



Gladly Beyond

Nichole Van

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An ancient curse, fractured at the birth of three brothers.

Two strangers helplessly drawn to each other.

A love story two hundred years in the making.

Claire Raythorn arrives in Florence, Italy, shattered, alone, and anxious to rebuild her life—preferably one without men. But she soon finds herself hunted and haunted—literally—when a mysterious stalker dressed like Mr. Darcy from BBC central casting appears in her photos. And only her photos. Who is this man? And what does his ghostly presence mean?

Dante D'Angelo simply wants to safeguard his brothers, despite the family curse that hounds his vision. But then Claire Raythorn walks into his life, untouched somehow by his curse. Soon, everything Dante thought he knew about himself starts to unravel, dragging Claire down with him.

Set against the lush backdrop of Florence, Italy—both past and present—Claire and Dante fight for a future together. But, first, they must uncover their shared past . . .

Gladly Beyond Details

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Author : Nichole Van

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Genre : Romance, Science Fiction, Time Travel, Fantasy, Paranormal, Clean Romance

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From Reader Review Gladly Beyond for online ebook

Julie Carpenter says

Full Review Now

My mind is still digesting everything from the novel. I enjoyed it. It isn't a 5 star absolutely love it for me but it was intriguing enough, it held my interest really well and all the twists and turns that I debated between a 3.5/4 star rating and finally decided 4. I had fun making guesses throughout as to who dunnit (my word for the bad guy-comes from watching lots of mystery/detective shows) and how the different characters connected into the storyline. Then to find out I guessed right! That's always a fun moment!

I'll share more of my ramblings soon...especially after I have time to let all the thoughts of this novel have time to settle completely in my mind. :-)

How to start this review? There's so many aspects to talk about, I think I'll start with the time travel or more accurately flashbacks which the author termed regressions. It was interesting the way the author created the flashbacks. I actually really liked how she did and have to say those were some of my favorite chapters. Maybe I should backtrack for a minute and give just a touch of information. I'm sure most everybody reading this review has read the synopsis and knows that Claire is in Italy and has discovered a Mr. Darcy dressed character appearing in her pictures. I think I would have completely freaked out if that happened to me...strange man following you around and appearing in your selfie pictures. When Claire first starts discovering this strange Darcy man in her pictures she takes a pretty good deep breath and searches all over for him. Discovering that he is nowhere to be found she takes a picture only to discover him in the picture, and sometimes right next to her. As she quickly searches again for him after seeing him in the picture he is nowhere to be found again. What is going on and what could it all possibly mean?

Claire really is over men and doesn't want to be anywhere connected to them or surrounded by them. She has been through some pretty crazy relationships and feels so disconnected from ever possibly having a normal human relationship. Her parents are pretty crazy, her grammy has recently passed away and she was the only real loving person ever in her life. Her previous relationship with Pierce ended with him cheating on her and acting like she should still love him and completely forgive him.

How does anyone open up and trust again with so many failed relationships that should contain trust yet have only broken and further damaged her ability to trust.

Being in Italy is all about patching up her career and trying to move forward with life. Florence is special to her because her and her grammy once shared a long wonderful vacation together there and she feels like she is reliving that and having her there with her once again. She is interviewing for a job with a wealthy man whom everyone calls the Colonel. He has an extensive art collection and rare artifacts that he wants to have appraised and detailed where they came from and cataloged. Claire is in a sort of competition with a couple other people for this position. First is Pierce. Yes that's right Pierce as in the arrogant cheater boyfriend. Can't stand him. Those were just my feelings upfront as I first started reading the book. Nope, those feelings didn't change much throughout. The second is a pair of twin brothers, the D'Angelo brothers. Dante is the oldest and the one who attends the first meeting with everyone.

Lots of background info and I am finally getting back to those regressions. Dante has a curse upon his

family. The first born son inherits the gift of sight from an ancestor who asked a gypsy to help him. So the first born can see everything from the past, the present and the future. I won't say much more about what they can see except, in Dante's case he's a triplet. I know you're thinking what, she said twin earlier. Well when he was just a concept of cells, those cells split creating fraternal twins and then one of those two cells split creating identical twins and three babies so triplets. Dante and his two brothers have each inherited a different aspect of the sight and use that gift/curse throughout the book.

Dante explains that a regression can occur if they are in the right place and with the right person, as in somebody with a strong emotional connection and who had been there in the previous life. So the flashbacks let us know that each person lives a life and then comes back again as a new person. Dante can see shadows of who a person has been in previous lives. He and Claire end up having several flashbacks/regressions together which ultimately reveal about their previous lives and critical pieces of information that is very helpful in one part of their job interview process. They are trying to assess the value of a sketch and if it is real or just a copy. All of this pulls the plot along and leads the characters to different discoveries.

Have I completely lost you or is it making sense? I think if you start at the beginning and have all the little bits and pieces slowly revealed it will make more sense to you.

Overall I did enjoy it. I liked the struggle that Claire had with learning to trust Dante, especially after seeing how their previous lives had played out. Once they did figure out their relationship and she finally decided to trust him there were several kisses throughout. Most of them were pretty chaste but there were a few heated kisses. Also a couple characters really liked a certain swear word that he'd throw out occasionally. I know some other reader's reviews said they were confused at the beginning trying to understand the curse and abilities Dante had but I didn't have a problem understanding it and thought it was explained pretty well. I think it just takes reading and allowing all the little bits and pieces to fall into place.

The ending had several twists and turns to it and had me going back and forth on who the bad guy was but I have to say my initial gut reaction at the beginning was right. Good luck piecing it together.

I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

Happy Reading!!!

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

Epic, fascinating, enthralling, imaginative! The dynamic between Claire and Dante was surprisingly powerful as they work side by side, competing for a lucrative job offer, and share secrets as their past lives intertwine with the present. I normally don't care for time travel stories, but found this book to be an exception, primarily because the past was observed rather than actively participated in. The concept of reincarnation is front and center and was creatively explored through the "gifts" of Dante and his brothers. The romantic tension is strong since Claire has walls up around her battered heart but Dante is determined to win her trust. A threatening stalker ramps up the suspense as Claire and Dante roam the city searching for answers from the past to solve the art mystery they were hired to investigate as well as their potent shared connection. I'm looking forward to reading more from this author, especially the upcoming books in this series from the other brothers' points of view.

(Thank you to Ebooks For Review for a copy of the book in exchange for my honest review)

iamnotabookworm says

I read book two of the series first. It was called Love's Shadow. I so love the story. I got this book for free on Kindle. I can't remember how. Maybe, I got an email that this book was on sale or whatever. Long story short, I got this for nada.

For those who don't know, I am a sucker for stories with history thrown into the mix. That's why I love the books of Clive Cussler, Steve Berry and Dan Brown. I love stories that weave connections between the long dead past and the present. How the timelines or people are interconnected between the vastness of time and how the past has a lot to do with the present. I was just so thrilled to find Nichole Van, a female author who specializes also in this genre. Most of the books I read on the same genre were written by men, so I am just so happy to have found a woman who can just do the same.

So far, these two stories are set in Europe, specifically Italy. This one--Florence. The D' Angelo brothers which are the brothers referred to in the series title are descendants of an Italian Count who was cursed. So, the term "maledetti" which in Italian means "damned or cursed". The curse is actually was asked for by the original D' Angelo. He wished for it from a gypsy woman, which turned out to be too much for him. So the saying, "be careful what you wish for" was probably aimed for the first Conte de Maledetti. This curse gets passed on to all the first born sons, until the present. The only difference now is, there are three of these sons, thus the ability was also fractured into three parts. The brothers Dante, Branwell and Tennyson are triplets who inherited the gift from their father, who got it from his grandfather, which can be traced back up to the first daring D' Angelo. This gift has driven a lot of D' Angelo's to madness and death. Good thing, the triplets had learned more of the ability as it was passed on to them. Now, they are more equipped than their ill-fated ancestors were but still, it doesn't guarantee that they are safe from the consuming madness that came with it or the ever present threat of death.

I realized the order of the books in the series might be based on the order of birth of the brothers. This story is about Dante who's the older twin of Branwell. Ten is the youngest of the three. The second book was about Branwell and the third one is about Chiara their sister and the last book is about Ten. I have book three too. So, I might have to start it soon.

I have been curious about regression and past lives. Could it be true? How amazing could it be to be able to know about our past lives and figure out how it's relevant to the current situations. How much of it impacted the you that you are today? Are you living the same life over and over again? Finding the same person over and over, life after life. Making the same mistake across lifetimes like a broken record. That's exactly the theme of this story. The same old song seems to be playing in the present lives of Dante and Claire and it has never changed over the past centuries. Will history repeat itself as it had always done over the past? Is there no escaping the past and how would these two end up?

I feel like I need to go to Italy after reading this book. A lot of beautiful places and tourist spots are mentioned here. I feel like I was there, seeing Claire taking selfies. And yes, gelato. How I would love to eat gelato for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The intrigue and mystery in this story was not lost in all the grandeur and historic places. Who's who and the prominent figures and artists mentioned in the story. Not to mention, again Da Vinci the favorite subject of controversy among many writers. He's in here to. Who could refuse a heady sprinkling of a Da Vinci mystery, right? Just what I need.

I am not sure which of the two stories so far I liked more. Van has been so consistent. All the elements that are in this book are also in the second one. A haunting past that has a tight hold on the present. A mix of very interesting and suspicious characters. You wouldn't know who's really the bad one. A leading lady who is just as strong as the main man. And of course, the workings of the supernatural. There was no letting go of this book until I was done. Never have I been happier. I could eat the book if I wanted to. Just glorious.

Stories like these are what made me want to just read without stopping. How my heart beats faster in time with Claire and Dante as they try to outrun and outsmart the unknown enemy. How I was helplessly pulled into the story like these two were helplessly thrown back into the past without warning. And how I too made that same audible sigh of relief with the rest of the D' Angelo's as these two came home alive and unharmed to the manor. Ah, I want more. I feel no discontent but I can't get enough of it.

I give this book 5/5 pictures of Florence, Italy. After reading this story, I feel like I should be cautious in taking selfies because someone from a bygone era might appear in my photos. If it's as handsome and as gentle as Dante or any of the D' Angelo brothers, then no problem. As long as it's not some ghost that is out to haunt me. Nichole Van, no doubt you will end up in my favorite author's list. I can't wait.

Peace washed through me. An ache for this amazing man who would always be my own personal battering ram. Destroying anything that tried to hurt me, sheltering me.

Just make a little Dante-sized hole in the walls around your heart. You're welcome to seal it right back up once I'm inside. But, please, let it happen.

White tennis shoes on the Americans; brown loafers for the Germans; black dress shoes for the Japanese. I swear you can identify nationality by footwear alone.

- Nichole Van, Gladly Beyond-

Kathy says

I read these books out of order. This is book one but I read book two first. I loved the 2nd book and this one was good too, just not quite as good. I'm super excited for book 3!

Content: mild language

Lucinda says

3 1/2 or 4. Not sure.

I haven't read her first series but I know it's about time travel so I was expecting that in this book, and it's not. It's about reincarnation and I'm not sure how I feel about that.

The setting is very well done, loved Florence and the whole Italian flavor in this book. The characters are compelling and so is the story. It took me a while to get into it, but once I did, it was hard to put down. And

the twists at the end were surprising.

Looking forward to the next book in the series.

Kathy * Bookworm Nation says

3.5

Beautiful cover - check

Intriguing plot - check

Great reviews - check

This is my first time reading a Nichole Van book, although she has been on my TBR list for a long time. My good friend Kathy Jo just read and fell in love with this series and so I had to give it a try. This was definitely a very unique story.

What I liked:

I love a unique plot or storyline I haven't read before. This definitely has that with its paranormal elements that were woven in to a contemporary setting. The characters were likable, Claire and Dante have great chemistry. The stalker angle was handled well, kept me guessing. Supporting characters added a lot to the story and peaked my interest for future books. And just the overall story was intriguing and fun.

What I didn't like:

Reincarnation is just not my thing, but I set that aside and still enjoyed the book. The whole idea of "soul mates" does give Claire and Date an insta-love feel, which isn't a favorite for me. Lastly, while well written, my eyes tend to glaze over with art history and poetry, which is totally a personal preference.

Overall, a fun start to a new series. I enjoyed it and I'm definitely curious about the rest of the D'Angelo family and look forward to reading their stories. Would recommend to anyone who enjoys contemporary mysteries with a touch of the paranormal.

Content

Romance: Clean

Language: Mild swearing throughout (D)

Violence: Mild, stalking past memories(lives) of fighting and wars

Religious: None

Series: Brothers Maledettie, Book One

Source: Kindle Unlimited

Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says

Wow. Okay. What sort of book is this? It's not a time travel, but the past is literally making connections with the future. (It's kind of creepy) There is a bit of intrigue and suspense. It is a romance and a tragedy all rolled into one. All these elements swirl around creating this fantastically driven plot. It's crazy.

I loved how invested I was in what was happening. I was pushed forward to know and I read through this book very quickly. I loved the setting in Italy. I wish I could go there but alas, I cannot. I can only dream and live it through books right now.

This book is such a mash up of so many different elements. I think that is what I loved best about it. It wasn't what my mind was expecting at all and it kept surprising me. This was the best kind of diversion and a fun way to spend a day.

The future books are about three brothers who have this curse. The next book with the next brother is going to be good!

This isn't a book I would hand off to my teenager due to the content below but in the realm of new adult and adult books, this book would probably be classified as clean. I wish there hadn't been the swearing and the crass talk which is why this book didn't get 5 stars from me.

Content: Swearing (mostly mild) and some crude talk and innuendo. Some violence. Romance is clean but there is some talk about cheating and sex.

Jacob Proffitt says

I couldn't help myself. I skimmed ahead. Added bit at the end...

While I like Dante there are elements of this book that makes this painful to pursue. The biggest is that the entire plot and all of Claire's motivations stem from an event that makes exactly zero sense at all.

Van takes four or five coy chapters to actually explain what happened, but it comes out early enough I'm not going to spoiler-tag it. "It" boils down to Claire being an internet meme for being caught on camera reacting poorly to her fiancé cheating on her. And then suffering both professional ruin and emotional breakdown as a result. I'm sorry, but unless she *killed somebody* I don't see the internet being all that interested in someone catching their fiancé in bed with his assistant. That he's the one who released the video is even further confirmation that he'd be the dog of the internet and not her. There's just no way *she'd* be the bad guy or "crazy chick" in that scenario. Yeah, you may have a very small subset of jerks who get off on her saying something stupid under that kind of emotional stress, but that is *nowhere near* enough to make her the butt of literally millions—so much so that random teenagers in Italy identify and taunt her (even physically) six months later. I'm sorry, but that's just dumb.

Since that incident (in addition to other romances going wrong, apparently) is the *capstone negative motivation* Claire has for pushing Dante away (in the face of instalove, but at least an interesting instalove) it permeates this story in the worst possible way. At 40% in, it's a steady, even unrelenting refrain of pathetic stupidity.

Sadly, the meme thing is only the biggest example of people's actions not synching with how I think reality really works. I also hate that there seems to be a "plot repeats itself in time" thing going on with the setup. Yes, Dante has an interesting family curse, and I did find that engaging. But I suspect that a big use for that is to invest weight into the current setup (specifically with "the Colonel") that the story isn't going to otherwise earn.

I have never been a fan of the trope in romances where someone has been hurt before, even repeatedly, and then punishes the obviously good person for their previous bad choices. Claire has that in spades and ramped up to an entirely unreasonable degree. It finally broke my sympathy entirely and I can't go on. Sad, because the writing is good and I *really liked* Dante.

ETA: I couldn't find the answer to two questions in any of the other reviews of the book so I skimmed ahead to find the answers to:

1. How long did it take Claire to get over her punishing Dante for her previous bad choices thing.
2. Was I right about the probable bad guy.

Results: (view spoiler)

So yeah, glad I bailed when I did.

Englishrose says

This was a phenomenal read. The author masterfully intertwined the past and present lives of the main characters, tragic soul mates throughout time. It is impossibly romantic and enthralling. The story is full and has wonderful side characters that are rich and full in and of themselves. I loved the storyline and the author had a firm grasp on history, which is always appreciated. The paranormalcy was believable, both with the past lives and Dante's family abilities. Highly engaging and with wonderful twists, I couldn't put it down. It was simply fabulous and I would highly recommend it. I can't wait until the next book comes out - you can guarantee I'll be reading it.

www.cleanromancereviews.com

Melissa says

Wow what a well written adventure. This book kept me on my toes from the very beginning, I couldn't figure it out and was really blown away by the creativity of author. The story line is brilliant. The love story was well done and characters believable and endearing. I'm so excited I get a whole family to read about. There were some issues for me a bit of repetition in the way they felt about each other, it was a little over the top but then so is the story. The ending wrapped up a little too quickly with such a major build up. Overall a clean, different story that I really enjoyed reading.

Kathy Jo says

4.5 Stars

Alone and broken, Claire finds herself in Florence, Italy determined to rebuild her life and career. She wouldn't be in this situation if it hadn't been for her cheating boyfriend. Thanks to him posting the video of her reaction when she discovered him cheating, she is now known as "Batty Ray Psycho". Everyone sees her as the bad guy instead of the victim. Never again will she let a man into her life. She can and will do this on her own.

On the day of her interview with the Colonel, a wealthy man with a vast art collection, she discovers that she is being followed. A man dressed as a Mr. Darcy look alike is showing up in all of her selfies. She doesn't need this. Not today. It's bad enough that she already has a cyber stalker and that her interview turned out to be an audition between her, her cheating ex-boyfriend and Dante D'Angelo. Can't one thing go right for her?! Too much is riding on her getting this job. She just needs to put her head down and focus on the job. There can be no distractions and definitely no men. No matter how attractive and intriguing Dante D'Angelo is. She needs to stay strong and stay far away.

An ancient curse has plagued Dante's family for many years. But this time around, it's different. This time there are triplets. One to see the past, one to hear the past and one to see the future. Dante has so much on his plate where his family is concerned, he doesn't have time for anything else. But then he meets Claire. She is completely blank to him. He sees nothing of her past. How can that be? Is his ability on the fritz? Who knows. But there is something about Claire that draws him in. He can't explain it but he has to get to know her better. He wants to be by her side always. To protect her, help her, laugh with her, enjoy life with her. He'll definitely have his work cut out for him.

While Claire and Dante work to find the origin of a painting, they discover that their lives are more entwined than they ever imagined. The more they get to know each other, the more their feelings grow. However, with Claire's past, she has a hard time trusting Dante and letting him in. But with everything going on with her cyber stalker, the Colonel acting creepy and weird, her ex-boyfriend popping up out of nowhere, a man following her and Dante, she has to put her trust somewhere. She is tired of living in fear. It is time to take back her life and actually live it. Will they be able to figure everything out before it's too late? One thing is for sure, curse or no curse, neither Claire nor Dante will go down without a fight.

sigh

What do you do when you have a major book hangover from reading several amazing books and the normal ones you read just can't capture your attention?! You search for something new and different! When a bookish friend told me that I HAD to read Gladly Beyond I thought what the heck! Let's give it a try! And I'm glad I did! All I can say is WOW! This book kept me on my toes and had me guessing till the very end! There were so many twists and turns that I did not see coming! I can't wait to read the next book in this series!

This is my first book by Ms. Van and I will definitely be reading more by her! She really did an amazing job of sucking me in! I got mad when real life got in the way of my reading time! Haha.

Ok... I'm not going to lie. This casting was SO hard! I can't tell you how many pictures I looked at of this guy. Haha. So... without further adieu... my casting!

Content: Mild swearing.

Katie W says

It's hard to resist a story with a little touch of paranormal--especially when the "ghost" appears in the form of Mr. Darcy. There is an element of time travel and reincarnation, but it's done in a way of flashbacks, instead of the characters actively engaging in those components.

Claire goes to Italy to find herself after the death of her grandmother and a horrific break-up. She's in the running for her dream job and finds herself up against her ex-boyfriend and an intriguing man, Dante. I really loved Dante--a lot. He's had time to figure out a little of what's going on, with his family's curse, and uses that to his advance in many aspects of his life. I liked Claire. She has a lot of class, especially given the situation she found herself in that resulted in a viral video. She's very mature in the way she handles herself. Dante and Claire have a very sweet relationship, although she is very hesitant to trust and has thick walls up. I love watching a couple work through their issues and work together to not only come together, but to solve issues in the story.

This book has a lot of fascinating history, but I have to say that some of the events that occur, while interesting, are a little strange. It was really hard to wrap my head around some things, yet I couldn't stop reading, because I really wanted to know what was going on and how things were going to end up.

Overall, this is a great story for those who enjoy a contemporary, romantic suspense, with fantasy elements. I'm looking forward to reading more about this family, especially Dante's brothers.

Content: mild expletives (moderately used); mild romance (kissing, implied affair, some innuendo). Clean for a more mature reader.

I received a copy from eBooks for review in exchange for an honest review

Kim says

I was very intrigued with this novel from the prologue that starts with a wry disdainful, but humorous comment about the hero's ancestor. That moment of bitter humor softens the blow for the tragic origin prequel story of the hero and his two brothers' paranormal powers. Every first born D'Angelo male since that one ancestor Giovanni D'Angelo had asked for and paid for the gift of Sight from a gypsy 700 years ago, has had the powers of psychometry, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and clairsentience. An extremely oversimplification explanation of all that person's powers would be they can see, hear, and feel both the past and the future. This gift is a curse, because it causes the deterioration of the minds of each recipient with all that sensing and stimulation 24 hours a day. Most D'Angelo first borns end up dying before their 35th birthday by their own hand. An unusual situation happens when male triplets are born. Two identical and one fraternal triplet splinter the gift unevenly and categorically amongst themselves. The hero Dante D'Angelo is one of the triplets and the romantic hero of this novel. This is the first novel in a planned series with each brother being the romantic hero of their own novel.

The setting of this novel is the beautiful romantic backdrop of Florence, Italy which we vicariously get to

tour all the historic sites as they are today and sometimes how they used to be with the hero Dante and the heroine Claire Raythorn. They both as well as Claire's ex-fiancé Pierce Whitman are all three competing for a permanent lucrative art appraising position curating elderly billionaire nicknamed the Colonel (Kenneth Finister-Cline)'s super vast collection of art and antiques accumulated by both sides of his family over the centuries. Their test audition is to appraise whether a piece in the collection is a lost masterpiece of Michelangelo. They have a month and all the resources they may need to make their final judgement.

It is hard to describe what genre this novel was. It was like a paranormal romance tragedy suspense mystery. There is the creepy mystery of why a British Regency Era dressed guy keeps appearing in all Claire's selfies around Florence, but not there before and after the picture. Who is the person text message stalking her with denigrating to threatening messages, despite how many times she changes her cell phone number? Why does Dante's one power not work on Claire and is incomplete on the Colonel and Pierce? How are these three people connected with him? How is the alleged Michelangelo work connected to both Dante and Claire? There also is the secondary romance story experienced through Dante's power of past life regressions of a couple in Florence history by the names of Ethan and Caro, that I was in suspense of how that story would conclude. Who is the bad guy in the present?

The ending had several plot twists that I enjoyed immensely and I enjoyed the ride of being diverted and tricked though I wasn't totally surprised. There was one last M. Knight Shyamalan like plot twist though after the resolution of everything else that I totally was shocked to like, "What!!!! How? No way! Explain!". Then looking back in the novel with this different paradigm I totally could see it.

Language: The D word used in literal meaning and as a profane expletive expression was used several times.

Sensuality content: There is discussion of Claire's ex-fiancé Pierce being caught in the very act naked with another woman cheating on Claire, while they were still together. Zero sexual details. Just mention of nudity with no body description and Claire's reaction. So sketchy clean. PG 14.

Source: Review copy in exchange for 100% honest opinion.

Charissa says

I might just have found me a new favorite author. Grabbed this off of KU because it intrigued me and I kept seeing it pop up on other reader reviews. So glad I did. This story was Beyond Riveting, and I couldn't put it down once I started. The premise is a family curse that has afflicted the D'Angelo family for centuries. A great-great-and-so-on Grandfather asked a gypsy for the gift of sight to turn around his family's fortunes, and the gift became his and generations of first-born sons curse that drove them mad at the end, driving them to suicide.

Skip to modern day Italy. The curse fractures when not one son, but triplets are born. Each son has part of this gift. This is Dante's story, but nothing will stop me from reading the other brother's stories now too. Dante and Claire meet when a crazy old rich guy has them and Claire's ex-fiance, Pierce, all meet to contend for the job of working for him and cataloguing his art collection. Claire and Dante don't like each other at first, but she intrigues him because he can't see any shadows around her (shadows of other lives that he sees in everyone else).

I don't want to ruin a second of this book with spoilers, so I won't expand on the plot. Suffice it to say, it's fantastic! So many twists and turns, intriguing historical details (this book centers mostly on Florence, Italy...sigh), and awesome characters. There is absolutely NOTHING that I didn't like about this book. It's a 6 on the 5 scale. Completely amazing. Thank you, Nichole Van, for writing such an incredible book. I'm exciting to continue this series and see what else you've written.

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

3.25 stars. Kindle freebie romance time again! (Now back to its 99c price point.) *Gladly Beyond* is an interesting twist on the paranormal romance genre, involving an ancient gypsy gift/curse that gave the D'Angelo family the Sight, a powerful ability to see and hear both the future and the past, that passes from one first-born son to the next and inevitably drives them to suicide. Now the Gift has splintered between three triplets, easing the burden somewhat. Dante D'Angelo and his brother use their gift in their profession of assessing the authenticity and provenance of antiques. A full-time job being offered by a wealthy man called the Colonel (after Colonel Sanders, because of his KFC initials and appearance) could be just the thing to get the D'Angelo family back on solid financial ground.

Claire Raythorn, in the same profession, comes to Florence, Italy to try to rebuild her reputation after a couple of major setbacks, but finds she is competing for the same lucrative job not only with Dante but also Pierce, her ex-fiance. Pierce and she had a huge blowup a few months ago when she caught him in bed with another woman. Pierce unkindly posted an online video of Claire's meltdown (screaming and throwing everything in reach at him ... including tampons), which went viral, and now the whole world is laughing at Claire's perceived craziness.

So Claire's self-confidence and trust in men have been shattered ... which makes it tough when she and Dante share a mysterious connection, one he's very anxious to explore with her, despite their job competition. Meanwhile, Pierce is competing for the job as well, while being his smarmy jerk self and trying to win Claire back. And there's something odd about the Colonel, who is a little too interested in Claire personally. Not to mention Claire's anonymous stalker ...

Anyway, that's the set-up, and actually there's a lot to like about this book if you enjoy romances with a side of paranormal stuff, including reincarnation and past lives that affect the present. (I have to say I did enjoy the idea of Napoleon being reincarnated as Dante's mother's pet rat.)

Problems: The whole curse/reincarnation thing played out in some intriguing but rather inconsistent ways. And Claire's whole "I'm broken and will never love again" thing went on for way too long and was just a drag on the overall story after a while, not to mention the romance itself. I liked Dante a lot, but he's a Gary Stu character, practically perfect in every way, with no discernible flaws, not to mention smokin' hot (of course).

I'd recommend this to readers who love light romance novels and enjoy paranormal plots. The Italy setting was fun, and after making my mouth water with the descriptions of Italian food, the author was kind enough to include a recipe for roasted lemon-herb chicken at the end which I am FOR REAL going to try one of these days.
