



With This Ring, I'm Confused

Kristin Billerbeck

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She's got the rock, so when does happily ever after kick in?

At long last, Ashley Stockingdale—patent attorney, fasionista, and homeowner—can finally add "fiancee" to her spirited resume. That means the next four months will be a dizzying and decadent waltz through aisles of Vera Wang, Kenneth Cole, Sheridan sheets, Kate Spade place settings, and Oneida flatware. Well . . . maybe not.

For starters, the HR department has hired Ashley's ex-boyfriend (yep, the one who ran off to India with that other woman) as the new director of software. And now her fiance is starting to sound crazy—something about moving across country, to Philadelphia of all places. Worst of all, right before her eyes, Scarlett I-need-some-Prozac O'Hara is hijacking her wedding plans!

Life for our heroine is spinning from out of control to downright confusing. But whether she makes it to the end of the aisle or not, she'll never be at a loss for drama!

With This Ring, I'm Confused Details

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Author : Kristin Billerbeck

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Deb says

with this ring i'm confused by kristin billerbeck[return:][return:]publisher/date/no. of pages:[return:]westbow, 2005, 294 p.[return:]plot summary: what happens, when & where, central characters, major conflicts[return:]ashley stockingdale should be enjoying this time of her life--she's about to get married, her job is going well, her sister-in-law just had a baby. but her wedding is being taken over by her in-laws, her ex-boyfriend just got hired at her company, and her mom is too focused on being a grandma to help her much with the wedding. ashley thinks all of this equals a crisis of huge proportions, of course, and this leads to scenarios like her having to be bailed out of jail while wearing a "gone with the wind" wedding dress. true love and faith get her through and help her learn how to get along with her in-laws, make sacrifices for her family, and give in when it's really important.[return:][return:][return:][return:][return:][return:]style characterisics: pacing, clarity, structure, narrative devices, etc.[return:]ashley is truly out of control and even neurotic at times! i don't know how her fiance puts up with it, except that he is never there and that he acts like the perfect beau when he is. this book is mostly fun and frivolity, an escape from reality though the situations may be easily related too. but the characters are clear exaggerations--though i found myself identifying with kay, ashley's put together housemate. [return:][return:]how good is it?[return:]just for fun.

Denise Kettering says

I felt the first book in this series was the strongest of the three. As the series went on, I found Ashley to be too materialistic and whiny and found her more and more difficult to relate to as a character. In the first book, she was smart and funny and strong, but not without flaws. In this book, I just found her to be annoying. The issue of being Christian in the 21st century is certainly important and questions appear in this book about how that can work, but in the stress of creating the perfect American wedding, I couldn't help but wonder what kind of message this might send to women preparing for marriage. The book is meant to be a fun piece of chick-lit though and as such brings this series to a satisfying conclusion with the marriage of the main character.

Liyana Sidek says

I picked up this book not knowing that it's the third book in a series. I only discovered that it's the last book of the series when I was already halfway through. Some characters' backgrounds (not the main ones) were a little difficult to understabd because they are probably explained more in the first two books. Nevertheless, I liked the humor and sass in almost every page! Ashley actually surprises me for keeping a calm head while dealing with all the crazy struggles in her life. Despite being a lawyer, she still has the spirit of a little child and maybe that's what I love most about her. I don't know if I'll be searching for the first two books but if I happen to come across it, I definitely wouldn't mind reading it.

Karen says

I liked the main character and the story was just good, quick fun to read. Yeah, it was predictable but who cares when you're just looking for something frivolous?

Amancay says

I finally made it through the series *laughs*, "finally!?" more like, "already!" *giggle*
Good stuff, it's so good, I'm so very afraid I'll be hard pressed to find anything of this caliber anytime soon...
starting off in the world of Christian Chick-Lit with the master, may become my down fall!

It all makes me want to find my very own prince Charming (as if I have any power in that process), have a fabulous wedding, and move along knowing full well God has über awesome plans for us both!

Again, enjoy, read whole-heartedly, share... just make sure it gets back to me eventually!? K!? thanx... *sighs
wondering what to read now!?

Katie says

Cute book...good end to a trilogy... drug out for me though as some parts details were redundant.

Erin says

This is the third book in a three part series. The first is "What a Girl Wants", which I loved, and is by far the best of the three. The second is "She's Out of Control", which I also enjoyed. This one, being the third was not quite as good as the others. I feel like it kind of rambled on and got a bit tiresome. I think this series would have been better had it been condensed into just two books. I am, however, excited about this author and look forward to reading some of her other series (Spa Girls). I love that she's written some fun, hip books for Christian women in the 20's-30's age group.

Beth Peninger says

Thank goodness the series ends in this book. As you can see from my review of book 2, I found it to be a painful and annoying series to get through. I finished it in hopes that somewhere along the way Billerbeck would redeem the picture of Christian single women she had painted but alas. My dreams died along with the last paragraph.

In this third, and final, title in the Ashley Stockingdale series Ashley is a bride who is struggling in different ways with her self-absorption. Her fiance's family is more self-absorbed than she and so you can see the potential for friction. And there is friction. Again Billerbeck had an opportunity to write Ashley's character practicing some good doctrine but again Billerbeck fell short. Instead she has Ashley, and Ashley's fiance, practicing people pleasing (the Bible calls that fear of man) and being a doormat in "the name of Jesus". UM.

That's just a wrong picture of Christ all the way around. While he was gentle and firm with people and was gracious he was never a doormat and doesn't really call us to be. "What about turn the other cheek and all that?" All I can say is read that in context.

I was filled with immense gratitude to be done with the series and now I'm looking at the other Kristin Billerbeck books I have on my "to read" list and thinking that I probably won't give her another shot. There's so many good books out there that take advantage of the opportunity to paint a realistic picture of a particular stereotype that I don't need to be reading the books that just encourage it.

Valerie (Val's Vicinity) says

This book is the third and final entry in Ashley's life, and I have to say I'm kind of glad.

The storyline: "With This Ring, I'm Confused" basically chronicles Ashley's life as she tries to plan her wedding, keep her job, and keep from strangling her future in-laws.

My opinion: Ashley always seems to have so many "problems", things that really aren't that big of a deal, and yet she always blows these things way out of proportion. Yes, I can understand some of her issues concerning the wedding, afterall the bride should be the one to decide on her own gown and the theme (or no theme) of the wedding, not her future sister in-law who has bad taste. But Ashley just stresses over everything so much more than necessary. Even her friends tell her so, but she still continues to stress and freak out about stuff. She could be so much happier if she would just calm down and relax a bit. I feel sorry for people who actually live like that....

So as I said, I'm glad to be done with this series. It's not that I really disliked it, I really was curious to find out what would happen to the characters... it's just that Ashley's whining and over-reacting really kind of put a damper on things for me. So while this series hasn't been my favorite, I still give it two-and-a-half to three stars. Also, I do recommend Kristin Billerbeck's stand-alone novel, Split Ends.

Sara Marsh Billiet says

For the most part I enjoyed the Ashley Stockingdale series. I liked the character of Ashley and her antics. I enjoy Kristin Billerbeck's style of writing. I think at times though, the characters actions were a bit of a stretch and lacked motivation. I think Dr. Kevin Novak was a little "too good to be true". Of course the catch with dating him was the difficult in-laws, but I still thought he was a little too perfect.

I also thought it was a leap that Seth was the perfect guy Ashley almost let get away in the first book but by the beginning of the second book, he was a horrible boyfriend who would never marry her. Not much of a developed reasoning behind Seth's not wanting to marry Ashley, but will marry Arin, who is pregnant with another man's child. Didn't ring true.

Even with my nit-picky-ness, I would read another Kristin Billerbeck novel, because I enjoy her sense of humor and pace of storyline.

Ale says

Overall, this book is funny but irritating once you just can't settle what's wrong with the lead character. It makes me feel weird that being Christians mean you suppress your anger and get along with everyone. Isn't that just being kinda hypocrite? I guess being Christian means you love everyone and NO HATE shall ever exist. It just weird. I thought we have emotions therefore that's why we're humans and having bad feelings towards someone who is taking over our lives is pretty much normal. At least to me. Ashley Stockingdale is just too irritating at times but she also have her funny moments. I just wish she would have taken her life in more control before freaking out like that in public but I do like the series. I have no intention to read the rest though cause it is tiring just reading about her ever-so-nice-no-hate life.

Katie says

I didn't feel as though I connected with any of the characters, as there was an apparent lack in the development of emotional/intellectual depth. However, I thought the portrayal of Christian relationships was strikingly honest. No one is perfect, and everyone struggles at some level (even Christians) to be the person God is calling them to be. As was demonstrated in this book, bestowing love and grace to those around us should be a DAILY priority. Overall this was a light, moderately entertaining read. I got a few chuckles out of it anyway!

Amanda Birdwell says

I can't help it -- how lame am I that my guilty pleasure is totally Christian chick lit? But, you know, this is just like when I started reading in the first place: I don't have anyone girl friends in my life who really struggle to be close to God and make good choices. Not ones with whom I can reflect on my constant failing to do so and my subsequent need for grace.

I would like to write a book that is not part of a series, with a character who is less the ubiquitous Christian Bridget Jones that I keep encountering in these books. Sort of a Kristin Billerbeck-Jami Attenburg-A. Manette Ansay situation. That may be my next project; I just can't really relate to wanting to find a Good Man. When I was single, I was more interested in finding a Good Job and moving to a third world country. I don't know, maybe making your protagonist Christian and female narrows the market enough that in every other way she has to be That Girl.

Heather says

My local Christian book store was having a liquidation sale, so I bought this book which is the third (and final) installment of the Ashley Stockingdale series. I had read the previous two a couple of years back and then gotten off the series because Billerbeck was a little too churchy-preachy for me (granted, I'm a Christian, but rather than you coming right out and telling me what she's struggling with and how she's overcoming it, or not, just let me figure it out on my own). Anyway, I decided it might be good to read how somebody else is writing about virtue and waiting... something that I did not find in hardly any of the aforementioned YA novels. Billerbeck's still super preach-y, but Dr. Kevin Novak is a dream, and if you're in to

Christian chick lit, you can't get much better than Billerbeck.

Kaitlin Traver says

Super cute book about a bride planning her wedding. I loved it considering I'm planning my own wedding right now!
