wealthy rival in town ended up marrying Elizabeth, Tom convinced himself that his lifestyle, first as a soldier and now as an agent for Wells Fargo charged with foiling bank robberies, is not conducive to settling down and having a family.

Four years have passed since Tom and Elizabeth first knew each other. Tom has suffered through the loss of his partner and his own self-doubts as a result. Robbers have hit in the area around La Playa, and the bank fears the loss of its upcoming shipment. Tom requests the assignment and gets it. The author does a good job of setting the scene, convincing the reader just how important this job is to Tom as well as showing how his return to the town affects him. Tom can't help feeling nostalgic even though he is positive that Elizabeth has settled into the life of a wealthy young matron in San Diego.

To his surprise, Tom wanders into the local mercantile and finds Elizabeth still there. Not only does she still tend the store, but she is still unmarried. One chance meeting turns Tom's assumptions on their head – and sets the stage for what ends up being a rather sweet story.

This is a partial review. You can find the complete text at All About Romance:
<https://allaboutromance.com/july-2018...>

Joann Maggio says

Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs written by
Kathryn Albright ****

A fine western romance about two star crossed sweethearts that have been kept apart by lies.

After four years of carrying a torch for Tom Barrington, he returns to town for a job with the government and Elizabeth finally learns the truth of his departure. Elizabeth's brother Terrance kept Tom's letter expressing his love and asking her to wait for him from her. In turn, Terrance wrote Tom a letter saying she had married. Elizabeth always thought he upped and left her.

Tom returns on an assignment to apprehend gold thieves and avenge his partner's murder. He learns the person responsible for his partner's death is the gold thief. This book has many twists and turns to the story which captivate your attention completely.

I enjoyed the book very much it has romance, mystery and a HEA ending. I would definitely recommend.

Amber Meller says

Half of it seemed a little pointless, but it fit together well. It was interesting.

Harlequin Books says

Miniseries: Heroes of San Diego

Stephanie says

When a woman's brother steps in and changes things without permission a lot of things can go awry. Especially a romance that was just beginning and was already going to face some challenges. Fast forward 4 years and Tom is back and is surprised to see that something that he has been told about Elizabeth has been dead wrong.

Now on a hunt for some crooks and a second chance with the one that got away Ms Albright takes us on an adventure of suspense, mystery, romance and second chances.

Tom is a man who has a bad past including the death of his partner in the government. When he comes back to the place he left 4 years ago and sees Elizabeth he realises that time hasn't changed anything, no matter how much he might have wished it to.

Elizabeth has been working at her store since Tom left 4 years ago, when so many things come to light about her deceiving brother and the loss of her life she turns back into the strong capable woman she once

was.

I loved this book, it was a really great romance that focused on the relationship nothing overly physical besides some heartwarmng kisses.

Cynthia says

This was a cute clean read that I enjoyed. The author has a great plot with very interesting characters. This is a story about the one that got away through no choice of their own. Sometimes things are taken out of your control which leaves you no choice but to carry on the best you know how with a badly broken heart. The only man Elizabeth ever loved walked out on her leaving her with a broken heart and no one to heal it. Four years later he is back wanting some answers. She is shocked shouldn't she be the one asking question? It does seem things are not as they seem as they compare notes leaving a few things unanswered. With Tom back he starts to think maybe just maybe they could have a life together but first he must finish the job he started.

I really liked the characters each were wonderful in their own way. I didn't think too much of Elizabeth's brother and did expect that to come out a little different. The author does throw in a few interesting twists. The only problem I really had with this story was there was not much interaction between the main characters. Most of the story was taken up with each remembering things or thinking about how they felt for the other. From the back cover I thought Tom was going to be kind of an alpha but he wasn't. He was a really nice and sweet man. When you read the intro where he pulls her on his horse you think more is going on than it is. It was a cute story but nothing really comes out and grabs you that said YES YES yes. The ending is great with a big surprise. I just thought things would end differently with her brother.

I hope you give this a read you might find that it is one of the best books you have read. For me I just wanted more passion, more fire. I wanted to see sparks. The author does give a lovely story of second chances and starting over. Sometimes the one who got way is just waiting to step back in to sweep you off your feet.

Marsha says

Since this novel had a smart heroine who's managed to manage a failing store into a thriving business, I expected a cool-headed practical woman. No such luck. Elizabeth Morley is under her brother's thumb and has cherished a *tendresse* for the man who broke her heart in spite of all the other eligible suitors who lined up at her door.

For his part, Tom Barrington thought she'd married someone else the moment he disappeared over the horizon, in spite of her affection for him. So they're both cherishing hurt feelings due to miscommunication and the machinations of another party.

Both of them dance around each other's feelings. But Tom is your typical brawny hero and has no problems threatening to raise a scandal or kidnapping Elizabeth to get his way with her. He's also the type of romantic protagonist who doesn't want to expose a woman to his dangerous lifestyle for fear she'll get her feelings hurt or be placed in harm's way. Funny how they rarely consider to ask a woman what she thinks of such an arrangement.

There's also a big mistake in this novel. While Barrington confesses that he loves Elizabeth (finally!), she states that she has yet to say it to him. Wrong! She confesses her love to him on page 45, a declaration that he doesn't return until four years later. Oops!

While the intrigue of a possible gold heist provided a suitable secondary storyline, the romance was more frustrating than stimulating.

Susan says

Sweet romance with a touch of suspense. Four years earlier Tom had been a soldier at a nearby fort and Elizabeth the storekeeper in town. They were drawn to each other, though Elizabeth was also being courted by another man, one approved of by her brother. Tom receives a promotion and transfer and isn't able to see her before he leaves. Elizabeth is heartbroken when she doesn't hear from him.

Now Tom has arrived back in town, no longer a soldier, but with a job to do. He is shocked to find that she is still running the store and not married the way he thought. He had never forgotten her and with the new information is tempted by her again. Elizabeth is shocked to see him and surprised by the reason he had stayed away. She hasn't forgotten the way he made her feel, but she's not ready to risk her heart again, especially on a man unlikely to stay around.

I liked Tom. He is a man with a strong sense of honor. His reason for being in town was to ensure the safe transport of a gold shipment. He asked for this particular assignment as a way to make amends to the family of his previous partner who had been killed in the line of duty. Tom felt responsible for it and is determined to stop the thieves this time around. Seeing Elizabeth again has him wondering if there's any chance of a future with her.

I liked Elizabeth also, though there were times I wished she was a bit more forceful. She has been running the store in town for her brother, who has a second store in San Diego. She does everything she can to keep the peace with him because of a promise to her mother. His treatment of her is very patronizing and she just takes it. A confrontation he has with Tom has her wondering what is going on. When she discovers that Terrance interfered in her relationship with Tom she is furious and finally starts to think of herself.

I enjoyed seeing the relationship grow between Tom and Elizabeth. He is very protective of her, especially when she shows up in the town where he is working on the gold thefts. Though he knows he should stay away from her, Tom can't help seeking her out whenever he can. There's a really sweet scene where he shows up at the schoolhouse to help her and her friend. Out from under her brother's thumb, Elizabeth's own personality begins to reemerge. Though Elizabeth is cautious about risking her heart again, Tom's attentions have her dreaming of a future with him. Their conversation at the schoolhouse party draws them even closer, but Tom won't look ahead until he can clear his past.

The suspense comes with Tom's search for the gold thieves and his commitment to get the gold delivered safely. There are many things that could affect the outcome and Tom has to plan for all of them. The resolution of the problem does not go smoothly and Tom has to deal with an unexpected complication. Fortunately it all works out and Tom is finally able to put his past behind him.

I loved the ending. Elizabeth had to trust in Tom's promise to return. She returned to her home and faced

what was happening. She came back a different person and I loved seeing her embrace it. Tom's arrival back in town was perfectly timed. I loved his "conversation" with Elizabeth's brother. What happened next was a surprise, but the perfect resolution for Elizabeth and Tom.
