

Once and For All

Cheryl Etchison

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The Rangers of the 1st/75th fight hard, train hard and play hard. They are physically strong and mentally tough, disciplined and courageous. But all their military training hasn't prepared them for falling in love.

Rule #1: Military and matrimony don't mix.

But if there's one person Staff Sergeant Danny MacGregor would break all his rules for, it's Bree—his first friend, first love, first everything. Maybe he likes playing the hero. Maybe he's trying to ease ten years of guilt. Either way, he'll do whatever he can to help her.

Wish #1: A little bit of normal.

Bree Dunbar has battled cancer, twice. What she wants most is a fresh start in a place where she can find a new job, and where people aren't constantly treating her like she's sick. By some miracle her wish is granted, but it comes with one major string attached—the man who broke her heart ten years before.

The rules for this marriage of convenience are simple: when she's ready to stand on her own two feet, she'll walk away and he'll let her go. Only, as they both know all too well, things don't always go according to plan...

Once and For All Details

Date : Published May 24th 2016 by Avon Impulse

ISBN:

Author: Cheryl Etchison

Format: Kindle Edition 371 pages

Genre: Romance, War, Military Fiction, Contemporary, Contemporary Romance, Military Romance,





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From Reader Review Once and For All for online ebook

E-Reader Addict says

There's just something about a second-chance love story that I find myself unable to resist. Maybe it's the scene where the man finally says "I messed up, but I've never stopped loving you." Maybe it's the moment when the woman decides to forgive the man and love him again despite how badly she was hurt before. Either way, I just can't get enough of these stories, and *Once and For All* satisfied me on so many levels.

Aubrey and Danny grew up together, even lived across the street from each other. In seventh grade, Danny made his move to make Bree his, and they were together until the end of their freshman year of college. Then Danny left Bree behind to join the Army without any explanation, and no goodbye. She was devastated. And in the past ten years, while Danny has been fighting the Taliban overseas, Bree has been waging her own personal war against two bouts of cancer. She's trying to be upbeat and positive, but she no longer has a job and is living with her parents. Seeing Danny again has her flustered and reliving the pain he caused.

When Danny sees Bree for the first time in ten years, she doesn't look like her usual self, and he can tell something isn't right. Their reunion doesn't go well. But he's never stopped loving her, and when he discovers she's wanting a break from her life, he blurts out the first thing that comes to mind to help her out. "Let's get married!"

I loved so many things about this book. The characters were great - the main ones and the side characters. From Danny's older brother, who is both his best friend, but also protective of Bree (and later becomes her confidant), to Danny's regiment, all added extra depth and color to this story. Bree was a sweet and strong heroine, and I loved how determined she was to pick herself back up after all the heartache she'd experienced the past ten years. So many times I felt her heartache, too.

I'm not a big fan of majorly angsty stories, and thankfully this book was low in the over-the-top dramatics. I was concerned there would be other woman conflict, since Danny apparently had a reputation for being quite the player (in fact, when we first meet him he's sneaking out of a woman's house, and he doesn't even remember her name...), but there wasn't. And Danny and Bree actually talked about what happened in the past. What they didn't do a good job talking about is their feelings for each other now and what they both wanted for the future. But if they had done that, there wouldn't have been much to the book - you gotta have SOME angst, after all.

It's rare that I'm impressed with an author's first book, but I am with this one. For starters, there were very few editing/proofreading errors (YAY!). The writing was really good. The plot moved along at a good pace. In fact, I started this book after dinner and read it all the way until the end - I was that drawn into the characters AND the story. The characterization was really good, and the backstory for Bree and Danny was compelling and explained enough that I could understand why they were still hung up on each other, even after ten years apart. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing them fall in love with each other again. And when an author can get me so invested in secondary characters that I want to drop everything and keep reading the series, that's the sign of a good author. If you'll excuse me now, I'm going to sign off and start reading Michael's story!

Maida says

3.5 stars rounded high. It's a sweet second-chance story between childhood sweethearts with a marriage of convenience storyline thrown in. Overall, a good book with some nice heart-tugging scenes. I especially liked the parts particular to military procedures like those a single soldier has to put together when he recently got married. Been there, done that. If I have a criticism, it's that everything is even keeled, not much highs and lows.

Nelle says

I got to meet Cheryl at a KissCon on my birthday this year. I picked this up then and came home and immediately read it. I have a love of military stories and this one caught my attention and didn't let go.

Danny seemed brusque and rude at first. But you could tell from the beginning that these two were meant for each other. This was an emotional journey.

Debbie I Heart YA Books says

Oh, this is when I wish I could rate a book all the way up to 10, because Cheryl Etchison definitely deserves a perfect 10 for Danny and Bree's love story. Once and For All is an awesome, emotional romance. It's full of high and lows, taking readers on a hold-on-to-your-heart rollercoaster ride. Danny and Bree's romance begins as a friendship. Friends to lovers, and then lovers to enemies. Which then in turn becomes a marriage of convenience, with a forever, happily ever after in their future. Danny and Bree's fiery, passionate romance is an intense love shot straight to the heart. Sexy Ranger/Staff Sergeant Danny grabbed my heart strings and the man did not let them go.

Bree hadn't seen Danny for ten years. Ten Years since he walked away from her and shattered her heart into a million pieces. And to top it off, she had to find out from Danny's roommate that he had packed up and left college, and most of all left her. Now Danny's back...the boy she has loved her entire life, and the man she has hated for a decade. The boy she knew is now a man, a very gorgeous man, and she still has no reason as to why he left her 10 years ago, but he does have a proposal for her: a proposal for a marriage of convenience.

Danny knows he messed up royally 10 years ago with Bree, the love of his life. Danny has lived with his own guilt and heartbreak for the decision he made, but when he discovers that Bree has had cancer and beaten for the second time, Danny sees his second chance with her. He's not sure what kind of a second chance, but he takes what Bree will give him, and if he can make Bree's life a little better and maybe his guilt, then he'll settle for that. But Danny knows he wants more.

Danny and Bree's marriage of convenience is either their second chance for getting it right this time, or will history repeated itself when it comes to these two? I loved every delicious twist and turn with Danny and

Bree's insanely crazy, beautiful romance. I highly recommend Once and For All as a must read.

Kristina Birch says

New author for me and I was not disappointed! This military romance has it all: marriage of convenience, second chance romance, suspense, humor, and heart. I can't wait to read the next one.

Le Ann Foster says

??Reviewed by Hooked On Books and CherryOBlossom Promotions ??

I gave this book 4.5 stars!

Wow for a debut novel, Cheryl knocked it out of the park. I was hooked from the first meeting in the story to the last at the beach. I absolutely fell in love with Bree character, even though at times I wanted to strangle her. Danny, Danny, Danny....Your Hot as sin, Alpha Male and a Army Ranger! Your definitely a triple threat!

Bree and Danny were high school sweet hearts. Their freshman year both of their world's came crashing down. Fast forward 10 years. Bree has beat Cancer A\$\$ twice and is tired of everyone looking at her like she might break. Danny is home from leave and finds out that his brother and dad has been keeping secrets. When he learns about Bree he wants to do something for her, so he suggests they get married. When things start to fall back into place, one call, one email changes everything. Can these two survive?

You will be on an emotional roller coaster with these two, you will think one thing and then it will be totally different. I love Cheryl writing style and can't wait to read more.

Kristina says

Winner of the 2017 RITA Award for Best First Novel, this is an absolutely brave and stunning first novel!

Bree, who has survived two bouts of cancer just wants to get back on her feet and out from under her very protective mother. Staff Sergeant Danny, who walked out on Bree ten years ago, bumps into her in a grocery store and can't believe how much of her life he's missed. Then he does something even he almost can't believe, he offers her marriage as a means to an end. She'll have insurance, a new home in a new city, and a fresh start. Desperate enough for that new life, she takes him up on the offer. Soon however they both start dreading their eventual divorce.

One of the first things that struck me about this novel was the bravery of Cheryl Etchison to write a woman like Bree into not only a romance novel, but Cheryl's *first* novel. I've honestly never read a romance novel with a woman who faces the uphill battles that Bree faces. It was at once both refreshing and heartwrenching.

Now the romance: I loved Bree and Danny as a couple. From the first you can see that despite the years Danny has cared for Bree even if he wasn't with her. His first instinct on seeing her after all those years it to protect and comfort her. Bree being mad at his abandonment however, runs at first. Being friends since early childhood though she hears him out and opens herself to forgiving him as only lifelong friends (and people who have survived tremendous odds) can do. It was amazing watching them open up to one another again and find the love they both thought they'd lost.

In between all the romance I found the military life Cheryl portrayed to be incredibly realistic without being overly technical. She was able to write the men's excitement of the adrenaline rushes to the women waiting at home with equal heart and played off both emotions well in the story.

WARNING: I read the last 15% through a haze of tears... have tissue handy.

Jultri says

This author is new to me and I came across this novel while browsing through random books for inspiration. This is a surprisingly good book, well-written with excellent dialogue. After ten years of managing to avoid each other's spheres, Bree Dunbar bumped into her childhood friend and first love, Staff Sergeant Danny MacGregor of the Rangers. She is recovering from her second bout of chemotherapy following her recurrence of ovarian cancer. He is back home from leave. After the initial awkwardness, they reconnect as old friends, but there is a lot of unanswered questions stemming from the abrupt manner Danny walked out on Bree and their youthful romance all those years ago. Within hours of them meeting again and Danny learning of Bree's cancer fight and the financial strain which forced her to move back home with her parents, he proposes a marriage of convenience in name only. She gains his generous army health insurance benefits and gets to essentially housesit his abode, while he is away on his frequent missions. The plan is for her to stay for as long as she needs to bounce back from the treatment and get back into the workforce, at which point she can walk away with no strings attached. Of course, the best laid plans can and will go awry when there is a a lot of intense emotions, passion and history between them.

Amy says

Good debut novel. I liked the writing and the voice. Sweet love story!

Bree has battled and survived cancer twice but it has done a number on her life. No job, no hope of one as long as any perspective employer thinks it will increase the company's insurance premiums, she has no choice but to live with her folks and not have a life of her own. Not only that, but she feels like everyone thinks of her as being sick rather than being a survivor. Her greatest wish is just to be able to live her life, get a job, get back to normal, and unencumbered by worried watchful eyes. She knows they all mean well but she's a grown woman and wants to live her life, her way.

When Danny comes home on leave...the first in a very long time...he discovers the girl he left behind has had one rough time of it. When he thought she'd moved on, he did. He joined the Army and chose a new life, one that didn't include Bree Dunbar but now he wants to help her. He wants to give her what she wants most...her life back. With an offer of marriage, he wants to help her get free of her life as it is, start over, and get back to living a normal life. When she's ready, he will let her go, if she wants, free to live her life, even

explore love with someone new if she wants. Only once they start spending time together, he knows he wants her only to spend her life with him.

Orders take Danny back into action and an email gives Bree the chance to get what she wanted, but then everything changes in a blink of the eye.

ONCE AND FOR ALL by Cheryl Etchison started out a bit awkward and I wasn't sure I was going to like this story but then I saw the friendship that exists between Bree and Danny. I understand this story. I understand Bree's feeling trapped in her life and understand her accepting Danny's offer of rescue. I had to laugh when Bree says, "If it weren't for bad luck, I wouldn't have any luck at all" because I say that same thing all the time, which is why I could connect with Bree. I've never had cancer, but I understand completely your life no longer being your own.

It is the life-long friendship growing into an adult love that made this story so wonderful. The characters are real and honest. Although, I was a bit put off that it took Bree so long to talk to Danny about her cancer but admittedly, in the beginning of their marriage, it wasn't important. I appreciate his acceptance and caring for her, even after a decade apart. They may have split in their romantic relationship but their friendship was one that would last a lifetime, and all really good love matches are based in friendship first and foremost.

I truly recommend ONCE AND FOR ALL, book one in the American Valor series by Cheryl Etchison because it's a real romance, even if it starts out a little wonky, and a little unrealistic, it's real and it's special. Cheryl has a wonderful voice and a talent that I think will take her storytelling to greater heights. I look forward to reading more from this debut author. Maybe brother Michael, will get his story too.

***eCopy provided by author and publisher in exchange for an honest and unscripted review.

KAS says

This book had me immediately hooked. A romantic, emotional story about Bree and Danny meeting up again after ten years apart. Danny had left Bree without a word back in college to join the Army and now finds out she has been battling with cancer. These were well developed characters I truly cared about and the story flowed with great conversation. 4.5 STARS!

I liked how life as an Army Ranger and the wife of a Ranger were depicted accurately, as I myself am married to a former Army Ranger. Not being able to be more than two hours away from post and getting phone calls in the middle of the day or night, where your husband takes off for days, weeks, months at a time happened all the time, and you as the wife, have no idea where they went. Ranger wives are also a very tight knit group of women.

I am excited to read the next book in this series about Lucky James, who is also an Army Ranger! Hooah!!!

Jeffe Kennedy says

Very much enjoyed this RITA® Award winner for Best First Book. A charming and touching contemporary

Cocktails and Books says

A good book, but I wanted a little more from this story. Their jump from marriage of convenience to back in love with each other was quick. There so much that happened during the 10 years they weren't together that is made it hard to believe that in a few weeks everything came back.

Liz says

Took me a little while to get into this book but once I got past the first few chapters I couldn't put it down. I loved the marriage of convenience angle of this second chance romance. Such a romantic and full on emotional read. Danny and Bree certainly captured my heart, I'm looking forward to reading more in this series.

Kari says

I read this book in one sitting. I'm a sucker for second chance/friends to lovers stories. The couple on this book was so cute together. I loved what Danny did to help Bree out. I was rooting for them the whole time. Definitely a book to check out!

Carol-Ann says

This love story touched my heart for obvious reasons. This couple staff sergeant Danny MacGregor and his friend and first and only love Bree Dunbar they had both been on a rollercoaster of a ride there feelings for each other has strong has ever. Loved there chemistry and the history they had together and a love worth fighting for!! I'm so glad that I picked this book to read, I can't wait to read the next book!!