



## Soul to Keep

*Garrett Leigh*

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## **Soul to Keep** Garrett Leigh

Recovering addict Jamie Yorke has returned to England from California. With no home or family to speak of, he sticks a pin in a map and finds a small town in the Derbyshire Peak District. Matlock Bath is a quiet place—he just needs to get there, keep his head down, and stay clean. Simple, right? Until a chance meeting on the flight home alters the course of his so-called life forever.

Ex-Army medic Marc Ramsey is recovering from life-changing combat injuries while pulling nights as a trauma specialist at the local hospital. Keeping busy is a habit he can't quit, but when Jamie—so wild and beautiful—bursts into his life, working himself into the ground isn't as compelling as it used to be.

Marc falls hard, but chaos lurks behind Jamie's fragile facade. He's winning his battle against addiction, but another old foe is slowly consuming him. Both men have weathered many storms, but the path to the peace they deserve might prove the roughest ride yet.

Part of a series, but can be read as a STANDALONE.

## **Soul to Keep Details**

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Author : Garrett Leigh

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# From Reader Review Soul to Keep for online ebook

## Jan says

I really liked this.

It was good to see Jamie moving on and over his hard past.

However, let's not forget that that past made him the person he became in this story.

*“Things happen. If we hadn't done what we'd done, we wouldn't be where we are now. And I don't know about you, but I wouldn't change my life for the world.”*

Well, the story of my life.

As always GL give us real characters and a story easy to relate to. Marc was a perfect match for Jamie.

He made Jamie slow down, just with his presence and his silent strength. The relationship felt natural, they were so attuned to each other despite the age gap between them.

I love the way GL makes me feel with her stories. So much love and good vibes!

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## Judith says

3.5

Part of the *Rented Heart Series* but can definitely be read on it's own,however I would recommend reading Rented Heart because it's one of her best.

It's no secret that *Garrett Leigh* is one of my favourite Authors.Her books always hit the spot for me,however I was a bit underwhelmed here.

**Jamie** was introduced in book one and I was more than a bit fascinated by him and couldn't wait to get his story. He has been in California for the past year recovering from a drug addiction but he's had enough of the sunshine and wants to return to the UK. He, randomly picks a small town in the Derbyshire Peak District to settle in and it's on the flight from the US that he meets Marc.

**Marc**, an ex Army Medic, is also recovering-from a life changing injury he got while in Iraq. Marc has it in his nature to care for people and he's more than a bit fascinated with the beautiful young man he encounters on the flight.

By chance or by fate, they find themselves living near each other in the same town. They start a tentative friendship which becomes more over time. It's a slow burn but given the men's backgrounds it fits the story perfectly.

Both men's recovery processes were extremely well written and believable but I just felt something was missing here for me.

Overall, enjoyable enough and I would recommend it...

*Review copy provided by Riptide Publishing through NetGalley.*

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### **Cadiva says**

I think this is my favourite Garrett Leigh book. I don't know what, exactly, about the book makes me say that, but I just know that as I was reading it, my heart felt full and my head was quiet and calm as it absorbed the growing love between Jamie and Marc.

And oh did they need each other. As with any book from this supremely talented author, there is such a driving need for finding peace with what life has thrown at you. Both Jamie and Marc had such scars, not only the visible ones crossing their bodies, but the mental ones which are the hardest to come to terms with.

One of my friends has said she feels wrung out and sad after reading a Garrett Leigh book, but for me, I have the exact opposite result. Yes, the subject matter is always brutally real, but I am always left with an overwhelming sense of hope.

Her men are always left in a better place, even if they still have demons to live with, than they were at journey's start. Her men always manage to find the one person in the world who understands them, who can bring them a sense of peace and of belonging. They learn how to live with their troubles, even knowing they will never be *fixed* or free of them.

You can't *cure* an addict, no matter what they're addicted to, but you can give them the tools to learn to live with it to their best ability and in *Soul to Keep*, we see Jamie slowly come to terms with the knowledge that he doesn't have to spend his life as if spiders are crawling all over his skin all the time.

The relationship between Jamie and Marc is very much slow burn, and it has to be, both of them have pasts

which have irrevocably changed them and trust is something which takes time to build but let me say, when they finally do break through the barriers of what's going on in their heads, the resulting sex scene might be one of the most emotionally powerful (and volcanically hot) I've read in a book from Garrett.

I adored every single bit of this book and there's a little piece of my heart that fervently hopes that Jamie and Marc really do exist in their little bit of Derbyshire and they're happily getting along with their lives in Chesterfield General's A&E department and the food project kitchen :)

Oh, secondary characters - yes, another wonderfully drawn collection, one of whom is utterly real even though he only ever is described off page and I seriously hope Garrett is going to give us Nat and Connor's story even though they're together in this one. I'd love to know how the SAS CO and the journalist got together.

**ETA:** Note - Okay I'm an idiot, Nat and Connor are, of course, the subject of *Between Ghosts*

And, a final thought, big props to Garrett for the research into the special forces which is hinted and obliquely referenced here. As someone with an uncle who was once based in Hereford, all aspects of that side of this story felt very real.

*#ARC kindly provided by the author in return for an honest and unbiased review.*

All the gushing and fangirling, as with all my favourite authors, is done completely off my own bat ;)

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## ? Todd says

After loving book 1, "***Rented Heart***," I had extremely high hopes for **Jamie's story**, since the majority of the drama in the first book happened to Zac as a side-effect of **Jamie's continuing, terrible life choices**.

Book 2, "***Soul to Keep***," began one year after Jamie had been shipped off to California, to go through rehab and begin his long road to recovery from heroin addiction, so the majority of Jamie's most challenging struggles had already taken place, **fast forwarded and entirely off-page**.

But California was a bit "*too perfect*" for Jamie's tastes, so his itchy feet led him to randomly stick a pin in a map and move his life to middle-of-nowhere, Matlock Bath, England to force himself to **make a fresh start**.

Then Jamie met "***wounded hero***" **Marc**, an ex-Army medic, who had lost a lower leg to an IED in Iraq and currently worked as an ER doctor, on his flight from Chicago to the UK.

Marc's deep-seated desire to take care of others immediately drew him to the recovering addict he'd been seated beside during some rough turbulence, then they found themselves being neighbors once Marc arrived back home.

However, from that point on in the story, I felt as though **nothing much *really* happened**, as the book began the same slow march from "*they meet*" to "*they lived happily ever after*" that I've seen hundreds of times before.

I kept waiting for something unexpected and exciting to happen, but it never really did, so other than this being **a nice, somewhat-expected, comfort-healing story**, I can't really think of a single thing that stood out as being unique.

I did actually like both MC's; however, as I didn't find the story very eventful, I'll definitely end up remembering the details from book 1 much more vividly than those in this book.

I've loved several of Leigh's previous books, but this one only rated at around **2.75 stars** for me.

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*My ARC copy of the book was provided by the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for a fair, unbiased review.*

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### **\*J\* Too Many Books Too Little Time says**

#### **3.5 Stars!**

This one wasn't my favorite Garrett Leigh, but I am going to go ahead and round up because I *was* engaged and I didn't skim. And it *is* Garrett Leigh, so I did like it.

Something was just off though. Like it started in the middle of the story or something. The first chapter I was confused how Jamie got to where he was. I feel like I needed the part where he hit rock bottom, where goes to rehab, where he spends a year in California.

As a result I just never connected with Jamie. I much preferred Marc's character but I also feel like we were missing some back-story there too.

I know GL most often writes heavy, downer books dealing with heavy subjects - addiction being my least favorite to have to read about, which we got here with Jamie. Perhaps that had a lot to do with my enjoyment (or lack there of) with this one.

Still there were positives, plenty of feels, some nice steam in the second half but in end I just liked this one, I didn't love it.

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### **Ariana says**

For some reason this felt a little bit like a play to me - the main stage is Marc's house where most of the action seems to happen, and the plot mainly revolves round Marc and Jamie and their developing relationship, with not many other characters on the sideline.

Not that I am complaining, btw!

We know that Jamie really hit rock bottom (a few times) in *Rented Heart*. After a year of recovery in California he takes the first steps to rejoin RL. It is obvious from the start that he will have major hurdles to jump and a couple of Himalayas to climb. Jamie is deeply flawed and intensely complex, and the author does a stellar job delving into his mind.

Marc has got some physical and psychological scars caused by his time in the military, too, but on the whole his calm, accepting and understanding way is exactly what Jamie needs.

They both have to learn to open up to let someone else and help in. Which is something Marc finds difficult because he is 'addicted' to the role of carer and worrier.

While my heart bled for Jamie, I loved Marc and was awed by the way he put up with Jamie's mood swings and break-downs all along.

Although there are not many secondary characters, you will be pleased to meet Connor and Nat from *Between Ghosts* again - thank you Simone for drawing my attention to this!

Garrett Leigh is a master writer and this book is no exception. She picks Jamie and Marc's feelings and brains expertly apart and puts all the parts of their puzzle to a fabulous picture together again.

I really enjoyed the psychological aspect here.

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## **Karen says**

4.5 stars rounded up because still no 1/2 stars here on GR and because I liked this one a tiny bit more than 'Rented Hearts' but just a tiny bit...

*Can two broken souls create one happily ever after? They can when they're strong enough to take another chance...*

'Soul to Keep' is the second book in Garrett Leigh's series 'Rented Hearts' the book that introduced first introduced us to Jamie Yorke...former rentboy and recovering drug addict. Zac's friend who we last saw in California where Liam, the other MC from 'Rented Heart' who helped Jamie get to California for his rehab.

In 'Soul to Keep' we catch up with Jamie as he's returning to England. He's been clean for a year and while California is warm and sunny for this Brit it's just not home and Jamie needs to go home.

It's on his flight home that Jaime meets the older and equally damaged ex-army medic and present-day trauma specialist, Mark Ramsey returning home following surgery in Chicago.

When Jamie's nervousness gets the better of him on the flight home, Marc's need to nurture and fix things takes over and he helps Jamie to overcome his nervousness. Once the plane lands both men go their separate ways and while neither really man really forgets the other they both have their own lives to get back to and are equally surprise a couple of weeks later when their paths cross yet again when they discover that they are living just minutes from each other.

I really loved this story for me it clicked. While the attraction happened fairly quickly and was easily felt between these two men that didn't mean that the relationship was instantaneous. For as much as they felt their attraction to each other both men were also hesitant to enter into a relationship because of their own

personal demons.

As well as his addiction issues, Jamie is caught up in the grip of OCD and his self esteem is low, to say the least, but he soon finds that being around Marc gives him a sense of peace and grounds him as few if any other things do, so while he kept running from Marc when things got to intense he also kept coming back. Jamie's convince that the other shoes going to drop and Marc's going to send him away but until that happens he's not going to leave permanently.

Marc's convinced that Jamie's going to cut and run once he's had enough of being with a man who's only got one leg. He's so conscious of his injury unlike Jamie who sees beyond Marc's injury to the man and the goodness he contains. To Jamie...Marc is strong, handsome and sexy and so much more than he could ever possibly deserve.

But Marc sees Jamie in such a different light. He sees someone who's fought in a different type of war and he wants to help Jamie feel good about himself to learn to control the things that are controlling him...he's a doctor it's his nature to want o fix things but Jamie's gotten under his skin in a way that goes beyond simple doctor/patient relationships. He's coming to care very deeply for the beautiful, damaged young man.

I admit I'm totally a sucker for second chance stories, stories about people who life has repeatedly sucker punched but who have just as repeatedly pulled themselves back up only to keep going, keep trying moving towards their goal of becoming the person they want to be...someone better and stronger than who they were...someone they can be proud of...someone who deserves love and happiness as much an anyone else in this world and that's what Garrett Leigh writes and writes so incredibly well are stories like this. Stories that remind us that the human spirit is strong and indomitable that giving up should never be a part of anyone's vocabulary and that everyone is worthy of a second chance at both life and love.

Garrett Leigh is quickly becoming a favorite for me. Without fail I have loved everything that I've read by this author so far and while I haven't read everything that she's written I'm working on it.

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An ARC of 'Soul to Keep' was graciously provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

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## Simone says

\*\*\*4.5 Stars\*\*\*

**"Things happen. If we hadn't done what we'd done, we wouldn't be where we are now."**

So true! And yep, this book proved it once again: give me a man with a cat and I'm melting into a puddle of goo...

*Natalie, apparently, was equally enamoured, and bypassed Marc to jump onto the counter by Jamie and rub herself all over him like white on rice.*

*"Traitor," Marc muttered. "She took a piss in my shoe the other day."*

*"Why?"*

*"She didn't say," Marc said dryly. "Should I have asked?"*



*"You should've KNOWN," Jamie retorted. "Cats are clean. They only do stuff like that if they're cross. What did you do to upset her?"*

*"Are you serious? You think it was a revenge piss?"*

But of course that was not the only thing I loved about this book:

**Jamie** - former hooker and drug addict facing the every day struggle to stay clean,

and

**Marc** - the soldier turned war veteran with an ingrained need to care for people, whose life had changed forever after a severe injury,

are another couple I wanted to hug in a full body tackle. Jamie intrigued me already in *Rented Heart* and I was glad that I could read his story right away. Marc was the medic in *Between Ghosts* and I squeed - *loud!* - when I saw a tweet by the author that I will also get *his* story here. And as a bonus I could revisit Nat and Connor (*Between Ghosts*) and also Zac and Liam (*Rented Heart*) again to learn that they are still happy.

Although *Soul to Keep* can be read as a standalone, I would recommend to read the other books first, to get more of Jamie's and Marc's background and to understand them better.

This was another amazing hurt-comfort story by Garrett Leigh, with a delicious slow-burn romance (not quite as steamy as *Rented Heart*), an age-gap of fourteen years which totally worked for me here because fate brought two broken souls together to find friendship first and then their perfect match in each other, and... a cat. ;-)

Oh, and not to forget about their well-deserved HEA:

**Had they healed each other? Probably not, but Marc's place in Jamie's heart was etched in stone. Years ago, he'd rented his body to the lowest bidder, but now and forever, his soul was Marc's to keep.**

Maybe I am greedy again, but now I'm hoping for a book about Wedge and Ludo. I don't even know if there will be another book in this series, but both guys made me more than curious and I just *have* to get their story. Pretty please?

And here I wanted to write just a mini-review... \*facepalm\* Apparently not possible with this author, there is too much to say about her books. Highly recommended!

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**Adam says**

**Tag team review with Lost**

**4.5 stars!**

I started this book with some serious bias against Jamie. Given what went down in book 1, I really wasn't a fan. So I was pleasantly surprised when Jamie began winning me over pretty early on.

Life hasn't been kind to Jamie, and he's a bit broken. But he refuses to give up, no matter how often his inner demons tell him that he deserves nothing. Jamie needs someone solid to love him, to make him realize that he really is worth more than his addiction and his past.

Marc is a knight in shining armor - he's strong and he's fiercely loyal towards those he loves. But he has his own struggles, given his own past as an Army medic and his leg amputation.

I was swooning from the moment the two men met on their flight back to England. It was a snapshot of what was to come - with Marc's strong urge to protect Jamie, and Jamie knowing that he was safe with Marc.

Despite their early attraction to each other, the relationship builds slowly. The MCs end up in the same small town, and Marc offers Jamie some work until he can find permanent employment. The work, clearing out the old house Marc inherited from his mother, brings the two into close contact regularly.

Slowly, the two men build a routine, and a friendship. They share meals and conversation at the end of long days, all the while gradually falling for each other.

The connection between them - emotional and physical - is undeniable. Marc is captivated by Jamie, and for the first time in a long time, Jamie finally feels safe and calm around Marc.

When their relationship inevitably moves from friendly to romantic, it just *clicks*. They're two very different men, which often means that they're at loggerheads, but they complete each other.

This isn't a particularly flashy book, with the focus being on personal growth. Jamie's addiction is a tangible thing throughout the story. His recovery is a daily battle. Marc, on the other hand, has to learn that he doesn't always need to be the fixer.

However, all of the ups and downs make their relationship stronger by the end. Their happily ever after was all the more sweeter for it!

'Soul to Keep' really hit all the right notes for me. Two complex characters, a sweet romance, some angst, and a hard-earned but brilliant HEA. I can't wait for the next book in this series!

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**Diana says**

**3.5 stars**

*Soul to Keep* is book 2 in the Rented Heart series by Garrett Leigh. I didn't realize it was book 2 when I requested it from NetGalley, but I did find reading it was easy enough to figure out the characters.

Jamie Yorke is returning home to England after spending a year in California in rehab. While freaking out on the plane, he meets a very calming, gorgeous guy, who talks to Jamie and calms him down. Little did they know they were practically neighbors, and they meet up by chance and start spending time together.

Marc Ramsey was a Medic in the Army, and after a life changing injury, he is now a Trauma doctor. He cannot stop thinking about the beautiful man he met on the plane. He understands Jamie is in recovery, but he knows every day is a struggle, and wants to help him.

I really enjoyed both Jamie and Marc. They both had their own struggles to overcome, plus the opening up to each other in order to heal and loved. I adored how Marc handled Jamie because he knew Jamie was much stronger and braver than Jamie thought he was.

Even though this book did have some angst, there wasn't a lot of drama. It was more of a healing/comfort read.

*I received an ARC of this book via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.*

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## **Fabi says**

Sure, this can be read as a stand-alone. But you will get a much fuller story if you read *Rented Heart* first.

*Soul to Keep* picks up a year after *Rented Heart* left off. We see Jaimie in recovery, homesick enough to leave sunny California behind for the colder climes of Derbyshire Peak District. He first meets ex-Army medic Marc on the flight home. By chance it turns out they live close to each other and they click.

Since Jaimie and Marc both have personal demons to fight, they help each other overcome and accept what life has thrown their way. In the process, feelings develop and they find that life is so much richer when faced as a couple.

**It's a really sweet love story with little to no angst** in spite of the painful background both men bring to the table. There's a significant age gap but it's hardly touched on at all. I felt like I should know Marc's friends Nat and Connor and Wedge. Maybe they are from another of Leigh's books I haven't read yet. I'm very interested in their story if it exists.

*Review ARC graciously provided by the publisher via NetGalley*

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## Elsa Bravante says

El primero de la serie Rented Heart me gustó, pero tuve algunos problemas para creerme la historia, en ciertos tramos me pareció todo demasiado fácil y además Jamie me interesaba más que la pareja protagonista. Afortunadamente, tras mucha espera, Jamie tiene su propia historia que comienza después de estar durante 1 año sin probar las drogas. Su compañero es Marc, médico y veterano de guerra, con un miembro amputado, que lucha por adaptarse a una nueva vida, pero sin recrearse en ningún momento en lo ya perdido.

Tratándose de un adicto y después de lo vivido en el primer libro, esperaba un romance lleno de tristeza y angustia. Nada más lejos de la realidad. A pesar de que es duro ponerse en la situación de Jamie, y en la de Marc, en ningún momento se pierde el tono de esperanza, la oscuridad nunca es total y la historia de amor se desarrolla a un ritmo pausado, en un entorno de calma, poco a poco construyendo una relación donde todo tiene su significado y los sentimientos están a flor de piel. *Soul to keep* trata sobre lo que el título nos dice, las almas de dos personas que se encuentran y se complementan, sin un ritmo frenético, sin grandes explosiones, dos almas que han vivido mucho y no tienen ningún interés en verse envueltos en malentendidos estúpidos o pérdidas de tiempo. Por lo que, aunque es cierto que va despacio, no hay un segundo o página desperdiciado hasta que llegan a su final. Y siempre acompañados de muy buenos secundarios.

Muy bonito, muy bien contado, no sé si la autora seguirá con la serie, espero que sí.

4.5, lo subo a 5 porque quiero xD.

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## Ele says

**\*4.25 stars\***

Rented Heart is one of my favorite books by Garrett Leigh but I went into *Soul to Keep* with low expectations because addiction stories are not among my favorites. Well, I actually ended up loving Jaimie's story!

We met Jaimie in Rented Heart as Zack's drug addicted friend who screwed up everything for him. In the end of that book, Jaimie was recovering in California a year after the big fallout, trying to start fresh. This is where *Soul to Keep* picks up from.

Oh his flight back to UK (to a random town where nobody knows him) Jaimie meets Marc, a trauma doctor and ex-Army medic who has his own struggles, mental and physical, to deal with.

From that point forward Marc offers Jaimie the thing he needs the most at the time: a safe place. **Something to keep him grounded, occupied so that he can fight the demons he kept at bay.**

I loved every single interaction between Jaimie and Marc. I loved how Jaimie always wanted to be close to Marc, to touch him or just feel him. And I loved how Marc was always in tune with Jamie, eager to take care

of him.

The addiction theme was very prevalent but I didn't find it overwhelming at all. Maybe because there were **equal parts of UST and intimate moments along with some nice steamy ones in the second half.**

I believe this can be read as a standalone but I suggest that you read Rented Heart first because A) you 'll be missing an amazing story and B) you won't be able to understand Jaimie's relationship with Zack, his best friend, who played a major role in Jaimie's recovery.

I liked the secondary characters, they all play a significant role in the story. I especially loved Nat and Connor. Are we ever getting their story? Have we already gotten it and I don't remember?

What I felt was missing was more Zack. Yes, he made an appearance in the end but I can't shake the feeling that, given their shared past, Jaimie needed more interaction with him.

This is one minor niggle though. Overall, I might not have loved this as much as Rented Heart, but I very much enjoyed this addition to the series.

Recommended!

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## **Emalie says**

~ Book provided by NetGalley in exchange for my honest opinion

Soul To Keep is the first book by Garrett Leigh I read and I'm quite sure it won't be the last one. Also it is the second book in the Rented Heart series, but can perfectly be read as a stand-alone in my honest opinion, because that's what I did. I might have missed some backstory about Jamie and Zac (main character from the previous book), but I didn't need it to understand Soul To Keep, so no harm in not knowing the first book.

Garrett Leigh's characters were quite broken. Marc not as much as Jamie, but he also struggles. Both, Jamie and Marc, had to fight with some sort of darkness in their life and I like, how after meeting and getting to know each other, they complemented each other. Their relationship started off as some sort of friendship and morphed into a romantical relationship. What I loved about that relationship as well was that it was quite a slowburner. The first time they really had sex was at 80% of the book. Don't understand that wrong, they did make out a bit before that with BJs and stuff like that, but it took some time till they had the real deal. Nowadays I feel like most of the books have the first sex scene in the first 30% and sometimes it feels totally unnatural, more like it's a requirement to have one that early. So I was glad that was not the case in Soul To Keep.

I also liked how Garrett Leigh dealt with Jamie's addiction and other problems and didn't totally make them disappear at the end of the book, because that's not really the way that works. That little conflict Marc and Jamie had near the end also made perfectly sense, because of Jamie's past.

Also this book had quite a lot of angst, mostly from Jamie's POV. Marc was more relaxed in that manner, because he already had enough years to deal with his problems, but I liked to read from both POV's. That's

always my favourite, because this way I can experience the feelings from both sides of the story.

I absolutely recommend this book, if you are looking for an angsty, but at the same time cute and slowburner-y book to fill some of your hours.

Rating: 4,25 stars

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### **Mads says**

3 Stars -

Not doing lengthy review as I love my friends reviews and it is better than one I can write!!!

Judith

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Diana

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Monique

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

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