



## Hot and Bothered

*Kate Meader*

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**Hot and Bothered** Kate Meader  
**A Fire They Can't Put Out . . .**

Although her baby boy keeps her plate full, Jules Kilroy is ready to take her love life off the back burner. Despite a bevy of eligible bachelors, it's her best friend, Taddeo DeLuca, who's fueling her hormones with generous servings of his mouth-watering Italian sexiness. But Jules learned her lesson once before when she went in for a kiss, only to have Tad reject her. She's vowed never to blur the lines again . . .

After a lifetime of excuses and false starts, Tad has finally opened a wine bar, a deal made even sweeter when Jules joins his staff. Lovers come and go, and he's had his share, but friendships like theirs last forever. Still, ever since he tasted her luscious lips, he can't stop fantasizing about what could be. Then she signs up for an online dating site—and the thought of *his* Jules with another man makes Tad's blood boil. Even if he gets burned, Tad can't stop himself from turning up the heat this time.

## Hot and Bothered Details

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Author : Kate Meader

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## From Reader Review Hot and Bothered for online ebook

### Amanda (Hootie) Clark says

Hot And Bothered was I think the first kitchen romance I have read. Jules and Tad both came from families who cook so the friendship they formed was cemented in more than one way. This is the third book in the Hot In the Kitchen series and as is my M.O. I read this one before the others. I am glad I started with this one because Jules and Tad stole my heart and made me want to read the other books.

Jules is a single mother to toddler Evan. After leaving London two years ago with a broken heart she came to Chicago to rebuild her life and make it on her own. That's a huge deal for any woman to start over somewhere new but to do that while being pregnant takes a special kind of woman. Jules was determined to do things on her own and focus on raising her son. Yes she had help from her famous TV chef brother Jack who paid her rent while she's looking for work but she didn't let him decide her life and stuck to her guns when he tried. Battling dyslexia has made her feel inferior to everyone around her so she used sex to distract her dates. The self loathing that came with her distraction tactics is what got her in the single moms club. She fears she will pass on the dyslexia to her son and it made me sad for her because she wasn't stupid like she tended to feel.

Tad was a little bit of a slut, always moving through women faster than a speeding bullet. The residual guilt over his parents deaths and the part he feels he played in the events keeps him from finding something stable. Most of the guilt comes from not fulfilling his father's wishes for him to become something important like a lawyer or doctor. What he really wants to do is cook but he chooses to open his own wine eatery. I loved that Tad was a family man and cared for Jules and her son but hated how he felt about himself. Yes he was a little damaged and normally I don't give slack about being a man whore during those times but I loved him so much I overlooked his slutty ways because he knew and acknowledged he wasn't worthy. Plus knowing that he went on a pussy sabbatical and wrestled with his feelings for Jules made my heart skip a beat.

Jules and Tad are connected in more than one way. Her brother Jack is married to Tad's cousin Lili and Jack's half brother Shane is married to his sister Cara so it was inevitable they could become close friends. Their relationship faced a serious test after Jules threw herself at Tad and tried to kiss him. Being a lonely single mother finally got to her and her attraction and deep feelings for him got the best of her one night. What she doesn't realize is everything from that moment changed for Tad. It's not until she starts dating again that he realizes what's right in front of him. These two were so much fun and the sexual chemistry was felt whenever they were around each other. The buildup to the heated moments they had was just as much of a reward as it was a tease. The author plays with several hits and misses that left my mouth watering. One of the sweetest things about this book was the inclusion of Jules' son Evan. You never wondered what happened to him once the fun began. He wasn't just an after thought or a prop to bring the couple together. He was included in the story and became a part of the canvas of characters. I loved watching Tad and Evan together. There is just something sexy about a man with a child. Not to mention when the secret surrounding Evans father is revealed I loved watching Tad step up. It just added another layer to his amazing qualities and their romance that much more special to me.

All the characters that make up this story, from Jule's brother Jack to Tad's sister and cousin make me want to go back and read the other books in this series. Especially the interesting relationship of Jack and Shane being half brothers. I picked up on some past animosity between the guys and it sounds like it would be a delicious addition. There were a few times while reading Hot and Bothered where I had to go back and reread a section or didn't quite understand something between the characters but other than that this could

absolutely be read as a stand alone. There were so many sweet, romantic and funny moments that I found myself highlighting like crazy. I loved the big family feel of this story and how everyone worked through their issues together. I had no idea going into this what I was in for but the way everything came together by the end was exactly what I had come to hope for as I read through. Hot and Bothered is exactly what I felt reading this so it should come as no surprise I would recommend this adamantly. I'll definitely be reading more from this author and the other books in the series!

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### **Jaime Fiction Fangirls Book Review says**

This is my first time reading a full novel from Kate Meader, I had previously only read her short story, Rekindling the Flame from the Baby, It's Cold Outside anthology, and swore after reading it that I needed to read ALL of her books. So when I had the opportunity to review this book I jumped at the chance.

From the prologue to the final page I was enamored. I couldn't stop reading. I stayed up until 4 a.m. to finish the story and I have zero regrets about it.

This isn't a story full of twists and turns, there is little to no angst yet somehow I managed to feel just about every emotion possible. The story was funny, a little sad, inspiring and a whole lot romantic. I'm not ashamed to admit that tears were shed during one of the more poignant scenes.

Tad is a perfect example of the ideal book boyfriend. The way he is always there for Jules and Evan from day one had me swooning. The way he encouraged Jules to follow her dreams and to make her own decisions proved that he is the perfect guy for her.

I loved how Kate wrote it so that while Jules was insecure in her own ways, Tad was the more insecure/vulnerable one. I'm so over the woman always being the weaker of the characters. Not that either Jules nor Tad were weak but rather they had weaknesses that kept them from believing they were worthy of the happiness they felt with each other.

The secondary characters and the Italian family atmosphere help to round out this story in all the right ways. The story flowed naturally and felt honest and real. It's the type of story that I'll feel for days. It's the type of story that has me shoving aside the other books on my TBR so that I can read the previous books in the series.

\*I received an ARC from the author/publisher in exchange for an honest review

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### **Maria Rose says**

This third (and hopefully not last!) book in the Hot in the Kitchen series features Tad and Jules, cousin and sister of the Italian DeLuca and British Kilroy families respectively.

Tad has opened a new bar with hopes of redeeming himself in the eyes of his family for his part in a terrible accident that caused the death of his parents several years earlier. Jules is hoping to get out from under her overly protective big brothers' thumbs and prove to them (and herself) that despite her dyslexia, she can make it in the food industry and is deserving of a loving relationship. Having entered the "friend zone" from their first meeting, their one aborted attempt at passion has left them wary of their attraction to each other yet unable to deny their growing feelings.

Having read and enjoyed the first two books in this series, I was expecting great things from Kate and she delivered in spades. The alternating points of view of Tad and Jules are full of emotional depth that engages

the reader and pulls them fully into the story. As readers, we feel that we have a vested interest in how Tad and Jules will reconcile their feelings for each other with their obligations to their respective families.

Family plays a large role in the setting and overall feel of the novel and all the characters come alive with their realistic interpersonal dynamics. At times poignant and thoughtful, the overall humorous and heartwarming tone combined with sensual and steamy love scenes makes this a romance to delight and entice the reader into the Italian kitchen. 5 well deserved stars!

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### **1-Click Addict Support Group says**

I have to say that this book surprised me and it wasn't like what I expected it to be. I thought I would be getting a light, easy, playful book and while some of that is true, it was so much more. *Hot and Bothered* was deep, meaningful, and beautiful.

Juliet Kilroy loves being a mother, but she longs for someone to share her life with and there's no one she would rather share it with than her best friend, Taddeo DeLuca. He's made it quite clear, though, that they'll never be anything more than friends and she decides to try online dating. What she hoped, but didn't wholly anticipate, was how much Tad would hate the idea of her dating other men. Tad and Jules go on a long, difficult journey in order to get their happily ever after.

*Hot and Bothered* wasn't the easy read I thought it was going to be, it was hard and full of heartache and tears, but that is what made it such a great book. This book is about letting go, moving on, and forgiving and loving yourself. It was beautiful to see Juliet and Tad become stronger, better, and happier people.

I haven't made this book sound very fun, but it was. It was funny and light and warm. The characters were all awesome and entertaining. It was pretty d\*mn HOT too! I just really loved this excellent book!

*Hot and Bothered* is a standalone told from Jules and Tad's POV and they get their HEA. ~ Paige, 4 stars

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### **Julie says**

I've been waiting for Tad & Jules and it was worth the wait. Love of family, witty banter & HOT!

I love this series and I hope there's more to come.

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### **Abby Green says**

Another 5?????????? read from Kate Meader. Each one of these books in the Hot In The Kitchen series is a winner. Characters bursting off the page with sexy charisma & dialogue sharp & witty enough to create serious author envy in this fan ;). Tad and Jules were so real, and relatable that they jumped off the pages. You are so drawn into their world, that it almost felt voyeuristic to read their story even though I'd have rugby tackled any attempt to get the kindle out of my hand before I finished reading it. As for the sex scenes...scorchio. And I love love love Kate Meader's witty Irish voice shining through. More please!

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## Msky chick says

I got this book as a guaranteed free available read through NetGalley. This is the first book by Kate Meador for me, so I went in with no expectations.

This book started out sweet and light, and I thought it was going to be a fluff book. But it got more serious at the end, with some major growing up and character maturation of both Tad and Jules, which was unexpected and pleasing. Jules came to have a sense of her own sense worth, which was awesome. She deserved to be fought over, to be wooed, to be the center of a man's world. And until Tad learned to love himself, he wouldn't be able to give her the all-consuming love she merited.

This book has so many tried and true tropes:

- Friends to lovers
- Just fooling around turns into true love “Their friendship might have placed this in a different category but it didn’t change the fundamentals. He was the unrepentant bad boy and she was the reformed bad girl and they were supposed to screw each other out of their systems and move on.”
- Guy who won’t allow himself emotional intimacy because of prior trauma that wasn’t his fault
- Playboy guy cock blocked by the magic hoo ha (Jules kisses Tad, then he has no interest in other women for the next year, until Jules and Tad finally get together. This, despite the fact that he’s a serial and frequent man ho before that kiss)

And they are tropes, for a reason, because they work. I saw someone commenting last week on Twitter that the people in romance books who hop into bed but say they’re not going to go into a relationship are just fooling themselves, because it always matures into true love. So correct!

I found myself irritated with Jules often, because she was such an avoider. She seemed to be so superficial often, and expected those around her to pull up the slack and enable her to slide through life. But she was very admirable as a mother, and her love, both as a friend and as romantic love, for her best friend Tad was great. So I see sawed back and forth for awhile about how I felt about Jules.

I was also somewhat ambivalent about Tad until I found out about the whole backstory about his guilt regarding his parents’ death. I thought he was a terrific guy, but wished he would tell Jules that he loved her and just be her boyfriend, for goodness sake! Then I understood where he was coming from once I learned the backstory. His guilt was out of portion and illogical, but that is so often how it works in real life that it didn’t seem unreasonable for Tad to have the issues that he did.

Since his parents’ death, he was a broken mess, an amalgam of jagged pieces held together by sheer force of will. His need for her in that moment knocked him on his ass, and while he had no doubt she would ease the pain in the short-term, he couldn’t reciprocate. He would take and take from this amazing woman, and give her nothing but heartache in return. With her it would be real and raw and there would be no coming back from it.

Tad really manned up when the father of Jules’ son showed up, and I like how supportive but rational (and correct, in my opinion!) he was about the situation. Hard to do when you’re in love with one of the two parents involved in a custody issue! Even still, after Tad helps Jules see that she needs to step up and be an adult and make her own decisions about herself and what’s best for her child, it still takes some time for them to end up together.

She wanted to thump the living daylights out of something, but not because of Simon and the hurt she felt

then, but because the sweet, funny, sexy guy in her arms had shown her how perfect it could be. She had owned her choices and come up with a plan to ensure she never made mistakes like that again. And then she met Tad. Dreamed about him. Acted on her greedy fantasy and now she was back to where she had come from. Wishing for things she couldn't have.

As the story progressed, I enjoyed it more and more, and was really rooting hard for their HEA by the end of the story.

And here she thought he was the one rescuing her. Truth was they were saving each other and there was no one else she could imagine sharing her life with.

I very much enjoyed this book, and will now look for other books by Kate Meador to try. I'm assuming that the other 2 main couples who are side characters in this story are in her earlier books, and I liked those characters too, and would like to read about their romances as well.

Funny quotes:

For a reason known only to him, he [Jules' brother] subscribed to the view she'd only had sex once, likely an accidental fall onto a stranger's penis that had resulted in Evan.

[When Jules is answering a call from Tad] Before she answered, she took a deep breath. "Erotic Circus Clown School. Squeeze more than red noses." "

She didn't want gelato... said no one ever.

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### **Heather andrews says**

Tad he knows how to defuse labor pains, "so the window for legalized narcotics has passed," Tad said. "But that's okay because I'm here. I'm your drug, baby. Just look at me and tell me you're not addicted to my shocking good looks." Also the boy has an appreciative view on Jules's breasts, "a double gin and tonic." As soon as the words escaped her lips, her mouth watered like she was Pavlov's dog. "Just one, though, because I'll be breastfeeding." Tad's dark brows lifted and his gaze dropped to her breasts, covered by a hospital gown. They'd ballooned to a point where they could be seen from the International Space Station. There was the Great Wall of China, then her massive boobs." Tad the boy is quite considerate, "I offered to take care of your needs," he said loudly." He's fiercely protective, "if Doctor Perfect of that Conor a\*\*hole had so much as laid a finger on her - with or without her permission - he was going to deal a heavy dose of deliverance with his hands." He's quite pushy when it comes to certain things, "he rubbed his sandpapery jaw against her cheek. "Time until your next orgasm." Blimey, were they on a schedule here?" Tad he's also sensitive about certain body parts of his being discussed, "oh, for eff's sake. The bargain had been fulfilled, over and over again. All night, she had been right there with him, alternating between satisfying his starving co\*\* and begging him to feast on her honeyed heat. No part of his anatomy had even flirted with 'flaccid.'" I can't wait to see whose next in this series.

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### **Anna's Herding Cats says**

Reviewed for herding cats & burning soup.

Quickie Review:

Very sweet friends to lovers story that they really had to work for. Enjoyed it and looking forward to checking out book 1 and 2 now.

Review:

Yay foodie romances! And friends to lovers romance with oodles of Brits and Italians surrounding them. Even better! Hot and Bothered was such a sweet read as best friends Jules and Tad, well, get manipulated a little by those they love into finally...finally! going after what they want...each other.

I really liked these two. They both balance on that razors edge of confident and insecure which made them both likable and relateable. Both are amazing people but have things that hold them back so badly and really rock their self worth. Tad dealing with the guilt over the death of his parents years ago and Jules with a learning disability (she's dyslexic). You don't see that too often in romance and I really liked how it was handled.

These two have been best friends since she arrived at her brother's restaurant two years back while very pregnant. And despite both loving each other and wanting each other they've kept--for the most part-- just friends since they didn't want to ruin things between them.

But! \*yay for buts!\* Jules is finally ready to break out of her mommy role and start dating again and, well, that's definitely going to put a hitch in their "just friends" status when the very protective Italian male in Tad surfaces.

These two were sweet. They had some awkward moments. They had ones that made me ache for them because they're both so perfect, so wonderful for each other and just couldn't quite get past their personal insecurities to see they really deserved the other in their lives. Tad was crazy sexy. He's got that whole loving her kid thing going for him too. Can be a little broody and a little outgoing. And Jules was a great mom who loves deeply and is trying so hard to find her spot. Her struggles with her dyslexia just about did me in and there were a couple scenes with Tad over it that just had me melting. Seriously...perfect for each other.

I loved watching them both deal with their issues. Sometimes pushing when it wasn't wanted (but was needed) or being a shoulder for the other. These two have each other's backs and gah that was nice to see. Things do heat up and whew! yeah there were some really hot scenes that were crazy passionate and a little risky location wise which I freaking loved.

All in all, Hot and Bothered was just a heart warming romance with two people who were crazy perfect for each other and just needed a little nudge-push to realize it and take that next step. Meader threw together such a loud and boisterous group and I loved every second of getting to know them. If you've ever been around an Italian family Hot and Bothered is like coming home. It's impossible not to smile and feel like you're a part of the family.

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### **Aly says**

I like the idea of friends to lovers, but I often end up disappointed by the books. Well, not this time.

"Five months ago, she'd made the best choice for her baby when she left London and all the pain behind. Finding the strength to admit she needed help by mending fences with her brother had brought her to Chicago. To a new life and a ready-made family."

If you read book one, you know that Juliet is Jack Kilroy's sister. Jules never told him that her baby's father was one of his friend and she never told the father about the kid they made because the day she was about to, she came accross the wife she didn't know he had and saw the woman was pregnant too.

If you read book one and/or two, you know that Tad is Lili and Cara's cousin. It's not a secret for anyone ; Tad is a player. Or he was, before a kiss changed everything.

" When Jules wore that look, it was easy to remember why they had become friends in the first place. They had connected the moment she showed up in his family's restaurant, knocked up, beat down, and in need of a pal."

Jules and Tad's friendship have always been full of banters and a little bit of flirt. She had a crush on him from the beginning, but when your friend talk to you about his "sexploit", it doesn't really encourage you to tell him how you feel.

"One look at Tad DeLuca; cardio without moving your fat arse."

A few months ago, in a moment of weakness, Jules kissed him but Tad made it clear that nothing romantic could happen between them. Since then, he can't stop thinking about it, but no matter how much he wants her, he think he's no good for her and he doesn't want to love and loose again. But when Jules decide that she had enough of feeling lonely and it's time to get back on the dating horse again, it may be what Tad needed to finally make a move.

This book had one of the sweetest prologue ever. And I cannot not talk again about how much I enjoy this author's writing style. It's always fun, cute, sexy, touching and full of spirit.

""I've got salted caramel gelato,"he said into the steamy silence.  
She didn't want gelato...said no one ever."

I'll admit at some point I wondered if Tad and Jules would stop dancing around each other and make a decision already about their relationship, but that doesn't mean the author didn't make things interesting. I liked the cute little nicknames Jules gave her son too.

I don't know about you, but me, I adore series with loving families and seeing previous characters throughout the series.

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### **Diane says**

Thank you NetGalley and Grand Central Publishing for letting me read this book for my honest review.... Enjoyed this story of love, life, and foodies. This is the third book in the series and includes the couples from the prior books as they are family and such a neat family. Love Jules and her British accent, her little one Evan, and her best friend Tad. I always find it funny when two people clearly are attracted to each other but fight it so badly because of their friendship. Tad is sweet and loving to Jules and protective and supportive. Jules is a great cook, a sister to a famous chef, and she is dyslexic and struggles with it but Tad encourages her always. I enjoyed this romance it was easy and quick. I would recommend to others.

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### **Lyndy Ann ? says**

#### **Hot and Bothered is Jules and Tad's story, can best friends become more?**

Jules Kilroy ran away from London two years ago to Chicago to her big brother Jack for his help and support as she was pregnant. She was taken in by the Deluca family and she became best friends with Tad much to Jack's annoyance. Jules has always kept the identity of Evan's father a secret but secrets always have a way of coming out.

Tad Deluca is a hot Italian who has had LOTS of female attention, one night when Jules kisses him Tad stops the kiss but after that night there is no other woman for him but Jules. For the last ten years Tad has been carrying the guilt of his parents death and living half a life and in his mind Jules deserves a better man than him.

Jules decides to start dating and with Lili and Cara's help signs up for on line dating, seeing Jules on dates makes Tad's blood boil and thinking of another man raising Evan does not work for him so he is willing to risk their friendship and soon they are tearing each others clothes off while getting hot and bothered. Will their friendship survive when emotions become involved?

This story has emotion, funny banter and lots of sexy times. I love the relationship between Jules and Tad and the bond between Jules, Jack and Shane is sweet and cute at times. It was great catching up with Jack, Lili, Shane and Cara. **I have loved this series and I would recommend it to anyone who loves sexy romances that have their ups and downs. Kate Meader has become one of my new favourite authors of 2015.**

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### **Susan (susayq ~) says**

Tad DeLuca. I wanted to kiss him and beat him. All at the same time. He was the most loving, caring, uplifting guy, with a dirty streak to him. Just my kind of hero ;) While Tad was all those things, he was carrying a huge serving of guilt that kept him from admitting his feelings for Jules. His guilt was so strong it even had him pushing her away. Thankfully, Jules changed enough through the book that she finally stood up for herself and told Tad that he was missing out on the best thing to ever happen to him :)

This was a great read. Even though it's the third in the series, it can be read as a stand alone, since I didn't read the first two in the series and I didn't feel like I was missing any important info. Will I go back and read the previous ones? Yes, I probably will :)

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## Kate Meader says

### \*\*\* TOP PICK from *Romantic Times Book Reviews* \*\*\*

Here's what they said . . .

*A deft and delightful wrap-up for the Hot in the Kitchen series, this book can also stand alone. Meader's writing has continued to pick up steam in this series with fully developed characters who are modern without being raunchy, sex scenes that are steamy without the trite play-by-play and with fast-moving, realistic plots. The dialogue is witty and fun, and the story will warm your heart.*

### A word from Kate...

This is Book 3 of the *Hot in the Kitchen* series, and it features Tad and Jules. If you like friends to lovers tales, then you'll enjoy this sexy story about a bad boy wine bar owner and a formerly wicked girl who's trying - and failing - to be good. There's the usual DeLuca snark and meddling as we catch up with Jack, Lili, Shane, and Cara - however *Hot and Bothered* can also be enjoyed without having read Books 1 and 2. Next up? Chicago firefighters in March 2015!

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## Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says

Slick's review posted on Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

Review copy provided for an honest review

### 5 STARS

Every...damn...time...author Kate Meader gets to me. The third book in her Hot and Bothered series is even better than the first two and considering how much I loved them, that's saying a whole lot. If I could give this book more than 5 stars I would that's how freakin' fantastic it is and how much I adored it. Simply put Hot and Bothered is sassy, often hilarious, poignant, and incredibly sexy. The characters despite their flaws and issues are relatable and loveable; these are people I want to be friends with despite their complete and utter adoration of wine. In the past few months this author has proven she's got what it takes to satisfy her readers and I plan on having a long and lasting relationship with her.

Tad Deluca bartender, award winning mixologist, and new owner of a wine bar named after is dearly departed mother Vivi; Tad seems like a good time guy, always flirting, a new woman in his life every week yet underneath that facade is a man who is just trying to get through life bearing the pain of losing his parents way too young and the scars that come with it. In the past two years he'll admit his life has changed for the better when Juliet (Jules) Kilroy walked into his uncle's restaurant and dropped a bombshell on her brother his cousin's now husband. Since that time he's been her friend, supported her through her pregnancy by another man, her admission of a secret she's held inside for years, and through the birth of her son and the bright spot in his life, Evan. Secretly he wants her but he knows she deserves better than the man he is and so as hard as it is, he'll remain her friend no matter how hard it is to deny what he wants but can't have.

Jules Kilroy wasn't sure where she was going in life when she busts into one of the big moments in her brother Jack's life and delivers news that sends him reeling. Never having an easy relationship with her big brother, Tad jumps in to help her and be a buffer between them. She's never lied to herself about the way Tad makes her lady parts jump up and scream "take me now" but in the two years they've known each other Tad has been her friend and other than one embarrassing moment a year ago, that's apparently all he plans to be. However, now that her precious boy is getting older Jules knows it's time to start taking care of some of her needs and what she needs is a man.

Seriously, as I'm writing this I'm smiling and giggling to myself over the many, many moments of fun these two share. I love their easy banter, how comfortable they are with each other on all sorts of topics, and how they rely on one another. Their friendship isn't perfect because deep down they are both denying that their attraction to one another is keeping them from sharing the things in their past they are most ashamed of but as their friendship turns into more, they both begin to discover every facet of the other. I admire the way they both accept each other good and bad, and the way they refuse to let the past get in the way. Jules strength goes beyond words; she's had to deal with so much in her life and has had a lot to overcome. She still struggles with accepting her worth but I love that once she realizes what she wants from Tad she holds on and doesn't let go. She absolutely pushes despite what it might mean for their relationship. Tad's back story was pretty gut wrenching and the fact that Jules was the one that realized what he needed from his family but never got is quite telling to how much she understands this complex man.

I could go on and on about this story but instead I'll just ask you to buy it and give it a try. I honestly think you'll love it and this author. *Hot and Bothered* is a perfect love story; flawed but fascinating characters, entertaining and emotional plot, snappy and smart dialog, and enough smokin' hot sex to make you well...hot and bothered! This is one series that I can easily read again and again, I love this zany cast of characters so much.

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