



## Hate to Want You

*Alisha Rai*

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## **Hate to Want You** Alisha Rai

One night. No one will know.

That was the deal. Every year, Livvy Kane and Nicholas Chandler would share one perfect night of illicit pleasure. The forbidden hours let them forget the tragedy that haunted their pasts—and the last names that made them enemies.

Until the night she didn't show up.

Now Nicholas has an empire to run. He doesn't have time for distractions and Livvy's sudden reappearance in town is a major distraction. She's the one woman he shouldn't want . . . so why can't he forget how right she feels in his bed?

Livvy didn't come home for Nicholas, but fate seems determined to remind her of his presence—and their past. Although the passion between them might have once run hot and deep, not even love can overcome the scandal that divided their families.

Being together might be against all the rules . . . but being apart is impossible.

## **Hate to Want You Details**

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# From Reader Review Hate to Want You for online ebook

## Bubu says

For a beautifully written and *coherent* review please read Kyrraker's thoughts about this book. I don't think I'd be able to do this book justice as wonderfully as she's done it.

Anything I will say - I will be able to say - can only be random babbling. Or, to quote Nicholas here: "**trite and overused words.**" But I knew it. I knew it. I knew it. I knew it would be good. I knew I would love it. I don't know why or how. It was simply a gut feeling, only to be confirmed by Kyra's review.

I assume everyone has seen those reviews that start with "**5+++++ Stars**". I've never done that, although I have a few books that fit that description. I think it's time to create a new shelf for those books I would throw dozens of stars at, if I could. **Hate To Want You** would be on that shelf in a heartbeat. I went up to London today, trying to listen to an audiobook but unable to stop thinking about this one.

Anyway. Enough. Let's get to the book, shall we?

How to describe the beauty of Alisha Rai's **Hate To Want You** who is a new to me author?

Years ago, I watched a documentary about Swiss watch makers and their job (yeah, I'm a little strange) and was surprised by how fascinating it was. The precision with which these people put the watches together; how every tiny little screw has its place and function; how all the components correspond with each other and make the watch work: brilliant. They create the 'bigger picture'.

The extraordinary achievement of Ms Rai is that she made me understand; her story, her characters and their motives. Every. Step. Of. The. Way. And she does it by putting every component of her book together with the precision of a watchmaker. All elements fit and click together perfectly, thus presenting a story that made me fidgety, nervous, uneasy. I don't know how many times I switched and surfed the web, got up, walked around, went into the garden, just trying to let everything sink in. Only to run back and read some more.

I just deleted a huge paragraph giving the backstory of this book. It's the story of two star-crossed lovers; a feud between the Chandlers and Kanes, not unlike the one between the Montagues and the Capulets. The first to fall victims to this feud are Olivia Kane and Nicholas Chandler, childhood sweethearts, that leaves them devastated and broken. Olivia, not able to cope with the losses in such a short time, leaves her hometown.

So much for the backstory. Apart from the following- for the next decade Livvy texts Nicholas the coordinates where to find her. Always on her birthday; always somewhere else with the following message:

One night. No one will know.  
Don't bother coming if you're with someone.

However, this year she doesn't text him, leaving Nicholas devastated.

But the book has to start somewhere. When Livvy's mother breaks her hip, she returns to her hometown for the first time in ten years to help her.

I am not exaggerating when I say that **Hate To Want You** grabbed me by my neck from page one and didn't let me go until I was finished. I was simply mesmerised.

The book seemingly starts with lust. Now, this is where I'm going to speak from experience: Lust is easy. No, strike that. *Pretending* it to be only lust is easy. The feelings bubbling underneath the surface - the anger, hurt, resentment, bitterness and love - are not to be touched. That would be too much; that would be like pouring salt over festering wounds and poking them. So Nicholas and Livvy have never done more than have sex. Once a year. Nothing of their past has ever been mentioned.

Page one, and we watch Nicholas watching Livvy, who has become a tattoo artist, from his car and it's clear right from the start that it's more than lust. In Nicholas's words:

In terms of pure pleasure and relief, he imagined the feeling he got when he received a text from Livvy was similar to what an addict felt when they got a hit of whatever drug they craved.

[...]

He was not unaware of the parallels between his sugar addiction and his Livvy addiction [...] Nicholas shook his head, hating the uncharacteristically flowery thoughts that had invaded his brain. Today's not a day for hedonism. Which was why he could not go inside. He could not go inside, he repeated, as he snatched his keys and got out of the car. He could not go inside, he told himself, as he mounted the steps to the brick building. He could not—

The bell above the door to the establishment jingled cheerfully as it opened. He stepped inside and closed the door firmly but quietly behind him, the bell cutting off.

The second chapter depicts their first encounter from Livvy's PoV and it's equally devastating.

There was nothing to discuss here, nothing that would help them move forward. Only a repetitive cycle of pain and desire she had resolved to break this year.

So, no, it's not only lust that drives them. It's a craving that can't be satisfied. And there are only a handful of books I can think of where this kind of addiction was as vividly and palpably put into words as it was here. Livvy and Nicholas may have tried to move on over the past ten years but nothing compared to what they had and still have, even if it's only sex; or, in Livvy's words: "**if only [to] get the physical crumbs of his affection**".

But Nicholas feels exactly the same. It's not the case of The Big Misunderstanding that keeps them apart. The accident that starts the feud, the circumstances and the subsequent events simply silenced them.

Now that she's back, however, there's nowhere to run for either of them. They're bound to stumble upon each other, and the journey begins.

I know I could have kept this much shorter, and maybe I should have, but I wanted to point out how much I felt sucker-punched after only two chapters. But no worries, I won't go through each chapter.

No, Alisha Rai kept sucker-punching me. If I thought that turning the focus to their family dynamics would give me time to recuperate, I was thoroughly mistaken. **Hate To Want You** is so much more than a romance novel.

I'm not very fond of externally induced drama, and anyone who has read my ~~rants~~ reviews about books, where drama was heaped upon drama for drama's sake, may rub their eyes that I would let myself immerse into a book filled with tragedy and drama. But please don't forget what I said at the beginning: Ms. Rai made me understand.

The words 'dysfunctional family' are used by both, Nicholas and Livvy, to describe their current familial situation, but that's about it. Or rather, that *is* it. Apart from Nicholas' father, who is truly scum, all other family members are simply damaged goods, not only by the accident itself. It's just the way families are, aren't they? Isn't that why, even when we reach adulthood, have our own lives and kids, we still fight with past situations we were put in? Or at least, most of us. Both, the Chandlers and the Kanes, are terrifyingly normal in their dysfunctionality. I could spot behavioural patterns that I myself have seen. Even Nicholas' father's cruelty is casually normal.

No physical abuse. [...] The man preferred to use words and leverage and silences as his weapons of choice. They left no marks. Not obvious ones at least.

But despite the problems, they are still family, and Nicholas and Livvy try desperately to balance things out, always aware that the families tore them apart in the first place.

The secondary characters of **Hate To Want You** were everything I could have wished for. Multi-dimensional, flawed, scarred, complex, but vital parts to Nicholas and Livvy's story. That said, there's also forgiveness. One particular scene with Nicholas's grandfather and Livvy had me swallowing hard. And I am ever so grateful that the book didn't end with a ridiculous revenge plot which happens so often. What happens instead is something as 'normal' as understanding that some people are simply too toxic to keep around, and moving on is the best choice.

Back to Livvy and Nicholas.

Yes, the sex is hot and explicit. Yes, it's toe-curlingly steamy. But forget that. More importantly, the sex mirrors the emotional turmoil they're both in, which made the scenes so much more intimate. I've become a little jaded by now when it comes to sex scenes. I read them but I'm rarely invested as most authors seem to simply fulfill the quota, according to the sub-genre. Explicit they may be, but Nicholas and Livvy's sexual encounters also show the slight shifts in their relationship. Now that it's not only one night a year; now that they have time, give themselves time; now that they're forced to face the past, they finally start talking. Painful to watch and yet beautiful in its execution.

I adored the balance between Livvy and Nicholas, sexually and emotionally. Again, only a few books come to my mind that offer this kind of balance. They're as strong as they're weak. As harsh as they are tender. As careless as they are caring.

Also, Ms. Rai doesn't rely on the tried and trusted technique of flashbacks which pushes it firmly away from NA-land. What we learn from Nicholas and Livvy's relationship prior to the accident, we learn from the dialogues and memories of two people who are ten years older and who have felt pain.

"You did. Then you kissed me. Paul [her deceased brother] flicked water at us." His smile subsided. "How was that us?"

I think I can safely say that many people will know how bittersweet reminiscing can be. Instead of being forced into the heads of teenagers, I felt their giddiness, the wonder of first love and the heartbreak with the resignation of two hurt souls.

I haven't said a single word about Nicholas and Livvy individually. Honestly, I couldn't even if I tried. But these two people will stay with me, as a couple as well as individuals. Livvy, though, oh Livvy. She's everything. Not that Nicholas wasn't equally important, but there's something about Livvy that resonated with me so deeply that I can't encapsulate her character within a few sentences.

As stated in a previous review, I'm not overly fond of grand gestures. I consider them as obvious emotional manipulations, written to make sure we understand how true the love between the main protagonists is. But when Nicholas pulls his grand gesture off, *it is exactly what Livvy needs*, not what I, as the reader, need. This is one of the few times where I found it a necessary element to a relationship that is guaranteed to have a few bumpy rides ahead.

Which brings me to the missing epilogue that some reviews bemoaned. I'm not one who needs an epilogue, with rainbows, unicorns and babies. A good author, a talented author, will convince me of the HEA of a couple without it.

"I'm scared."

"So am I. Let's be scared together."

That's all I need to know. These two will fight for each other because, despite their fears, they've found their way back. You don't let go of something you lost once and broke you the first time around.

Last but not least: Being of bi-cultural background myself, it was a breath of fresh air to have diverse characters, like Livvy with her Japanese-American ancestry. It wasn't the focus of the book - although there were hints and nods - and I don't know how to put it. It just felt *good*. I wasn't prepared for it. But it felt good.

I lingered for as long as I could, rereading paragraphs, whole chapters. I didn't want to let go.

What a perfect story.

I wonder if Alisha Rai has any Swiss ancestors.

Never mind. Thank you. Ms. Rai. And thank you, Kyra. You knew I'd love it. :)

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### **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

\*2.75 stars\*

Overall, I enjoyed this audiobook from new-to-me author Alisha Rai, but I still had a number of issues.

I give all the props to the female narrator, Summer Morton, who rocked every voice and every inflection. However, Jeremy York was a different matter. I felt like he was giving it his all and was technically proficient, but his voice was all wrong for the character. He sounded... prissy, which bothered me and distracted me while I was listening.

I liked the diverse cast of characters (lots of POC and across the queer spectrum as well) and the themes of

relationships between siblings and parent/child, but I grew really tired of the back and forth between the two MCs. It felt repetitive, and the sex scenes felt rote, so much so that I ended up fast-forwarding through them a lot of the time.

I don't love M/F contemporary romance, so it's hard to say if it was my personal tastes or the book, but I never got above "like" into something more. I mostly felt like the book was an okay-ish, pleasant listen with a stellar female narrator, who deserves all the props.

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### **Elsa Bravante says**

Tenía muchas expectativas puestas en este libro, es una autora muy recomendada, fundamentalmente cuando se habla de libros con diversidad. Y efectivamente, quizás la historia no me haya noqueado, pero me ha gustado.

Dos familias con unas relaciones muy intrincadas, tiene lugar una tragedia y las consecuencias se hacen sentir en las relaciones personales de todos los miembros de las dos familias. Fundamentalmente, afectara a Libby y Nicholas, enamorados y que ven cómo las circunstancias les conducen a romper su relación. Diez años pasan y las cosas cambian... Libby es una heroína fuerte, valiente, imperfecta y quizás no lo que nos solemos encontrar en la romántica más tradicional. Nicholas se encuentra dentro más de lo común, aunque esa vertiente vulnerable es material para arrancar los suspiros. Quizás lo más interesante de ambos personajes es que no son perfectos, ambos se equivocan, o al menos en mi opinión, a lo largo de su vida, tal y como lo hacemos nosotros en la nuestra. Hay varias escenas sexuales, todas muy sexy, aunque he de reconocer que durante la primera parte del libro me parecía que su relación estaba tan unida a su atracción sexual que era difícil ver mucho más. Afortunadamente, esto cambia en la segunda parte, cuando conocemos mejor a sus protagonistas y su historia.

No me gustaría dejar de señalar el protagonismo de los personajes secundarios, imprescindibles para la historia y todo el mundo que la autora crea, provoca que sea imposible perderse el siguiente de la serie para ver cómo se resuelven los misterios familiares y algunos de los secundarios encuentran el amor también. Un libro muy entretenido, sin ese ambiente tan "blanco" con protagonista negro o hispano token, una manera de escribir muy fluida, muy sexy y en momentos, muy romántico, dulce. Poco más se puede pedir a una historia romántica.

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### **Mandi Schreiner says**

Favorite Quote: "You never told me why you decided your car is a woman."

"Because no man could ever handle my ass for this long."

Alisha Rai has a new series and it's angst-filled from page one. I enjoyed it. I've seen it mentioned that this book is like Romeo and Juliet, except with a happy ending. And that is right on target. We have two enemy families, tragedy, resentment, and secret love.

Nicholas Chandler and Livvy Kane grew up together, and their families co-owned a large grocery store chain. Nicholas and Livvy fall in love, but tragedy strikes. Nicholas's mother and Livvy's father were killed in a car crash. No one knows why Nicholas's mother and Livvy's father were in a car together, heading towards a lake house...but this tragedy sets the families on path for a big feud. Blame is thrown at one

another. Nicholas's father buys out the Kane family's shares at an extremely low price and more hatred is fueled. A feud brews and when Nicholas's father demands that Nicholas can no longer see Livvy, or he will bankrupt everyone Nicholas holds dear, he decides to leave Livvy to keep her family safe. And she is devastated.

Livvy starts traveling the country, working in various tattoo shops along the way. But once a year - just one day a year - she texts Nicholas coordinates telling him where to meet her. He flies to her, they have sex, and he leaves. This happens except in the tenth year, she doesn't text. Nicholas doesn't know what to do with himself not being able to see her.

When Livvy's mom breaks her hip, she goes home to stay with her for a while. Nicholas shows up shortly after - and this is where the book begins and oh boy, do we get some sexual tension with a good dose of angst thrown in.

*That same spark tingled to life as he walked toward her now, But then she noted how his steps were hesitant, reluctant, and that spark died a swift, fierce death.*

*Because he didn't want to walk toward her. He might crave her body, but that was all he wanted. And he hated himself for it, the same way she hated herself for being unable to control her feelings for him.*

I've put an entire book's worth of intense family dynamics into one paragraph above so I've glossed over a million things. But - Alisha Rai does a fabulous job of letting the reader have a very intimate look not only into the lives of Nicholas and Livvy, but their families. Their living parents, their siblings. While it took me a minute to get everyone straight, by the end of the book, I felt like I knew them so well. I feel like she writes this book on a very emotionally intense level - and keeps it there the entire book. Livvy is so, so guarded. She has built up a wall around herself, and does not let anyone in. Not her mother (who has her own wall) not Nicholas, not her brother. Wait - let me mention her brother, Jackson. He left after his father died and no one has seen or heard from him. But then he shows up out of the blue. And he is mysterious, and gruff, and a man of few words. And if Alisha Rai does not let us in his pants ...errr...writes him a book, I will weep.

Anyway! Back to the story, Livvy is all tough persona, but crumbling on the inside. She has endured much tragedy in her life, and has had to endure it alone. She fears she will break if she has to give all to Nicholas again. But oh Nicholas. Mr. organized, broody, intense man. He loves running his grocery empire, but his father and him butt heads, a lot. No one has gotten over the death of his mother. His younger sister walks around timid and shy (she also needs a book!). Nicholas has anger but even more - he has a longing for Livvy that made me swoon.

Throughout the book these two clash - romantically and then push each other away. Trying to trust, and break down family walls and expose all the secrets they have held on to for so long.

Do you like books that end with the hero performing a grand gesture? Oh do we get that. And even better, the words he says at the end made me smile. My only complaint is that I wish we had an epilogue! These two end with what I consider maybe not a fragile bond - but they have had to work so hard in the book to get to a happy place, and we don't see that happy place until the very end. I wanted to see them a few months down the line. How are they coping with all the stress of their families???

Divine angst, intense emotions, and a sexy romance. Well done.

Grade: B+

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## **Renae (Romantic Parvenu) says**

The corner of Romancelandia I tend to stay in has rarely embraced a book or author so unanimously as it has Alisha Rai and all of her *Forbidden Hearts* trilogy—but especially the first book, *Hate to Want You*. And, I must admit, even as an Extremely Hype-Adverse Reader, I managed to get on board with this. *All* of this is amazing. Rarely have I read a contemporary romance that seems to get everything right (which is why I tend to read historicals). But friends, I am willing to wholeheartedly certify that *Hate to Want You* is the full package.

### **ROMEO AND JULIET, BUT BETTER**

If you know anything about this book, you've probably seen this pitched as a modernized, sexy take on *Romeo and Juliet*. Which isn't too far off the mark. The book's leads, Livvy and Nicholas, were both raised as wealthy children whose grandfathers had founded a large-scale grocery chain in the region. However, due to ~circumstances~ when they were in their early 20s, the two families had a major falling out, and Livvy and Nicholas's relationship failing was just another symptom of that. They broke up, spectacularly.

Jump to ten years later, and Rai has established a pretty plausible “forbidden love” scenario. Sometimes stories like this seem silly, because the reasons the couple can't be together aren't legit, but with *Hate to Want You*, I totally bought into it. The family dysfunction (on both sides) is amped up way high, and it was super interesting to see how the two of them navigated that dynamic in order to reach their HEA.

### **SECOND CHANCE ROMANCE! EXCEPT...NOT**

At this point, it's probably common knowledge that second chance romances are my favorites. *Hate to Want You* is one...sort of? I mean, Nicholas and Livvy were together, and then they broke up, and now they're back in close proximity, headed towards an HEA, so all the earmarks of the trope are there. It's just that I've never really seen second chance romance play out the way it does here. Rai does something different from what I'm used to, and I liked it.

For one thing, it's not as if the two leads haven't seen each other in all the intervening years since they broke up. Rather, for the past ten years, Livvy has sent Nicholas a text message on her birthday, giving him a location for him to meet her so they can fuck each other silly, no strings. (Why either of them thought that was healthy behavior is beyond me.) So, though they haven't been together for a long time, there has been “casual” sex going on. Which I maybe wasn't a fan of, but only because it just seemed like a really stupid thing for both characters to do. That being said, I think this book is very much about unhealthy behaviors and breaking away from them, so I think it was important to Rai's overall narrative.

Another aspect of *Hate to Want You* that was different from the usual progression of the second chance trope is how the leads felt about each other, i.e. the complexity of Nicholas and Livvy's emotions. Rai deals very well with emotional intricacy and doesn't ever allow anything to be simple. This is realistic, but makes for a prickly relationship at times, because there often doesn't seem to be a clear way forward. I *loved* this—the story here is rich, layered, and dark. There are a lot of *feelings* being thrown about or being suppressed, and it's intense, but very real in a way I'm not used to, in any type of romance.

### **MENTAL HEALTH REALNESS**

I honestly don't think I've ever seen a book engage so directly with mental health as *Hate to Want You* does. The female protagonist, Livvy, has chronic depression that she's dealt with since high school, and it appears that her mother does as well. Rai doesn't just mention Livvy's depression in an aside, rather, it's brought into the center. All of Livvy's feelings and doubts and insecurities are confronted and discussed, in a way that I found very refreshing.

Rai also goes into a discussion of how women have to do much of the heavy lifting in relationships, emotionally speaking, and how this contributes to women's feelings of worthlessness, etc. *That* is an issue I've been dying to see brought up in a romance novel, and the fact that this book brought that reality out into the spotlight was surprising and hard-hitting in the best way.

Conversely, Nicholas has issues with rejecting emotions, deadening his feelings, and over-controlling his behaviors. Mental abuse from his father and other aspects of his life have lead him to be a very reserved, closed-off person. While different from Livvy's issues, Nicholas isn't necessarily very healthy here, and I appreciated that being touched on.

Regardless of one's background or circumstance, mental health issues are always relevant, and I was delighted that they were approached in this story in a major way.

#### **ALSO: SEXYTIMES**

It's also worth noting that *Hate to Want You* is hot. Like, hot-hot. Smokin' hot. I was a few pages in and I read "dick" and "pussy" in the same sentence and was like "OKAY BUCKLE YOUR SEATBELTS, THIS IS IT" and damn, I was not wrong. I also really appreciate a man who loves to eat his lady out. Gold star.

So, in short: this book is the shit. It's dark, mature, complicated, sexy, and emotional. Sometimes, the hype machine knows what it's about.

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#### **Sue (Hollywood News Source) says**

Hate to Want You is on my top five favorite romance of this year. It's so good, I've read it quite a few times.

#### **Tropes: childhood lovers, forbidden romance with a second chance touch.**

It follows the story of Livvy Kane and Nicholas Chandler who were a power couple back in the day. They both come from an intertwined affluent family, but a tragedy tore their relationship apart. Now, they're public enemies.

I love this so much. The back and forth pull between the main characters and chemistry is legendary. I was weak for it. One of the things, I didn't expect is that Livvy has a depression, which makes the plot heavier. Just giving a caution to readers who want to avoid something triggering for them.

In the same vein of Romeo and Juliet with a modern twist. This is the book you don't want to miss. It's very angsty. I would recommend it in a heartbeat. Full review to come.

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## WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Growing up as the pseduo prince and princess of their families, it was almost inevitable that Nicholas and Livvy would end up together. However, their world gets shattered when tragedy strikes and they find themselves ripped apart.

Ten years later and Livvy is back home to take care of her mother and maybe get back some of what was lost to her.

Nicholas wants something too, more than one night a year.

First in the new Forbidden Hearts series, *Hate to Want You* lends itself to the easy comparison to Romeo and Juliet. We have two families brought together by hard work and determinism, only to be broken apart two generations later by hurt, innuendo, secrets, and pain. Our couple's grandfathers started a grocery store that has been built up over the years to develop into a chain. When the heroine's father and the hero's mother are killed in a car accident together, painful questions are raised. Then the hero's father does some suspiciously underhanded dealings to buy heroine's family half of the grocery chain. Thus, begins the cold war between the families and the fracturing of Livvy and Nicholas' romance.

***In terms of pure pleasure and relief, he imagined the feeling he got when he received a text from Livvy was similar to what an addict felt when they got a hit of whatever drug they craved.***

We are started off with Nicholas' point of view and what a deep emotional start it was. We learn that on Livvy's birthday she texts him her coordinates, he travels to her, and they have sex for that one night a year. Except she didn't do it this year and he finds out she is in town where she hasn't stepped foot in ten years. Our first look at the couple is so filled with emotion and sexual tension, you'll be hooked. Nicholas starts off as the brighter focus of the two with his barely contained torment, weight of struggling to take care of the business and his family, and inability to stop craving Livvy. There is a tiny little bit of martyr syndrome to him, but ultimately, his character and heart was wonderful to read.

***All those years ago, she'd lost her father to death, her mother to grief, her brothers to hate. And then she'd lost him.***

While I thought Nicholas started off with a stronger spotlight, Livvy grows brighter and brighter with each new insight to her character. Livvy was such an amazing look at strengths and weaknesses that were laid bare with inner struggles that were a painful beauty to behold. Her struggle to try and manage her feelings to what she thinks is acceptable and still respect her herself had so much depth. We also learn of a very real struggle she deals with, I loved how the author didn't use to define her but showed how she is in some ways fashioned from it. Our heroines don't always get to be everything; Livvy was a fantastic multi-faceted woman.

There is no way I can do justice in relaying to you the complete picture of story and characters Alisha Rai gives us. The family dynamics going on here were tremendously done, with the emotions feeling real and raw. There's obviously more to be discovered about the instances that tore these two families apart, the introduction to the secondary characters that are connected by these story threads will have you dying to get the complete picture. Nicholas and Livvy's siblings aren't thrown out there as series bait but rather fill out the complete story; I'm salivating for their stories (Put me on team pairing up Eve and Gabe!).

Now, this has more intense sexual talk and scenes than your average contemporary, you could probably put an erotica tag on it. They are gritty, raw, and of course sexual with the author not shying away from pearl clutching language. I would argue though, that what makes them feel so raw are the deep emotion between Livvy and Nicholas, but look, the spanking and hair pulling also helps. What I personally loved about their sex scenes were the powerful dynamics happening. There's a blowjob scene where Nicholas is the more vulnerable participant, even while physically we know he's the more powerful, he's shown to be incredibly emotionally vulnerable. There's been a little bit of a trend to portray "Me Tarzan, you Jane" sex, the power and emotion dynamics sex scenes here blow those depictions out of the water for me. I was a huge fan of what felt more like consensual and emotionally balanced sex. What I'm trying to say, is spanking and hair pulling sex scenes can be amazing when you add depth of emotion. The hint of humor and lightness between our couple, which gets bogged down sometimes from the pain and circumstances, also plays a big part here, even if regulated to the edges.

Deep, emotional, raw, and hot, *Hate to Want You* is an incredible lovers-to-enemies-to-lovers romance. Nicholas and Livvy's desire and love for one another is the stuff of Shakespearean plays. Alisha Rai has set up a series with a world and characters that I can't wait to return to and read about.

***"You're not my secret anymore. My love for you is bigger than anyone who might try to tear us apart."***  
***He paused. "I won't leave you, Livvy. You don't have to trust me completely right now, but watch me. Watch me fight for you this time."***

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### **Hollis says**

*"I'm not looking for a relationship right now."*

***"Damn. Now you've done it."***

*"Done what?"*

***"Said the words that ensure a relationship smacks you in the face."***

I'm so mad at myself for waiting so long to read this book. But knowing I have both (!!) of the follow up installments on hand takes away some of the sting. Still though. Why did no one pull an *A Clockwork Orange* on me and force this into my eyeballs? I'm really disappointed, friends.

*She took his lust because it was all she could have of him.*

**Anywayyyyy** I had all these big plans to do some brilliant point by point review but I'm feeling lazy and the fact that you're even getting quotes is a miracle.

*"New tie?"*

***"Perhaps. I don't recall."***

*"Nice. It really brings out the blue in your blood."*

**HATE TO WANT YOU** was so much amazingness. We have diverse representation in our leads; two families, both alike in.. oh wait, wrong story; ahem, we have two sorta-feuding families tied together by betrayal; we have mental health issues; conversations about consent; tender family dynamics twisted up in grief and loss; and a totally realistic second chance romance ten years after the first time. Plus lots of

secondary characters with stories to come (whoopee!).

*It was far easier to be kind to other people than it was to be kind to herself.*

This was such a smartly written contemporary romance. Sure, it's fine to have the hate and the lust and the games and the fluff but Rai's writing was all that and also real, intelligent, and felt perfectly possible. I am so excited to read on (if only overdrive would hurry itself up a little..) for more of this family and more of this writing.

*"[Thirty] is the new twenty, though, or so I hear."*

**"Will I get back the ass I had at twenty?"**

*"No, just the financial stress and the sinking feeling that you don't know what to do with your life."*

**"I'd rather have the ass."**

While not a perfect ten (or five, really), and with a little speed bump inconsistency I've already ranted about and won't bother repeating here because it's petty and I'm ridiculous, this is highly enjoyable and I would highly recommend.

4.25 "this magical land of not giving a fuck was pretty cool" stars

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### **Chelsea (chelseadolling reads) says**

I think this one ended up being a little overhyped for me :( it was fine.. but I feel like it's just blending in with a lot of the other romances I've read this week. Womp x100

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### **Jiana says**

so good!!!

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### **Ari says**

***"Everywhere. That's the problem. I want you everywhere, and I always will."***

I've seen many bloggers raving about this romance and enemies-to-lover is one of my favorite tropes, so I decided to give this new-to-me author a try. Y'all, I am dead because this book is probably one of the best enemies-to-lovers romances I've ever read and if you don't already have it on your TBR, you are missing out on one hell of a read.

Olivia Kane and Nicholas Chandler have a deal: for one night every year, the two will meet to share a moment of intimacy and then go their separate ways. Then one year Olivia doesn't show up. When she returns home after her mother falls ill, Nicholas seeks her out to get answers about why she never showed. A flame is ignited and these two find it harder and harder to stay away from one another. But there's only one

thing stopping them from being together: their families.

**LAAWWDDD, THIS BOOK!** Alisha Rai needs to supply Victoria Secret gift cards with the purchase of each book for all the panties she's about to ruin. I'm not even kidding because this book was **HOT AS HELL!** *Hate To Want You* is a modern-day *Romeo and Juliet* story with forbidden lovers and a feuding family. All the tension in this book killed me. The family tension, the sexual tension, the lies, the secrets... I was addicted. Alisha Rai's writing is amazing. I have so many quotes highlighted because she is a genius at one-liners that will make your heart melt.

Olivia is my new favorite heroine. She is a tatted-up badass who's been on the run for far too long. She loves deeply, yet it is that same love that ends up burning her in the end. Nicholas is a little sly motherfucker. I initially thought he was like the good-guy type, but the dude has a filthy mouth on him. What I liked about both Nicholas and Olivia is the fact that despite their strenuous relationships with their parents, they still cared about them and tried their best to fix their relationships with their parents. The chemistry between this pair is volcanic! When things erupt...let's just say there ain't anything putting that mess out. Honestly, don't read this book in public or you will end up like me and look like a cherry tomato. I'm extremely hyped for the sequel. I'll admit that I do have my hesitations because I'm not a fan of the particular trope, but I've been told that it's handled very well so let's see if it can top *Hate To Want You*.

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### **Melanie says**

***“Ten years is long enough for me to be hung up on a man who hates to want me. Who I can’t seem to hate enough to stop wanting.”***

This was a damn treat to read. One of my favorite second chance romances of all time. Never have I ever read such a sexy book, that constantly emphasizes the importance (and sexiness) of consent! On top of the fact that this book has some amazing diversity from most of the cast of characters, but it also showcases an Asian main character who is living with her depression and who loves her soft body completely and unapologetically. I loved this. Absolutely loved this. And I completely recommend this to every romance reader.

*Hate to Want You* switches between two perspectives:

- **Nicholas** - In line to own his family's empire, while working constantly.
- **Livvy** - Tattoo artist who won't stay in one city for too long.

***“Love rarely conquered all, the true villains almost always went unpunished, and happily ever afters? Ha. Sometimes all you could hope for were secret stolen moments with one messy, royally bad girl.”***

And their lives have been intertwined forever, since their family used to co-own a business. Key word: used to. After a tragedy, that business relationship fell apart, so Nicholas and Livvy's relationship fell apart, too. Yet, every ten years, on Livvy's birthday, she will text Nicholas coordinates to meet her in a different city.

And he always comes. And they always have mind-blowing sex.

Except, last birthday, Livvy's thirtieth birthday, which would have marked ten years since Nicholas started traveling each and every year to find her, she didn't send a text. But now she's back in town, staying with her mother, in the city where Nicholas and her grew up and fell in love. And Nicholas is not only curious why she didn't text him, but he's also trying to keep his emotions in check.

***“How can I be with anyone else when I spend three hundred and sixty-four days waiting for you to draw me a map?”***

And Nicholas and Livvy's families are heavily connected. Like, generations back connected. And throughout the story we slowly get to see what drove them apart ten years ago, while also focusing on everything that is still keeping them apart.

You all, it was refreshing to read about people actually older than me for once in a romance novel! Seriously, I've been feeling in kind of a funk about my age and reading lately, and this was a breath of fresh air! The media we consume just makes us feel like we should be married, in our dream homes, with kids, in our late twenties. Then this beautiful and actually realistic story comes along, and it was the perfect thing that me and my head space needed.

***“The world was unkind to women. It was devastating to women who didn’t believe in themselves.”***

This was the most seamlessly woven feminist romance novel I've ever read, too. And I honestly feel like I'm going to rate all romance reads off of this one book. I always add little caveats for my erotic reads, about how I rate them differently, because so many of the themes are so unhealthy, toxic, and problematic, but now I understand that's just bad and lazy writing. Alisha Rai wrote this beautiful, powerful, sexy as hell, feminist book that didn't have any of those unhealthy elements that I've come to expect. I was proud to finish this book, and this author has now set the bar for me, and I'm not looking back.

***“I read this article once that said the quickest way to get a dude to stop hitting on you was to say that you’re with another guy, because men respect other men more than they respect a woman saying no.”***

This was honestly pure joy to read. It was so fast paced, so intriguing, so sexy, so powerful. The representation was beyond words amazing. The themes were important and so very appreciated. And the story was great. I can't wait to read every single thing Alisha Rai has created. Don't sleep on this one, lovelies.

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Buddy Read with Taryn & Paloma! ❤

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### **Joce (squibblesreads) says**

Took me a long ass time to figure out the family tree but it's SO WORTH IT because it reads like a dream. One of the most complex and refined romances I've read, ever, and I'm so happy I get to breeze through the next two. Sexy af and wonderful family dynamics and representation. I'm INTO IT.

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### **Kimberly Carrington-Fox says**

#### **Nuestra reseña en *A la cama con... un libro***

No sé qué esperaba de este libro pero no era lo que me he encontrado, una estupenda historia culebronesca entre dos familias con guarerismo del bueno y, sorprendentemente, dulce y con mucho amor.

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### **Sara►[hiatus] (Ink Is My Sword) says**

★★★★

*“You can be strong and have moments of incredible despair, when everything feels like it’s collapsing in on you, and yes, when you feel like you want to die. Those moments are not weaknesses. They are simply moments. And they are not you.”*

*All images were found in Pinterest, I do not own any of them.*

**The sparks, chemistry, angst, feels, all of it flew out of the page directly to my heart.**

? Depression

#### **?Pre-reading thoughts:**

I have recently heard so many good things about this one and I need some **good** in my romance reading life.  
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