



The Muse

L.M. Halloran

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What happens when the future brings the past?

Iris Eliot has survived a lot in her twenty-seven years. Despite the emotional and physical scars she carries, she refuses to be labelled a victim. Now in her final year of graduate school, her dream is within reach. She's ready to put the past behind her and embrace whatever the future brings.

Until the future brings *him*.

Professor James Beckett, internationally bestselling author and award-winning poet, is the new head of the Creative Writing Department at her university. Brilliantly talented and obnoxiously sexy, he's more dangerous than Iris knows.

When Beckett sets his sights on Iris, it's not just her heart on the line, or her academic and professional careers. Surrendering to the way he makes her feel will rewrite her past.

The Muse Details

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Author : L.M. Halloran

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance

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From Reader Review The Muse for online ebook

Nikki says

Oh dear. Very choppy writing style made it really hard to connect with the characters. Despite the heroine obviously having a hard life for some reason I didn't get the feels I should given her circumstances. I didn't like Beck/professor. He's aggressive with his students and particularly Iris. He's really inappropriate, this came across really sleazy as it happened almost as soon as they meet. For those reasons it was a DNF for me. It's go great reviews though so obviously I'm in the minority. A definite red flag for me I'm afraid?.

maggieandteddy says

Very well written. 1st person POV Iris, last year of graduate school. James Beckett, her professor in an English composition class.

Iris is also Beckett's TA for another class.

The chapters are numbered and one-word titles like: allegory, hubris, motif. I just noticed-they're in alphabetical order. The dialogue and narrative is very crisp and flows well. The chapters are short and kept my interest up.

There is insta-lust. Like faster than almost any book I've read. I thought, OK, good- there will be more time for relationship development. Nuh uh (I wouldn't do well in Beckett's class). There's so much push and pull. I got dizzy. First Iris, then Beckett. I forgot to keep score. Wait, I should have to.

I still found myself interested. through the 50% or so mark. Around 60 % there's a little reveal.

Beckett is called a "prick". He accepts the label. Iris seems like a tease. Like she can just come back to Beckett (James) whenever she wants. This had a hipster feel to it. So 10 dollar words are thrown around.

There's some separations. Iris does need to grow up and decide -for sure what she wants.. What does Beckett want?

Iris does have a fairly good reason for acting a little immature at times. She had a tragic accident years before that has had lasting effects on her physically and emotionally.

I liked Iris' friends Claire and Griffen.

I really enjoyed this story. The push/pull was interesting and dramatic. The repetition wore me out.

Maybe Iris' friend Claire, could have refereed and just said OK, this is it. Work it out now or move on.

No going back. Gah. They're both English language experts- talk!

Great ending, epilogue was good but brief. I would love to read more by this author.

Thanks to Jnwcmb for the reco and the loan :-)

4 STARS FOR THE GREAT WRITING.

Melanie (mells_view) says

Iris Eliot is so close to achieving her biggest goal, by finishing graduate school. Despite the whirlwind of a past she has overcome, at a surface glance she seems pretty normal. Once you get beneath the skin she's a little deeper than you may think.

Professor James Beckett is a best selling author and an award-winning poet, and also the new Creativing

Writing professor Iris is TA-ing for. Not only is he a brilliant, but he is also more than easy on the eyes. He's got a bit of a reputation, but for some reason none of that matters when it comes to chemistry. These two can't deny the draw they have toward one another!

Outwardly this may just seem like a teacher/student romance, but it is way more than that and then some. This couple is a near perfect fit, but is perfect enough? Sometimes it's not. This story isn't all happy and roses. Yes, there are moments that make your heart beat faster, and smile tilt your lips, but there are also moments that will make your heart clench in your chest. Both of these characters are very flawed. Sometimes authors make it so all the angst falls on one character's shoulders, and LM Halloran did a great job of distributing the blame. This story, it felt very real... if that makes any sense. It's fiction, yes, but it doesn't feel like everything is EASY and simple. The story was difficult at times, and yet it still works. I honestly didn't know how this would turn out until I read the very last chapter. The last thing I would call *The Muse* is predictable. GREAT writing!

Once again L.M. Halloran has blown me away with the beautiful way she links words together. This story may round about be about a poet, but Halloran so clearly is one herself. The way the lead characters interact with each other is pure poetry at times. The way she writes the side characters so that you care about them and want to know more. Just. So so good.

Highly recommend this read to anyone who enjoys an angsty contemporary romance.

<https://instagram.com/p/BYgNQ6gAS08/>

https://instagram.com/p/BX6ofT_AwYK/

^a fan teaser on Instagram!

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

4.5 fabulous stars!

“This feeling, right here and now, has brought gods from their heavenly thrones, started and ended wars, and shifted the borders of nations. Nothing in my life has prepared me for how you make me feel, Iris.”

We sampled her writing in the rockstar romance, *Breaking Giants*, and now, with *The Muse*, LM Halloran has cemented herself as a TBB 1Click author. We were completely sold on her talent, the story and her characters in this standalone student/teacher forbidden romance that eclipsed anything we had anticipated, taking us in directions we didn't expect and forever keeping us on our toes, finding ourselves totally enraptured by James and Iris's complicated and emotional love story.

“Do you want me or not?” he takes a step toward me, fingers sliding under my jaw to lift to my face.
“More than anything in memory, yes.”

We'll admit that, initially James and Iris's fascination and desire for one another moved at breakneck speed, which gave us pause for thought, however, what developed was anything but an insta love story. What began as a sizzling sexual chemistry, soon receded and was replaced by an attraction that went beyond the physical. This was a meeting of intellect, mutual respect, emotional intensity and understanding, oh and yes, desire!

But as James and Iris begin to explore their feelings, we learn more about the fate and destiny of these two characters with explosive consequences. This is a love story that spans time, growth, healing and self-discovery and it was intense.

“You were born with eyes that hold worlds. Lifetimes of love and loss and pain. I’m only sorry I added to your pain. I truly never mean to hurt you.”

They say timing is everything and that couldn’t be more true for James (Beck) and Iris. Hired as a TA for the brilliant, handsome, cantankerous 33 year old British Professor James S Beckett, the newly appointed Director of Creative Writing, Iris would meet a man who is a contradiction to say the least. An academic, a NYT BS fiction author with a brilliant mind, he could render us breathless with his exquisite eloquence one minute, whilst sending us into giggles over his snarky dry, caustic mirth, then have us fanning ourselves when he unleashed his very sexy dirty talk! Oh James could be a right cock at times, but bloody hell did we love him! We loved every complicated thing about him!

“...There’s a chance your talents are being wasted on crime fiction.”
He hums in humor, hands skating under my shirt to find skin. Then he says, “The only erotica I’ll write will be for you. Tomes and tomes of it, my little muse.”

Twenty seven year old Iris Eliot didn’t stand a chance against his charms...albeit it, she had to dig deep to find them beneath the Beck’s obnoxious exterior! But this resilient young lady, has a sad and painful past, consisting of a loss that haunts her and a guilt she carries from the repercussions. However, as the full impact of Iris’s past is explored throughout the story, she broke our hearts.

“Iris,” he whispers. “So aptly named. Complex and radiant, deceptively delicate.”

As the story progresses, we open up to Iris’s past and we learn why Beckett became so enamoured with the 27 year old Iris, and why his attraction was so ‘sudden’ – and it was tormenting, heartbreaking and beautiful, and so cleverly devised and written by LM Halloran. What a way to throw a spanner in the works, LM! There’s a burning lust between the two that crackles yet this never once overruled the development of their relationship or the emotional impact of the story as LM Halloran delivered an intense, sexy, painful, thought provoking, stunningly written story of a love that refused to yield, a story that captivated us from start to finish from an author who has amazed us and seized our hearts once again.

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✧ **BJ's Book Blog** ✧ **Janeane** ✧ **says**

ARC received from author for an honest review

It has been a couple of days, and I am still struggling to put into words how I feel about this book.

Not ecause it is bad, but because it is so darn good.

From the moment I read the blurb I knew this was going to be an emotional read, however I didn't know how much this book would engulf me.

From the first time Iris and James meet, I was emotionally invested in this couple. I couldn't help it. Ms Halloran drew me right into and I couldn't stop reading.

Words cannot express the emotion and pain that our lovely Iris has been through, and is still going through. I felt it with her, every laugh, every loss, every blow to the soul.

James. I love him. I hate him. I love to hate him. I want to hug him, and then I want to hit him with my kindle. His relationship with Iris is a little bit toxic, and as much as I want them together, I want him to leave her be!

Ugh, it makes me so confuzzled about my feelings!

I don't want to spoil anything about this amazing book, as it is one that needs to be felt by the reader as they are reading.

I will just say that I absolutely love it.

I feel that I should be screaming from the rooftops at how amazing Ms Halloran is as a writer. She is an exceptional writer, and the two books I have read of hers to date are completely underrated and need to be out there for the world to read.

I can't wait to see what she brings us next.

Bev says

I've gone back and forth with my rating because initially I loved the first half, asshole hero and all! Then I got to thinking about it and for me there was nothing special here. This could've been so much more - insta-lust, asshole hero, initially a strong heroine, forbidden romance, you name it - it had all the ingredients I love in a book. Then IDK, the writing got rather choppy and confusing.

Halfway through the author threw in a plot twist and I thought things were going to kick up another notch, but no. Instead Iris morphs into a 3 year old, hissy fits and all, Beckett loses the ability to speak so they can TALK annnnnnd commence separation. I hate that, I really do especially as they're both supposedly so

highly educated in the damn English language, yet can't string a sentence together to actually talk to each other. Ridiculous!

The story limped along after that to a rather underwhelming end. Sorry, but deciding she wants him now after 3 years because(view spoiler) doesn't work for me or convince me that she's 100% committed in the relationship. Not at all!

So, I'm downgrading my initial rating from 4 stars.

Jan says

I really liked the way The Muse started, strong heroine, asshole professor, funny lines, but around 40% I was bored out of my mind. I decided to go a little further and it paid off because an unexpected twist put me right back on track. It didn't last long though. Downhill it went.

My experience with this story was like a bumpy road. Up and down.

The story was a bit insta-love *ish*. They met when he became her professor. The pull was immediate, strong and irresistible. They had a VERY short affair which ended in a whirlwind.

Three years go by. They met again and had a one-night stand. They exchanged lots of hate words,

"We were loosely together, what, a grand total of three weeks? I can count on one hand the number of times we slept in the same bed..."

but also declared their love for each other. More shouting. It doesn't end well. He slams the door and disappears again for three months.

My thoughts: there were a lot of miscommunication. Bad and childish ones.

James was a pig sometimes. He wanted Iris, but hey, I don't date! And then, we see him with others, and have to hear a bullshit speech about open relationship, but hey, no commitment!

Another thing that pissed me off was that when they met again after the three years they'd been apart, I had to hear from the heroine sentences like: He was not my James anymore. His eyes were now cold and bla, bla, bla... The author wanted to give an idea that he had changed because of her, because she broke his heart. The author tried to pass the same impression regarding the heroine feelings but I couldn't feel that either.

"Sometimes I wish I was still her," I tell him. "That innocent girl."

Hellooo?? what are you talking about? You two had had nothing in that span of 3 weeks' time, apart from

the instalust. For the life of me I couldn't follow that "broken feeling" from the time they had been apart because there was nothing to break in the first place!

I don't know... this was definitely not for me. It didn't convince me. There are a lot of good reviews though. So, it must be me.

Jenny - TotallybookedBlog says

4.5 fabulous stars!

"This feeling, right here and now, has brought gods from their heavenly thrones, started and ended wars, and shifted the borders of nations. Nothing in my life has prepared me for how you make me feel, Iris."

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Heather Moss says

LOVED THIS BOOK!

This was my first book by this author and won't be my last! She is a beautiful writer who brought a beautiful story I couldn't put down. If you haven't read The Muse yet, I highly recommend you do.

JG ~ Jezabell Girl & Friends says

Wow, this is one truly talented, and hugely underrated, author. The Muse was yet another beautifully written story and I loved it!!!

When the synopsis mentioned the words "physical scars and victim" I knew this was going to be an emotionally challenging story but these simple words couldn't go far enough to express the pain and suffering experienced by Iris during her short life to date. Despite her past, Iris is pushing on towards a

positive future as her dreams of becoming as successful a writer as her father start to be realised.

Iris is estranged from her father for reasons which become clear in the story but she still lives in the shadow of his success, especially when she starts working for Professor James Beckett. Assigned to him as a graduate TA, Iris knows from their first introduction to each other that her life is going to become complicated but little does she know how much.

Beck or Beckett, as he wants to be known, has a brilliant mind, swoon worthy good looks and is frustratingly egotistical. A womaniser of the highest calibre, Beck is known to leave a trail of broken hearts but satisfied souls behind him. Now fixated on Iris, he is determined to make her life a misery both in and out of the classroom.

As Iris and James' story progresses their lives become unexpectedly intertwined as Iris' past finally unlocks its many secrets. They find happiness together only to lose themselves again, and again. Iris' path to happiness is dogged by shocking revelations and her future is once again uncertain as her past tries its hardest to break her once again.

This story is more than a second chance romance, it's the romance equivalent of scaling Everest. Whilst it is clear that Iris and James are destined to be together, their love is not without its own pain, trials and tribulations. This story is definitely one that will rock your world. Whilst not part of the Breaking Giants story, reference to the band and Rose's cafe does play a small cameo part, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

This story progresses at both an unhurried but hectic pace as Iris' life takes two steps forward and one step back as she tries to find both herself and a future that she can cherish without the demons and ghosts which have been her constant companions to date. Iris' character is emotionally battered but yet she still portrays an inner strength which you can't help but admire. Despite being one of the most frustrating men that you will ever read about, James is also perfect, both for readers and Iris alike.

If you like books that work hard for their HEAs then you will love LM Halloran's writing style but be prepared to have your heart ripped out before being tenderly put back together again.

This ebook was kindly provided by the author prior to release date in return for an honest and unbiased review.

We are proud to provide honest and unbiased reviews written from the heart.

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Jo-The Hopeless Romantics Book Blog says

"As far as first kisses go, that rewrote the book."

As soon as I discovered that this book was a teacher/student romance, I was beyond excited and then I met the hot, brooding and arrogant male protagonist and I became even more thrilled for what was to come from this story. "The Muse" turned out to be so much more than a tale of forbidden love and with each new chapter, this novel continued to get better and better. I was well and truly hooked and devoured Iris and Beckett's story in less than 24 hours. This novel ticked every single one of my boxes and was so much more than I expected.

"From the moment I saw you, I've been yours. Mind, body and heart."

The story follows Iris in her final year of university who falls hopelessly in love with her professor, Beckett. This was a book that consumed from the very beginning and kept me frantically turning the pages as I was desperate to know what was in store for this passionate couple. Iris and Beckett's relationship kept me on the edge of my seat. So much was going on with this couple and their romance was full of highs and lows that made my head spin time and time again.

"In the following seconds, nothing exists but the two of us.

Our beating hearts, out gasping breaths. The yearning of our bodies and minds, manifesting in the savagery of our kiss."

Iris's tragic back story made for some emotional scenes and was the catalyst for so many gut-wrenching challenges for Iris and Beckett. My heart broke for Iris and I wanted so much for things to work out for the couple. I truly thought that he was the man who could help her heal. As for Beckett, he was a bit of an arse, but he was also gorgeously swoon-worthy with the most dirtiest of mouths. I do love a good dirty talker, so I completely understood why Iris fell so hard for him. Beckett was like the bad boy that you knew you shouldn't want but was impossible to resist. Sometimes I thought that he was a complete bastard, but then there were moments where I would have been more than willing to jump into bed with him. No wonder Iris and Beckett's romance was a bumpy ride! Lol.

"There will never be a last, little muse.

You have my heart, my soul and whatever afterlife waits for me.

You are the first and the last."

"The Muse" was beautifully written, captivating and hugely addictive roller-coaster of a read. It easily gets 5 hearts from me.

Dri ☆ says

★★★★4,5 "little muse" stars!★★★★

"Happiness is a frame of mind. A choice. Today I will be happy."

?Tenho que confessar que de uns tempos pra cá, tenho me decepcionado muito com livros nessa vibe de

professor-aluna, tanto que raramente escolho esse tema pra ler. É sempre a mesma coisa, tabu, forte atração, mocinho possessivo e dominador, os dois se "pegando" as escondidas até alguém descobrir e daí vivem felizes para sempre. The end.

No entanto tenho que admitir que "The Muse" me surpreendeu bastante. Positivamente é claro! Essa história tem sentimentos profundos, elementos que a diferencia do "mais do mesmo" que vemos por aí.

A princípio achei que seria assim, mas do nada teve uma reviravolta que eu fiquei tipo: wow de onde veio isso que não vi chegando?

Me pegou totalmente desprevenida e acho que foi aí que a autora me físgou por completo!

"I'm not afraid of scars, and perfect is in the eye of the beholder. I already know you are. Every inch of you."

Iris & James me cativaram e não consegui desgrudar os olhos das páginas. Adorei os personagens, tanto principais quanto os secundários. ?

A escrita é muito gostosa, envolvente e fluída. Em nenhum momento me senti entediada ou irritada.

Leitura mais que prazerosa e que trouxe de volta a esperança de ler bons livros nessa temática.

Super recomendo! ???

"A little breathlessly, I tell James, "You're a stalker." "To the ends of the earth, my little muse."

L.M. Halloran says

♥? The Muse is LIVE! ♥?

<http://a.co/1BKnNPc>

Rachel Beamin' says

I honestly feel like I've read this book before. To the point where I kept checking the cover, then going on Goodreads to see if I had it listed.

Strange.

Maybe it is because I've already read one that was similar.

Nonetheless, this apparently is no different from the college-professor-affair-getup-with-student genre.

Girl with a troubled past fancies the new professor (NP) with a British accent. NP is a womanizer, and is known for gallivanting around campus with different chicks.

Girl and NP lock eyes and sparks fly.

NP proclaims his undying love and faithfulness to Girl.

Girl finds some troubling news out about NP; however it doesn't stop her, she still allows NP to camp out in the cave of love.

Of course they go through some turbulent things.

The End.

☆ Bianca ☆ BJ's Book Blog ☆ says

OK - where to start. I really loved reading it. I had my problems with it - but all in all it was a really great romance.

I loved the student - professor thing. Especially because it wasn't creepy like in so many other books. She's 27 - he's 33. Perfect. BUT - I also had the feeling that, in a first draft of the book, the author used different ages, but didn't change the story. Everything felt like he was 42 and she was 19. And that would've been way too creepy, so she changed it. But you still notice it all through the book, because they both don't act like their ages.

The book was romantic and sexy and frustrating and sweet and moving and sad.

But mostly - especially the first half of the book - was very frustrating.

All that back and forth. I want you - take me - no - kiss - go away - I hate you - I want you - sex - no - running away - sex - running away - I want you - go away - sex - pushing him away et cetera ...

Horrible!

It got better in the more grown-up 2nd part.

I cried a bit and it was really sweet - kind of like a second-chance-romance within a student-teacher romance.

Great book with some very serious elements. Could've been done a bit better. And also - it had some of my hard-limit-no-go's when it comes to books. The **AS!** You know the AS I'm talking about? The AS that should be exchanged for a SINCE or BECAUSE - usually it's only used by British authors - and then it's ok, but I still hate it. But I especially hate it when American authors use it. No young american person talks like that in their everyday life! I have no idea why people use it in books.

And another word that was used way too often in the beginning - MERE or MERELY. I hate that word - no idea why! Probably because I can't pronounce it!!!! ??

Another tiny little thing I hate.... Mentions about previous books. Books I haven't read. I don't want that in my books. The first time this book was mentioned, I didn't understand what they were talking about AT ALL - until I finally got that it was about another book. Jeez. Don't do that authors! If you want to make a series, call it a series, but don't mention books in other books.

BUT - my weirdness about words and stuff has nothing to do with the story. I really enjoyed reading it. It was a great love story. I might almost be tempted to call it an EPIC love story. But there should be some changes and some more editing before I can fully commit to the epic thing. ?

But read it - it was really good!

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