



Private Politics

Emma Barry

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New York socialite Alyse Philips is not the airhead people take her for-she's great at convincing D.C.'s rich and powerful to open their wallets. Never one to coast on her family's connections, her real dream is to help charities in a bigger way. Before she can pursue her ambitions, she discovers a money-laundering scandal that's got her signature all over it. If Alyse can't clear her name, she'll never work in nonprofits again.

Political blogger Liam Nussbaum has been pining after Alyse for six months, certain she'd never go for a quiet guy like him. Helping her with the investigation is a no-brainer. But going up against a seedy network of money and influence isn't just a romantic opportunity or a chance to grab the headline that will take him into the big time-it's a gamble that could destroy his blog's reputation.

As Liam and Alyse dig deeper, their hearts collide alongside their ambition. Will they choose love or politics? Because in Washington, everything comes at a price.

Private Politics Details

Date : Published September 8th 2014 by Carina Press (first published January 1st 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Emma Barry

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Contemporary, Romance, Contemporary Romance, Politics

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From Reader Review Private Politics for online ebook

Kay (aka) Miss Bates says

I loved Barry's latest in The Easy Part series, PRIVATE POLITICS. Hero Liam may fall under the beta category, but he is the loveliest, smartest, and sexiest hero I've read in a long time, even though he can't pull off a suit and tie. He helps heroine, Alyse, caught in some fraudulent money matters at Young Women Read, a charity helping underprivileged girls to read, clear her name and ensure her future in the volatile atmosphere of Washington D.C. politics. Alyse shows growth and, though she initially is unsure about her feelings for the torch-carrying Liam, she recognizes his value. How she falls in love with him and how he holds out for the best in her mixed with some charming and funny screwball comedy scenes makes this romance one of the best I've read this year. If you'd like to read a more extensive review, please follow the link:

<http://missbatesreadsromance.com/2014...>

I'm grateful to the author and Carina Press for an e-ARC and the opportunity to read and review this terrific romance.

Jordan says

A good between 3.5 and 4.

I liked this one a lot! This series continues to be great and enjoyable. What I really liked is that the first sex scene or whatever between the two of them wasn't long drawn out? Like it happened quick and was over fast and that happens more often in reality than what romance novels give us sometimes. So it was nice to see that. These two played well on the opposites coming together situation.

And she continues to do a good job of grounding the series in its setting.

I'm excited for the next one!

Jess says

This was GREAT. I love this series. And am tremendously excited about the third book.

Amy Cousins says

Whip smart and funny. I'm a bit of a politics junkie who has probably been saved from a lifetime obsession by never moving to D.C. This book hits me in all my sweet spots: romance, awesome ratcheting up of sexual tension, clever writing, politics. It's not actually *about* politics, but you get a terrific sense of the political maneuvering that goes on in D.C. about *anything*. The way the operators work, connecting with people,

following information, figuring out how best to make use of what they learn.

Alyse, our heroine, is convinced that she's not a particularly good person, and one of the best parts of this book is that that is actually somewhat true. Liam, our hero, knows that he is a good person, and that's another strength: I love a book with a genuinely good guy as the hero, and this book delivers. Liam doesn't lack anything at all in the ability-to-get-your-blood-pumping department (although I swear, some of the hottest scenes are the ones where they're just STARING at each other, both of them thinking about getting each other naked, but then not doing anything about that), but he's about as far from an asshole as you can get.

Alyse's internal monologue is maybe my favorite thing about this book though. She's so smart and so consciously aware of how she tries to manipulate people (for good causes! but she definitely does it), that the thoughts she keeps to herself while more innocent conversation comes out of her mouth are hilarious. :)

I really enjoyed this book. Really. It's so smart. There's a lot going on for your brain to enjoy while reading it, from the writing to the complicated emotions to the unusual setting for a romance. Highly recommended!

ETA a couple of my favorite quotes:

"Smart, capable, and in awe of her: was that really too much to ask from the men in her life?"

"Not wanting to think, she kissed him. A kiss to drive away the feelings and confusion. And it, like all tactical kisses, was doomed to fail. It was Liam. He was all or nothing. She was a compromise wrapped in a girl."

Lovely, right?

MB (What she read) says

1/16/15 Weeellll..., I was really liking these two characters and their intriguing and suspenseful plot, until Chapter 17. At that point, she made a TSTL move (*which turned out to be unimportant, so I'm over it*), and he turned from nebbishly sweet guy into a pushy controlling pouty Drama Llama. Talk about a switch!

So, they made up, and everything is okay with them as a couple in fictionland, but *I'm* still kind of ticked. I didn't like the way the balance of power shifted, where she had to grovel to him and he grudgingly took her back. Frankly, imo, he was stupid, thoughtless, and pushy, and I didn't like the fact that it became mostly her fault that she reacted less overjoyed contrary to his expectations in a time of great stress and turmoil, and that he was so pissy about it.

I don't think he's ready for marriage if he doesn't recognize that it's not all about him or his needs, that there needs to be give and take, and maybe he needs to be less demanding and pushy.

So, while this book was good (mostly), the last few chapters moved it into my romance category of "not likely to stay together once the bloom wears off / I suggest couples counseling before proceeding" territory. Sorry, but I'm weirdly practical like that. ;-)

Positives: only two mentions of "the boy" noticed this time. And several mentions of him as "a man" or "the man".

Still, I liked both books enough to purchase and move on to #3. So, it's not all bad, right?

Brandy Painter says

I really enjoyed Barry's first book, *Special Interests*, but I LOVED this one. There are so many books out there where the quiet, often overlooked girl finally gets the hot guy she's always secretly (or not so secretly) wanted. You don't often see that gender reversed. I like that here it is. Liam is such a great hero in so many ways. I have to admit I have a fondness for ridiculously optimistic despite all evidence to the contrary journalists. I'm actually married to one. (There aren't that many of them in existence.) Liam is that and one of those heroes that has a quiet strength and assuredness that is calming. At the same time he can be super sexy. I also really liked Alyse and her struggle to figure out who she really was and what she really wanted out of her life in D.C. Together they are not the easiest of partnerships, but they work. The roadblocks that they encounter on their way to a happy ending are ones that make complete sense for the type of people they are and the places they are in. Liam has every right to be cautious of what Alyse will do to his heart, and she has every right to feel like she needs space and time to figure out what she wants. Fitting those two together is not easy.

The political storyline in this one is realistic again and fairly simple, but it does have some fun espionage moments and mystery. The writing is stronger than the first one overall I think. There were some places where I absolutely adored the way Barry phrased things. I also liked the humor.

I'm the first to recognize as much as I love these books, they aren't for everyone. But if you are in the market for smart, realistic, politically savvy romance, you need to read these books NOW.

Katherine says

I just really didn't like either of them as people

Stella says

I really liked this book. Emma Barry's prose is so fresh and revigorating. I love that the HERO is not the usual ALPHA - this 'bad boy' recipe is getting old. I loved how he struggled with his own feelings and how happy he was in his own skin.

Guilty as charged! I love nerdies, geeks and vulnerable men. So, if you like politics, Beta heroes and love stories that progress in an actual pace, you'll love this book.

Gisele says

3,5 - 4,0

The political part of the book is a bit of a turn of for me, but the romance between Alyse and Liam is SO DAMN CUTE, it's impossible to resist.

Home. Love. Books. says

To read this review and others like it check out my site at www.homelovebooks.com

I really liked this book, I think it's because in another life I would have loved to have lived in DC and worked for a non-profit or been a political blogger, or really just had anything to do with the whole political scene (although given the state of politics today I am so glad I didn't go that route). This was kind of the perfect blend of romance, suspense, and mystery rolled up into one.

I liked Alyse, who works for a non-profit, and through the course of a standard audit starts to realize something isn't quite right with the accounting. And more than that it looks like someone has been signing her name onto things that she never even knew about. She's positive something illegal is going down and she is being set up to be the fall guy. Unsure of what to do she starts gathering as much information as she can and enlists to help of her friends, who in turn enlist the help of Liam, a political blogger.

Liam is kind of the nerdy guy who is harboring feelings for Alyse but it totally unlikely to act on them because he is pretty sure that she is completely out of his league. He's a smart guy, and he is able to ask more questions and poke around things a lot more than Alyse is able to.

But when the mystery behind what is going on at the non-profit starts to turn scary, like a break in and threats, Alyse and Liam start spending a lot more time together and things start to heat up. I loved the dynamic between the two of them, because they seem like such the odd couple, but in reality I think they compliment each other so well.

I loved the suspense and the whodunit of the book, and truthfully I though the author did a great job with putting D.C. as a background to the book, the city was vivid and so was all the political happenings that go on within it. I think one of things that stuck out to me is that Alyse could have very easily been the self-absorbed girl who didn't have a lot of depth, but that was totally not the case, and even more than that she has some moments where she is just such a genuine person wanting to make it on her own. If you like political mysteries wrapped up in a romance, I would highly recommend this book for you.

Elisabeth Lane says

[Elisabeth here. I gushed so effusively about Liam, the hero of Emma Barry's latest DC-set romance, that my husband pestered me until I let him read it. I asked if he had any thoughts he wanted to include in my review. As it turned out, he had lots of thoughts. So I just let him write it. I'll pick back up with the recipe after his thoughts about the book.]

If you had told me two years ago that I would be an avid reader of romance novels, I would very likely not have believed you. And if you had told me, right after Elisabeth persuaded me to start reading my first romance novel (for the record, *Hard Day's Knight* by Katie MacAlister) that I would be writing a romance novel review for her blog, I would have definitely been skeptical. But my wife knows me well, sometimes

better than I know myself. She knows that I like a good story, even though I wasn't much of a fiction reader when we first met. To borrow a phrase from the Most Interesting Man in the World, I don't often read fiction, but when I do, I demand good stories and fully-rounded characters. The romances Elisabeth has steered me towards definitely meet that criteria, and today's review, *Private Politics* by Emma Barry, is no exception.

Private Politics is the second of a series of romances by Barry set in contemporary Washington, DC, but it can be read as a stand-alone. The heroine, Alyse Philips, is the daughter of a wealthy New York City family who is forging her own path in DC as the star fundraiser for a non-profit. She wants to do something with her life that she finds meaningful instead of the plans she suspects her family has for her (move back to NYC, settle down with an ambitious up-and-comer alpha male, and follow the typical socialite life). But her plans start to go awry when she discovers some suspicious discrepancies in the charity's books during an annual audit. Torn between protecting her perceived reputation (including her prospects for continued DC employment and therefore independence from her family) and the growing doubts about the legality of her current employer, she ends up working with Liam Nussbaum to get to the bottom of things.

Liam is a political blogger and budding investigative journalist. He's an acquaintance of Alyse's, and has been nursing a crush on her for six months. However, he considers her unattainable – she's beautiful, successful, and desirable, all qualities he believes he lacks. From the beginning of his involvement with Alyse's problem, Liam is torn between his natural desire to help her and help set things right, and his struggle to hide his growing desire for her. As the case gets deeper, and Liam and Alyse get more involved with the scandal and each other, she starts to key into Liam's better qualities – his honesty, his enthusiasm, his political street-smarts – and begins to develop a crush on him as well. At which point... well, I won't spoil the details, but it's a romance novel. You can work out the end results.

So what made this book in particular so intriguing to me – enough so that I agreed without hesitation to write this review? First, I immediately related to Liam. He's definitely not your typical Fabio-body-Greek-tycoon-expense-account-Casanova-charm mutant hero found in many romance novels. (Or so I'm told – Elisabeth has fed me on a steady diet of novels with quirky heroes). But he's probably the character who has come closest thus far to being someone like me in real life – someone who doesn't have six-pack abs, isn't rich, and is actually somewhat in awe of the lady love of his life. I got his point of view immediately, even the bad parts (he wavers between holding himself aloof from Alyse to doing the emotional dump truck on her and back again). Which brings me to the second point – the sexual relationship between them looks (and reads) real to me. They don't immediately go from zero to mutually-assured-simultaneous orgasms. Their first encounters are, well, messy, and it takes them some time (and conflicts) to work through that. Third, the tension ran right up to the end of the book. In fact, the conflicts in *Private Politics* were painful enough for me to have to take short breaks afterwards to reorient myself, but in this case it didn't seem too forced. The final resolution fit quite well with who Liam and Alyse are shown to be in the story – and being able to craft a story that honors the personalities of the characters is a great thing.

In short, I liked *Private Politics* very much, and heartily recommend it. So I guess, counter to all of my prior expectations, I am a romance reviewer after all.

For a recipe inspired by *Private Politics*, visit *Cooking Up Romance*:
<http://www.cooking-up-romance.com/201...>

Ana says

The second book in the Easy Part series by Emma Barry, *Private Politics* is the story of Washington fundraiser Alyse Phillips and political blogger Liam Nussbaum. Alyse didn't always know what she wanted out-of life, only what she didn't want. She knew she didn't want to have a just-good-enough-marriage in the upper East Side just like her parents and sister. Alyse essentially stumbled into a career she loves. She is passionate about her work raising funds for an international girl's literacy non-profit, even if most people see her as a glorified party-planner. Often dismissed by others because of her good looks and sparkling persona, Alyse is distraught to discover irregularities in donation paperwork as she gathered materials for their auditor. Alyse turns to her roommate Millie for help, who calls her fiance's good friend Liam to help Alyse investigate and figure out what her options are.

Liam Nussbaum has been infatuated with Alyse for months, a crush Alyse does little to encourage. When Alyse turns to Liam for help, he is wary and guarded. Exposing the bad-actors in at YWR could catapult his political blog to the big-leagues but working with Alyse could either be his best shot at getting closer to her or put his heart through the wringer. Liam with his round soft face, less than chiseled body is acutely aware of how out of his league Alyse is.

Private Politics is well rooted in Washington DC, the city's pulse and local color a vivid part of the book and Alyse and Liam are distinctive and original main characters. Alyse is beautiful and knows just how to use her beauty as distraction and manipulation. She is not mean-spirited just calculating and skilled at managing people. She knows the value of appearances, of head tilts, timely words, and has the right touch to make her a very successful fundraiser. She is a serious person who excels at appearing un-serious. Liam is affected by her, infatuated even, but all the same deeply aware of the artificiality of the composed persona Alyse presents to the world and treasures any genuine interaction he has with her.

While Alyse is careful and calculated, Liam is a not. He open, genuine, earnest, brilliant and principled. He has built up his college blogging hobby into a thriving small business. The transition isn't without growing pains, as Liam is learning to trust his staff with editorial decisions and to take the necessary journalistic risks order to make waves. He is the perfect anti-dote to the alpha-hole hero. He is a responsible, thoughtful adult who cares how the decisions he makes affects the people around him.

When a threatening note pushes Alyse out of her apartment, Liam invites her to stay at his place, much to the amusement of their mutual friends who have been waiting for Liam to make a move for months. Liam's struggles with the appropriateness of expressing and acting on his desires and complicating both their lives. I just loved them together, how they surprise each other, and how hard it is for them to negotiate their relationship. I loved the romance, how Liam's honesty about his feelings and wants both spook and fascinate Alyse. I loved how Alyse slowly comes to see Liam as increasingly attractive the more she gets to know him. I loved their self-deprecating inner voices, their banter and the perfect dose of investigative hijinks. As soon as I finished *Private Politics* I jumped online and bought *Special Interests*.

Come to Washington for the political intrigue and fall in love with Alyse and Liam, who are almost too smart for their own good.

I am grateful for the review copy of *Private Politics* provided by Carina Press.

Beanimous says

The author has a really nice voice, I like the way she writes very much.

I am not a big fan of this book though, the subject of politics and lobbies in Washington, is a very dry subject to me, which I find it hard to read. Moreover, tried as I might, I can not seem to like the heroine Alyce. I was unable to have any strong affection towards the hero and heroine as a couple. Several times I contemplated to DNF the book, although I had persevered, I remained unimpressed at the end.

Mandi Schreiner says

Last year I read and enjoyed *Special Interests* by Emma Barry and was excited to see she had another book coming out revolving around DC politics. Now, before you scrunch your nose and tell me you don't want to read about our lovely government, let me tell you – Emma Barry makes it very interesting. Where we could get bogged down in dry terminology and boring details, Barry makes lobbyists, bloggers, and non-profit groups intriguing! In this one we have a scandal that our heroine must uncover all the while falling in love.

Alyce works for a women's literacy non-profit and is the head of fundraising. Coming from a wealthy New York family, Alyce is well-educated and passionate about her job, even if her boss thinks she is a bit ditzy. Alyce is good at using her looks and body language to her advantage, but she is anything but ditzy. When it's time for the annual audit, as Alyce gathers documents for the auditor, she starts to wonder why she has never heard of some of the donor names before. With a quick google search, she realizes some of these corporations are dummies. Confused and a little scared, she makes some copies and heads home. After talking with her roommates, they call their mutual friend and DC blogger Liam over to see if he can give them any insight.

Liam has been lusting, and I mean really lusting over Alyce for the past six months. He can barely form a complete sentence when in her prescene. After hearing what evidence Alyce has, he isn't sure what he can really do to help, besides be there as a friend. As Alyce digs deeper, she discovers more and more things that could not only bring down her beloved non-profit, but makes her look guilty as well.

After receiving a threatening note, Alyce moves in with Liam temporarily. And we all now what that means...longing glances across the kitchen table and dirty sex, obviously.

There are a couple of things that this author does that I appreciate. First, the DC setting intrigues me and I find it very fascinating. She has done her homework with research – the details are really great and she keeps it interesting the entire time. I felt the same way when I read book one. Alyce isn't perfect – besides having the stress of this cover-up going on, she has a colder side to her. She isn't necessarily emotionally demonstrative. Her chemistry with Liam is there, and she definitely falls for him, but she is reserved and not the warmest heroine I've read. However, she redeems herself well at the very end. I was so glad she said what she said, otherwise, I may have graded this differently.

Liam is just a nice fella. I wouldn't call him beta but he slides that way. He is a political blogger and when

things finally turn from friends to romance with Alyce he wants to take it from 0-100 in one day. The 'let's move in' and 'I love yous' are intense with him because he has been in love with her for so long. I liked that about him. His excitement over Alyce is sincere and romantic. I also love that the author describes him this way:

Liam wasn't a chiseled guy – he probably hadn't seen the inside of a gym in a while – and it couldn't possibly matter less. Broad shoulders, solid arms and pale skin splashed with a pattern of freckles she wanted to memorize.

That's not to say he isn't totally sexy and adorable. It's just that he is more like a real live man!

A satisfying romance and resolution to the light suspense. I'll definitely be picking up the next one.

Rating B

Katie says

This maybe dragged for me a bit by the end, but overall, I liked it a lot!
