



Ashes

Kelly Cozy

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Anonymous. That was Jennifer's life. But when she survived a domestic terrorist attack and her last-minute escape became the iconic image of the event, that life was over. Wanting only to disappear and become just another face in the crowd, she cashed in on her unwanted fame and moved to a small town, hidden away and safe.

Retired. That was Sean's life. A former covert operative - the kind the government denies exists - he'd been pushed unwillingly into a life of suburban peace and quiet. But his retirement ended when he saw Jennifer's rescue; from then on he only wanted to find those responsible for the attack, even if it meant turning rogue.

What Jennifer and Sean will both find is that nothing goes to plan, and their paths will cross in a way neither could have foreseen.

Ashes Details

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Ciska says

Disclaimer: I received a free copy of this book on from the author in return for an honest review

Author

Kelly Cozy became hooked on books in early infancy, when she turned one of her parents' paperbacks into a teething ring. She lives in California with her husband, son, and cats.

Her hobbies include cooking, reading, watching movies, and attending nerdy conventions.

Review

This book is a total surprise. I read the synopsis and was like "Ok, looks interesting enough lets give it a try" but reading the first chapter left me breathless and I was not able to find my breath back till I was at 75% of the book and it finally slowed down a bit.

Jennifer is a character you can easily relate too. Pushing the snooze button one to many times on the day her life changes forever. Her struggle after surviving the attack is heart wrenching and all I felt like doing was comforting her. Telling her it was not as she was thinking. You really hope she will be able to find herself again and get a grip on her life. I really love the developments and how she reacts to them.

Sean is lost too I guess. In a way it is beautiful what he wants to do. It is clear he is a good man... somewhere.

The situations in the book make you question a lot of things for yourself. Is Sean right in the way he seeks justice, would I be able to think like him if I went trough things like that. What would I decide in the end. Even though after the first chapters the real excitement is gone there are so many questions and emotions going around you cannot stop wondering about the developments. Only as said before around 75% the lives of both Sean and Jennifer seem to settle and it gives you some space to breath. But just a little space because soon things start to move again and you are left with questions... That was the one minus I could actually find in this book. It has an open end leaving me with a lot of unanswered questions.

BookLover1013 says

I thought I wouldn't be able to read this book because it would be too upsetting to read about subjects like the bombing of a federal building, that it would strike a painful nerve, that it would be too graphic. The author approached it and told the story in a way that did not horrify. I felt sad, yes, but it wasn't too traumatic.

Jennifer's tale is of survival, and her struggle to figure out why she survived when others had not, why was she special? Her need for change – some place new and fresh – because she was no longer the person in the photographs being pulled away from that building, leads her to a new home – far away where she is not a "celebrity" and can find a measure of peace. But the past has a way of following you and she has demons left to exorcise.

Sean's story is of a hero put out to pasture, a man who sees Jennifer's rescue on television and wants to help bring those responsible for the horrible deed she survived and so many others didn't to justice. His superiors don't want or need his help, and so he sets out on his own to find and infiltrate the hate group responsible, with a plan to bring their leader to Jennifer so she may be the one to exact revenge. But will she want this gift he delivers to her door step?

Sean's side of the story has a bit more violence to it, and honestly I skipped over a little, but I am sensitive to that kind of thing. If you are not it probably won't bother you anymore than other plots that include a little torture to get information.

I found that the "bad guy" is likeable. Some one you would befriend in your small town, devoted to his wife and community. Even Sean likes him, which makes his task a little more difficult. Hard to believe he is responsible for such hate and destruction, which makes the story interesting.
I was given a copy of this book for free in exchange for an honest review.

Kimberly says

due to the main premise for this book, I wasn't sure I would enjoy it. Boy was I wrong, it's a real page turner.

It's written from two perspectives, a young woman who was the last out of the building alive, and a middle aged man who was 'retired' from a black ops program. They don't know each other, but it's nice the way the story intertwines. it is very well written.

While the main premise is a tough one, the story itself is wonderful. Don't let the premise shy you away from checking out this book.

Beth Camp says

Cliffhanger???

A compelling and skillfully told story from the first chapter. Two main characters on very different trajectories are contrasted throughout, both seek healing and redemption from an act of terrorism. The story gave me new insight into survivor grief as well as the human cost of 'dark ops.' But the final resolution of this story is tied to the next story in this series. Still, Kelly Cozy is an author well worth reading.

Nick Kelly says

Jennifer Thomson is average. She doesn't have amazing dreams or expectations. She has an okay life. The low points are getting yelled at for showing up late at work. The high points are not getting yelled at for sneaking in late to work...

...and then her average little world gets blown to pieces.

Jennifer's workplace is rocked by an explosion, and everyone tries to escape. She is among the survivors; the last one out. The image of her being taken to safety by an emergency responder becomes iconic. Her average, little life is consumed by nightmares, press inquiries, and probing, unwanted questions. Jennifer is left in a lonely place where average would seem like paradise.

Across the nation, former undercover government agent Sean Kincaid goes through his average life. Sean's "average" is just a cover. The neighbors wave and smile, but none of them know about Sean's past – the battles he's fought, the people he's killed. Sean has gone from laughing in the face of death to being put out to pasture. When he sees Jennifer's rescue on the news, something sparks within him. He commits to finding those responsible for the attack, and getting justice for the innocent girl who barely made it out alive.

"Ashes" focuses on becoming someone new and overcoming the past. Author Kelly Cozy (The Day After Yesterday) rolls out an interesting path of transformation for her protagonists. The two lead characters couldn't seem further apart, yet their lives are meant to intersect, Sean will make certain of that. The story following the attack begins slow, ramping up the closer Sean and Jennifer get. Cozy describes environments

in vivid detail. Readers will find themselves immersed in fast-paced Los Angeles, humid Florida, and among the pines in British Columbia.

Relationships are also at the core of the story. Jennifer's support network changes many times, and readers will enjoy the many different characters with whom she interacts. Sean is much more of a lone wolf, but his undercover work puts him face to face with some really fun bad guys. A run-in with a former colleague provides one of the breathtaking highlights of the book.

"Ashes" is the first in a duo of books, to be followed by "Reckoning" in late 2013. Reading "Ashes" following the recent attacks at the Boston marathon provided an interesting experience. Cozy gets the opening chapter across without overdoing it. She paints a picture of the terrorist attack, and the ensuing news coverage, that is reminiscent of the attacks on September 11, 2001.

"Ashes" takes a little while to get going, but the payoff is very effective. When the two transforming protagonists finally meet, the stage is set for a tense interaction that will change their lives forever.

Kim says

I obtained this free e-book from Amazon and I am voluntarily writing a review. I hate cliffhangers, especially when there is no forewarning. I view it as insecurity of the author in their talent by using cheap tricks to lure the reader to buy another book when it should be the skill of writing that lures the reader. Honestly I would have rated this as a 3 on Amazon and a 2 on Good Reads until I discover on the last page it was a cliffhanger which gets a rating of 1. This is about a woman Jennifer that survives a bombing of a federal building in Los Angeles and the struggle to rebuild her life. Sean is forced into retirement Black ops that is his own twisted sense of justice hunts down the brains behind the attack to deliver them to Jennifer so she can met out justice. I have the second book but will not bother to read it.

Carol Simmons says

Unusual.Book

What a fantastic book the storyline kept you reading with unable to put book down. Meeting Jennifer and Sean and all the people who were entitlement. A excellent story by this very talented author. Will continue reading all the books in series and follow this author

Yvonne Moncovich says

Revenge? Vindication?

Jennifer Thompson's headed for another day at a job she doesn't like but pays the bills. Her biggest worry is her boss catching her...late again. When she gets to her desk, a broken copier is all that keeps her alive. The only one in her department to make it out of the bombed federal building in Los Angeles. And just like that, she becomes the iconic image of survival. No heroism. No idea why she was spared and 361 others died.

On the other side of the states in Florida, an ex-operative sees Jennifer running from the crumbling building and disappear in a cloud of smoke. He counts..one..two...three...hoping she'll make it. When the fireman

steps from the smoke holding a crying, broken Jennifer in his arms, Sean Kincaid knows what he must do. He'll bring vengeance to Jennifer.

And the mission begins.

This was an incredible find. A book on my Kindle for months, maybe years, unread. And once I picked it up I couldn't put it down. Homegrown terrorism doesn't fuel patriotism the way a foreign assailant does. So the government gives the masses what it wants. It's a terrifying look into what the government is willing to look past. And what patriotic Americans are willing to do to reclaim their birthright. Engrossing. Thought provoking. And all to real. Masterful.

Sandra Harkless says

I could see the similarities to another worldwide crisis in this book. The two main characters were very different but connected due to this crisis. Jennifer was sweet and innocent while Sean was heartless and ruthless. This book was very good and I was anxious to find out what happened in the end. The ending left me wanting more and I can't wait to read the next book.

Star says

Jennifer Thompson's life was ordinary and the day her life was irrevocably altered she just wanted to get to work on time. She was the last person out of the federal building where she worked after the bomb exploded, unintentionally becoming an iconic image on every magazine, newspaper, and website. All Jennifer wanted to do is pick up the pieces of her life and live anonymously. When Sean Kincaid, a former black-ops agent, sees Jennifer he makes it his life's mission to find the one(s) responsible and bring them to Jennifer so she can have closure. Both Sean and Jennifer's best laid plans go as awry as possible and it brings them together in a most unexpected way. Ms. Cozy has a remarkable way with words and has made 'Ashes' a definite must-read novel. Without being graphic the author has captured all of the palpable emotion of a terrorist attack and its aftermath. There just aren't words enough to describe the effect reading 'Ashes' had on me, but I recommend it most highly. With the wicked cliffhanger, I can't wait to read the next book to see what happens!

Series: Ashes (1)

Jeane says

This is a thought provoking book and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Jennifer was the last person out of a Federal building that had been bombed. The picture of her crying in the arms of a fireman went all over the world. She was recognized wherever she went and she was besieged by the media. Of course, she had the usual survivor guilt also. Sean was a forcibly retired government assassin. As he watched the tv report of the terrorism and saw her picture, he was affected greatly. He decides he must find the perpetrator and help Jennifer by bringing this man to her.

As I watched the tv reports on the Boston bombings, I couldn't help but remember a thought from Sean

"What could be more truly American than to watch disaster from the comfort of an easy chair, the remote ready to skip from network to network, snacks just a few steps away in the kitchen? The audiences at the gladiatorial matches in Rome never had it half so good."

The confusion and fear caused by being in a collapsing building is very well written. And the feelings of nearly harassment by the media is something I hadn't thought of in relation to surviving a disaster.

Every reader will, I think, be wondering if they would take the guilty one to her and if the reader were her, would we do the same thing.

I am looking forward to the next book in this series and I recommend it highly.

I neglected to say that I received this book for free from Good Reads First Reads.

Lisa says

I'm really not sure how I feel after reading this book. So many unanswered questions and really didn't like the ending.

Nicola Smith says

Jennifer could never have imagined what was going to happen on a normal day when she was late for work. The unthinkable happens and she is left fighting for her life. She tries to rebuild her life but can't help the uneasy feeling of feeling guilty to be alive. She decides that enough is enough and relocates to Haven Cove. It takes a while and a few mistakes but she finally finds a job she enjoys and friends that are there for her. Whilst Jennifer is rebuilding her life Sean is trying to track down who brought this devastation to her door step. He thinks she will want to get revenge on them.

This book was brilliant! There are a lot of things going on in it and it is basically 2 stories that come together at the very end. Every chapter alternates between Jennifer and Sean. There is a lot of action in there and it always keeps you on your toes. If you like a fast paced book then this one is definitely for you. I was a tiny bit disappointed with the ending but only because i didn't want it to end there and needed to find out more. Another brilliant book by Kelly Cozy.

Frank says

[free B&N ebook]

I read to the end and was absorbed, enough so that I would consider the second in the series. The strength is the bad guy militia and the similarity to the Timothy McVeigh attack on the federal building in Oklahoma City. The internal monologue (free indirect discourse) was lengthy but moved along. The government assassin was tolerable.

There were plot points which made no sense, which probably should have detracted more from the rating, but I let them pass.

Tricia says

HOLY SMOKES! Ashes by Kelly Cozy had me glued by the first few pages! This has been the most suspenseful story that I have read in a long time. The story begins with Jennifer Thomson going to work on a typical work day in Los Angeles, talking with her co-workers and making her way to the copy room to make copies. Then her building explodes. She has to fight her way through death, destruction and a collapsing building to get out. She walks past co-workers that she had just spoke with that are now dead. She was the only survivor in her department. Unbeknownst to her, the image of her being carried out by the firefighter was splashed across the nation, making her an instant hero.

All the way across the states in Florida, Sean Kincaid watched the catastrophe unfold as millions of Americans did that day. He was an early retiree, living in Florida, living a low key life, trying to blend in and not be noticed. He was a former covert operative, he performed secret missions and caused plenty of death and destruction of his own. Watching this news unfold wasn't a big deal for him until he saw Jennifer emerge on the tv screen amidst all the dust and debris. This woman touched something inside of him and he had to help her.

Now, this is where I thought the story would be about how Sean travels to find Jennifer and help her heal and they fall madly in love.....you know, typical romance stuff. Nope. Not in this book. What unfolds is one of the most interesting books I've read in a while. Sean decides he must find the persons responsible for this attack and bring them to Jennifer so she can serve up her own type of revenge. Using his skills that he learned in his former job, he begins his journey of investigating and tracking down who committed this crime. Meanwhile Jennifer struggles with returning back to a normal existence. She decides to relocate to a small town where hopefully no one would know who she is and begin a new life. It takes her a very long time, but she begins to function and make a happy life for herself. But just when she begins realizing how happy she is, Sean barges into her life, declaring how he has captured the person responsible for the bombing and presents the person to Jennifer to seek her revenge. Keep in mind, Jennifer never knew Sean or that he was going to do this, so she's terrified, shocked, scared..... you name it, she's feeling it. So here she is, looking at the bomber, the person who altered her life forever. Sean has given her a gun and tells her do whatever she wants. Oh what to do???? What to do????? She makes a choice. And guess what? That is where the book ends. NOOOOOOOOO! What happened? What did Jennifer do? I have no idea! OMG, it was the best cliffhanger EVER! I was reading this on my e-reader, I swear I turned the e-reader over, looking for more pages. The last sentence says "The story continues in Reckoning." Well, I do believe I will be reading Reckoning very soon. People, read this book. I was very brief on my descriptions because I didn't want to give too much away. There is so much that happens within those pages and my review would never do the book justice. READ IT!
