



Behind the Scenes

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Kennedy Smyth's firm provides security for companies and charities in seriously dangerous countries. She doesn't usually take on "frivolous" jobs, but when an old friend asks her to protect his son's movie shoot, she finds it hard to refuse. Also hard to resist is the film's charismatic star, Rogan St. James. The handsome actor piques her interest, while the strange actions of the terrorist threatening the set raise her suspicions.

Even though he's a successful actor, Rogan wants more--a real woman to love, the type he doesn't think exists...until he meets Kennedy. She intrigues him with her confidence and passion for her work, and frustrates him with her refusal to let him get close.

But Kennedy finds herself in a vulnerable position when she discovers that the terrorist isn't actually out to derail the film. She's the real target--and if he finds out how much Rogan means to her, he could be next...

Behind the Scenes Details

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From Reader Review Behind the Scenes for online ebook

Tracy says

An Explosive Package of Suspense, Action, and Romance

Driven by the murder of the elder brother she idolized, Kennedy Smyth has spent a decade building an elite security business with the sole purpose of protecting companies and charities working in dangerous countries. Her team is the best in the world. She's the best of the best.

When a family friend asks her to take a job providing security for his son's movie production, Kennedy wants to dismiss the job as frivolous. She doesn't do frivolous. Plus, she has doubts about the legitimacy of the threats against the director and lead actors, regardless of some of the dangerous rhetoric they've been receiving. Still, there are jobs she can decline, and those she can't, and a personal request from a family friend is definitely one of the latter.

Once on set, Kennedy and her crew are all business, doing their level best to secure the actors and director and make the environment as safe as possible. Complications, though, arise quickly on what should have been a simple job, complications in the form of the actor who is the movie's leading man. Try as she might to keep a professional distance between her and the good looking, charming Rogan St. James, he is intent on pushing through her defenses from the moment he sees her.

If she hadn't already been wrong once, and the danger to the set and the crew hadn't been proven to be all too real...and if she dared to be at all honest, she would be just as interested in him. Not that she would ever act on those feelings. No matter how enticing he is.

Those good intentions may be blown to hell when the job's complications turn critical. The machinations of a determined madman have become all too personal...and are targeting neither the movie nor its cast and crew, but Kennedy herself. If she doesn't stop a deadly foe she can't see or find before he can kill her and anyone close to her, she may lose more than her life, she may lose the man who - despite herself - has become the leading man in her heart.

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Okay, I'm just going to rip that bandage off right away, because I had some issues with this book. The premise for the external plot conflict was a stretch for me. I just couldn't quite buy into the actions and motivations of the Bad Guy or understand why 'they' (as a gender-nonspecific pronoun) would go through the convoluted gyrations 'they' went through to achieve what 'they' wanted to achieve. Because of that, the security job on the movie set and the subsequent introduction of Roman and Kennedy came off as a bit contrived to me after the dust had settled.

I also wish more attention had been given to the relationship between Roman and Kennedy as it evolved. What was there was okay, and I did like them both as individual characters and as a couple, but Roman just didn't seem to be as significant a presence in the story as I would have liked him to be, and the romance arc suffered just a little for me because of that.

There, now that's said, lets get to the parts that I loved, which far outweighed those petty issues. I adored Kennedy as a lead character and love, love, *loved* that she was not only the top of her field in a very male-dominated occupation, but that she started and built her own company around that field. Yes, I freely admit, I

have a wide and large soft spot for kick-ass heroines, but what I admire more in my fiction are women who excel at unconventional jobs, work hard, and command respect for it all.

That she was also a flawed and slightly broken woman still haunted by the death of her brother and was someone who definitely sacrificed a lot to be where and who she is just made it all the better. *Loved* her.

My hat, were I wearing one, would also be doffed for Damschroder for doing such a remarkably superb job creating and executing such an intensely complex security job. With seemingly effortless aplomb, she manipulated and wove together the myriad pieces of characters, setting, and suspense, and produced one of the most detail-oriented and believable scenarios of a realistic security detail that I've read in romantic suspense. Ever. And considering the proliferation of security teams/bodyguard organizations in the RS genre and the number of books featuring them that I've read, that's saying something.

I may not have totally bought into how Kennedy came to provide security for that movie, but I have nothing but admiration and respect for how bloody well written it was once they were there. Everything from the initial preparation of her team to the rising anxiety as the threat level increased to the actions and decisions made as a result of that increased threat worked perfectly for me. It was intense, compelling reading and I adored it.

The secondary characters that made up her security detail, while perhaps not excessively fleshed out, were given enough definition to seem completely individual and believable to me. I do wish Diane had been introduced a little earlier in the story, because I loved her attitude and thought she had a fantastic presence on the page. I would thoroughly enjoy a book that featured her as the lead character. That Damschroder was able to just plop her down, flesh her out, and make her so damn respectable and likable in such a short period of time shows off her impressive storytelling chops.

Without doubt, I thought the scenes surrounding the security detail job were brilliant and the plot - beyond the premise - was chock full of action, suspense, and intense emotion. The characters were well drawn and the storyline packed with enough depth to keep me engaged throughout. I wish the romance had as much emotional impact as the suspense, but what was there didn't disappoint, either. The excellent storytelling and strong characters made for memorable romantic suspense and created for Damschroder a new fan of her writing. I can't wait to see what else she has out there, and wonder what's coming next.

***Disclosure:** An ARC of this book was provided to me by Carina Press via NetGalley. This rating, review, and all included thoughts and comments are my own.*

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Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

Lhenry says

Really liked the role reversal in this - the heroine is the driven owner of a security company and fairly emotionally empty. She protects a movie being filmed and romance between her and the lead actor. I really liked how he really liked her for what she was and was so good for her and also that she grew to a more mature adult in the course of the story. The suspense part was, well suspenseful, with a lot strange attacks and waiting for worse to happen that kept me surprised. I would have liked more details about the movie filming and I thought the ending was a little confused but still enjoyed it a lot

Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says

Originally posted at: <http://longandshortreviews.blogspot.c...>

Kennedy Smyth is in the business of protecting people, but she doesn't like fluff jobs. Which is why she only accepts her latest assignment at the request of an old friend: guarding a movie set. However, what she finds there are quite a few surprises, one of them leading to love.

Kennedy is a perfect example of the current heroine trend - tough, headstrong, and knows how to get ahead in life. She's built her company from the ground up and made it successful. While others may avoid danger, Kennedy takes it head on to keep her clients safe.

She's caught the interest of actor Rogan St. James. He's a successful actor and seems to have it all: good looks, money, and a successful career, but deep down there are things Rogan wants that he doesn't have. Kennedy is now on that list. Despite being a famous actor, the author created a friendly, down-to-earth hero in Rogan. What you see is what you get with him. He doesn't put on an act about who he is, and he's not the snotty type. I really enjoyed getting to know Rogan.

There are plenty of thrills and suspense in this story to keep the pages flying. Many things happened on the movie set that kept me guessing. Each character has their role in the story, and the tension and fast pacing kept me at the edge of my seat. There are times when Kennedy must face part of her past to figure out what's going on.

Overall, I enjoyed this suspenseful and well-written tale. The plot has twists that I never saw coming, and the interaction between Kennedy and Rogan had me rooting for this couple the whole way. If you enjoy an edge-of-your-seat romantic suspense story, then don't hesitate to get a copy of *Behind the Scenes* and allow yourself to get swept into this fantastic novel.

Lori says

The romance aspect was awkward at first with a big jump to wanting to know his opinion when it didn't seem like they'd had more than surface conversations up to that point. That part got a lot better. More importantly, 90% of the book was not related to the romance and was very good, had a lot of suspense and a little action.

Christa says

I thought that *Behind the Scenes* was an enjoyable book with a nice mix of suspense and romance. The main female character, Kennedy Smyth, was a very strong and tough heroine. I found both she and the main male character, Rogan St. James, to be very likeable. Rogan St. James was very much a Beta hero, and his personality was a good contrast with Kennedy's. This book was fast paced and had an interesting and

suspenseful storyline.

Kennedy Smyth's security/protection company provides services primarily for humanitarian organizations that are operating in dangerous places. She is persuaded by a close family friend to oversee security on the set of a movie. It appears that the film set has been targeted by a terrorist organization, and as Kennedy and her team take over the security, several incidents occur. It soon becomes apparent that Kennedy, and not the film, is the target. Lead actor, Rogan St. James, is a very down to earth, caring man, and he is immediately interested in Kennedy. Kennedy knows that anyone she cares about will be in danger, so she tries to keep Rogan at arms length while providing protection and also investigating the attempts made on the film location.

Behind the Scenes kept me interested and was full of action. I liked the characters, and thought the ultra strong heroine and beta hero worked well together in this book. I enjoyed the way that Rogan recognized Kenney's expertise and put his safety in her hands. I look forward to more by this author in the future. I received this book as an ARC through Netgalley.

Anita says

Actual Rating: 3.5 Stars

I wasn't sure what I was expecting when I went into this book, but the truth is, I'm not even sure if the book met my expectations anyway. *Behind the Scenes* is enjoyable and well written, and the characters are all quite unique in their own ways. I liked Kennedy's independent spunk, and her ability to take care of herself. I also loved that she wasn't created to be flawless, but was also able to recognize her own weaknesses so she could work on them. She wasn't cynical about her own worth either, and knew exactly what she was capable of without being overly arrogant. In comparison, Rogan was also Perfect Boyfriend material, being quite... well, perfect in many ways.

These people are all good people, but to be honest, it also makes them a little flat and boring, especially when the story does a lot of small time skips here and there.

Nonetheless, the semi-investigation and the security set-up that took place in the book was outlined really well.

This is, at best, a mediocre, yet quite enjoyable read.

If I had to complain about something, I think it would have to be the romance. Kennedy and Rogan seem to fall in love and start talking serious relationship much faster than I liked. On top of that, people start mentioning how the two of them seem to have something going on. And yet, as the reader, I'm not entirely sure when and where their unofficial courtship began. One moment, they were discussing the terror attacks. One moment, they monologue about their intense attraction.

But then the very next moment, they're talking deep feelings and "meant to be" and stuff like that.

When their relationship starts up for real, though, it was pretty sweet.

The identity of their mysterious terrorist is rather predictable, but probably only because subtle hints were

thrown out here and there. Maybe.

Anyway, enjoyable as it is, this isn't a book I'd reread, but since I DID find it entertaining, I'm not complaining.

Linda says

Kennedy Smyth watched her new recruits and knew who would fail and never come back Owing SmythShield, a security business that provided security for charities and companies in dangerous countries. She scoffed at protecting "frivolous" jobs, but when her dad's best friend asked her to help his son and her childhood friend's movie shoot she found it hard to refuse him.....

Movie star, Rogan St. James grew up in a house where his mom put her job first, it was her job and duty to help abused women and their children get into a safe place. She did her job so well that she put aside her husband as well, so Rogan vowed to never get into a serious relationship until he met Kennedy. Then the major actors starting getting threats from a terrorist group that's out to derailed the movie!!

Natalie Damschroder spins an intriguing story that captures you from thee first chapter! Kennedy tries to fight her attraction to Rogan but the man is like a dog with a bone and she's the bone! She had closed her heart up when her brother was killed and never told anyone that she loved them again including her dad, but as time went on and her resistance to Rogan weakened she found herself fearing for his life and not trusting her training but her heart.

Alicia says

A great book but one that I wouldn't have picked up normally. Thank goodness for book clubs that ship books each month. Kennedy runs a security firm that provides protection for clients, normally overseas. However her latest job is protecting the movie shoot for an old family friend. The terrorism group targeting the film isn't your normal run of the mill group and Kennedy finally realizes that this group is actually after her. She is falling for one of the stars on the set but if she gets closer to Rogan, that just gives the group one more thing to target. Can you figure out who is behind the terrorist group? Will Kennedy and Rogan survive the attacks and be able to pursue this relationship? So many different characters that could be behind the plot to get Kennedy. Fabulous book.

Janis says

Fairly good read. I liked the action scenes, they were well paced to keep you interested. I know its a romance novel but the sex seemed a bit graphic compared to scenes of violence which were quite tame in comparison. Still, worthy of your dollars.

M.J. Fredrick says

I had a hard time relating to Kennedy, but in the end it all paid off! I couldn't click through fast enough!
Awesome action-adventure!

MBR says

Behind the Scenes By Natalie J. Damschroder is the second novel by Natalie that I have tried out, which is set to release from Carina Press on the 31st of this month. Though I have managed to read just two of her novels, there is a theme that rings constant in both her books – you get heroines of the kick-ass variety that drive the story forward and heroes who are a bit laid back than the usual alpha heroes that we all clamor for.

Kennedy Smyth is the owner of SmythShield, a small security company focused exclusively on projects with a humanitarian goal. It had been the death of her beloved brother working in one such project that had kickstarted Kennedy's efforts and it had taken her 10 years to bring SmythShield to its current level and status.

When Kennedy receives a request to monitor the security of the movie shoot of Coming of Day because of terrorist threats that a few selective members of the cast and the director of the film has been receiving, Kennedy's first impulse is to say no and take on a project more related to what she usually handles. But in the end, Kennedy says yes and finds out that she had completely underestimated the level and focus of the threats that have been following in the wake of the shootings since the beginning.

When the handsome and sexy movie star Rogan St. James comes into the picture, Kennedy has no interest whatsoever in pursuing the curl of desire that leaps forth within her. A woman focused on her work and the pressure that it brings to her life is who Kennedy is and she has no intention of changing that anytime soon.

Rogan is a laid back version of alpha heroes who doesn't get as much time as I would have liked in the story. But the scenes that he does appear in, he does make them count and I think Rogan's brand of laid back persuasiveness was exactly what Kennedy needed in order for her to see that sacrificing her whole life for the greater good of mankind isn't all there is to living.

Kennedy who hates showing any sort of vulnerability knows that the first time in ten long years she is in danger of doing just that when bit by bit Rogan invades her thoughts, dreams, desires and then her life until the threats start focusing on the object of her affection. Though Kennedy tries her hardest to keep Rogan at bay, Rogan seems equally determined to do the opposite leaving her with no choice but to embrace his love in the end.

Behind the Scenes is very much an action driven suspense novel with bits of romance thrown in. Kennedy is a tough heroine, who makes it really hard for anyone to get close to her; her worst nightmare being that if she gets close to someone, he or she might be the target of enemies that she has accumulated over the past years. Her focus and intensity when it comes to the job at hand is awe-inspiring and humbling at the same time.

Rogan though he doesn't play an overly major role in the story, turned out to be an endearing and sexy hero

whose intention of never getting involved with an actress or a woman whose too driven goes up in flames when his attraction towards Kennedy develops into something much more than he ever envisioned. It is how Rogan seems to know exactly when to advance and retreat with Kennedy that seals the deal with her. Rogan has reserves of patience and of course the wisdom to let Kennedy be true to herself even when circumstances look pretty harrowing.

I liked the overall premise and the setting of the story. A female heading an exclusive security firm is a novel concept and the constant danger and action that is seamlessly integrated into the story makes for a compelling read. Though I felt that the romance aspect of the novel didn't get an equal amount of attention as the suspense part, *Behind the Scenes* still managed to keep me turning the pages. I felt that unveiling who the villain turned out to be took just a tad longer than necessary because by the time the story hits the last couple of chapters it is pretty obvious who the villain is.

Rated as good read, *Behind the Scenes* by Natalie J. Damschroder is recommended for those who love action driven suspense novels with kick-ass heroines leading the story.

Rating=3.75/5

Original review posted on MBR's Realm of Romance

My quotes included below the review!

Lady Lioness says

So this isn't coming out until Halloween, which is a little over a month away, but Carina Press doesn't have any 'wait until' guidelines over at NetGalley and I'm feeling too lazy to log into Blogger.

I realized when I was almost finished with this book that I tend to think of these books as Carina Press books rather than a Natalie Damschroder book. I figure it's because I've never heard of most of these authors, but then I catch myself trying to compare *Behind the Scenes* to Falke's *Captive*. It's apples and oranges, Self, apples and oranges.

Anyways. The book. The heroine is Kennedy, a security specialist who dedicates herself protecting others. She normally sticks to taking jobs from humanitarian organizations because her older brother was killed while working for a Doctors Without Borders-type group. Due to machinations by her father and old family friends, she gets drafted into protecting a movie set. Kennedy doesn't take the threat seriously at first, but soon learns the bad guys are taking it very seriously indeed. She gets entangled with the leading man, Roman, who then becomes a target for the bad guys.

So. Good stuff. Kennedy is the kick-ass, take charge, type of heroine. She may not be in the military, but she is a soldier nonetheless. Her strategy was smart and she was a good leader. The reader gets a very in-depth look at what being in personal security means. The book also moved along at a very fast clip.

Bad stuff. Next to Kennedy's strong presence, Roman paled. Here's this Brad Pitt-esque movie star and he barely registered. In addition, the relationship development got greatly overshadowed by the action. Damschroder makes it a point of saying that Kennedy & Roman are having nightly chats over a long period of time, getting to know each other, but the reader doesn't get to see any of it. I twigged onto the bad guy's

identity about halfway through, but Damschroder threw in enough red herrings that I wasn't positively sure until the last quarter of the book.

I don't read a lot of romantic suspense so that could factor into my general meh-ness about Behind the Scenes. I admit, I wanted more of the rich and famous lifestyle & less of the screaming and dodging. If you like romantic suspense, I'd rec you give this a try and you'll probably rate it four stars. Everyone else, go read something by Shannon Stacey or Cindy Spencer Pape.

Kelly Willcoxbrackeen says

Natalie Damschroder did it again! She wrote an excellent book that I couldn't put down! Aiding and abetting in my procrastination of my homework again. Wow...a strong lead female character along with a couple very strong female secondary characters. The mystery, action and romance keep the plot interesting to the very end. Never a dull moment happening here. I guessed who the identity of the troublemaker long before the end. The actor, he melted me into a big puddle of hormones. He never gives up on her, even when I just wanted to slap her silly. I recommend for everyone to read this novel. You won't be disappointed. Happy reading my fellow bookworms.

Natasha A. says

Was a good story, but didn't grip me.

Sadie says

I got this book as a First Reads winner. It was an easy read, and was good for a fluffy romance novel. The plot was great and intriguing, though slightly predictable. I enjoyed it and breezed through it. Kennedy was a likable character, though she tended to bug me just a bit when it came to her reason for her occupation and not wanting to sway from that, but that's minor. Rogan was definitely a charmer and not exactly what you would expect. He was definitely much more of a gentleman than I would have anticipated. It was a good story and had a good plot. But here are the reasons I gave it two stars:

1. Of course with most romance books these days sex is pretty much a given, which I don't mind as long as it's *hinted* at. I hate descriptions and find it kind of unnecessary. So there were two incidents where I had to skip over in order to avoid any of those unpleasantries. (Of course I know that my opinion over this isn't exactly the popular opinion, but I honestly don't think it's necessary to go into detail over. You would get the same things from stories if details were left out. But that's my two cents.)

2. There wasn't much swearing throughout the first half of the book, but in the second half it popped up more frequently, such as the "f" word, which is not one of my favorites. It doesn't bother most people, but again I found it unnecessary and other words could have been used or even taking them out wouldn't have harmed the story line.

Diana seemed to come fairly out of the blue and I would have liked a little more in-depth description of Kennedy's past and what not, though I can see how through that style of writing her personality and her

changes are portrayed so I do understand that.

I probably wouldn't recommend this book to my friends just because they share the same views that I do, and I know they wouldn't like to read this, so there's that. Props to Damschroder though; it was a good book other than the few things I didn't like about it. Had they been left out I would have enjoyed it a lot more (even if that labels me as a prude). Thanks for the free book.
