



Under Pressure

Kara Greenan

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In the dangerous world of high profile theft, love is often a fantasy the wealthy and naive are sold. Grifter Sebastian Walker sells love like nobody else, leaving a trail of vacated bank accounts, empty champagne bottles and broken hearts in his wake. The one heart he never meant to break was London's.

Considered by many to be the greatest thief of his age, London favours a minimalist life, devoid even of a surname. He lives for the next job, liberating art from museum walls and prized treasures from collector's vaults. When he and Sebastian collide in Venice on a con to steal a priceless copy of Michelangelo's David, the unthinkable happens: they begin to fall in love.

A long, lonely year later, Sebastian emerges as a new member of London's team of world-class thieves. London knows he can't trust him. Sebastian lies, better than anyone else, for a living. Sebastian wonders how he could ever entrust something as precious as his heart to a born thief. But as they team up for another perilous heist, they discover the true value might not be in the diamonds they're stealing, but in each other.

Under Pressure Details

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From Reader Review Under Pressure for online ebook

Pianka *call me PIU* says

4.5 Stars

This is my first m/m romance with characters involved in high-profile heists. In plain words, they are THIEVES! and I totally loved them. It was like 'Ocean's Eleven' but with less characters and a fiery romance going on in the midst of it all.

London is a thief and Sebastian is a conman and they are a match made in heaven! They meet in Venice while doing a job and a fiery passion like no other ignites between them. They spent a blissful week making sweet and sometimes bed-breaking love before Sebastian abandons London one day with nothing more than a note saying 'Sorry'. Harsh, right? Well, London thinks so too. He has unsuccessfully tried to purge his feelings for the charismatic grifter since then and it does not help when his crew needs Sebastian to pull off a new heist they are planning.

With Sebastian again back in his life, London has difficulties to put his obvious feelings for the man under wraps. Sparks ignite almost immediately but will London get burned again if he surrenders his heart once more to Sebastian??? Read this amazing adrenaline revving and passionate romance to find out!

Wow! This book is just too awesome. I loved the backdrop of a crew planning for a heist. It's their job and they are damn good at it. London's crew are known for their skills in the 'thief world' and they are the best. I loved all the planning and the smooth execution of the heists as well as the police chase after. **It was exciting and reminded me so much of the 'Ocean's Eleven' and 'The Italian Job'**. I love heist movies and reading about one was an awesome experience.

London's crew was like a family who meshed really well together. They had a hacker, a cat-burglar (London), an explosive expert/muscle (a kickass girl she was!) and a mastermind (with a myriad of backup plans on the ready) and adding to that they had a conman who can make anyone dance to his tunes with a mere smile. So yeah, you can guess how exciting this story is going to be.

As for the romance, it was explosive and the best kind of 'push and pull'. After almost a year Sebastian is back in London's life and despite his head telling him that he should not fall under Sebastian's spell once again, London can help but do just the opposite. His heart and body are completely on a different page than his head and that means trouble for London with a capital 'T'. London does not trust Sebastian at all and this leads to some heavy/passionate/steamy encounters with also some pushing, pouting and avoiding. Sebastian has his work cut out for him if he wants London to believe that his feelings are for real and London is the real deal for him. He is a conman but this time his skills to lie and charm is not going to be enough and he has to bring out the real 'Sebastian' to woo his guy for good.

This read was really exciting. It was a good combination of action/adventure and romance. The plot moves fast and I was totally hooked till the end. What I liked was the dual POVs with London's being in the present and Sebastian's in the past as flashbacks to the heist in Venice when they actually get together for the first time. I loved this concept a lot. There is angst here as can be expected but it was not on the heavy side. The battle raged mostly in London's head with few bouts of separation but they were too gone for each other to stay apart for long*wink* They do have an awesome HEA at the end which was all kinds of HOT!

Overall, I completely loved this story. It's Kara Greenan's debut novel and she has done an amazing job. This is the first book in the 'No Pressure, No Diamonds' Series. I am not sure if London and Sebastian's storyline will be continued or if there will be a new couple featured next but one thing is sure that I am gonna read it!

This review has been cross posted at GayBookReviews

Sara says

4.5 Hearts

There is something about a story that has a MC who is a thief that gets me. It's the romanticizing of someone doing something so blatantly illegal and how much they get off on the thrill of it all. Them getting off helps this reader engage in the story and if you toss in a grifter, a professional con man as the thief's love interest well then, just call me a goner. This book, this romance, this heist... I was gone for it so damn fast.

London is a thief, Sebastian a professional liar. Long story short, they'd never work out.

Told in dual POV's as well as past/present storytelling, we get the story of London and Sebastian. As we first meet London, he is doing what he does best... balancing and planning as any young and infamous cat burglar would do when a huge heist is his next job. With his team of intelligent and bad ass misfits (Amelia, Hale and Frankie) they have the perfect plan to steal diamonds but are sadly missing one important piece; someone to distract the guards. When Frankie suggests they call in Sebastian Walker, London throws a fit and crawls out a window. Literally. He is all about taking the high road or at least the highest roads possible to get around town and he wants to get as far away from the idea of being near Sebastian again. Though he doth protest, he does it too much and we get the why of London's unwillingness to work with Sebastian.

You see, London and Sebastian met on a job a year ago in Venice and while the men attempted to stay professional, that didn't last long at all. I love that the story is told in both tenses as we see how the men are today and then we find out what really happened in Venice. We know from London, Sebastian walked away with only a word on a notepad and kinda broke London's heart since he thought they were more than just sex. But after Sebastian walked away, London now wonders if their short term romance was just one of Sebastian's cons.

Goodness. I loved being in both men's heads seeing as how much they are lusting and longing after one another. Getting their first meeting from Sebastian's POV we know there is the bit of hero worship for London as he is well known for his talents and we also know that Sebastian is good at being a grifter because he is devastatingly handsome and loves what he does. Actually, everyone on the team absolutely loves what they do even though it's illegal and that made this so much fun.

Psst... If you are looking for a comparison for this book, this Ocean's Eleven but, well better. To me anyway.

So, there is history between Sebastian and London and while we have the angst in the present, wondering if London will let his guard down to the pleading (seriously, I melt every time Sebastian says, or um, begs Please to London) and the story of why they are in the current position from the past. As we go back and forth, we learn so much about each of these men and why they've become criminals. Both London and Sebastian have less than stellar childhoods though one could argue Sebastian, with his ridiculous name with

the fancy title had it better but that is just surface judgment. Regardless, the push and pull of the sexual tension and trust between these two was amazing. The chemistry was off the charts and the sensuality and just downright sexiness of both of them together, was smoking!

Honestly. There are some ridiculously hot scenes in this book that are totally rimming, I mean winning from every corner of UNF you can think of. I love what London likes and that Sebastian likes doing what London likes because it's hot. Every freaking time it is and good lord, you can't go wrong with the winning. *winks*

The heist is almost another character in this story and it's so detailed, smart and action packed I couldn't get enough. Even the other jobs they do before and the recon so they can learn to work as a team were so entertaining. I mean, who knew running away from cops on rooftops and gondolas could be ultimate foreplay?

We aren't supposed to be seen. When you grift, all the focus is literally on you, that's the whole con.

At the heart of this love story though is the trust between London and Sebastian that has disappeared. Yes, both men are criminals but you have London who is a cat burglar and Sebastian who is a con man. How would it even work for these two to have a relationship??? That lies solely in the artful storytelling of the author and I have to say she knocked it out of the park! I was worried really about them up until that last chapter and then she just knocked me on my ass and made me get way too emotional for a Tuesday at work.

Wow. What a fabulous debut from Kara Greenan. A fabulous start to a new series that I hope has Sebastian and London at each other's throats and in each other's hearts for a very long time.

Bring on book two. I'm ready.

Karen Wellsbury says

I kind of liked this, and then I kind of didn't.

It reminded me massively of the TV series Hustle, very glossy, good plot, great locations but lacking in character development. It was a fun and easy read, but you do have to put your credulity to one side, and accept that things are as they are. One of the characters apparently stole something from the V+A piece by piece, and this is just casually thrown in.

Frustrating

Allwaswell says

On the surface *Under Pressure* is an interesting, heist novel set amidst a Venetian background, but just under the surface is an emotional and passionate romance between two thieves, wary of risking their hearts a second time. London, a highly skilled, adrenaline junkie of a thief, scorns the thought of giving Sebastian, a professional liar and grifter, another chance to break his heart. A year ago, Sebastian left him behind with only a scribbled word, but now they are forced to team up to pull off another risky heist.

The cinematic quality of it was lovely, and the supporting characters gave it an even more emotional pull. The crew surrounding London was more like a family than a band of thieves, and I especially enjoyed the friendship between London and Hale as they both had something so valuable to offer each other.

The romance between ex-lovers thrown together again had such an amazing tension to it. It's the kind of push and pull that many readers will be easily drawn into. And yet there was such an emotional resonance to it that the author skillfully unveils piece by piece.

This novel was such a page turner! From the crew planning the heist, to flashbacks of how London and Sebastian fell in love the first time, to their explosive romance burgeoning again, the action and romance and banter was so fast paced and well written. It made it very hard to put down!

Andreea says

I've been one of the select (lucky) few who got to read 'Under Pressure' in form of an ARC and I am infinitely grateful for it.

The author made the wisest choice in my opinion with running both past and present day **narrative** lines as parallels, the pacing and timing of the two fitting beautifully. Telling present day from London's POV and Venice from Sebastian's is another winning point. We get to see the two main characters through each other's eyes and we learn what their past together means to them at the same time.

Speaking of **characters**, I'd like to point out that the secondary ones stand out on their own. Nobody gets left behind as the story progresses and they're not a team not only in name. London is definitely my favourite, but Frankie is an absolute gem.

The **writing** doesn't get stilted or boring, even when the action moves at a slightly lower pace. Descriptions are accurate enough without being overdone and for my taste that is always a big plus.

This is the kind of story that gets you intrigued and hooked from the get go. 'Under Pressure' has all the makings of a page-turner: love, mystery, action, risk and of course excellent plot and characters.

Heather the Queen of (Smut)Books says

Ocean's Eleven this was not. The heist takes a backseat to Sebastian getting back into London's pants after a major fuck up a year prior. These thieves are supposed to be professional and yet they bicker, pout and throw jealous rants rather than actually communicate and get the job done. Instead they argue and sulk like kids.

Plus there's actually a scene of them sucking each other off after Sebastian got hard with a woman who was a mark, which was a major turn off for me. It's also told in third person present tense and flashbacks. The minute I would start to get used to the present tense, a flashback would occur and knock me for a loop. It felt clunky and jarring. The actual heist that they were working towards...I had no clue how it actually happened as the author focused on them more than the heist. I wouldn't have a problem with it normally but I just didn't feel it here. I was actually a bit more intrigued by Hale and Amelia tbh.

There are a few seriously hot rimming scenes that made me keep reading though. I mean up high up, leaning over a balcony, with a leg up thrown up over the ledge, ass spread and high...kind of rimming. My pervert heart obviously decided to keep reading after that. Ahem.

2.5 disappointing stars.

Simone says

To Catch A Thief...

... starring Cary Grant and Grace Kelly, was one of my favorite movies when I was a kid. I loved this film. Maybe that is the reason why everything revolving around a heist fascinates me, be it a movie or a book. Hence I could not resist when *Under Pressure* popped up on the site of a publisher and of course had to click the download button. And what can I say? I don't regret it.

London is a thief and good at his job. The best, as a matter of fact. A legend, despite his young age.

Nobody knows any details about him and that is exactly the way he wants it. The less attachment, the better. So you won't get hurt when people abandon you, right? He learned that lesson at a very young age, when his mother submitted him into foster care, but kept his siblings. That is why it hits him hard when he thought he had found someone special in Sebastian, a colleague during a planned heist in Venice. He thought he had found someone he could love, someone he could trust, only to be dumped after a few nights of passion, hot sex and something London thought, would be more. Deeper.

One year later. A new heist. A new team. A team, London calls his friends, his almost only friends. When the heist proves not to go to plan, not to be as smooth as they hoped it would be, Sebastian comes in.

Sebastian is a grifter. The son of an Earl, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and because of the wealth of his family and his good looks used to get what he wants. He is able to charm his way into the coldest of hearts and everybody is happy to please him. My initial thoughts were "spoiled brat" and that is true to some degree, but there is more to him than meets the eye. The only problem? When you are used to telling lies left, right and center, nobody will believe you when you tell the truth. Especially not London, who is set hard on revenge, when Sebastian joins the team. Getting it without endangering the heist proves to be difficult.

And resisting Sebastian's charme and the chemistry between them which is still there, even more so...

Obviously, the heist plays an important role in this book...

... but the main focus lies on the relationship of London and Sebastian and their dance around each other. The story, told in British English, is very interesting, albeit a bit slow, and with the setting in three of the most beautiful metropolises in the world, London, Venice and Paris, it is absolutely refreshing. Add great characters to the mix and consider me hooked.

You might ask yourself now, why only four stars and not five, then? For one, *Under Pressure* contains two of my pet peeves: present tense narration and flashbacks. It is virtually two stories in one, the present day when London and Sebastian meet again and one year ago when they met in the first place. Where I adapted to the present tense pretty soon this time - which surprised me the most, because that is something I normally don't like at all -, the flashbacks yanked me out of the story sometimes, even if I understand that they are necessary to comprehend everything, especially Sebastian's motives for dumping London a year ago. On the positive side, because of the flashbacks it did not really feel like the insta-lust/~love that it actually was. We get to know the story bit by bit and that was something I have not experienced before.

Probably it is just me, but sometimes I found it hard to keep track of in which head I was in because for me the perspective changed at whiplash-inducing speed at times. I had to read some sentences twice to know whose thoughts I was reading about.

And then there was the first sex scene, or rather the nonexistent first sex scene... Well, to say I like sex scenes would be an understatement, but I even survived a whole series without real sex scenes. But then there *was* no sex! The first sex in *this* book was off-page and clueless me did not even get it at first. A few pages later (after another flashback) London claimed that he and Sebastian had sex and me: "Huh? When?". I actually had to turn back and yes, there it was. The clue. Don't get me wrong, the following sex scenes were absolutely hot and they so made up for the lack of the first one (just to give you a hint, not to say an apertizer: rimming over a balcony rail. Do I have to say more???), but it was a bit disappointing at that moment, although I know where the author is coming from.

All in all, though, this was a very enjoyable read which I can only recommend and of course I cannot wait to read more about London and Sebastian and the team planning a new heist.

This review has been posted on Dirty Books Obsession

Natosha Wilson says

Such an exciting read. There is the danger of being a thief in a highly stressful situation. There is the danger of possibly being caught. There is chance at rekindling a romance with the one that you fell in love with that in return slipped away in the middle of the night stealing and never returning your heart. There is the hurt and the pain of coming face to face again with that person again and the chemistry still being between you. There is just so much happening in this book that it is definitely not a boring read at all.

Sebastian truly broke London's heart the last time they was together when he left London after their time together in the middle of the night. Sebastian was trying to protect himself by doing so but in the process he

alienated the one person who made him feel alive by leaving the way he did and never getting in touch again. Well that is until the job London and the team he works with needs the extra help and that extra help comes in the form of Sebastian.

Sebastian in some ways acted hurt that London would not readily forgive him when he showed up to help out. I can understand London wanting to try to protect his still broken heart. London has felt what being abandoned in the past was like by his mom when she abandoned him at an early age so to feel that pain again when he finally falls for someone makes him more closed off and unforgiving then he was previously. In a lot of ways I do not blame him for being skeptical of Sebastian's intentions and if he would up and leave again if he was to let him back into his life.

But then there was Sebastian's reasoning as to why he did what he did that made me understand his side also. Both of these men have had different up bringing but in some ways they was alike in the fact that they felt abandoned and alone and felt they had to do what was necessary to protect themselves.

This was definitely an adventurous journey these two men had to take in order to end where they finally ended up. Between the issues with them and the planned heist they was involved in, it made the book that much more interesting. I truly enjoyed this read. I can definitely see this being a book that hits some record sales and ratings.

Was given this galley copy for free for an open and honest review

Ann says

A group of individuals who come together to con and steal from people they think deserve it. This book concentrates on two characters - London and Sebastian. London has trusts issues after Sebastian abandoned him in Venice. The story switches between Venice a year ago and the present day and we gradually come to understand the background to why London seems to hate Sebastian.

Kara has a good flowing writing style. Characters are well formed and scenes are described really well. This is a good original storyline with plenty of surprises along the way to keep you enthralled. This is my voluntary review of a complimentary ARC I received.

Tvshows_addict says

I really love this story and I highly recommend it to anyone who like fast paced stories that are carefully crafted.

You come for the gay romance, you stay for the secondary characters as much as the main ones.

I loved the banter and the high energy radiating from the book. If you liked Ocean's eleven or The Italian Job, you'll love this book. It has a very cinematic quality to it.

I wish the author all the best.

xx, Addy

A. says

Was lucky enough to get an early reader copy of this book, and boy, am I grateful I got that chance.

The way this author sketches a situation is compelling, it's thrilling, and it makes you not want to put it down until you're done. Rather than it solely being an action filled heist story, there is plenty of focus on emotion, on character development, which realness in description makes it different from most books I've read. She has a way of involving both happy, romantic scenes and tension filled moments that move the plot forward, without it becoming boring. It is fast paced and keeps you on the edge of your seats, while you feel deeply for the characters and root for them from the very beginning.

Additionally, there are plenty of side characters, but none of them seem like are unnecessary or redundant: every character has an aspect to them that makes them undeniably them, which is not an easy feat to do. This book is definitely a must-read!

Suburbancowgirl says

This is a really excellent debut novel. It was fun and well written. I was totally invested in the characters. I wish there was a little more action /heisty stuff, only because that kind of thing totally draws me in. The fact that the story was really about the romance, with the action as a secondary plot device really did not detract from the story though.

I am a total sucker (pun intended?) for a good rim job, and there were a few in the book. The sex was written pretty well and didn't come across as basic m/m formulaic smut.

Hope to see more from this author in the future.

Amber says

4 Hearts

There is something so unbelievably seductive and appealing about a criminal that make crime sexy and that is exactly what this story is in a nutshell...SEXY. I really enjoyed this from the beginning. Sebastian and London are appealing all on their own but the side characters are also integral in the story. They also added to the intrigue....Amelia and Hale had me wanting to read an M/F romance and I haven't read one of those in years. I really enjoyed this authors writing style...she gave enough information and detail that you knew she knew what she was talking about and I appreciated that. This was a really great start to a very intriguing series.

Sebastian and London have history. They spent a short but unbelievably passionate time together that left London reeling. When Sebastian disappeared London vowed to hate him forever. Now Sebastian is back and forever is a lot shorter than her thought.

Like before London and Sebastian together are combustible. They cannot deny their attraction nor do they want to. But London doesn't trust Sebastian, who is a known conartist.

Their current heist is dangerous, intoxicating but leaves the team exposed.

The side characters are huge in this story. London relies heavily on his team and they rely heavily on him. Bringing Sebastian in to assist is supposed to make things easier on everyone. I don't want to say too much about the heist(s) because they are incredibly suspenseful. This story goes from past to present and I really liked seeing London and Sebastian then and now.

This was a very well told suspenseful, sexy story and when I say sexy...my GOD...these two get off on danger and the risk of detection and it's incredibly HOT.

I really enjoyed this. Definitely recommend.

This book was provided free in exchange for a fair and honest review for Love Bytes. Go there to check out other reviews, author interviews, and all those awesome giveaways. Click below.
