



Ever After

Karen Kingsbury

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Two couples torn apart—one by war between countries, one by war within.

In this moving sequel to *Even Now*, Emily Anderson, now twenty, is attending college on a soccer scholarship when she meets the man who changes everything for her: Army reservist Justin Baker. Their tender relationship, founded on a mutual faith in God and nurtured by their trust and love for each other, proves to be a shining inspiration to everyone they know, especially Emily's reunited birth parents, Lauren Gibbs and Shane Galanter.

Lauren and Shane still struggle to move past their opposing beliefs about war, politics, and faith. Shane believes it's possible but Lauren doesn't. So she says a painful good-bye to her long-ago love and returns to her job as a war correspondent in Afghanistan.

Both hearts are shattered, and Lauren and Shane believe that this time their relationship has truly ended forever. Then tragedy sends shock waves through all their lives. Can Lauren and Shane set aside their opposing views so that love—God's love—might win, no matter how great the odds?

Ever After Details

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Loraine says

SUMMARY: In this moving sequel to Even Now, Emily Anderson falls deeply in love with a young Army reservist who is about to serve in Iraq. At the same time, Emily's parents seem on the verge of losing all they had gained. Will heartbreaking tragedy be the turning point for all of them?

REVIEW: This book brought me to tears. As the wife of a Vietnam vet who was engaged when he served his tour, I could identify with every emotion that Emily experienced. I also could identify with Lauren's torn feelings between supporting the military and wishing the military personnel would just be brought home. Kingsbury handled every facet of this book with the depth, understanding, and intense emotion that these issues bring forth in all who are involved. The characters were full of life and the storyline continued the emotions and problems introduced even now. Excellent read.

Erin Woodall says

I really loved this book. It is not often a book brings tears to my eyes. Karen brought the story to life. You felt the loss like it was somebody you knew! And then it turns to joy and knowing all along God is with the characters every step of the way!!

Beth says

Lauren, Shane, Emily and Justin - another tear jeeper . . . But Shane and Lauren get married. In this moving sequel to Even Now, Emily Anderson, now twenty, is attending college on a soccer scholarship when she meets the man who changes everything for her: Army reservist Justin Baker. Their tender relationship, founded on a mutual faith in God and nurtured by their trust and love for each other, proves to be a shining inspiration to everyone they know, especially Emily's reunited birth parents, Lauren Gibbs and Shane Galanter. Lauren and Shane still struggle to move past their opposing beliefs about war, politics, and faith. Shane believes it's possible; Lauren doesn't. So she says a painful good-bye to her long-ago love and returns to her job as a war correspondent in Afghanistan. Both Lauren and Shane are shattered, believing that this time their relationship has truly ended forever. Then tragedy sends shock waves through all their lives. Can Lauren and Shane set aside their opposing views so that love---God's love---might win, no matter how great the odds?

Ivy Rose says

Oh. My. Gosh.

I just moments ago finished this book. I cried through the last half of it. Sobbed. This is the saddest, most vivid, most real, most heart-wrenching, most moving book I've ever read. It's gonna take a while to recover from this one.

Read it. (But read book 1 first). Shut yourself in a room so you can cry while reading. This book will totally change how you think.

Tiana says

This was the sequel to *Even Now*, which I gave 3 stars. Even though I wasn't crazy about the first book, it didn't conclude everything, so I felt like I had to read the second one also. I have to say, the first one was better. This story was way too predictable, and of course it wouldn't be Christian fiction unless there were some unnecessary tragedy that occurs, which predictably happened in this book. I think it was supposed to be a sweet book about patriotism and courage and love, but I felt like she was again trying to make a political statement, and this time I didn't agree. The book is primarily about the war in Iraq, and the politically liberal character who opposes the war is portrayed as someone who is spiritually lost and confused who eventually finds God and realizes the war is actually something she should support. It kind of made me want to gag. I still gave it 2 stars instead of 1 because the author does accurately portray the idea that war is complicated, not just right or wrong, good or bad. I have to give her credit for that, so that bumped it all the way up to 2 stars.

Ajoque says

I loved this book it opened my eyes to the war in Iraq in ways I never thought possible. I cannot even begin to explain it. It is filled with all sorts of information about the war, the soldiers, war casualties and insurgents. At times I felt a bit overwhelmed that almost the entire content of the book was encapsulated in the war but again, as with the first book, she writes it in such a way that you feel a part of it so it is hard to get bored. This story drew me in so deep I had a hard time separating the fiction from the facts.

It made me face my views on the war, something I had only started to do after Bush's presidency was coming to an end, and I realize my thoughts remain the same. That I am neither 100% against nor 100% for the war. War is complicated but sometimes necessary, even if nobody wants it. I believe the war in Iraq was initiated for the right reasons, to maintain the freedom and protection of American citizens after the unfortunate events of September 11. However I also believe that the reasons for remaining their this long and risking our soldiers' lives was all for the wrong reasons. This, for a lot of people, is what taints the good these men and women sacrifice their lives for everyday. The one thing I am and will always be 100% sure of is that our troops need our support. These young/old men and women sacrifice and are risking their lives for us everyday so that we can continue to live in peace and to have and enjoy our freedom. They are and will always be in my prayers. I am thankful for their sacrifice and devotion to America everyday!

As with the first book, this story also broke my heart but in a completely different way. Yet while my heart was breaking it was also being filled with everything that is wholesome, pure and good about the world and the power and pleasure of God's love.

Kingsbury truly is an inspirational writer. This is only the second novel I've read but I've already gained so much insight about faith and trusting in God. The messages she sends through each book is clear and in this book it is that "love is not possible without sacrifice and sacrifice is not possible without love." She has the amazing ability to make the stories so real it's as if you were listening to a close friend confiding in you. I cannot wait to read more of her books.

Erin says

This book carried across well the truth that one life touches many, and it is up to us whether we will be a positive or neutral influence.

Brooke — brooklynennereads says

There really isn't much that I can say in this review without giving anything away. In fact, you may be able to predict what happens before reading the book (or in the beginning). However, I can not get over how much this book hit me emotionally. It's a fictional novel but it also is similar to a lot of people's life. That alone, I can't get over. It also explains how one life can make a difference to many with a rippling effect.

This book truly makes you think about life (or it had that result for me anyway). I understand how many won't necessarily agree with different aspects of this novel (surrounding politics, military, and religion) but I hope they receive the main message of this novel. This novel was incredibly well written, meaningful, and very important. It definitely will be one that I will remember and continues to have me thinking about now that I have finished.

Prepare yourself with some tissues but definitely read this book.

Tiffanie says

This book just like the first one had me bawling my eyes out through the whole book. A girl who spends her whole life trying to find her parents and wondering if they ever found each other finally locates them and learns they never found each other. She plans a surprise reuniting for them and on their first night in town learn that being separated so long their views about the war their both in or work for are so different they can't see making a relationship work. Their daughter finds love during college working on the army base with a soldier. After spending the summer together and falling in love he has to do a 2nd tour in Iraq but only for 6 months not the year they originally thought. 2 months into his tour he gets hit by a roadside bomb and is killed but his best friend manages to survive. In his final moments he tells him to go home and be a friend to her because she will need a friend to get through these hard times and to tell her how sorry he is that he's not coming home to marry her. They go through the funeral and all the grieving and it shows 18 months after all that the friend she made because of her first love is someone she falls in love with as he does her. Such a very touching story.

Cydney says

Favorite quote from book: "Love is not possible without sacrifice, and sacrifice is not possible without love" [from authors notes:]

When I finished "Even Now" [the prequel to "Ever After"], I was disappointed in the ending - it seemed 'unfinished'. I picked up the sequel, "Ever After" to see if it gave 'closure'. The answer is yes, it did! I liked

"Ever After" the best of the two. There is enough 'reminiscing' to fill the reader in if they haven't read the first book (I would read both if you have the time).

I was so glad that my family was fishing this weekend, I would have had a difficult time explaining my weeping to them. I've been 'weepy' while reading books before, but rarely do the tears leave my eyes. Oh no, not this one! The tears welled up before the middle of the book, and by the time I finished it they were streaming down my cheeks and onto my neck!! [I must justify myself, first- the author herself said that the book "flowed out of her in just 5 days" and she "wept more than ever before while writing", second- this might not have been the best 'week' to control emotions, and third- one main character is 22-years-old and going off to war...my 19-year old leaves in 10 days to serve a church mission in Mexico for two years. Probably not the best time for me to be reading emotional stuff!:]
Even with the weeping...I really liked the book!

Kristy says

Rating: 3/10

Super cheesy! 'Even Now' was cheesy too but it had the whole reunion thing going for it. I used to read these kind of books all the time as a teen and just lap them up but now I see how unrealistic stories like this are. Yes, you read books to escape reality but this was just too much. Does it make me a terrible person that the saddest part of the book didn't move me at all? I also guessed the ending about one third through the book. I guess the whole story is super predictable.

What bugs me the most is how Emily treats her grandmother. In 'Even Now' Emily loves her grandparents and they raise her with love, encouragement and make sure she has everything she needs. Understandably, Emily wishes she knew her parents as she knows they are out there, she just doesn't know how to reach them. But she takes it one step further and says she always felt empty. Like the love she felt from her grandparents wasn't enough. There are kids out there who don't have their mum or dad to raise them but another family member might step in and take the place of the parent. That's what Emily's grandparents did. They loved and cared for her like they were her parents so she should feel secure enough in that to not feel like she is missing out on so much. Yes, she can long to know her parents but they would have loved her just as much as her grandparents.

Then the reunion happens and all the way through that process, Emily is keeping her grandparents in the loop and rejoicing with them. Everything seems wonderful. Then once Lauren and Shane are in Emily's life, it seems like Emily kind of wipes her grandparents out of her life. They are there but it is Lauren and Shane she goes to. I don't think there is anything wrong with Emily treating her parents like parents but her grandparents are the ones who put in the hard yards. They know her better than Lauren or Shane and they are slowly pulled out of the picture.

This happens more so in Ever After. Emily doesn't contact her now widowed grandmother at all to see how she is going or ask for advice. It seems that the only people who keep in regular contact with her is Shane's parents. I couldn't imagine what it would be like to lose your husband and then see the child who you raised and love basically replace you with the parents who can't get it together. I just think that you can't love enough and Emily could have loved them all equally like she now has three parents. Meanwhile, it never mentions that her grandmother feels rejected. She just accepts it. I know that in reality that would never happen. Emily's grandmother even says in 'Even Now' that she felt she made a lot of mistakes raising Lauren

and she felt like she had a second chance with Emily. That would have created a stronger bond because she raised Emily in a way that allowed Emily to feel loved and supported. Lauren felt like she had to fit the perfect mould set up for her which is why she happily ditched her parents and never looked back.

I am not a parent and have no plans to become one anytime soon, but I think about how my mum would feel and I know it would break her heart if this happened to her. Sometimes people don't understand how much parents put all their blood, sweat and tears into their children and then those kids grow up and completely disregard their parents. I know that my rant is about such a small part of the book but it loomed over me the entire time I was reading 'Ever After'. Where is Emily's grandmother??? She is not only lost her husband but the child who she gave everything she had to. Rant officially over.

The Questions:

Entertaining/Addictive?: It is so cheesy that I rolled my eyes way too many times. I listened to the audio book which was easy to follow along to.

Writing Style?: Cheese feast. The author writes in a way to try pull at your emotions and make you cry but it was so blatantly obvious that I felt nothing.

Impacting/Thought Provoking?: Read my rant above

Clean?: Yes

Read it again?: No

Would I Recommend it: No

Donna Porter says

I picked up this book with great anticipation after having read the first book *Even Now* which I could hardly put down. This one, however, falls short. There were long discourses of character reflection and introspection. That's my pet peeve. I prefer dialogue and more character action and interaction. Kingsbury does do a lot of these sorts of inner dialogues in her books, and they usually don't bother me. This time, however, it was too much of that and not enough action between people. I found Laura Gibbs' change of heart about the war forced, trite, and too fast. She and her hero, Shane Galanter, are at odds about the Iraq war throughout the entire book, then she changes her mind, he changes his mind, and that's that. In turn, the ending, while a happily ever after, was too quick and unsatisfying. If you are into tear jerkers, though, have a box of Kleenex handy because you'll need it for most of the last 1/3 of the book.

Rissa says

3.75??

Emily is doing everything in her power to bring her parents back together.

It was cute.

Laura says

OH MY GOSH, SO GREAT! I loved this book. And I cried like I actually knew the characters in it! It's a great story, and it also made me think. You have to read it!

Tamara Tilley says

I thought EVEN NOW was a great book, but WOW . . . EVER AFTER was incredible. I read the last hundred pages through blurry eyes and a wad of tissues. EVER AFTER takes up where EVEN NOW leaves off. Emily's parents, Lauren and Shane are finally reunited. But their opposite views on the war, continue to be an obstacle to their happily ever after. In the meantime, sharing the patriotic views of her father, Emily gets a job on an army base and soon falls in love with Justin Baker. When Justin is deployed for Iraq, and Lauren decides to leave Shane and go back to reporting the war abroad, Emily feels her world is turning upside down. Now, two of the people she loves the most are in the most volatile place in the world. Justin - fighting for what he believes in, and her mother - reporting what she sees as a waste of time and human life. When Emily receives devastating news, her faith is put to the test and her hopes for a happily ever after. This was a great book. It sums up what I assume are the feelings of many Americans. It gives perspective to the war we rage on foreign soil to preserve our freedoms and give freedoms to the people who have never experienced it. Great book, Karen! I can only hope that someday my writing might affect others the way yours has affected me.
