



All In

A.T. Brennan

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"I learned a long time ago that nothing is free, not even help." ~ Blaze

Almost getting killed in a gay bashing should have been one of the worst moments of my life, but with everything I've been through, it was just another day, except for the gorgeous man who stepped in to save me. There is something about Galen that draws me in and makes me want know him, and the more time I spend with him, the more I felt free to be myself. Galen doesn't seem to know what he wants, but I'm a man who stays true to himself, and Galen seems to be someone worth taking a chance on.

"Then you happened and all you have to do is touch me and I lose myself." ~ Galen

I never thought I'd stumble on an attempted murder, but that's exactly what happened one night while I was trying to get home. After chasing away the assailants and helping the enigmatic young victim home I tried to put the incident out of my mind, but I couldn't get him out of my head. I might not have ever thought about being with a man before, but the more time I spend with Blaze, the more I learn about who I really am. Blaze has scars that run deep, but as he opens up to me I find myself questioning everything I thought I wanted, and wondering if I'm a good enough man to give him what he needs.

*This is Book 1 of The Den Boys series, but can be read as a standalone. No cheating, no cliffhangers, and trigger warnings are listed in the book before the table of contents.

*This book is intended for an 18+ audience and is a story of male/male romance and love. There are graphic depictions of man parts doing naughty and sexy things, so please be sure this is the kind of book for you before reading.

All In Details

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From Reader Review All In for online ebook

Barbara? says

I can't believe I'm saying this but...this book had too much sex ?. Yes...too much. Hey, I love some hot MM sex scenes just like the next person and I often wonder can there really be too many? Yes, there can be and here is a good example. Don't get me wrong, they were hot and the author knows how to write good scenes but when the sex scenes overshadow the story, it's too much. There was hardly any relationship development. I'm surprised their dicks didn't fall off with all the sex they had. You only have a couple of pages of them interacting with each other or others then they're boinking again ?. I found myself eventually skimming the sex scenes just to get to them talking to each other.

At about 85% I think, here we go...some story and some drama. Well, that lasted about 5 pages then it's over in a flash. WTF just happened? The whole book is pretty low-angst and there's an instant connection between the two. It's pretty much gfy/ofy because honestly, I had a hard time believing that Galen was all of a sudden bottoming and topping a guy when he'd never even been attracted to one before. THIS is where more character/relationship development is essential. He can't go from only having sex with women to suddenly bottoming for one guy and it be believable without some kind of development. Where was the struggle? The doubt? And him just "not calling/contacting" Blaze for a few days doesn't count.

The writing was good and I kept reading because underneath it all I knew there was the potential for a good story but...and here I go again can't believe I'm saying this...the sex scenes ruined it for me. Shit! I can't believe I said that. ?

Claudia says

I'm so glad I found out about this series and I loved this book from the start. I loved Blaze and how he managed to get himself together after all he faced in life and I absolutely loved Galen and how he never had any doubts about claiming the man he wanted... even if at the time he was not gay. I'm totally diving into book 2

Anne Boleyn's Ghost says

DNF at 28%. Too much sex, too little substance. The circumstances under which the first sex scene occurred were highly questionable. And instead of an honest and frank discussion about it when they next got together, we got...more sex.

Farrah says

Dnf 30%

Brown Eyed Girl ~Suzanne~ says

I was given the chance by the author to read this and I am so happy I did! I'm always hesitant when reading an author who is new to the m/m world. I am happy to say that Ms Brennan wrote a beautiful story full of love, hope and some very hot sex!

This will be a series and I'm looking forward to reading about the other characters.

NeRdyWYRM says

Surprisingly Good

I read this book in anticipation of an upcoming ARC read for book 3 of the series. I didn't have specific expectations other than I wasn't expecting much. There was no concrete foundation for that inkling, but I will try to explain why and then I'll tell you why my instincts were *way* off.

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I know better than to judge a book by its cover, or in this case, its title. I think the title of the series, "The Den Boys" threw me off a little. And I confess, I don't always read the reviews before I decide to read something [shocked face]! Unbelievable! Nah, not so much \*wink\*. I explained my motivation ^^up there^^ for reading this one, but still.

This author was not known to me and I guess I expected rent-boys or street-wise waifish twinks with saviors or something like that. Let's face it, there are similar series out there with similar titles and I mean, come on, "The Den Boys", right? Wrong.

This was one of the very first quotes in the book. It struck me right between the eyes and turned my assumptions on their figurative heads.

"So you've got a savior complex going on?"

"No." I ignored his attempt to deflect the conversation and pulled his shirt down so his side was covered again. "I just want to help you. Not save you."

"That's good, because I'm beyond saving."

Blaze was right. He absolutely did not need saving; he'd already saved himself. What he needed was someone like Galen to help him see he was worth loving. And yep. That's what I get for making assumptions. While there are degrees of some of that street-wise rent-boy syndrome involved in the story, that's not what it's actually *about*.

Obviously, I'm glad I didn't let my flawed instinctive response to the title keep me from reading this one. It

was really, really good.

When I scrolled through the reviews *after* I read it I saw a lot of DNFs and that made me sad. There were some valid points in there, i.e., Galen's identity struggles and his past sexual history stuff. I mean, it was pretty obvious to me, too. I get it.

Thankfully for me and unfortunately for anyone who missed out, a little patience paid off when reading this title although when I *was* reading it, the personal growth aspects of the character-development felt like a natural progression and not like it took too long to get to the epiphanies.

I'm being deliberately vague, because reading this for yourself and finding out along the way is essential to enjoying this story.

Suffice it to say that this title was surprisingly low on angst. There are some gnarly family shenanigans and a little bit of self-doubt and confusion on the part of the MCs, but none of that infuriating miscommunication crap or the ubiquitous misunderstandings that lead to weeks-long separations full of pining. Nope. Thank the book gods. None of that.

What you do get is a little hurt comfort, stellar parallel journeys of self-discovery, and a not-too-sweet love story. And these guys were burning it up in the bedroom, I mean ... fuck me running, they were hot together! And in slightly unexpected ways. Even better.

The author was clever about introducing Blaze's friends, or his chosen family, as it were. They're fleshed out as people with personalities, but nothing so overt that the mystery is gone. You can tell they're likely going to get their own stories, but there aren't any preconceived notions about how they're going to pair up, who they're going to pair up with, or even how any of their individual plotlines might play out.

I really liked that aspect of the story. It makes me want to continue the series to see what happens. Lucky happenstance since I need to read it anyway, but I'm glad I'm looking forward to it and not anticipating a slog. I'll confess to being a little bummed that there was no follow-through on the bad guys in the opening scene.

Don't get me wrong! I didn't want it to turn into a police procedural or a court case or anything like that, but I would have expected the assholes to make a reappearance at some point. Maybe that happens later in the series, maybe not. People like those tend to continue what they're doing until they get caught so ... I thought that was a little bit of a lost opportunity, but was simultaneously glad that nothing external took the focus off the MCs because I lurrved their story.

I loved this book. I loved the fact that the themes present didn't drive the plot into Captain Obvious-Land. I loved the characters, I believed their chemistry, I believed the romance, and I believed that they could have been real people in real life if such things were possible.

This read was sweet with an edge. Not Lucy Lennox sappy, not Mary Calmes endearing, or Stella Starling

heartwarming or anything overtly like *that*. There was just enough grit to make it interesting but not so much angst that it was exhausting to read. In other words, it was *just right*.

I'm looking forward to continuing the series and this author is now on my mental BOLO list. I highly recommend it for someone looking for a stress-free read with some good one-handed moments, believable romance, engaging characters, and a plot devoid of crazy drama or gratuitous OTT-ness.

*Other reviews by NeRdyWYRM can be read [here](#).*

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## **Truuss says**

Galen and Blaze 5 stars

Owww this is an amazing intense read. Blaze almost gay bashed to death and Galen saving him. Blaze a bartender and Galen a lawyer. Blaze thinks Galen is way out of reach but Galen is impressed by Blaze his strength. Their attraction is instant.

After he is been saved by Galen they stay in touch. And they are getting closer and closer. Not only physical but also emotional.

Super hot hot story with a lot of excessive sexiness but besides all their sizzling sex there is also a real and good story to follow.

They are amazingly sweet together...honest and open. Galen had never a relationship before and now with Blaze, Galen learns he is absolute gay and head over heels into Blaze. They have vulnerable personalities and you will love them both, because they are charming and sympathetic.

Blaze has a very difficult and hard past, he is a survivor pur sang and somewhat lost...It seems Galen his past is also difficult so there is a bond of understanding.

Galen is very sincere and clear about what he wants.....only....Blaze is afraid he will be the one, left behind, with a broken heart.

Very well and strong written story. Smoothly and steady also. All their conversations were amazing put down and their sexual activities were very steamy. Overall an engaging story and immense enjoyable!!

Kindly received a copy from the author. Thank you!!

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## **Candice says**

I really liked this one! But, I won't be reading the next book because it's a trio. I'm bummed.

I LOVED Blaze!

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## Lyn says

44% and giving up. Maybe I'll be able to get back to it, but I doubt it.

I was really hoping this was a slow burn since it's gfy, but that turned out not to be the case. The relationship is so rushed, it's hard for me to feel the chemistry between the MCs. It just comes off a bit cheesy.

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## Happily Ever Chapter says

☆☆☆☆ FOUR & 1/2 - STAR ☆ REVIEW ☆☆☆☆

>> Judging a Book by it's Cover <<

Cover composition was not very eye-catching to me, only the blue title color and font caught my attention. The synopsis interested me. I've not yet read anything from this author so I am anxious to discover another new to-me writer.

>> Looking Deeper <<

POV ~> Alternating first-person POVs. Clearly defined. Easy to follow.

"He was educated, successful and in a league I couldn't even see, let alone be a part of.

I was a castoff with a mismatched family I'd made after my own had abandoned me."

On his way home from a club late one night, Blaze is jumped by three men with fatal intentions. Only by chance does Galen witness and stop the crime, saving Blaze's life.

The two men, a straight lawyer and a gay bartender, couldn't be more different... right?

It would seem they have much more in common than either ever would think though.

Wow, loved this cast of characters! The leads were great, the Den staff was supportive and interesting. And even the dislikeable families provided just enough outside conflict to create some additional dynamics. The chemistry was hot, sweet, and everything in between. They balanced one another nicely. The dialogue was believable. Interactions felt natural. The plot was engrossing and the story flowed very well. There was only mild predictability, but nothing that really took away from the story. The conclusion was solid.

This is the first book that I've read by this author and am salivating for HEALING HIM to release! I need more!

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Rating: [R] ~ Score: 4.4 ~ Stars: 4, 4.5 if I could!

Triggers: Hate crime, gay bashing. Scenes of past mental, verbal, physical and substance abuse.

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? ? \*\*\*\* Disclosure of Material: I won a copy of this eBook from Sinfully Gay Romance Book Reviews and am voluntarily leaving unbiased and unsolicited feedback. I was not asked, encouraged, or required to leave a review - nor was I compensated in any way. I am posting this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising". \*\*\*\*\* ? ?



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## **Doris says**

### **Not for me - not believable**

Certainly not the worst book I've ever read, but a waste of my time.

Some spoilers.

When the main character is getting jumped, it would have been impossible for him to remain silent. Have you ever worn or felt steel-toe boots? Even a good punch in the gut is going to cause at least a gasp or grunt. Lost me there. Also, the rescuer would likely have also been jumped. No major injuries, I don't think so. The sex scenes were so messed up. Not in a hot way. Not in a fun way. And side note - if Galen never enjoyed being with a woman he was likely never straight.

I've read a lot of both really good and really bad m/m stories and this one was unfortunately the latter.

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## **Carra says**

I think I need a cold shower after that. All In was HOT. Not only was it hot, it's an excellent story, written very well with strong characters who are flawed, with complex pasts, and to whom I quickly became attached early on in the story. For a debut M/M novel, A.T. Brennan did an amazing job and I've now put her on my list of authors to watch in the genre.

From the moment Blaze and Galen meet, there's a strong emotional connection between them—it's obvious and only gets stronger and deeper the more time they spend together. Blaze has been so beaten down in his life and keeps surviving through his sheer strength of will, and Galen wants nothing more than to be there for him...never expecting the powerful attraction that erupts between them. Galen is truly one of the good guys, helping for no other reason than because it is the right thing to do—something Blaze has not really seen for most of his life.

Chemistry? Just make sure you keep a fire extinguisher handy. You'll be hard pressed to find two men more right for each other than Galen and Blaze, and that's never more evident than when things get hot and heavy...again...and again...and...yeah, keep the batteries charged as well. Their intimate scenes are distinctly erotic and while you might think otherwise, they're actually not necessarily gratuitous as they do demonstrate how deeply the connection between the two men goes, and how it continues to strengthen over time. And it's not just those scenes that show the development of their relationship—there's a heck of a lot more to this story than sex (that's just a really nice bonus).

What Blaze goes through will make your heart hurt for him, and some parts of that might be disturbing for some readers as he does go through a gay bashing, and some portions of his younger years while he was still living at home move past the disturbing point as well. His self esteem is damaged by his past, and it's Galen who helps him heal. At the same time, Blaze helps Galen realize who he really is inside, and Galen's strength of character shines once he comes to terms with his true self—especially when it comes to his family.

Filled with a load of emotion that had me not wanting to put this book down, All In was a 5-star read for me, and I highly recommend it to any M/M romance fan. I would put it in the hurt/comfort category, with a bit of

coming out as well. This is definitely re-read material for me, and I'm really looking forward to reading more in the series—this author has impressed me with her M/M debut novel, and I'll be keeping an eye out for more to come. This book is meant strictly for readers 18+ for adult language, explicit erotic sexual content, and some disturbing scenes as mentioned previously.

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### **Angie says**

I read my personal copy for Wicked Reads

Loved this book. First book I have read by this author but it will not be the last. Once I started this book I could not put it down. I just loved Galen and Blaze. LOVED them. Galen was a true knight in shining armor and I loved how he just rolled with things and was so open. Blaze was just as wonderful. As soon as I finished this book I had to start the second. This book hit all the right buttons for me and it will be in my re-read pile for sure!!!

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### **Christina Wade - BFD Book Blog says**

So, I'm a bit torn on this one...there was good and bad. I'm just going to throw down my thoughts about the book so it won't be a normal review.

I understand that Blaze had a hard life. I get that he's suffered. After damn near dying in an attack which he only survived because Galen interfered, his lack of reaction did not work for me.

Galen just learned about Blaze's past and he all but raped him without prep or lube, which incidentally was Galen's first time with a man. Fortunately he realized what was going on before it ended and corrected it but that was really hard to read.

I did like that they got their histories out in the open early and we didn't have too much drama from that.

There was a lot of time spent on the casual side of things but when Galen decides he's 'all in' the book is almost on fast forward. And the direction of their future was told through Blaze thinking back about it. I would have liked to read about that real time.

The angst with Galen's parents was pretty predictable but I am glad it wasn't drawn out and Galen settled it quickly.

We meet who I'm assuming are the characters for the rest of the series. The next book appears to be a triad and the synopsis seems like one I've read time and again. I'm not sure whether or not I'll stick with the series.

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### **~Volha~ says**

\*\* 3.75 stars \*\*

This is my first time reading anything by A.T. Brennan, and frankly speaking I had a hard time rating this book. I liked the MCs separately, I loved the Den boys but Galen and Blaze as a couple not so much. I loved how they met and where it all was going until it screeched to a full halt with their first intimacy. It was dubious at best, and the circumstances preceding it didn't make it the right one. I would have been fine if emotional connection was established. That talk needed snuggling and cuddling not pounding. And it just colored my opinion about them as a couple.

I didn't like the first part of the book. It was way too physical, I didn't feel any bond or emotional attachment between MCs. But the second part where they actually took time to talk mellowed me a little bit towards them. What I really liked were all the Den boys, Owen and Layla, how close they were. They became a real family - they teased, helped and supported each other. There was some mild angst in the end that made the book worth reading. But I had to skip some sex scenes because there were too many for this particular book.

So, it was a nice read but it didn't blow my socks off.

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