



Just My Luck

Rosalind James

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A little distraction can be a wonderful thing.

Nate Torrance has a job to do, and the biggest rugby boots in the world to fill. He can't afford to lose his focus, especially not to a brown-eyed Canadian who pushes all his buttons and looks much too good in a climbing harness.

Allison Villiers may not know what she wants to do with her life, but she's clear about one thing. She's not impressed by the new captain of the All Blacks, however big a deal he is to the rest of New Zealand. If only her unfortunate taste for adventure didn't keep leading her astray . . .

Just My Luck Details

Date : Published August 1st 2013 by Rosalind James

ISBN : 97809888761940

Author : Rosalind James

Format : Paperback 380 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary, Sports and Games, Sports, Contemporary Romance, Sports Romance

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From Reader Review Just My Luck for online ebook

SheLove2Read says

I have loved the previous books in this series but I have to say this was a letdown. There are two stories running concurrently in this book - Allie and Nate's along with Kristen and Liam's. Allie and Kristen are roomies and Nate and Liam are players on the same rugby team.

Allie was selfish and arrogant when she had no right to be. Nate was a bit self centered but not a bad guy, he just had his priorities in the wrong place. I disliked Allie almost from the start and by the end of the book, couldn't have cared less what happened with her.

The only thing keeping me reading was the wonderful story between Kristen and Liam. They deserved their own book and more story time because it was all that was romantic and heartfelt and a true journey that I love to see.

A generous 3 stars - Allie and Nate ruined this for me.

Melindeeloo says

This was a twofer romance story.

I loved Liam and Kristen's second chance story, it was slow and sweet. 4 stars for them

The story between Nate and Ally was good up to a point, and then I got sort of mad at both of them. Him for treating her so poorly and her for letting him squeeze her into the very small spaces in his life - and for caving and forgiving him so easily, she really needed to take some lessons from Kristen and he really needed to do some major groveling. 2.5 stars = pretty good for them.

Kelsey Bowen says

Good, but Ally was probably my least favorite of all female protagonists Rosalind has written about. I definitely didn't hate her; I found her likeable most of the time. I'm not sure I can peg exactly what it was.

Naksed says

HERO: I am a commitment-phobe who has no room in his life other than for professional rugby.

HEROINE: Let's date!

HERO: I am a commitment-phobe who has no room in his life other than for professional rugby.

HEROINE: Let's have sex!

HERO: I am a commitment-phobe who has no room in his life other than for professional rugby.

HEROINE: I love you!

HERO: I am a commitment-phobe who has no room in his life other than for professional rugby.

HEROINE: WHAT????!!!! Why didn't you tell me? Waaaaaaahhhhh *runs away crying*

Then, there's the conversation heroine has with her roommate where her roommate has to explain to her that men sometimes lie and have one-night stands. Also, she lets everyone, from her ex-boyfriend of six years, to her ONS who took sex pics of her without her consent and published them on the Internet, to her boss at work who steals her ideas, belittles her and finally wrongfully terminates her, WALK ALL OVER HER WITH TOTAL IMPUNITY. (Her response to the suggestion that she prosecute the CRIMINAL who violated her privacy: how can I file a police report against him when he has moved to another country ? *face palm*)

To add insult to injury, there is a B plot with the Perfect Romantic Couple that seems to have been inserted in the book just to hammer the point that heroine is a HOT MESS.

I am sorry, Rosalind James, your lovely New Zealand travelogue cannot make up for the deficiencies of this particular heroine.

With this book, I have unfortunately broken my New Year's Resolution to automatically DNF at the first sign of Doormat.

Lyuda says

Oh, my! I think I had escapes too many with the series. Here is what you find reading the stories:

1. New Zealand is a paradise on Earth
 2. The only men worth considering in the paradise are the rugby players because they are:
 - The most intelligent
 - The most sensitive and hardworking
 - Best looking on the outside (most of them) and inside (all of them)
 - Sex gods who can change any woman to a sex kitten willing to try anything
 - Great in bed despite all the hard work and bruising they receive on the rugby fields
-

Honeyeater says

This was too boring to continue on with. DNF

Jennifer says

3.5 stars

Just My Luck starts off with strong Pride and Prejudice influences. There are two couples stories here - Ally and Nate (the main couple), and Kristen and Liam. Kristen is the recently divorced sister of Hannah from Just This Once. She was headed to New Zealand to try and heal from her divorce and such and convinced Ally to come with her for a year for a bit of adventure. Nate and Liam are both rugby players for the All Blacks, Nate being the new captain. I love the setting and the rugby player romances that these books are. I don't know that much about rugby, but I did see the All Blacks at some community thing that we happened upon while visiting New Zealand. I love the writing and how the Kiwi dialect is in there, seeing what they say that is different from me. I like learning all of that.

As for the story, it was good. It wasn't my favorite of the Escape to New Zealand stories, but it was a good read. I only wish we would have had a separate book about Kristen and Liam though as I loved their story and wanted to see more!

Ally and Kristen meet Nate and Liam for the first time at the climbing gym where Ally is working. Ally is a bit of an adventure junkie. She loves to rock climb and cliff jump and anything active and exciting. The first few meetings between Ally and Nate don't go so well. Nate just keeps stuffing it up somehow and it really was kind of endearing. Unfortunately Ally is believing the terrible things Devon is telling her about Nate. Not sure why she believes them, especially after Devon acts kind of weird with her (like wanting to take her and her friend out, not just her). Devon is obviously after the connection to the famous rugby players, but Ally believes Devon when he tells her how horrible Nate is. I know Nate messed up at times, but he seemed like a genuinely nice guy. Eventually it works out and Ally gives Nate a chance, but there are more issues there.

Nate is a very organized guy. He has his life scheduled out in detail. He has only one thing he really cares about, rugby. He needs to focus on that and cannot afford any distractions, especially since he is the new captain. He has some big shoes to fill and Ally would be a distraction. He is so focus and organized he doesn't see how he could fall for Ally, have a real, serious relationship with her and focus on rugby. He is kind of geeky and one of those really smart people that doesn't see the obvious things that are right in front of him. I did enjoy reading him as he seems like such a nice guy.

Ally tries to keep things relaxed with Nate, but there are of course issues at the end to work through. Nate does take her for granted at times. He just assumes she will always be there when he needs/wants her, but he won't commit to a deeper relationship. They are exclusive, but eventually Ally wants more. I am glad they were eventually able to work everything out.

As for the secondary relationship I loved Kristen and Liam. Kristen is beautiful and she often times has issues with that. Guys don't want a relationship with her. She is not the one they have deep conversations with because they only see her beauty. Liam is different. He sees her at a party and sees how uncomfortable she is surrounded by a group of guys. He saves her from that situation, but doesn't press her for more. She also is still trying to figure out how to be on her own and doesn't want to depend on another guy. She has given herself a year to be by herself without a guy. Liam is so incredible with her. He likes her, wants to be with her, but knows that he needs to go incredibly slow with her. They are friends, hang out often and have a

lot of fun together. Kristen does grow to care for Liam, but she wants to stick to her timeline. She needs to know she can do it herself. They were great together and I wish the entire book would have been about them. I would have loved to have seen more of their outings and them growing closer and closer. I liked their story more than Abby and Nate's story.

So overall I did enjoy this book. Nate was so nice, even if he didn't see what was right in front of him or took Abby for granted at times. I loved how he was different from the other guys from prior books. Kristen and Liam were great as well and I loved watching their relationship grow. A good read and I look forward to more from this author.

This review was originally posted to Jen in Bookland

Anna says

A little blah, and honestly I almost gave up on it. Two love stories is really too much for one book. And, honestly, I didn't like the main one at all. The only thing I liked about this book was the rock-climbing --- the protagonist's passion for the sport really came through and I almost felt the need to hunt down a climbing wall and try it myself. Almost....

Pamela says

This has to be the weakest and the least enjoyable book in the "Escape to New Zealand" series. The story was way too long, not to mention boring beyond belief. Ally and Nate's story just went on forever! Half-way thru the novel I had no choice but to start skimming thru quickly just to end my misery. I also have to say that while I did like both Kristen and Liam, including their story, I absolutely hated both Ally and Nate. As for their story, it just didn't work for me. They both came across as childish and immature. I don't know if I'll continue with the series which is too bad because I really enjoyed book 1. Oh well. May not be to my liking, but I'm sure others will enjoy it.

Bunzluna says

I found this story disappointing. I've enjoyed all the other rugby romance books I've read by this author but this one left me dissatisfied. Nate and Allie just didn't spell HEA for me. He's a immature jerk and she's a whinny girl. I liked Kristen and Liam's story much better. Wish that had been the principal arc in this novel.

Emily (Mrs B's Books) says

2.5 STARS

This was my least favourite book in the series. We are given two couples stories that should have been split, but the author may have been running out of ideas. In any case the bulk of the book was with Nate and Ally with a bit of Liam and Kristin thrown in for luck.

Thankfully the author seems to have run out of history lessons however the game of rugby was still being explained to me. To be honest I am quite happy the series has finished as unfortunately this series just didn't gel with me.

KB Wayne says

3.5 stars.

I really do adore the author's writing, her ability to transport us to other places (or "time," as in *Welcome to Paradise*), and her keen attention to detail while never making it feel instructional or pandering. I'd read and greatly enjoyed all in her previous *Escape to New Zealand* series so it was an absolute "duh" to get this one tout de suite.

There are two main characters, Ally, a Canadian-American, and Nate, the (new) All Blacks (national rugby team) captain, and two lesser characters (more than supporting but not as main as Ally + Nate), Kristen, a recently divorced American (and younger sister to *Just This Once's* Hannah) and Liam, a Maori rugby player, teammate and good friend of Nate. This story takes place in Wellington, so it was fun to learn a bit more about NZ and its cities.

At Kristen's behest, Ally moves to NZ with her for a year for an adventure (for Ally) and for Kristen to heal after the painful dissolution of her marriage (her husband was a jerk and cheated on her). Ally is an outdoorsy woman, loving adrenaline sports and works as a rock climbing instructor: she works for a misogynistic blowhard, which is hard on her but she plugs away. Ally does not have really any disposable income -- she is living month-to-month, and that's refreshing -- so many romances have characters who seem to have not a financial worry in the world. Just like the rest of us, eh? Ha ha. Ally is forthright and maybe a bit brash for the depicted Kiwi polite, restrained culture -- to me, she felt like a breath of fresh air, and I loved how she didn't play coy or cute -- she is who she is and she feels how she feels. The only time(s) she faltered were when she didn't stay true to herself. Good girl -- she is what I wish for young women.

While rock climbing, Ally and Kristen first come across Nate and Liam, and so the story goes. Nate seems like a good enough guy but he's not looking for anything serious (code for easy sex), except Ally gets under his skin (in a good way). Because Kristen has had one disappointing and failed relationship after another, she has decided to not date and instead work on herself, figuring out what she is bringing, or looking for, or attracting, so she can break that cycle. Liam is taken with Kristen, of course for her statuesque beauty, but probably more for her quiet determination. He recognizes something of himself in her steely resolve to "fix" herself, and he responds positively to it.

There are strong *Pride and Prejudice* influences at play here -- Devon is Wickham with Ally the unsuspecting Elizabeth (and later, a touch of Lydia), Nate is Darcy with Kristen the ethereal and good Jane and Liam the pure and also good Mr. Bingley (but not naive like Mr. Bingley); the story line itself is even similar in that Jane and Mr. Bingley are strong supporting characters in *P+P* and we root for them without ever getting as "inside" their characters as we do Elizabeth and Darcy. There are also strong similarities to the first in the *Escape to New Zealand* series, *Just This Once*, with Nate this time drawing a parallel to Hannah and her devotion to anything but a relationship and how it could fulfill her personally. Nate is taken with rugby to the exclusion of being willing to have a serious relationship with anyone, including himself. And, just as it did Hannah, it hurts him. It hurts those who love him. (It's also fun the way the author peppers the titles from her previous books throughout, but not as titles -- as expressions.)

While I understand why the two story lines (Nate and Ally's and Kristen and Liam's) were told in one book (as they are concurrent in time) I would have wished for them to be separate. I would have liked to spend a lot more time with both Kristen and Liam, together and individually, especially inside Kristen's head and how she is doing with her self-work. It felt as if we got a better handle on Liam and how he had healed himself, which was terrific to read, but I wanted as much from Kristen. I also would have loved to spend more time in their relationship because it was so gentle, so tender, so frail-seeming, and I'm not just talking about their sex life (although that was so different to read because most of the sex lives of the couples in the Escape to New Zealand series seem to have rougher, more gymnastic couplings) but about their hesitant interactions with one another. They are both rather careful with the other.

Also, Nate just wasn't my favorite. He wasn't a bad guy but his priorities were messed up, and I got exasperated / bored with him. I loved that the author painted such a full picture of him that we understand why he is the way he is (that as a young teen he was sent away from home to attend school and to focus on rugby, because he was gifted at it), why rugby is his focus. During those formative years he wasn't around his parents to see how adults live and love together, the way they can be focused on outside pursuits but still make time for their significant other and how that SO can actually enhance those outside pursuits. So he's a bit stunted. But I still resented how he took advantage of Ally's emotional largesse and kinda led her on -- unknowingly, unintentionally, but led her on all the same. Early on, even when he hadn't admitted it to himself (thought he was after a quick lay), he was pursuing her in a relationship sense -- to have sex with her he wouldn't go on a big hike with her. He wouldn't pursue her at the rock climbing gym where she works, wouldn't accompany her to the ladder-diving off the quay near Te Papa (museum in Wellington), wouldn't have let it go on so long.

****SPOILERS****

I do also wish we'd spent more time at the end with Nate and Ally as they figured out how to have a loving, committed relationship, and how they did that while Nate was still pursuing his rugby and Ally pursued her education. By the end, it appeared that in that elapsed time (fourteen months) Nate had grown and changed *a lot*, and I would've really enjoyed being present for that. Really enjoyed it. Also, it would've been a treat to spend more time with Kristen and Liam as they planned their traditional Maori wedding. Just because.

****END OF SPOILERS****

Anyway, the writing continues to be quite good with characters you can get behind, invest in, root for, even if occasionally you aren't in love with them. I'll read anything by Rosalind James because she's a romance writer for smart readers.

Jan130 says

This one had two cute romance pairs in one book. Double value LOL.

Tina says

I have really enjoyed the Rosalind James series Escape to New Zealand. There are 5 books in all, and each one tells a unique story of a relationship blossoming from first introduction on. The first book is Hannah and

Drew's story. It is arguably the slowest of the 5, providing the New Zealand setting and the Rugby football instruction. While the slowest of the 5, it is in no ways a negative on the book itself. In book one, Hard working Hanna meets hard working Drew, and together they learn that sometimes it is ok to relax a little bit and to have someone to share the down time with. Book 2 is the story of Koti and Kate. They have a bet that he can't be friends with a girl without sex getting in the way. They can barely stand each other, her strong Italian personality a unique experience for him, as well as the fact that she is completely unimpressed with his celebrity status. They have a rocky start, and only begin to like each other when they begin to leave the preconceived notions on the wayside, and take each other at face value. It was refreshing that this couple were together for over 6 weeks before anything happened, and in the end they both end up losing the bet. Book 3 tells of Jenna and Finn. She is a nanny to his children. His love evolves from watching her with his kids, watching her maternal instincts, her strong character. They bond over failed marriages and feelings of unworthy, to learn that it was only because they needed each other to heal. Again, a relationship that develops first as friends over the course of several months before it becomes anything more. Book 4 is about Nic and Emma. One week six years ago was the best of their lives, but when they split apart to go their separate ways, something was left behind, something neither one ever forgot – for him it was a week of his life where he felt unconditional love for who he was, not what he could do on the field. For her it was a son, a son she is unable to let Nic know about even though she tries several times over the years. Chance brings them together again, and while Nic is getting to know his son, Emma and Nic are getting to know each other, too. Emma has to learn how to trust Nic again, even as outside forces try to make her doubt him. This review is about the last book of the series (though I hope not!!!), which is Book 5. This novel tells a dual love story with Nate and Allie, and Kristen and Liam. Kristen and Liam are secondary characters - though their story only gets slightly less development than Nate and Allie's. Kristen is a woman who has been used and hurt and is recovering from past failed relationships and he a recovering alcoholic recovering from a past failed marriage, learning to be strong on their own, and strong together, as this recovery takes place. Nate and Allie's relationship takes center stage with Nate doing everything he can to ruin the relationship before it ever starts, and Allie a strong independent woman hoping he can learn to get it right.

I came across this series with book 1, a free kindle download. I did not expect to like it, especially when I realized it had a foreign setting. I expected the book to be step 1. Meet at the beach. Step 2. Have wild passionate relationship for 2 weeks. Step 3. Realize you can't live without each other and get married. End of story. I was so pleasantly surprised that that wasn't the case with book 1, or with any of the books in the series actually. The relationships evolved. The couples courted. You got to see the relationships develop over realistic conversations and realistic events. The books that Rosalind James writes for this series all have this formula. It is refreshing to read a book that doesn't have a couple falling madly in love after 4 days together and living happily ever after. Some of these couples have real problems they have to overcome. Each of these characters stick with you long after the story is over, and it was such a pleasant surprise to have past characters pop up in each new book I read. Rosalind James made believable characters, with believable lives, in a memorable setting that made me want to learn about New Zealand and the world of Rugby Football. And as a nice little bonus, each book comes with a dictionary of common New Zealand terms so that you can see just what it is that these handsome Rugby players are saying. Try the books and you won't be disappointed. I'm only disappointed that book 5 seems to be the last one.

Angi says

Love this one just as much as the first 4...I'm not sure which of the guys was hotter: Mako or Toro! Either way it was great to see how they both struggled with getting into a relationship and how it affected their careers and future.

