

Bad Habit

K.A. Mitchell

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Bad Habit K.A. Mitchell *Bad in Baltimore: Book Six*

Life is always looking for ways to screw you over. Scott McDermott survived the foster care system and knows better than to let anyone close, but Liam Walsh is his one vulnerability.

Twice Scott let down his guard, and twice Liam vanished from Scott's life.

So when Scott comes face-to-face with Liam for the first time in six years, he punches Liam in the nose. Only after Scott's friend—and Baltimore County police officer—Jamie reads him the riot act does Scott discover that in the intervening years Liam has been to war and lost his leg.

Liam hasn't had the easiest life either. He took care of his drug-addicted mom when she was unable to take care of herself. He's fallen in love with Scott twice, but when Liam saw Scott going down the same path as his mother, he left. The lesson that he can't save everyone has been a painful one for Liam to learn. Maybe what he and Scott had can't ever be fixed.

Scott and Liam have never fallen out of love—which becomes obvious when they start working together—but what will make this time any different from all the others? Will the third time really be a charm?

Bad Habit Details

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Ele says

In any other case the lack - or more accurately, avoidance- of communication between the characters would have annoyed me. I also think that the reason Liam left Scott six years ago was not explored enough, it was barely touched. But OMG the connection between these two MCs was like no other, and the the tension was off the charts. It also speaks volumes that despite the fact that it has been YEARS since I read the last Baltimore book, I remember every single character very clearly.

I'm extremely happy that there are going to be more Baltimore books! K.A.Mitchell is definitely back in the game.

Sarah says

3.5 stars - I was given a copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads.

This is an angsty, gritty second chance romance. Liam and Scott's intense relationship started when they were in care together as teenagers. When they meet again as adults they must decide whether they can ever get past their baggage and be together.

I think this might be the darkest book I've read in this series. The book starts with Scott homeless and Liam tangled up in personal baggage. Life has been difficult for both men and the author doesn't offer easy solutions. Scott's temper makes him a difficult character to like and Liam isn't an easy character to get to know. The story isn't all dark though. Hope comes through Liam's music, Scott's new job and a group of supportive friends.

While I like Scott and Liam as a couple, this is a fairly unconventional romance. There is chemistry between the men but furtive hookups in grotty back rooms and cars aren't terribly sexy. Neither is Scott's poverty or his slightly twisted values (fancy classic car before everything/everyone else?). These two have lived hard lives so the lack of emotional intimacy makes sense - but it also doesn't make for great romance. I engaged with Scott and Liam but I didn't love their story. However, it might be a book that I would react differently at another time.

This book doesn't stand alone and even though I've read some of the books in this series, I was struggling at times because I haven't read all of the previous stories. There are several scenes featuring previous couples that I had no idea about. New readers would be better off starting with the first book and reading the stories sequentially.

Elsa Bravante says

Me gustaba mucho la idea, pero no me ha convencido nada la ejecución. Creo que le ha faltado intensidad y ternura, por el tema el libro debería transmitir esto y conmigo no lo ha conseguido. Me he aburrido a

momentos, y en otros me ha costado entender algunas actitudes de los personajes. Scott, al que describen como wild y feral, con problemas de abandono y que de forma tan rápida perdone el abandono más cruel... Entiendo perfectamente el perdón, además todos reaccionamos de forma distinta, pero esa rapidez no me ha parecido muy coherente con la forma como es presentado el personaje. Puede que sea yo, pero no me ha convencido nada la historia.

Kris says

I received a copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads

I'll start my review again by saying I really have enjoyed this series thus far! #6 is about a couple of guys that I really didn't remember much from the series. I dont know if that's my bad memory or the author's lack of making them known more in book #5? You know how you mostly know who's story is coming up next at the end of the previous book? Well, I had no clue. So, being new to Scott & Liam I went into the story pretty blind. Which wasn't really a problem, their story could even be read as a stand alone. Although, as in the previous books, all the boys we've grown to know & love are present in small ways and along for the ride in this story. Which is very nice, we all like our old favs to pop up here & there! EXCEPT when they're all in a scene together and I'm struggling to tell who is who? There was a bit of past character overload during one breakfast picnic scene and I became confused as to who was speaking. Other than Eli, as he seems to be easy to remember as the flamboyant goth boy glue to the whole batch of Bad in Baltimore's boys.

I found Liam & Scott's story really nicely told with great past history, old hurts and new redemption. I found Scott to be the bad boy with the heart of gold! Along with Liam, who is Scott's lost love, a wonderful second chance at happiness in a life of abandonment and hurt for them both. Liam had some growing up to do and he redeemed himself well in my eyes and Scott's. I thought their romantic trysts to be lightning strike electric and steamy summer nights hot! Thoroughly enjoyed their story!

Ayla says

4.5 stars

Oh, this book gave me feelings after just the first chapter! I will be honest in that anytime I start a book and it says "... years ago", I sigh. I do not know why but I just want to get to the good stuff already in books! But this chapter, this set up everything for this book. It set up these characters so perfectly and it gave me all the emotions. It set the stage for who these characters were and gave us the perfect amount of background to really understand Scott and Liam.

There is so much I could say about this book and so much that I cannot say. It was heartbreaking and beautiful. The characters were grumpy and sassy and chaotic but endearing too. Scott and Liam were loyal. They seemed to hate each other at times but they were loyal to each other as well.

The writing was emotional. There were certain parts that I just read three or four times before I could go on to the next section. The words did not come easy between these two characters. With Scott being as grumpy and jaded as he was, we had to read between the lines some. But even with that, the chemistry between these guys was insane. And of course, the sex scenes were hot hot hot. I cannot wait for more from this series!! I hope to see some Reeve and Marco stories in the future!

Natalie says

4.5 Excellent addition.

I was thrilled to see a new Baltimore book coming out for a favorite series from K.A. Mitchell, just one among her amazing variety of works. It's a fantastic second-chance romance that's not so easy to rekindle. I'm fond of edgier characters and Scott rocks a tough guy exterior and attitude to go along with his explosive temper but hides a guy far more perceptive and soft-hearted than he appears. Liam is a pleaser, with a strong need to be liked that too often conflicts with his own needs. Liam's life has altered drastically since ghosting Scott 6 years before, losing a leg while in the military and carrying a load of guilt that seeing Liam just adds to. He's also got a boyfriend but let me reassure you, there's no cheating of any kind. Scott is in a world of financial trouble, leaving him homeless and his less than tactful honesty leaves him jobless. Luckily he knows Jamie, who promptly introduces him to the entire gang from the previous 5 books. Eli is his usual snarky self and Tai and Beach are quite a revelation for Scott. Dual perspectives went such a long way to build Scott and Liam into the kind of couple I couldn't help but root for.

I liked Scott far more than Liam actually, in spite of the fact he punches Liam as the story begins. It's not slow burn exactly but it takes time until they even try to be together, so it felt more authentic. Liam's lost leg wasn't made into a huge issue, it's all about Scott wanting him not to have to be dependent on anyone and figuring out logistics. It's a lovely touch of hurt/comfort strengthening my interest in the outcome. The bar where Scott ends up working offered great secondary characters, like Chai and her brother Reeve among other peripheral figures. I can't stress enough how much I enjoyed the way the rebuilding of trust and love unfolded around interaction with people who slowly become found family and close friends. Steamy scenes are plentiful, from tentative and tender to frantic and forceful. Then there's the way that Jamie, Eli and Quinn work their way under Scott's guard and past his pride that was perfectly paced and never overwhelmed any part of the story. This can be read as a stand-alone, except you won't be familiar with the history of previous characters. I strongly recommend this one for low-angst and highly satisfying romantic feels. K.A. has promised more novels in the series and I can't wait!

An ARC was provided by the author, publisher or a promotional service and I have chosen to publish a fair and honest review for Jessie G Books Reviews blog

Cleo says

Meh. I've read all 6 books in this series and I keep thinking that I'm done with the series, but I keep coming back.

I had two big problems with this one. First - serious showing vs telling discrepancy. The book kept telling me how great the two protagonists were for each other, but I didn't see a lot of evidence of that, aside from the scorching hot sex. In particular, people in Liam's life were concerned about him getting back together with his volatile ex who a) punched him in the face when they first reconnected and b) kept getting fired for

losing his temper at work. Liam's reasons and excuses for why Scott was the one sounded like pretty textbook red flags. I was totally team Liam's mom here. I don't have a lot of confidence they'll last as a couple.

Second (and this is my personal quirk) - TMI about everybody's sex lives. Ugh. La la la, not listening. There are a lot of cameos and supporting roles by characters from other books and there's more public discussion of some of their sex lives (in front of acquaintances not bffs) than I'm comfortable with.

Amazonaute says

Gritty. Complex characters. Only Mitchell could get me to emphasise with these guys.

Sandra says

I LOVE this series!

Bad Habit is the sixth book in the Bad In Baltimore series, and where I thought the author was done writing more books, I was pleasantly surprised when this showed up.

Scott and Liam were both in the foster care system and fell in love as teenagers. Separated, but then reunited, they lived together while Liam worked and Scott attended college, but then Liam vanished again overnight, leaving Scott to pick up the pieces.

It's been six years. Scott is now a paramedic, and while he's at an event, he comes face to face with Liam for the first time since Liam took off. And Scott's immediate reaction is to punch the guy in the face.

Understandable, amirite, but also bad move. Scott get the riot act from Jamie, the cop from book 3, and then realizes that he's just punched a military vet who's lost his leg while deployed to a war zone.

It's clear from the start that neither Scott nor Liam ever fell out out love, as the connection between them is as strong as ever.

This is also where this book took a slight turn into a territory I'm not super fond of in my romance reads. (view spoiler)

While this book can be read as a standalone, it would be beneficial if you've read the previous books in this series, as many of those characters make an appearance here, without much of an explanation as to who they are.

Once Liam and Scott are together on page again, their story really takes off, as they must learn about the other all over again, and deal with some lingering trust issues. As Liam comes clean about his reasons for ghosting on Scott, their romance is all systems go.

There be snark and humor, and there be angsty moments. There be sexy times, and there be intimate moments that really showcase their connection.

I wonder now if the author has planned more books in this series. If so, sign me up!

** I received a free copy of this book from its publisher in exchange for an honest review. **

Tracy~Bayou Book Junkie says

4.5 Stars

I haven't read all the books in this series because not all the themes, BDSM and whatnot, appeal to me, but for the most part the ones I have read, I've really enjoyed and Bad Habit was no exception.

Truthfully, I wasn't so sure I'd like it at first. Scott seems like a complete ass, well, okay he kinda is an ass, and Liam has a boyfriend, so I almost closed the book, but I'm glad I decided to stick it out. While, as I said, Scott is an ass, there was also something endearing about him that touched me and his backstory, both of their backstories really, were heartbreaking. Together these two men set the pages of my iPad on fire. Their chemistry was explosive and even with Scott being rough around the edges, they were perfect together and complimented one another.

Like the rest of the stories in the series that I've read, the story was emotional, but it's filled with comic relief that had me chuckling out loud as well. I loved getting to catch up with some of the previous couples and I'm looking forward to seeing more of all of these guys in future installments.

This was a well-written and enjoyable read and as much as I wanted a happy ending for Scott and Liam, I wasn't quite ready to say goodbye to them yet. Definitely recommendable!!

copy provided by author/publisher in exchange for an honest review

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

4.5 *stars*

Bad Habit is the latest installment in K.A. Mitchell's wonderful Bad in Baltimore series. The previous book in the series was released about three years ago from Samhain, and the entire series has since been republished by Dreamspinner Press. I read all the others in the original publication, so it has been a while since I caught up with this series and I was a little worried that I would feel out of step with things with so much time in between books. But despite not remembering all the details of this ensemble cast, I did find myself easily falling into things with this latest installment. For those of you who are new to the series, I would say that Scott and Liam's story stands alone well. Scott appears as a side character earlier in the series, I believe, but I didn't remember him and had no problem jumping in. However, there is a large ensemble of past characters from the series who are involved as side characters here, some playing a pretty signifiant secondary role as friends and sort of gay fairy godmothers to the guys. So knowledge of the other books is a

bonus for sure.

This book is such a perfect lovers reunited story. From the minute we see them together, Liam and Scott just crackle with chemistry. There was never any doubt in my mind that these guys are meant for one another. There is almost a palpable longing for each other, even as Scott tries to keep some distance at first. They love each other so fiercely and fit together so well, it is hard to imagine either one with anyone else. Scott is prickly and edgy and Liam is the balm to his soul. You can just feel how he relaxes and eases in Liam's presence. And for Liam's part, while he seems to have things a bit more together on the surface, he has his own struggles and Scott is fiercely protective and determined to see him succeed. He has the right balance of helping to care for Liam, but also giving him independence and helping him find his own inner strength.

Read Jay's review in its entirety here.

Annie Maus says

After thoroughly enjoying *Bad Boyfriend* (which is the second novel in K.A. Mitchell's Bad in Baltimore series,) I was finally able to find an open schedule slot to nab the most recent and sixth installment, *Bad Habit*. Boy was I reminded what a treat I've been missing. It's chock full of secondary characters, from Mitchell's previous books, who are so enticing I'll need to go back and catch up. Luckily, *Bad Habit* reads well as a standalone.

I love how Mitchell consistently creates fully developed characters. Scott and Liam are men who loved each other as teens in the foster care system, again as young adults, and now, by chance, meet in their late-twenties.

Readers quickly learn Liam, a paramedic, left Scott, a mechanic, without explanation. Scott's life has gone downhill ever since. "Scott had spent six years killing and burying every stupid soft thing Liam had dragged out. Hope and love and belonging," Mitchell informs us. What readers don't know is how, and if the men can, or should get back together.

It's hard to create a character readers love to hate. And, after thousands of gay romances, it was amazing to encounter a unique personality. But Scott, who hits first and thinks later, literally in Liam's case, is the guy we've always avoided. How could he possibly attract us?

Mitchell paints Scott with such dignity and honor that Liam, who is smarter, more polished and more "stable," finds himself playing catch-up. Even though he lost a leg in the Army, Liam knows he's had way more opportunities than his buddy. Yet Liam, recognizes that he dreads their reunion, as much as he longs for it, and thinks, "It had nothing to do with PTSD or jeeps... (Liam would) chase something, like getting out of foster care and back with his mom, becoming a doctor, or being able to drive again, but the closer he got to having it, the less he seemed to want it."

Except for music and Scott. Can Liam stop running (tough with a prosthesis) long enough to take responsibility for his own needs – much less Scott's? Will he stop lying to himself and pursue his passion with the band where he sings?

In a few succinct sentences and with many playfully, aggressive feints, Mitchell presents two men on edge, men who can only love by finding an equal with whom to tussle. They each must be with someone strong enough, sufficiently trustworthy, to share his well-earned rage.

Here's another delightful element. Readers often know what happens before we know why it did, like why Scott strikes Liam, how Liam lost his leg, etc. It's an exciting format which parallels their personalities, as if life was always one step ahead of them.

And yeah, I've often felt that way. Thus, I identified with men I wasn't even sure I'd like! Wow! Good writing!

Here's another example of brilliance. After their initial confrontation, Scott apologizes because he hadn't known about Liam's prosthesis when he hit him. Liam's retort? "'So you're only sorry about hitting me because I'm down a leg?" Isn't "down a leg" a million times better than other phrases. Get used to it. *Mitchell's dialogue is pitch-perfect*.

In other words, *Bad Habit* will become my good habit. I've now downloaded all the other novels in this series on my to-be-read list. What fun!

Cadiva says

Full review tomorrow.

Right, here we go. All the way through reading this book I had such a sense of deja vu but it's a new release so I think I must have just picked up more on the snippets of this story which K.A. dropped into the previous book because I felt like I *knew* Scott and Liam intimately!

While this book on the face of it, is hugely angsty, for me it actually felt way less angsty than a lot of the others in the series. In spite of their troubles, I knew Scott and Liam would make it, they'd be able to move through their traumas and find a way to start again.

I loved both characters, fundamentally flawed but so powerfully strong when they were together. There's also loads of guest appearances from the rest of this ragtag group of *queer family* and I loved seeing Eli bossing them all around.

Great addition to the series.

#ARC kindly received from the Publishers Dreamspinner Press in return for an honest and unbiased review

Susan65 says

The Blogger Girls

I am a big fan of reunited and enemies-to-lovers stories and this one was a healthy combo of both...only that Liam and Scott never really were enemies, they were just misguided. Even so, it takes a bit for these two to put the past aside and accept that they are only meant for each other...no matter what happened, or didn't happen, in the past, and no matter that one has a boyfriend.

Liam is a big goofy guy who seems to be quite contradictory to rough-around-the-edges, Scott. But they work together...not fast and not easy, but they so obviously need each other that their emotions, though hidden from each other, are near heartbreaking for the reader. Scott has loved Liam twice, and twice Liam has taken off...he's a runner when life gets crazy. Scott is just trying to survive and his lack of trust is understandable. Why put effort into a relationship when everyone you love eventually leaves.

This was not a pretty story. Scott is near homeless and lives in a supply closet at a dive bar where he works. Life sucks and Scott is proof that happy ever after wasn't ever in the cards for him. Liam was a bit of an enigma to me. He left Scott for such a stupid reason, in my opinion, and almost got himself killed...and when he came back, why didn't he look up Scott? As Scott said, Scott never left so Liam didn't look very hard. And I agree with him.

I kind of loved the band angle of the story. It was about the only bright side as this was mainly a realistic view of the difficulties of life. I also loved reconnecting with the guys from the first five books, especially seeing so much of snarky Jamie. And now I want to read Eli's book again, too. This was not my favorite of the series, but it was pretty darn close. Nothing can top Eli and Quinn, but I will keep reading to see if anything comes close.

Overall Impression: I really liked it

Christy says

Color me surprised (and thrilled) when I discovered that K.A. Mitchell has written a sixth book in her 'Bad in Baltimore' series. I've adored this series, some of the couples more than others, but I've always enjoyed each of their stories and, even more, the way the author has made all of these people family. Family in the best sense of the word – the kind you choose not the kind you're born into. I have been hoping to get Scott's story ever since I glimpsed him in Jamie and Gavin's book, so 'Bad Habit' hit me in all of the feels.

Scott didn't just survive the foster care system, he lived through abandonment, not being "adoptable" due to many issues including attachment disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and conduct disorder, not to mention the boys' home where he was abused. He and Liam met in that orphanage and it didn't take long before both young adults had fallen hard. They were separated when Liam's mother returned but once Scott was free they found each other again. Scott was determined that Liam would see his dream of becoming a doctor come true and so he worked two full-time jobs to put Liam through his first years of college. Liam walked away when he realized Scott was taking drugs, uppers to be exact, in order to work that hard on little to no sleep. Liam wasn't going to allow Scott to fall down the hole that trapped his mother his whole life. Of course, if only they'd talked to one another, these past six years apart probably needn't have happened.

Please find my full review at Rainbow Book Reviews