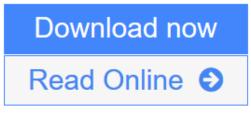


The Rescue Mission

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Playing with dynamite, a guy could get burned...

Given his aversion to love and marriage, Ross Coltrane—an elite soldier and demolitions expert—has no idea how he ended up playing middleman to his kid brother and the estranged wife.

More terrifying is suddenly noticing how sexy his sister-in-law is. He's never been attracted to his brother's wife that way before...

...But he's always had a spark with her twin.

Turns out the identical sisters have pulled a swap and duped everyone around them. Furious much? About to rain down retribution, Ross hesitates. Something about Vivienne Jansen's gutsiness and misplaced do-gooding gets to him. Except, he's not a guy who has feelings.

Enemies become lovers...

Vivienne Jansen's creative solutions work well as an international costume designer, not so well as her family's black sheep. But she's going to save the day, if only her brother's best friend will move his disapproving Alpha-ness out of the way. Chaos theory has always been her modus operandi but falling for the enemy—a guy whose friends call him Iceman—could be the most dangerous thing she's ever done.

Previously titled Stand-In Wife

The Rescue Mission Details

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From Reader Review The Rescue Mission for online ebook

Bronwyn says

3.5 Stars
I voluntarily leave my review for this book.
Entertaining and emotional with touches of humour and mild steamy scenes.
Was looking forward to Ross's book with him being the Ice-man but honestly he was a little forgettable and I felt the romance wasn't the main event in this story with so much going on.
Got to admit that the back story made the conflict between the H and h more believable.
Not usually a fan of so much deceit but really you could see that it was all for the "right" reasons but still, one little lie lead to 10 more!
I liked that it was again set in New Zealand and haven't really read that any based there.
Viv's character is strong and independent and sassy. She is a perfect match for Ross.
Overall a good read and I look forward to the next in the series.

Melanie S says

Outstanding character-driven romance

Stand-in Wife is a superb romantic take on the switched-twins trope, backed up by marriage drama, family conflicts, and wounded-warrior angst. Add in a couple of adorable, nearly uncontrollable kids, a nippy little pooch with the temperament of a junkyard dog, set them all in small-town New Zealand, and let the games begin. Author Karina Bliss handles a complicated plot with subtle humor and enough discipline to keep it all sorted. Her characters are stand-outs, every blessed one, with distinct personalities, hopes, strengths, fears, baggage, and blind spots. They are their own worst enemies, and each others' most staunch supporters. I am utterly charmed by this tale of madly mixed-up good intentions and bad judgements, where love in all its many forms wins out in the end. It would make an awesome movie! My thanks to the folks at Hidden Gems for the ARC, and the above voluntary opinion is strictly my own.

Christy says

A high 4 stars for me, despite the improbability of the identical twin identity swap. As the mother of twins (albeit of fraternal boys), I did like the twin dynamic that she portrayed. I think she did a good job of capturing the blessings as well as the burdens of growing up as half of a matched set.

Miranda says

This one was filled with laughs, drama, lies, sadness, and everything in between. I rather enjoyed it and couldn't put it down. Viv and Meredith are twins. Viv had always felt like she was the twin who couldn't do anything right or messed up everything. Ross is an SAS who survived an ied that has messed up his leg. His goal is to return to being operational so he can have his revenge. When Charlie's mother, Ross' stepmother

suddenly passes, the kids start and the deception gets thicker and thicker. I loved that Viv could stand her ground and fight for what she wanted when she wanted to. It was sad that Ross couldn't realize that he wouldn't be returning to be deployed. I loved this one much more than the first.

Isabella says

A VERY enjoyable read! Viv's character is strong and independent and sassy. She is a perfect match for Ross. The love scene was hot erotic, but so tastefully written. Definately a pade-turner and I'd recommend it to anyone who enjoys a romatic tale with a sharp edge. Thank you Karina!

Elaine Swinney says

I received an ARC copy of this book. When I started it I wasn't sure I was going to finish reading it. I don't do spoilers but I will ask that you give this one a chance. The first few chapters are a little slow and yes it is about twins changing places. It turns into a really good story after Ross finds out what's going on. It's worth you time and effort. Give this one a chance!!!!!

Alison says

I have no idea when or where I got this book!

This was a quirky fun read about adult twins where the single carefree twin Viv impersonates her separated with two children sibling Meredith after Merry breaks her shin. What starts off as a simple misunderstanding by the ex-husband Charlie's step-brother Ross soon spirals out of control.

I liked it because it was set in New Zealand (a bit different), I didn't know they had the SAS in New Zealand, so that was a learning point. Viv and Ross have a palpable chemistry and I adored Merry's domineering daughter Tilly (nicknamed Atilla by her doting uncle because of her bossy tendencies).

I see that this is an old Mills and Boon which has been re-released with a sexy cover (not this one obviously), I think it has weathered quite well (or been updated well) as I couldn't spot any references that would date it.

Overall, this was an enjoyable read and I will look out for the other books in the series as Ross' SAS team mates clearly also have their own stories.

Nicole Helm says

Another Karina Bliss book that I really enjoyed despite some plot choices I usually avoid. Mistaken identity/identical twins is usually an eye roller for me, but I was drawn into Stand-In Wife right away. I also like that even though it's a sequel, the story really is about the hero and heroine, not the previous or to come characters in the series.

What really amazed me about this book was that the hero and heroine barely have any romantic entanglements for at least half the book, but I was still drawn into the story. I wanted to keep reading, and I never sat around and wondered when they were going to finally get together because there was so much going on. Sometimes the plot choices were a little over the top, but I only think that in retrospect, not when I was actually reading it.

I though both Ross and Viv were really brought to life and I cared for both of them even when they were making choices that made me cringe. Their motivation was so clear, and I loved the resolution. It was so... realistic.

I look forward to reading more of Bliss' SAS series.

Susan Becker says

I received this ARC for an honest review.

This is book two in Karina's Special Forces series. This is the story of Viv and Ross. The twin swap has Merry has gone to an interview and has fallen an broken her leg while looking to relocate with a job and her kids. Her Husband Charlie are currently separated. He is living with his mother while they are going through the divorce.

Viv Merry's twin decides she will fill in for Merry while she is in the hospital and take care of the children.

Things get worse when Merry's mother-in-law dies unexpectedly while Viv is pretending to be her. Tilly who is 7 is smart and picks up on the switch and blackmails Viv to keep her secret.

Viv realizes she has been in Love with Ross and she has been since she met him 8 years ago. Viv realizes that the more things escalate between them they come to a heads. When Charlie's brother Ross, who has a history with Vivian finds out the truth there are hurt feelings all around. She get Ross to help her save her sisters marriage.

Over all it was a good read.

Margaret West says

If your looking for a sweet, sexy romance, this is for you. I loved the story line immensely. It had humor, entertainment via the little girl, Tillie's snarky mouth. Vic is trying to help out her identical twin sister whose marriage has crumbled. She stands in for her, while she has surgery for a broken leg in another town. Only to find out she can't fool the dog or Tillie. Viv has been attracted to Ross, her brother in laws stepbrother for 8 years after meeting him at her sister's wedding, but he rejects her advances. Ross was injured while on a mission and his one goal is to get back to health so he can be redeployed. This is a very entertaining read as things begin to unravel for Viv as she tries to play the role of her sister, soon more and more people know of her deceit.. I received an ARCformy voluntary review. I loved it!

Saly says

Okay despite all the drama and the subterfuge involved I enjoyed Stand-in-Wife, it was more of a family thing than a romance.

Viv is the fun twin, the one who is a successful custom designer in New York and her family doesn't really consider her responsible and she and her twin Meredith are complete opposites so when Mer injures herself and has to get a cast she volunteers to help pick up her son Harry. Mer's life is unraveling her husband left her for a kiss she shared with another man, her daughter is acting all pricey and she is scared of losing her kids. So, Viv goes to pick Harry up at Mer's mother-in-law, meets Ross(Viv's sister's brother-in-law and her brother's SAS teammate and friend, the one she hit on at the wedding) and then goes to meet the mother-in-law from hell Linda. Linda ends up dying and Viv after initiating finds out everyone thinks she's Mer and goes along with Ross since he made some threats about custody earlier, a tangled web in one word.

Ross is known as the "ice-man" and ever since he lost his friends the only thing on his mind is revenge and to get well enough to go back for it. He hated his step-mother who he felt broke-up his mother's marriage and was selfish and vindictive. He only loves Charlie even though there are things about him he doesn't like and he's angry at Mer for hurting is brother so he finds it weird to start noticing her now. Soon, he realizes that she's Viv and threatens to out her, but Viv is very convincing and puts the blame on him and Ross realizes that he was partially at fault for colouring his own views on his brother, leading to him moving out and start dating the baby-sitter(though he breaks up with her and is not sleeping with her).

As you can see the book defines complicated but it is fun to see Viv handle the kids, juggle Charlie and living life as her twin. Viv hated being a twin and she and her sister were never close. Viv likes light relationships and doesn't want them for herself since her parents didn't set a very good example and she also has this hurt that people in her family don't trust her.

The book is about Viv finding out some balance with her sister, coming to terms with what she can do and is also about Ross finally letting go of what happened. I enjoyed these two even though they don't come together for a long long time.

Kristiej says

I enjoyed this one. I read it a week or so ago now and need to read the blurb to remember it, but that's more of a case of declining short term memory retention then the book not being memorable.

Ross Coltrane, our hero, was first introduced in Here Comes The Groom. He is part of an elite Special Forces group – think Seals – only a New Zealand company, who were attacked and lost two of their own in Afghanistan. Each surviving member has reacted differently. In Ross' case, he is hell bent on getting himself back into fighting shape and avenging his lost friends. He hasn't time for anything else and holds all feelings in to the point that his nickname is Iceman. His plans are thrown into turmoil though when his step-mother perishes while exacting a nasty revenge on him. He's had a 'fractious' to say the least relationship with her for years, though he is very fond of and close to his younger step brother, Charlie.

The heroine of this book, Vivienne, is walking a fine line. She is a designer in New York, but has taken time out to help out her twin sister, Merry a wife and mother to the nth degree, who has broken her leg and needs

surgery. Her twin is married to Ross's step brother but they are currently separated. Ross is taking his brother's side and Viv, her sisters. In order to help, it's too complicated to go into detail, Viv impersonates her sister and I had a number of laugh out loud moments while reading this book with the complications that come along with this deception. Ross is decidedly angry at his sister-in-law for what he considers a betrayal of his brother and when he thinks Viv is Merry is not the warmest cube on the block. It doesn't take too long though before he realizes it's not Merry he's dealing with, but her twin Viv. Viv, the sister he's lusted after for years.

Viv pleads with him to go along with her plan and he reluctantly agrees to – for a short while.

This book, as I said is delightful and I'm so very happy I discovered this author. She writes believable characters, people you wish were real so you could meet them. I liked this book better than the first one, Here Comes the Groom.

One thing I have to add, please, please, please do not judge this book by it's completely horrid cover. I never would have read this one if I based picks on covers alone. The cover of this one is a real eye sore. So IGNORE it. Please!

Book Binge says

Buying into the plot of this book took a major suspension of disbelief. Vivienne Jansen comes home from New York to check on her twin sister, whose marriage has fallen apart. Meredith has sounded increasingly depressed and Viv is worried about her. She convinces Merry she needs a change and talks her into going to an interview at a new hospital, an hour away, thinking that Merry getting away from her soon-to-be-ex and his new flame will be good for her.

Unfortunately Merry breaks her leg while there. Viv goes to pick up the kids from her mother-in-law's house and runs into her brother-in-law (Merry's husband's brother), Ross Coltrane. Viv had a thing for him 8 years ago and it hasn't fully gone away. Except Ross mistakes Viv for Merry and throws a lot of accusations at her regarding her marriage. Viv gets defensive and doesn't bother correcting him. Then the mother-in-law falls from a stool and dies, with only Viv as witness. She rushes out and grabs Ross and together they try to revive her.

Now Ross thinks Viv is Merry and Viv goes along with it because Ross threatened her sister's custody arrangement. Viv has to fool her sister's husband, kids and the rest of the family. Not to mention juggle two kids and all the household chores - something she's never had to deal with before. In the midst of this her attraction to Ross is reawakened, she's asked to help plan the mother-in-law's funeral and her sister's husband tries to work on a reconciliation...with the wrong sister.

While this plot could have easily moved into "hot mess" territory, Bliss managed to keep it all straight and make it work. Is it likely this scenario would happen? Probably not. But Bliss sold it to me in a way that made it work despite my disbelief.

Ross is dealing with a lot of built up anger over his last mission where two of his team members in the SAS were killed and he was dragged to safety by a third. His one goal is to get back to 100% physical condition so he can be deployed again. He doesn't have time to deal with his half-brother's almost-ex, or the kids, or

any the funeral of his step-mother. Then he realizes he isn't dealing with his brother's wife, but her irresponsible twin sister. Which does, admittedly, make him feel better about the attraction he's been feeling toward her. Or it would, if he could get past his anger at being deceived.

Viv is tired of feeling like a failure next to her perfect twin. Stepping into her life doesn't make her feelings of inadequacy any better, either. I liked Viv's zest for life and the way she tried to see the good in every situation. She was way outside her comfort zone, but she did her best to make it work. I wish she would have stood up for herself sooner and not let herself be so taken advantage of. I do like that she didn't let anyone else get away with anything (ie Ross or her sister's husband).

The romance worked because both Ross and Viv worked on their personal issues throughout the book. This wasn't just a love story, it was also a personal journey for them.

I really loved the family ties of this book. The strong relationships stood out and brought the convoluted plot together.

3.75 out of 5

This review was originally posted by Holly on Book Binge.

Lauren says

Liked it more than the first book!

I had read the first book in the series because I received an ARC on Hidden Gems. I liked the characters and the stories of this group of people, and wanted to see where it would go. I unfortunately didn't get the second book on Hidden Gems, but it was on KU so I decided to get it there. So glad I did!!!

The plot of this book is based around twins Meredith and Vivienne. They are Dan's (from book 1) sisters and Meredith is married to Charlie, who is the brother of one of Dan's SAS troop mates. So you can see how connected all the parties are. Anyway, the twins decided to do a swap and chaos ensues. I found it to be very Rom-Com at times, but other points it was a good romance involving two people who for very different reasons didn't think they could find happiness.

Overall, really liked the book and makes me want to move to New Zealand! This was even better than the first book with deeper dive into more characters in this group of friends, family and former military troop mates.

Leigh says

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