



Playing It Safe

Barbie Bohrman

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Julia Boyd has dated more than her share of jerks, and she's done even pretending to like them. Putting her dating life on hold and focusing on her event planning career is a *much* safer bet for the blue-eyed blonde...until she meets her newest client.

Organizing the opening for an art gallery should be a breeze for Julia, but gallery owner Alex Holt is becoming very distracting. Tall and muscular with enough charisma and sexy dimples to make Julia swoon, Alex could be the perfect man. The two of them click immediately, creating enough witty banter to ignite sparks.

But just before flames of passion can erupt with Alex, Julia begins planning an engagement party...and learns the groom is Aiden, the man who broke her heart years ago. When Aiden admits that he still has feelings for Julia, everything changes. Should she seek shelter in the familiarity of the past, or should she risk everything on a brand-new love?

Playing It Safe Details

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From Reader Review *Playing It Safe* for online ebook

Arianna ♦ *SteamyReadsBlog* ♦ says

I didn't expect to enjoy this book so much, since the other book that I'd read by this author didn't work so well for me. I'm glad I decided to give this one a go. It really was what I wanted!

"Playing It Safe" was a light, sweet and fun read. This book has a little of everything – humor, smut and a little angst.

Julia is a 29 years old successful, independent, beautiful woman who runs an event planning business. She has a great family and great friends, but she has bad luck with men, picking practically only douchebags. Needless to say, she decides she had enough, wanting from now on to focus on her career.

Alex is a gallery owner. Julia has known him for a few years, having a friendship relationship only, but in the last year they developed a flirtatious relationship. One thing is very clear, they both are attracted to each other.

"We've been playing this game for a very long time. And I'm all for playing games, Julia, but sooner or later, one of us is going to win."

Alex is a man who knows what he wants. And he wants more than he has now, a friendship relationship with Julia. Julia doesn't want to ruin their friendship with just one night, but what she doesn't know is Alex doesn't want only one night with her. He wants everything.

Julia decides to give Alex a chance, but she never expects to fall so hard and fast for him.

"He's attentive, thoughtful, caring, affectionate, sexy, gorgeous, suave, insatiable, interesting, funny ... I could probably go on."

The story is told from Julia's POV, our heroine, which I loved very much. "Listening" to her was funny as hell. I smiled, I grinned and of course I swooned with her over Alex. I loved listing her thoughts about everything. I absolutely loved her. She is upfront, outgoing and honest. Her family (especially her father) and her relationship with them is fantastic and I enjoyed how she puts up with their antics. I also loved her friends, their relationship and also their banter.

Like Julia, I fell for Alex hard. Damn, he's perfect! Really! I loved the way he is with Julia and how amused he is with everything she does or say. There's no doubt he's the perfect man for her!

I loved the cat-and-mouse game between them. Their chemistry is of the charts and the sex scenes are really

hot.

Overall, a really enjoyable read!

A_Ryan says

3 chicka bow wow stars

This was hilarious! The tongue-in-cheek humour made this such an easy read, and the pages practically turned themselves with a narrative that was peppered with cultural references everywhere!

As enjoyable as it was, and as much as I love Bohrman's writing style, I had two issues with *Playing it Safe*. First, I felt like the love story here really started in the last book. The initial meeting and attraction happened during Sabrina's story. So it was like coming into a new show but starting in season 2. I wanted more detail about Alex's attraction to Julia and how their friendship developed.

Second, there was an almost complete lack of plot. This was just about two people who liked each other and began to date. No conflict. No angst. Just butterflies and good times. Except for the absolutely ridiculous misunderstanding at the very end which was sorted out in almost-record time.

That's not to say this book was not hilarious because IT WAS. But overall it was a very good (not great) read, which is why I'm only giving it a 3 star rating.

Beverly says

5 Fun, flirty, sexy Stars

This is my first book by Barbie Bohrman, but it won't be my last. I absolutely loved this one. This is a light read, that will make you laugh, swoon, and have your heartbreaking for the characters. I know that seems like a contradiction, but it's true. The story is told from Julia's POV and the entire time it really feels like Julia is talking to her best friend, you.

We meet Julia and right off the bat you know that she is fun loving, caring, and doesn't take shit from anyone. Julia has had her heart broke so while she enjoys dating she doesn't put a whole lot of stock in men. Instead she focuses on her family, friends and work. Julia's friends and family are awesome. I loved their banter and loyalty to each other. Julia owns an event planning business and she loves what she does.

We first met Alex at the art gallery he owns, Julia is running an exhibit opening for him. Julia is pretty relaxed, as she has been handling all of the galleries events for the past year. During this year Alex and Julia have developed a flirty relationship, so Julia isn't sure what to think when Alex asks her to plan his niece's birthday.

Alex knows what he wants and he is determined to finally get it. He has been waiting for Julia to be ready to be with him, and he is done waiting. Alex is sexy as sin and dominating. Now this isn't a book about D/s, Alex is just a dominating man, and boy is it hot as hell.

Julia is unsure about what to do, but finally decides to give in and give Alex a chance. Julia may be one of my favorite characters, but she is still a girl and with that comes insecurities. Despite her insecurities they didn't drive me crazy or make me want to scream, because Julia, like most girls, talked them out in her head or with her friends.

I seriously loved Alex and Julia together. I loved their chemistry, and how Alex was able to handle Julia. I felt like their relationship was real, and there wasn't drama just to have drama. This is seriously one of my favorite reads, it was so much fun. I literally laughed my ass off reading. Julia is one of my favorite characters I have ever read, because she was so real and down to earth. **I highly recommend this one!**

Christy says

5 F*CKING Stars!

Delightful. Sexy. Entertaining. Hilarious. And just an all round FUN read.

Julia is a woman who has had enough of men. She's focused on her job, her family and her friends. One of her friends happens to be an attractive man named Alex.

Alex is a gallery owner who is flirty with Julia, but his feelings run deeper than friendship. He pursues her in his own way, by hiring her to plan a birthday party for his ten year old niece.

Julia doesn't want to fall for Alex, but the more time she spends with him, the harder it becomes to not cross that line from friendship into so much more....

I'm not sure I've met a heroine I've loved as much as Julia. I love a girl with no filter. I love how hilarious she is. She's witty, feisty and cusses like a sailor. I feel like she was just sitting there talking to me the entire

time I was reading. And Julia's dad. Every single scene he was in I just found myself laughing my ass off.

Alex was such a lovable hero. He had a great sense of humor and was the perfect counterpart for Julia. I loved them together. Their relationship is flirty and fun. Just like I loved Julia's dad, Alex's niece Josie was another fantastic secondary character! Adorable! And the epilogue from Alex perspective- it was wonderful.

This book made me laugh, made me smile, made me tear up a few times and warmed my heart. Overall I just loved it. I had a perma-grin the entire time I read. It was truly a fun and feel good book!

Dyndyn says

5+++ stars! Amazing read. Totally loved it!

I enjoyed everything about this book. **Fan-freakin-tastic read!** I loved the dry humour, witty banter, sizzling chemistry, the fun and the chaos. This had me laughing out loud (so much) when I wasn't swooning, sighing and dreaming about Alex.

Julia has known Alex for sometime. They've always had a connection, an attraction which couldn't be ignored anymore when Alex hires her for his niece's birthday party.

I loved all things Julia. She's blunt, in your face, has no filter and curses like a sailor. Her internal musings were hilarious. She's quite a character. She's had a string of bad luck when it comes to men and has decided to have nothing to do with them anymore. Until Alex, who's just so swoon worthy... he'd have you panting. Drooling.

"He's attentive, thoughtful, caring, affectionate, sexy, gorgeous, suave, insatiable, interesting, funny ... I could probably go on. And sweet."

"There's at-work Alex, friend Alex, sex-crazed Alex, tender Alex, and now this, this carefree and fun Alex. All of them add up to one hell of a man." *sigh*

Add into the loop loud and meddling assistants, Julia's crazy family and bestie, Alex's adorable niece and irritating exes... perfection.

'Some' of my highlighted quotes. It was hard to choose since there were loads!

"One night post-coital, I dozed off. Next thing I knew, a pair of teeth bit down really hard on my ass, which made me shoot straight up in bed and yell so loud that the paint may have chipped from the walls. In total shock, I rubbed the spot and asked him what possessed him to chew on my ass like he was Hannibal Lecter. He said he was trying to get me back into the mood and thought I'd enjoy it. I don't know when I gave off the vibe that I'd be into having my ass chomped like it was a cheeseburger."

"God, I've become fairly acquainted with his dick already, but dammit if I still stare at it like it was a mirage in the desert."

“I get up and walk toward my bedroom, the whole time thinking to myself, I’m not going to sleep with him, over and over again. And to ensure that I won’t, I pull out the rattiest pair of granny period undies from the very bottom of my underwear drawer. You know the “ones that you keep for those four to five days every month? Every woman owns at least one pair, and I’m going to be wearing mine, holes and all, tomorrow. If that doesn’t keep me clothed, then I’m fucked—in more ways than one.”

“God, there’s really nothing worse than a guy who can’t go down on you properly. Right, ladies? Then you have to give the shoulder tap and try to give directions, and who has time for that? Not this girl.”

“It’s one thing to see a child cry but quite another for a grown woman. And really nobody should have to see me cry. It’s downright frightening. I do the whole bottom lip quivering thing, and my nose gets as red as Rudolph’s. Seriously, it’s not pretty.”

I seriously loved this book (if I wasn't obvious enough). The epilogue made my heart flutter. Especially since it's in Alex's POV. Wish we had more of those.

It's my first read from the author and I'd be stalking her from now on.

A MUST READ.

Jenny••Steamy Reads Blog•• says

I'm a sucker, a sucker for a friends to lovers story. This was all full of sass, way steamy, sexy, angsty, ALEX, amazing banter, and I was completely wanting to see a HEA. From the start of reading this book, I had a good feeling that it was going to be a great read. Indeed it was. It grabbed my heart, I fell I love with Alex & Julia. A sweet couple that is downright perfect for each other. The author does such a great job with this book. The writing is captivating and has you sucked in throughout the book.

Definitely a book I'd recommend to those wanting a fun, sweet, and angsty read.

Patrycja says

4.5 stars!

This one was so funny, sweet and sexy! I loved it :)

AJ says

Funny, romantic and steamy hot with epic UST. I freaking love this book!

This is my first book by Barbie Bohrman, and apparently it follows on from her first book, Promise Me. I had no clue about that, and so obviously went into this one blind, but it reads very comfortably as a standalone, and from the moment I started, I couldn't get enough of Julia and Alex.

Long-term colleagues (he runs a gallery, she is an event co-ordinator that frequently organises events for him), there has been a simmering tension between them for a while. But Julia's previous relationship messed with her and has left her scared and hesitant to jump into something else new – even though she has known Alex for years, and has lusted after him for the majority of that time. They have a flirty relationship which suddenly gets stepped up when Alex decides enough is enough and makes his intentions known.

“Why don't we cut the bullshit, shall we? ... We've been playing this game for a very long time. And I'm all for playing games, Julia, but sooner or later, one of us is going to win.”

And thus begins some absolutely epic chemistry and sexual tension. OMG, my heart was pounding during each subsequent conversation... meeting... flirty phone call... moments up against walls... dirty phone calls... it was all fantastic, and creates an amazing build up to the inevitable.

“This isn't finished— you and I, it's going to happen, Julia. You can make all the excuses you like and try to convince yourself that this isn't a good idea, but if the last five minutes are any indication, it would be the best fucking decision we've ever made.”

OMG, he is so right!

Julia is probably one of the funniest heroines I've ever read. Sassy, sarcastic, and absolutely no-nonsense.

I make no apologies for who I am. You either like it or you don't.

Hell yes, I like it! I absolutely love it! And to top it off, she has a complete lack of filter which is both endearing and hilarious. The book is written entirely from her POV in a conversational style which I loved because her inner monologue is sensational - hilarious witty, and sarcastic and full of 'oh my God, she just said that!' moments that had me laughing out loud.

I have no fucking clue what he sees in her. Maybe she has a cape flying out of her crotch with a giant S on it. That, or she can suck the chrome off a trailer hitch.

Meanwhile, I'm thinking about how he grinned at me when I followed his command to sit back down. My heart skipped a beat or two, and my pulse started to race just from pleasing him. Does that make me a sub?

And holy hell, where can I get me an Alex? Confident, funny, and oh so freaking sexy, the man is pure alpha book boyfriend perfection. He knows exactly how to handle Julia, but he's also got a sweet and charming side that is absolutely swoontastic.

Oh how I love these characters! And together they are sensational. The chemistry is zinging from their very beginning, and it only gets better as the relationship progresses because this book is hot – absolutely steamy hot. And all of that hotness blends in seamlessly with their witty banter, flirting and dirty talk, as well all of the sweet, funny little moments that had me giggling like an idiot.

And the supporting characters add to the awesome. Julia's equally feisty, take-no-crap Cuban assistant/friend, Lisette is fantastic and has some great lines, Alex's ditzzy-ish assistant made me laugh, and Julia's parents are absolutely freaking hilarious. I loved them!

*"If he's anything like the other guys she's brought home to meet us, I give it another week."
"Do you remember that one who wouldn't drink anything all night, even with his food? I mean who doesn't want even a little sip of water to clear their palate during a meal?"
"I remember that one," my dad says. "How about the one who kept going to the bathroom every five minutes? He must have had a serious drug habit."
"He didn't have a drug habit, Dad."
"Oh, so he had the shits then? I'm not sure that's any better, Julia."*

But it's not all fun and games. The sudden reappearance of Julia's ex, as well as a constantly annoying presence in Alex's life lead to all sorts of drama, and although the conflict is frustrating and spirals heartbreakingly out of control, it's resolved relatively quickly and very satisfyingly to give us a happy ending – and there's even an epilogue from Alex's POV – WIN!

So yep, I loved this book! It was such a fun story and one that I will definitely be reading again. I'm really keen to pick up more of Barbie's work.

4.5 stars.

* As a side note, I listened to this as an audiobook, and the narration is absolutely superb! Kate Rudd does an amazing job at bringing Julia to life, and even after I bought the book on kindle so that I could read it in more depth and highlight my little heart out, I continued to listen to her narration as well. It was just that good.

Tessa Teevan says

I promised to have a super stealthy, spoiler free review, so I'm just going to say this. **This book is the bomb. Alex and Julia are one of my FAVORITE book couples and they're super hot together. The writing style that Barbie Bohrman uses in this book is truly phenomenal, and I felt like Julia was my bff telling me her love story personally. Enjoy these gifs that represent how I feel after having read this book.**

I am sooooooooooooo excited!!!

I am so ready for you, Alex!

Catarina says

4 Sweet Stars.

Julia and Alex know each other for some time through Sabrina (Julia's best friend and apparently, a whole other book) and although they both are attracted to the other, neither of them does anything about it and remain good friends. Until the day that changes: Alex asks Julia's help for organizing his niece birthday party and uses that as a way to move things along with Julia. After all its time they both stop pretending. But with those new feelings comes stuff from their past that they both want to forget... and that could put a string not only on their friendship, but also on what they trying to have.

This was a funny and sweet romance, with some steamy moments and very good to read. It had a great sense of humor, which was its best feature, because since this was low on angst and drama, if it wasn't for that it would quickly become boring, and that wasn't the case.

If you're in need of a quick, easy and sweet reading with some laugh in the way, this is definitely the book for you.

Rating: 4 Stars.

Characters Development: I liked how Julia stayed true to herself from the beginning until the end of the book. She didn't change herself for the guy and that was refreshing to see. I really liked Alex too, I liked how he wasn't a manwhore and although not an alpha (meh) he knew what he wanted and did go for it. It also had a great group of supportive characters, especially Alex's niece, Josie, and her fascination for Harry Potter. I was exactly like her in her age!

Steam: Some hot moments.

Sensible Subjects: (view spoiler)

Love Triangle: (view spoiler)

Cheating: (view spoiler)

HEA: (view spoiler)

* Sara Johns* says

I think Alex would be perfect for Julia.. just sayin'

Jen says

5 I Loved Every Minute of It Stars

”We’ve been playing this game for a very long time. And I’m all for playing games, Julia, but sooner or later, one of us is going to win.”

What can I say? I loved Julia and Alex and I loved this book! 5 star reads are few and far between for me but this book hit every single last one of my buttons. The humor was all kinds of good without being over the top and reeking of effort, Alex was hot as hell and I genuinely found myself *liking* and relating to Julia.

But I make no apologies for who I am. You either like it or you don’t.

I first met Julia in Sabrina’s book, *Promise Me* and from the first moment I got the chance to meet her, I knew I loved her. She’s feisty, **loyal**, smart and sarcastic in a way I wish I could pull off. Do I think of sarcastic shit to say pretty much all of the time? You bet! But Julia has the lady balls to pull it off without sounding like a big ol’ bitch. That right there is worth the price of admission, my friends. Usually the heroine in a romance novel has the power to annoy the ever loving crap out of me, depending on the whine it out level of suckitude I have to experience at her hands. Julia not only had me rooting for her and her general badassery, but had me wishing she could come to life and be my new bff.

Does any of this sound familiar? There is a fair young maiden – a virgin, of course, because she’s never had sex in all her twenty one years of living. And before you go off the deep end and start hollering about how there’s nothing wrong with being a virgin, I agree there’s absolutely nothing wrong with it. But in these stories the chick is always a virgin with a magic vagina who apparently has a beacon in said vagina that only attracts tattooed bad boys or roguish millionaires who are without one flaw and sweep her off her feet so they can live happily ever after.

Yes to all of that cliched crap! In the interest of time I’ll just say that I have a huge girl crush on Julia and I’m leaving it at that.

Alex. Mmmmm, Alex! The man, with his occasional dirty talk and his obvious affection for Julia, both as a friend and as something more than that, won me over from the get go. He and Julia started off as friends due to the fact that Alex had the hots for Julia’s bestie Sabrina in the first book, but it quickly escalated from there and the two finally found their way to each other.

This book worked for me in a big way. I *love* a book that can make me laugh without the forced feeling of an author *trying* to make me laugh. Maybe it’s because I already felt like I knew Julia a little from the first book or maybe it was just because I could relate to her, I don’t know. I do know that I loved the fact that Barbie Bohrman stayed true to Julia’s character throughout the entire book. There was no softening of the profanity-ridden language I came to appreciate. There were no “main character suddenly turns into a dumbshit and causes problems for herself” moments. Did I agree with every decision made by the main characters? No. But they all felt real and relatable.

In case you couldn’t tell by the gushing review, I really enjoyed this book. I know I’ve mentioned the prior book in this series written by Ms. Bohrman but this one can most definitely be read as a standalone if that’s

your preference.

Christie«SHBBlogger» says

4.5 Stars

Wow, I had a good feeling about this book right from the start but I was not prepared for how much I would love it. I was expecting something funny and cute but the heat between the MCs was smoking hot as well. The heroine was so awesome I wanted her as a best friend! I felt like I never stopped smiling at her. I want more!!

Candace says

The follow-up book to 'Promise Me', 'Playing It Safe' delves into the story of Julia and Alex. I loved Julia's sassy, independent, personality in 'Promise Me' and could not wait to hear her story. Right from the start, Julia had me laughing hysterically. Her "say it like it is" personality kept the story lighthearted and entertaining.

Alex was a hottie. Although, he did have an irritating cling-on for most of the story, named Marissa. For what it's worth, Miss Teen America did keep the story interesting. She was well-developed as the "girl we love to hate" and every story needs a villain.

Julia's slacker ex-boyfriend, Aiden, also contributes a little drama. This man, who devastated Julia years earlier, was the epitome of the philandering, scumbag ex. Hearing Julia rip him a new one was fantastically entertaining!

It took me a while to get through this one, only because my audiobook listening time was limited to my drive to and from work. Julia's foul mouth was a bit much for the office, but she had me in stitches on the way to work each day. The narration was great also if you're an audiobook fan.

I've been reading a lot of dark stories lately, which I also love, but this was the perfect story to offset those. It was hilarious, witty, sexy and had me smiling from start to finish. Cute, fun read!

Brenna says

OMG, let me count the reasons I LOOOOVE this book....

Awesome characters

Sensational banter

Great dialogue

Alex

Sexual tension

Memorable/well written sex scenes

Alex

That *can't-stop-smiling-right-now* feeling

Julia

It's hilarious

ALEX.

I could go on. But yeah... TOTAL win. And FANTASTIC audiobook. 4.5-5 stars! ♥
