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On the phone, Layla Laraway had always driven men wild with her sexy voice. But in face-to-face encounters, few looked past her full figure to the woman inside. So, long ago, Layla had stopped believing in fairy tales...and Prince Charming

One look at Layla Laraway and CEO Ethan Winslow *knew* he'd found a princess. Layla was more woman than any he'd ever met, and he desired her far more than all those 34-24-34s he used to date. And suddenly this far-from-marriage-minded man was seeking to sweep Layla off her feet--and convince her that happily-ever-afters could come true....

A Whole Lot of Love Details

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Geri says

Wow!

Layla had the men all entranced by her voice, but once they meet her they judged her appearance as being fat/big girl. She's ok with the way she looks. She already had enough in her pass when she tried to change for someone else. It caused her to be hospitalized. She knew it would never happen again.

Ethan was one of the men that was enticed by Layla's voice. She had him volunteering for a charity bachelor auction. He was anxious to meet Layla and he too judged her immediately upon introduction. *BAD ETHAN* When Layla was pranked by the auctioneer to be auctioned too, Ethan saved her from embarrassment by bidding on her.

They went out on the required date and they really hit it off. It took awhile for Ethan to see her more than her appearance and Layla could not believe that Ethan really wanted her. She kept trying to set him up with her more attractive (thin) friend.

Nice HEA!

Kaycee ❤? says

I've been telling myself for the past years that I should finish my "to-read list" of my harlequin books, but unfortunately I haven't until now. And this year I told myself to do it again, that's why I have this book as my first read of the year. And I'm glad that I need because this is exactly what I need .

I thought I was getting a lighthearted romance, but boy was I wrong! This books is filled with smart dialogue, humor and a real heart. And I absolutely adored both Ethan and Layla. They were perfect for each other. They were so well suited it was uncanny. And just thinking about Ethan right now makes me happy and giggly. I really wish that he's real.

One of the strong points of this book is that the secondary characters are so well done. Everyone, even if they are only on the page for a paragraph or two, is wonderfully realized.

Overall, A Whole Lot of Love is a beautiful story that came with some surprises. I loved Ethan and Layla, and enjoyed how real their characters felt. Despite its simple plot, this book succeeded in taking over my heart and my mind. Always a good sign for a reader.

Cherise says

[Alzheimer's, anorexia (hide spoiler)]

Eva Suarez says

Muy lindo libro.

Aborda seriamente el "tema" de sobrepeso y los estragos que te generan en la autoestima.

Es una lectura con personajes MUY creíbles.

¿Lo recomiendo? Pues si, es un libro encantador.

jenjn79 says

A great love story about a woman with a fuller figure and the confidence problems she faces because of her size.

Dane says

Overall I enjoyed this story of a plus-sized woman and the man that loves her. I think that the author manages to address modern perceptions of beauty and size, a topic that can be volatile and sensitive, quite well. The manner in which the hero and heroine first initiated contact was cute, and while the hero (and especially his friend) occasionally got on my nerves with their attitudes regarding Layla's size, it was part of their character. For the hero, it was part of his development, and importantly, it was part of Layla's as well. I appreciated that the climax of this book dealt with the heroine's growth, since the hero's came a bit earlier. It showed an awareness of the kind of inner conflict women who had struggled with their weight all inevitably go through. In all I enjoyed reading this book; it was quick and enjoyable, and the two characters chemistry was spot on delicious.

Also, the best friend, Stephanie? I loved her to death.

Saly says

I really enjoyed a Whole Lot of Love as it had a plus-sized woman who though through trials had accepted who she was, but who was still dealing with society's perceptions of how she should be.

Ethan Winslow loves working, so much so that his sister's have been urging him to go out and live life, he now no longer has two sisters to keep and raise after the death of his parents. Ethan is a good guy, kind, loving, generous and he also feels guilty since the man who mentored him and gave him everything is now suffering from Alzheimer's and Ethan doesn't have the courage to see him.

Layla calls him on behalf of the auction she's organizing. She herself nursed her father through Alzheimer's and knows about it first-hand, but she loves her work and helping people. Her voice is seductive that when people see her, they flinch. She is plus-sized and it never mattered to her father but it did to others. At one time she dieted so much that she ended up in the hospital but now she's content.

What I enjoyed was that the book didn't paint magic pictures. Ethan is shocked to see Layla at first and he even debates with himself that is he that shallow? He starts lunching with her and not thinking beyond it. Even Layla comes to see that she too is guilty of prejudice and stereotype, just because Ethan is good-looking doesn't mean that he has had it easy.

We see them get to know each other and when Ethan tries to make a move, Layla shuts him down because she is scared, she tells Ethan he should date someone normal. I honestly enjoyed the depth the book had.

Elisa Vangelisti says

La prima parte è un rosa tale e quale a tanti altri: Layla invita un bel fusto ricco imprenditore a un'asta di beneficenza per mettere in palio qualche ora con lui. Il titolo in italiano si riferisce alla sensuale voce di Layla, che potrebbe lavorare per un telefono erotico, tanta è la seduzione che emana sentirla parlare. La sua voce affascinante evoca immagini di una sirena strepitosa. In realtà, Layla è sì una bella donna, ma con diversi chili di troppo e il fatto che sia bionda mi ha portato alla mente Adele, la cantante (tanto per capirci), e quella per me è rimasta l'immagine mentale della protagonista durante tutta la lettura. Forse è a quello che si riferisce il titolo originale, "A whole lot of love", che ho tradotto malamente con "Un sacco d'amore", un po' come dire "tanta roba" (in senso buono, ovvio). Quello che non capisco è perché in copertina (che è praticamente identica all'originale) ci sia una bionda magra. Mah. Forse se si fosse usata l'immagine di una ragazza in carne il libro avrebbe venduto meno? Dispiace perché stravolge il messaggio del romanzo, che in alcuni punti, da metà libro in poi, evoca immagini di una tenerezza devastante. Ovviamente i due protagonisti sono fortemente attratti, ma non succede banalmente che lui sia cotto di lei dall'oggi al domani senza cognizione di causa, bensì per gradi, quasi incerto, come se avesse tante remore evidenti e totalmente assurde, come è così che si vive nella società attuale dei paesi industrializzati. Non solo i protagonisti riescono a trasmettere le loro paure attraverso le parole di Justine, ma anche i comprimari non sono da meno. Amici dei due, i loro parenti... insomma, è un bel romanzo e lo conservo per rileggerlo a distanza, molto volentieri. Consigliatissimo.

Se McGregor says

A fantastic book - one of my all-time top ten reads! The world needs more Ethan's.

Brenda says

4.5 stars!!!

OMG everybody has to read it at least once!

It mixed a BBW romance with a bit of an education on Alzheimer's Disease. The characters were so credible and you can relate to them. This book made me cry at different places. I loved it!

Sarah Peterson says

I found this book via a blog (I think Smart Bitches, Trashy Books, but I'm not sure) several years ago and it's

been sitting on my shelf waiting for me to get around to it for a while. I finally did.

First off, the title is terrible. Absolutely terrible. There is no excuse.

The book itself, however, is pretty good. I only wish it were longer. I'm sick of seeing the typical "naturally thin" perfectly proportioned romance heroine. I loved seeing someone like myself in a romance novel (also, the cover art is off, because if that's supposed to be Layla, then I don't see what the big [pun intended] deal is with her weight). I also loved the background story of Alzheimer's. I liked that they had something in common that drove them and brought them together, though I wished Layla's back story would have been a bit more in depth. I found Layla's insecurities a bit annoying, but then I thought about it and I suppose I'd think the same thing if in that position. I'd probably even think it was a prank of some sort. So I really can't blame the character for her thoughts on the matter.

Honestly, this book was really a waste for a serial. It definitely should have been a longer standalone book on its own. Several people probably wouldn't even give it the time of day simply because it's a serial. I would love to see more books like this (and no, the heroine having "small breasts" or a "boyish figure" does not constitute an "imperfection").

StMargarets says

H/h meet when heroine calls hero to participate in a charity auction for Alzheimer's research/support. Hero, CEO of a small tech firm, thinks she has a sexy voice. Heroine can hear his interest, but knows he'll be disappointed when he sees what she really looks like. She's tall (almost six feet) and big – as in voluptuous – big hips and bust, but with a defined waist.

I include this description because it's repeated a lot in the story. And because her weight/appearance is the central conflict in the story. Her former fiancé dumped her after she put on weight following a hospital stay caused extreme dieting. She then decided she'd rather be healthy than try to diet. But she hasn't accepted any dates since, dresses neatly in dark clothes, and works constantly.

The hero is surprised when he meets her at the auction, but he quickly suppresses it. He has his own backstory baggage. He is a workaholic ever since his parents died when he was 17 and he was responsible for his two younger sisters. He is CEO of this tech company because the former CEO mentored him all through college and made him his heir when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Hero is very invested in Alzheimer research, but can't bring himself to visit his old mentor in the nursing home. Heroine's mathematics father died of Alzheimer's that is why she is involved in this foundation.

Okay, back to the plot. The comedian who is emceeing the auction unexpectedly brings the heroine up on stage and dares someone to bid on a date with her. It's supposed to be a comedy bit, but the audience is uncomfortable and the heroine is humiliated. Hero bids on her – the highest bid of the night – and heroine leaves before he can talk to her.

Heroine thinks he wasn't serious about a date, but he insists. They go for a day of sailing and have a great time. Heroine hears about his sisters, etc. . . They then go on some lunch dates and heroine decides he's going to keep it in the friend zone, so she won't get her hopes up

.
At this point in the story, the minor characters begin expressing the good, bad, and ugly about judging people

by their appearance.

The hero's bff from high school turns out to be a real pig, saying every cliched mean thing about overweight women and their desirability. (Thankfully the hero pushes back and eventually dumps him – although the dumping is off page).

The heroine's bff is all about positive body image and true love overcoming all, etc. . . .

The middle ground is held by the heroine's sisters who are delighted with the heroine coaxing their brother out of his workaholic shell and letting the heroine know that the hero has always been good-looking, has always had women chase him (and misunderstand him) and is just as vulnerable emotionally as the heroine.

Out of this tangle, the hero just goes for it and kisses the heroine, surprising both of them with instant arousal. With a taste of that passion, the hero pursues her, wins a place in her bed and the rest of the story is the heroine's to mess up.

There is an unexpectedly poignant moment when the hero works up the courage to visit his mentor in the Alzheimer locked ward. It made me cry – not tear up – cry. It was analogous of meeting someone you thought had died and telling them everything in your heart. It was the ultimate of second chances and *sniff* it slayed me.

This is a beautifully done category romance that tackles some serious issues. The H/h are compatible from the start – their opening phone dialogue made me smile with toe-curling delight. The love scenes are perfect for these two. Hero is so into her. I gave it five stars because it made me cry, because I believed the romance and because it made me think. It made me think because weight and appearance and romance are minefield and not everyone is going to be happy with this depiction of a big heroine or buy into this author's meaning of life.

Not everyone is going to be happy with this depiction of a big heroine because this is such a taboo subject in our culture. So I'll just round up what I imagine are all the conflicting views beyond what the story depicted.

I'm cutting for length (view spoiler)

Pesky says

This was such a satisfying read. The book was short but managed to develop attraction between the characters organically, instead of the instant blood boiling senselessness most plus size romances resort to. Ethan wasn't initially attracted to Layla, and I appreciate this greatly. The story takes pains to acknowledge the many things that go into being attracted to someone unexpected and the prejudices that go into it. Most bbw romances gloss over the reality that, oftentimes, a woman whose size doesn't conform to conventional standards of female beauty isn't the "type" many men go for or even expect to find themselves attracted to. Ethan acknowledges this and then, Justine Davis goes as far as to have him examine his own actions. Why is he so hesitant to go further with this woman who he likes spending time with, when if she was more conventionally attractive he knows he would have made a move long ago? I loved this. I found that Ethan fulfilled the fantasy of a romantic lead, being successful, tall, and very good looking, but he was also very grounded in reality in that he did all that thinking. The introspection doesn't end with Ethan. Layla also has to examine herself and her own actions.

Even with all this thinking going on, there is still plenty of time for the good parts. All that steamy romantic action that draws us to romance novels in the first place. This book was a perfect example of balance. The characters behave believably, the author doesn't use needless drama to move the story along, and it all happens in a satisfying way. The book is short but everything that needed to happen, happened. THIS is a great example of plus size romance, and really if you want a break from infuriatingly insecure and often nonsensical bbw heroines, I'd recommend reading this book. Layla is by no means perfectly confident, but Justine Davis makes her insecurity relatable and very believable. Definitely a great read.

Gabby says

I thought I'd never (ever) read this kind of books, but here I am.
I enjoyed the story, maybe 'cuz I'm a big woman, so I totally understand traits of Layla.
Pretty "ugly-duck-realizes-she's-a-kindly-and-beautiful-woman-and-gets-the-hunk-and-sensible-man" story.

Wiwo Aprilia says

4 Voluptuous Stars...
Nice cotton candy harlequin ;)
enough to keep me entertained.
