



Big Boy

Ruthie Knox

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Big Boy

Ruthie Knox

Big Boy Ruthie Knox

He'll be any man she wants--except himself.

A Strangers on a Train story

Meet me at the train museum after dark. Dress for 1957.

When Mandy joins an online dating service, she keeps her expectations low. All she wants is a distraction from the drudgery of single parenthood and full-time work. But the invitation she receives from a handsome man who won't share his real name promises an adventure—and a chance to pretend she's someone else for a few hours.

She doesn't want romance to complicate her life, but Mandy's monthly role-playing dates with her stranger on a train—each to a different time period—become the erotic escape she desperately needs. And a soul connection she never expected.

Yet when she tries to draw her lover out of the shadows, Mandy has a fight on her hands...to convince him there's a place for their fantasy love in the light of day.

Warning: Contains sexy role-playing, theatrical application of coal dust, and a hero who can rock a pair of brown polyester pants.

Big Boy Details

Date : Published June 20th 2017 by Ruthie Knox (first published April 2nd 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Ruthie Knox

Format : Kindle Edition 98 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Novella, Adult Fiction, Erotica

 [Download Big Boy ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Big Boy ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Big Boy Ruthie Knox

From Reader Review Big Boy for online ebook

Jaime Arkin says

Novella's are notoriously hard... it's difficult to build a 'relationship' with the characters because the story isn't very long and you don't get much history about them to even start forming an attachment.

Big Boy is an exception to that rule. In 66 pages, Ruthie had me cursing Tyler and wanting to jump into the pages to hug Mandy and tell her everything was going to be wonderful.

Mandy is a single mom to a child that isn't biologically hers. She works full time and she struggles to make ends meet. But for one night a month she's someone else. She meets Tyler through a dating website and they instantly connect. For that one night they both forget whatever is going on in their real lives to indulge in whatever fantasy is playing in their minds.

Tyler has his own struggles, and when they meet in real life, Mandy wants to make the transition to really dating... only she's not sure that's what Tyler will want.

Mandy was such a genuinely real character and that's one of Ruthie's talents. She writes people in such a realistic way that you can imagine sitting on their couch having a glass of wine and talking about what outfit she is going to wear to her next Tuesday date. She had me laughing and she had me cringing and she had me smiling like a fool.

One of my favorite passages....

"What kind of date?"

"The kind where I'm Tyler, and you're Mandy, and I pick you up at seven and drive you to a restaurant and buy you dinner."

This sounds like my kind of date but he's not done yet.

"And afterward, we talk about our childhoods over coffee, and you make me laugh, and then I kiss you good night and feel like skipping on my way back to my car because you're so fucking fantastic."

This is one of a series of novellas written by some incredibly talented authors you'll definitely want to check out! If you're in the mood for a quick, sexy read this would be the perfect choice!

This review can be found on my blog, Fic Fare:

Jill says

Big Boy could refer to any number of things -

But the titular Big Boy here refers to *this Big Boy*.

For Mandy, a teacher at the University of Wisconsin and a single mother to a toddler, life is full of teaching and mothering. Lonely and desperate for an outlet she goes online and meets up with a man. They meet once a month at the National Railroad Museum. They dress up and role-play from different eras. She doesn't know his real name.

There are five books in this *Strangers on a Train* series, and this is the first one I've read. The authors all use trains as their common setting tying the series together. All can be read as stand-alones.

Role-playing and dress-ups isn't my favourite thing to read in romance, but in the hands of the very talented Ruthie Knox this all came together. It took a while for me to actually enjoy this. In fact it was quite an average 3-star read until the final 10% (which was a 5-star read!) and had me upping the rating a whole star.

Well worth reading if just to see how the final part plays out.

Steam: 2.5

Alexis Hall says

This was the first Ruthie Knox book I read. And, omg, I was kind of blissfully destroyed by it.

It has what I now recognise as Knox hallmarks:

1. A sort of crystalline quality to writing: like looking into clear water, reflecting both depth and absolute clarity. Cleanly beautiful.
2. Absolute emotional commitment to the protagonists.

This basic set up of this one is that both the hero and heroine are trapped in what you might call carer's limbo: they escape it by meeting once a month in numerous guises for sex as pretend strangers.

Such a simple premise, but the execution is powerful and perfect. An exploration of the value and necessity of selfishness in life and love. Which sounds like an oddly negative thing to say, but it's such an important message.

Kathleen says

Ruthie Knox is such a fun writer! My favorite full-length book by Knox is *Ride with Me*. This one is shorter, a novella. It's told entirely in first person POV, from the heroine's perspective.

Big Boy is fairly entertaining, set in a city I know well -- Green Bay -- and at a train museum -- how cool is

that? (It felt like something was missing, with no mention of the Green Bay Packers, just knowing that city as I do).

I liked the various scenarios, set in different boxcars, with Tyler and Mandy in costume to reflect different historical periods. They kept their true identities a secret, and were basically playing a game. I loved the scenes with baby Josh, and the authenticity of Mandy's mixed feelings about new motherhood (much as she loves Josh, she also wants to have a tiny slice of life, and keep her new job at UWGB). Also, I was moved by the loving kindness Tyler shows to his dad.

The book was good, but short, only 66 pages. It felt like a teaser. Given the length limitations, it seems counterintuitive to spend most of the pages in disguise, playing various roles. Sometimes short works, but in this case it left me feeling unsatisfied. It just wasn't long enough, and the sex scenes came before I felt the slightest emotional bond with Tyler -- after all, I knew nothing about him, not even his name. Then, when troubled waters hit, the resolution came upon us so fast and so simply. All of a sudden we learn the truth about Tyler. I felt he was rather horrid to Mandy, so it seemed a cheat to win him back to the readers (to me) by (view spoiler)

If Knox had been granted just ten more pages, I might be a believer, but as it is, I did not close this book with a satisfied sigh. Maybe if we'd heard the nurse's perspective of Tyler sooner? I found that compelling.

Short stories that have left me feeling more satisfied:

Milan's A Kiss For Midwinter

J.R. Ward's Father Mine: Zsadist and Bella's Story

shorts by Linda Howard in Strangers in the Night

Tessa Dare's Like None Other

Content: Explicit sex, no violence, some cussing, religious profanity (could do without that)

FV Angela says

Originally posted at <http://fictionvixen.com/review-big-bo...>

Trying to get away from the monotony of her everyday life after the death of her sister and taking on the care of her infant nephew, Mandy joins an online dating service. Her interest is captured by a man who seems to have multiple profiles, in each one he is dressed as a different historical figure, taking on a new persona with each change of clothes. When she receives an offer to meet with him she accepts, and this begins a meeting once a month where neither exchange their real names or life circumstances, but where they pretend to be other people. They dress up from different time periods, make up backgrounds and begin a relationship based on role-playing and fantasy.

Ruthie Knox continues to amaze me. This is a short story, only 66 pages, but the emotion and depth of feeling I got out of those 66 pages had me wishing it would go on and on. Mandy and her fantasy lover have already been meeting for a while at the start of this story so they have an established sexual relationship.

Mandy plans her outfits and takes such care with the details of each new character she plays that her meetings become more to her than just a physical release. She starts to open up to her mystery man about the particulars of her life, always in the guise of her newest character, changing names and circumstances so he won't realize she's becoming more emotionally involved with him. There are reasons these two have chosen to keep their personal lives separate from this relationship and as the story moves along those reasons are revealed.

In some short stories the development of sexual relationship between the H/h might seem rushed or abrupt, this isn't the case with Big Boy. The reader is introduced to this couple after they have already been "together" for quite a while and with flashbacks of those previous dates they learn how Mandy and Tyler developed from strangers to sexual intimacy. This story felt so real to me. The chemistry between these two strangers meeting on the train for a bit of escapism from their everyday lives jumped off the page. Since this is told from Mandy's POV all of her stresses, dreams and emotions are right there on the page, but Tyler is a mystery right up until the end. I couldn't wait to find out what made him tick. Once he opens up and exposes himself to Mandy everything makes sense. Their HEA was perfect.

This is the best short story I think I've ever read. Ever. I absolutely adored every single thing about it. If I hadn't already been a fan of this author before, I would be after reading this gem. I will most definitely be recommending Big Boy to as many people as I can. Final Grade: A

Favorite Quote:

He's the Man with No Name. He's nobody. He's every single man I walk past, every corner I walk around, every thought in my head.

Lady Heather says

What an amazing little gem!!

Loved the writing!

The author did a fantastic job of creating wonderful characters, and story in so few pages!

LOVED the role-playing, and the rules no last names, and come as anyone you want, just stay in character.

Sunny says

4.5 stars. Big Boy is Ruthie Knox's novella found in Strangers on a Train.

What a beautiful surprise. So genuine, so gut wrenching, so real.

I simply love this novella. There are some stories that just hit you at a visceral level; the writing here is so

authentic, it speaks to my soul. It is about a woman whose world is turned on a dime and who is learning to adjust to/work with/manage motherhood and career. In that transition, Mandy is trying to find out where she fits in this new reality. Motherhood can be so overwhelming - where the needs of the child have to take priority and the mother's needs keep getting subsumed by all the tasks that are necessary. And then there is the guilt...how Ruthie Knox found the words, I do not know. But I saw myself in this text:

I'm not a bad mother. Not usually. But there's no room in my life for sick babysitters... Sometimes Josh gets the short end of the stick, but I console myself with the thought that I get it a lot more often...But when I'm at home with him, I'm a distracted mother, always trying to get away with as much work or as much cleaning as I can. He wants nothing but me -- my attention, my love -- and I want to give it to him, only I want so many other things too.

Mandy manages to carve out a little of her own identity in a monthly rendezvous with Tyler. Ironically, they met online and started their relationship with a roleplay and they never left it. A year later, Mandy is in love with Tyler but has no idea who he really is. She discovers that she wants more, something real from this relationship, but how can she tell him she wants out of their imaginary world?

I found the premise of this story fascinating. The idea that a relationship can begin in an pretend world, where neither of them have to reveal themselves and they can lose themselves is creative. But as Ms. Knox points out that without truth based on reality, there is no foundation for trust - hot, heavy sex, yes; trust, no. Misunderstandings abound and when Mandy wants something more, something substantial, something real, she has no idea if Tyler is on board. How they manage to work it out is moving and satisfying.

IN A NUTSHELL:

This is not my first Ruthie Knox novella and I'm impressed at how she masters the genre. How she manages to cover much emotional ground in a short space is beyond me. Excellent and highly recommended.

Thank you to Ruthie Knox for providing the ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Angie says

Originally reviewed here @ Angieville

I . . . I am just not going to be able to pull off being at all dignified about this book. I couldn't possibly manage it and, what's more, I am not the least bit interested in trying. Because this book is so good it makes my *teeth* hurt. And I just wasn't expecting teeth-hurting goodness, you know? I was expecting a bit of fun, an engaging evening. It's a *novella*, for crying out loud! How much awesome can Ruthie Knox pack into 66 pages? Honestly. I should just stop asking myself that question. It doesn't even signify anymore in a world of Courtney Milan and Ruthie Knox novellas. I read Knox's *How to Misbehave* novella not long back and thought it was extremely cute. And so when I heard about this *STRANGERS ON A TRAIN* compilation, I knew I'd be reading Knox's contribution for sure. If you're interested in the story behind the anthology, I highly recommend Knox's take on it here. I love reading about how authors come together behind a single idea and go on to interpret it in different ways. And, just for fun, here's the Hot Guys on the Train tumblr that got the ball rolling.

Mandy has been living in limbo for too long. Ever since her sister died, she's been Mama to her baby nephew

Josh. And transitioning from single professor of history to single mother hasn't been at all smooth. She loves Josh with a fierceness that sometimes frightens her, but she can't seem to reconcile who she seems to be now with who she was. And so when her friend and colleague Lisa convinces her to try an online dating site, Mandy is intrigued when she runs across eight different profiles for the same guy. She contacts him, agreeing to meet one night at the local train museum. And it is as though a lifeline has been thrown out. Now, once a month, Mandy meets this man whose real name she does not know. They never talk about their real lives. They come incognito, stepping away from reality--just for one night--to be someone else. And even though she knows it's not healthy (it couldn't possibly be healthy), Mandy is amazed to realize that every incarnation, every persona she crafts, every story she tells, allows her to reframe her world in terms she can accept. This man, this stranger she looks for in the nameless faces on the streets every day, is unknowingly aiding her in understanding her new life. The problem is, of course, he's also changing what she is looking for, from anonymity and escape to connection and permanence. And Mandy knows very well how little he is interested in those things. There must be *reasons* for the life he's chosen, after all. And despite her nascent hopes, Mandy is pretty sure those reasons will prove wholly incompatible with real life.

I still can't quite wrap my brain around how much I love this story, how completely it consumed me. I love it so much I'm actually fairly desolate a print copy doesn't exist for me to hug (I've just never been able to bring myself to hug my Nook). But my tactile issues aside, it is enough that it exists at all. Because reading it gave me every single last one of the feelings. I may actually have held my breath for the entire 66 pages. My heart pounded and my throat tightened with sympathy for Mandy and her agonizing situation, the lengths that she went to to keep Josh safe and happy, to keep her academic life rolling, to keep herself from going off the rails doing it all. I understood her. Oh my, did I understand her. And I couldn't look away. Not from her and not from the words on the page for fear she would be left alone to cope with the solitary, exhausting hand she'd been dealt. And I didn't want that. I didn't want her to be alone.

He tucks his head against my neck, breathing warm against my skin, and I feel so guilty. So inadequate.

I should've canceled my office hours and stayed home with him. I should put him in daycare, but I can't afford it. My salary is pitiable, and I have loans to pay off. So I make do with a couple of babysitters, telling myself he's better off at home, spending as much time as possible with me.

But when I'm at home with him, I'm a distracted mother, always trying to get away with as much work or as much cleaning as I can. He wants nothing but me--my attention, my love--and I want to give it to him, only I want so many other things, too.

When Paige and I were kids, we both thought we'd have big families one day. I imagined a husband and three children, every little girl's version of domestic bliss. Then I went to college, and I spent the summer after my sophomore year as a camp counselor in Colorado. The job was relentless. Cabins full of eight-year-olds for three weeks at a stretch. They never stopped needing me for one second. I felt like I was suffocating.

That's when I decided I wasn't cut out to be a mother. I was always the better student, anyway. I focused on school and let Paige focus on motherhood. She found her husband, her scrapbooking group, her happy domesticity. I went to grad school and fooled around in an unserious way with unserious boys.

I pet Josh's back, breathing against the solid weight of his sleeping body pressing into my neck,

my breasts, my belly. I wouldn't trade him for the world.

I want him to have everything, but all he has is me.

For such a quiet, intimate story, it packs a hell of an emotional punch. In fact, I was so unprepared for that punch I actually found myself in tears (a fairly rare occurrence) at one point. Real tears. The ones that only fall when you suddenly and unexpectedly encounter a specific, shared emotion within the leaves of a book. I'm really not sure what else to say, except that I loved the history of trains. I loved the costumes, the slang, the troubling, stifled longing. I loved the knowing attention to detail with which Ms. Knox painted everyday life. I loved Mandy and her man. Most of all, I loved the way she was afraid but had the courage to love anyway. And to say it in so many words. Brava.

willaful says

I want to write some really insightful and meaningful review, but I seem to be tongue-tied. (Finger-tied?) This was just a gem of a story -- it's short, but every word has a punch. It's kind of dark and rough, yet somehow manages to sparkle at the same time. It's about reality and fantasy and why we need both -- and it gives us both. Loved it.

Jill Sorenson says

Another fantastic story from Ruthie Knox!! I wasn't sure I'd like this at first. There is something uncomfortable and sort of non-heroic about the heroine's desire to escape from the drudgery of real life, including single motherhood. When she admits to enjoying the roleplaying dates because she doesn't much like the person she's become, it's a very honest moment. I found myself relating to her on multiple levels. I totally understood how she'd be hurt by an offhand comment about children being brats even though she thinks/says similar things. This tension between fun and responsibility sets up an interesting, touching dynamic. I was moved to tears when she said to the hero: "I have a kid."

The hero is a bit of a mystery, hot and smart and "weird." I wanted to know more about him but getting his POV would have changed the way the story played out. Knox gives just enough. The romance is well developed and progresses in a natural, believable way.

Loved the sex, the dialogue, and the costume details. The clothes, unf. This sexy, heartfelt novella packs a punch.

Wendy says

My brains has been hijacked by my libido.

Love that quote! This novella has sass and heart. It's engaging and it touches on the realities of life. I enjoyed this quite a lot and loved that ending! So good!

Crista says

Review posted at: Swept Away By Romance

~5 Amazing stars!~

I can honestly say that I've never read anything like Big Boy before today, and there is **nothing negative** in that statement! I finished Big Boy this morning and I've been thinking about it ever since.

Big Boy is part of the "Strangers on a Train" series, but the series is connected only in that the romances all occur on trains. This is a complete stand-alone novella.

Mandy is 34, but she feels so much older. She is a college professor and is also a single mother. Mandy's sister, brother-in-law, and niece were all tragically killed in an accident and left behind an infant son, Josh. Mandy adopted her nephew and has been raising him as her own child. She is overwhelmed and completely drained from the responsibility and direction her life has taken.

Mandy meets Tyler on an Internet dating site and agrees to a once a month clandestine meeting in which they both agree to take on different personas. Tyler messages Mandy prior to the meeting each month with a theme/year to dress like and they both adopt fake names etc. The rule is that their true names cannot be used and they must stay in character the entire meeting. These meetings soon turn sexual and I never knew train sex could be so hot!

However, if I am to be completely honest, I really struggled with this book up until the last chapter. The relationship between Tyler and Mandy seemed like such a scam. There didn't seem to be any depth, honesty, or sincerity on Tyler's part and I found myself detaching emotionally from the entire story. Then, it's as if Ruthie Knox waved her magic wand because all was made right in almost an instant. In fact, everything was made perfect.

The ending of this novella is one that you will soon not forget, and this book went from a 3 star read to a 5 star read in a matter of paragraphs. I went from feeling frustrated and let down to feelings of such bittersweet understanding and acceptance that it almost took my breath away.

This book at times almost seemed poetic in it's wording. I found myself re-reading complete paragraphs over and over just to bask in the beauty of this author's handling of the written word. It is truly beautiful.

If you haven't read Ruthie Knox, please make it a priority to remedy that quickly! Her novels (and novellas) are some of the best that contemporary romance currently has to offer, and this novella proves this point once again.

Fiona Marsden says

Okay 5 stars may seem over the top for a sexy little novella, but it made me cry. This is a really special little story about two people who are very real. Which is funny because they spend all their time together pretending to be someone else.

Mandy and Tyler connect in the modern way through the internet, their monthly dates carefully planned around the local railway museum. But they don't plan on what happens to them over the passing time. The connection that grows.

I loved this little story and the way the story pans out. It is sweet and sizzling and real and a fantasy all wrapped up in one compact package. Yes it is a short novella and yes I wish it could have gone longer, because I loved what was happening. But everything you need is in that package. Ruthie Knox really does a great job with her shorter length stories.

Karla says

4 Chugga Chugga Choo Choo Stars!!! All aboard!! This gives a whole new meaning to 'A Night at the Museum'!

What a sweet little gem of a book! I loved the whole idea behind this read. It was different and lots of fun, but it also had a serious side, all of which was perfectly executed by Ruthie Knox.

Told from Amanda's POV, she tells us her true feelings of the life she's been thrust into, not one she would have chosen for herself, but now that she lives it, she can't imagine it being any other way. Admittedly the stress of being a single parent wears on her, and to escape, she allows herself one night a month to act out her fantasies in the form of role playing, with a man who's imagination matches her own. He's a stranger to her, but as the months go by, he becomes more and more familiar, and Amanda finds herself wanting something more.

So much heart and feeling is written into this short story, and real life is not sugar-coated. I loved the conversations between Amanda and her 'man of many disguises', and how comfortable they became with each other. Telling their life stories through the characters they assumed during their nights of escape from the outside world. Just the two of them...on a train!

If you're looking for something a little different, you can't go wrong with this book! The ending brings the book full circle, and makes the read that much sweeter!

Big hugs to Crista and many thanks for the gift! xo

Paula says

Mandy's life has changed quite dramatically ever since her sister and family were killed by a drunk driver. They left behind Mandy's nine day old nephew, who she became the legal guardian for. Being a single parent and working full-time doesn't leave much of a social life for Mandy, so she decides to join an online dating service. While looking through the men's profiles, she kept coming across the same man with different identities from different eras in time. This man piques Mandy's interest, so she contacts him and sets up a date with him.

On the first date, they meet at the National Railroad Museum dressed up as people from 1957. After their first date, they meet once a month at the museum, role playing and dressing up as a different person from different eras in time. They never share any personal details about their lives and they don't know each other's names. But Mandy looks forward to her date with this mystery man every month, where she gets to let go of the everyday responsibilities and stress that comes with motherhood. What she never expected is to actually fall for her mystery man, especially when she knows nothing about his real life.

Being that this story is told from Mandy's POV, Tyler remains a mystery throughout most of the book. Tyler is charismatic and sexy and exciting. He takes the role-playing very seriously and didn't want to take his relationship with Mandy into the real world. That was one of his stipulations when they started going on these adventurous, inventive dates. Which didn't bother Mandy, who is completely intrigued by the role-playing as well. But, eventually, curiosity began to get the better of her. She begins to wonder who Tyler really is underneath all the different identities he wears. Who is Tyler? That is the question. When his story is revealed, it's an interesting one indeed. I was pleasantly surprised with the way this story unfolded at the end.

I absolutely adore this story. The sexy role-playing, the sexy fantasies they reenact, and the mystery behind these two people's lives was so romantic and charming and spontaneous. Ruthie Knox wrote one heck of a short story in 66 pages. I feel like I've said that before about one of her stories. Oh yeah, I have... I said the same thing in my *How to Misbehave* review. And I really meant it with both of them!

Every single page of *Big Boy* had me enthralled from beginning to end. There is so much heart in this story. I can't recommend it enough to all lovers of romance. Ruthie Knox makes me want to hug and kiss her for writing some of my most favorite contemporaries.

Rating: A

Heat: Warm

-- *A Romantic Book Affairs Review*

Find us on Twitter and Facebook too!
