

My Favorite Distraction

Stephanie Jean

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Not your run-of-the-mill erotica, this novel contains an aspect of mystery that complicates the plot.

Katie is always running from something; right now, she's running from her grandfather's death. In this story of romance, author Stephanie Jean creates a complicated tale of trust and loyalty with an unexpected twist.

Is Katarina (aka Katie) the daughter of money, or is she the pleasant dental hygienist who looks forward to lunches with her coworkers and keeps her apartment's kitchen organized in her free time, afraid to meet people that she might get close to? Katie has been hurt; the pain is particularly evident in the prologue when her brother saves her from an attempted rape committed by his best friend. This pain, along with her family's dysfunction, is what drives Katie to constantly run away and to make every effort possible to avoid getting close to anyone. Katie's character does grow and change over the course of the book, but those surrounding her often seem like props, there to simply serve as the Greek chorus to her poor choices.

Katie's "distraction," Jason, is a surprise. He's your typical square-jawed stud, who takes her by sexual storm. While there are hints of the catalyst through the book, Jason's motivations for wanting to control and possess Katie are not made clear until the final two chapters.

Jason's control and possession of Katie come in a sexual form. The sexual passages are well written and make it clear, early on, that Jason is steering their relationship in the direction he wishes it to go. Katie is overwhelmed by her desire for Jason, and this only serves to put her at his mercy. The foreshadowing is set in place early in their relationship. This facet makes this book a step up from run-of-the-mill erotica. There is an aspect of mystery here that complicates the plot. The back matter refers to this book as a lighthearted erotic romance, but the games being played are far from lighthearted.

The book's packaging is appealing. The cover does show a woman in a more dominant position, however, and that is misleading. But there are many grammatical, spelling, and sentence structure errors, which are distracting. There are also shifts in verb tense, making it unclear whether the action is occurring in the present or past. "I followed the trails of Heather until I see her blonde hair. She turns in the kitchen hands full of groceries."

Those searching for erotica with a strong sense of mystery will appreciate *My Favorite Distraction*, the first book in a projected series.

LYNN EVARTS (February 3, 2014)

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