



Nico

J.B. Hartnett

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When I was a boy, I met a girl.
She didn't know it then, but...
She changed me.

Now.....I am a man.
A man who is broken by the stories of the women who come to me.
They are my birds with broken wings.
I help them heal, help them to make them strong, so they can fly free.
Lark changed me. Loved Me. Made Me Strong.
With her, I am free.

I write...
To the girl of the past.
To the girl of my present.
And, the girl of my future.
Dear Dish...

Nico Details

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Author : J.B. Hartnett

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Sociology, Abuse, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Nico for online ebook

Vanessa says

I cried more times than I could count...J.B. you are amazing at what you do, keep them coming! :)

Review to come with my tour post on 2/8...

FULL REVIEW

“Seeing that beaten and bloodied woman led me to my destiny of helping women, but also brought new nightmares to my life. For whatever reason, abuse in all its forms, grief from what was or what wasn’t...I gave those women tattoos to help them heal...my future had already been determined from that day when I was a kid.”

Nicholas Grant carries a burden of many. Being in his profession, he naturally hears all sorts of stories behind why someone wants a particular tattoo...but Nico has a gift. A gift that brings women to his shop, opens them up, and tattoos their pain on their bodies as a way of healing.

“Sometimes they didn’t tell me. They didn’t tell me anything. I went through the same ritual with each woman that I did that very first day with Anika; I told them they were in a safe place and they could speak freely without worry of their secrets ever being exposed. My job was not to judge. My job was to give them what they needed to heal...I would kiss them on the cheek, hold them, and when they were ready to begin, I would sketch out whatever they had in mind, make a stencil, and get to work. If we had to stop because they were too upset, they just needed a minute to feel whatever they were going through, I let them guide me.”

His ‘birds’, as he likes to call them, have pushed into the forefront of his mind and as each day passes, Nico finds it harder and harder to cope with what he learns. Knowing he can only do what he’s doing to help, he still feels it’s not quite enough. When a note comes to him from one of his former clients, it’s the proof he needs that his life is not complete; and hasn’t been since he was seven years old. His destiny may have been mapped out for him but it was coming to that point that he was wondering if there was more to life than where he was at.

“I gave everything to those thirty-three women, and the list was growing every month...At that moment, I lacked calm and I definitely lacked balance-something I’d only felt once in my life, lying next to a little girl with dishwater-blonde hair.”

This book absolutely gutted me on a level I never expected. I read all three books of *The Leaves Series* in succession and honestly couldn’t wait to get to *Nico*. It was refreshing and heartbreakingly funny at times and other times so tense, I honestly was on the edge of my seat. I enjoyed every single word of this book. J.B. Hartnett has a beautiful writing style that just engages you and keeps you engrossed from the very first page, all the way until the end...and beyond, I didn’t want it to end.

Reading about Nico and having it told from his point of view was probably the first clue that I would love this book...When the realization of what was happening hit me, I cried. This is a true story of love lost and found. A story of strength in ways one would never expect. And that a love of a good man or woman can really make or break someone. The family ties, the friendships, the revisiting of characters from previous

books, even the comedic relief was nothing compared to the love story woven into the pages of *Nico*. I have never wanted two people to be together more than Boy and Dish. *sigh*

****5 Bear Paw Stars****

Liezcel Felix says

“I felt lost. I was empty because there was no one else on God’s green earth that made me feel any kind of peace...until you.”

I will admit that this is the first J.B. Hartnett book that I’ve ever read. I’ve had both Inky and Cole on my e-reader forever but never had the time to read both before starting *Nico*. Did I feel lost going straight into Book 3? Not at all. I however was impressed with its’ storyline that I couldn’t help but read both Inky and Cole right after I finished *Nico*. After reading all of it, I would have to say that the entire series is just spectacular.

So about *Nico*...he is a SoCal tattoo artist. Sounds simple right? Not so much. He creates beauty from women’s pain. He has this gift (besides his art that is) ... the gift of compassion and sensitivity that you rarely experience in men. Every single one of his clients are able to find peace and acceptance under his creative hand. The only thing is that *Nico* suffers tremendously knowing the agony and misery that each of his “birds” have gone through.

His only way to cope with everything is through sex – lots of it. Most of the time not even that helps. There are multiple people who pass through his life that tell him to find his true partner to help him carry the burden but that doesn’t sound so easy to him. That is up until he meets his new neighbor Lark. He is immediately taken with her and she with him. It is as if their souls recognize and gravitate towards each other. Their relationship blossoms exquisitely over time. It however doesn’t come so easy as you would have hoped. There are painful secrets that are kept and one wanting to destroy something so beautiful.

I have a very short list of authors that are on my insta-buy list and I have to say after reading this entire series, J.B. Hartnett is now on it. I was very impressed with the writing, the storytelling and most especially the character development in each and every one of the stories.

She definitely has this special way with words – how she is able to describe a painting, a tattoo or a difficult situation or scene for that matter. It was as if I was literally pulled into the book and experiencing it firsthand. Every emotion was truly heartfelt – whether it be one of the women’s pain or *Nico*’s longing or even the couples happiness.

What I loved most is strong, intertwining relationships – not just the one between *Nico* and Lark but also the remarkable rapport that *Nico* had with his family, friends and even the women (most importantly Inky) that he’s come to help over the years.

Absolutely loved this book and can not wait to see where J.B. Hartnett takes us next.

Lorie says

4.5 STARS!!!

A friend asked how I liked *Nico*. My response: “*I just finished, and I have a HUGE smile on my face*”. **Love it, love it, love it.**

JB Hartnett has the most beautiful cover art on this series, and the stories she tells inside are no different. ***Nico* is filled with passion, emotion, healing, drama, laughs, heartache, joy, and most of all DEPTH. It's nothing short of brilliant!**

Ok.... So what's with the blurb??? It's kind of cryptic, and I really couldn't figure out what Nico's story was (aside from the whole tattoo thing). But, I didn't really care because it's a JB Hartnett book, and I was reading it no matter what. Once I was into the story, the light bulb went on and I figured it out. I am kind of glad the blurb is written the way it is. Unearthing the mystery of the blurb makes Nico's story just that much more beautiful.

I absolutely loved *Inky* and *Cole*, but Nico's story is very heartfelt in a very different way. We all know Nico as the tattoo artist that helps women rid themselves of their demons through body art. But, what we weren't privy to before is just how much the burden of all the hurt weighs on him and just how tortured he is on the inside. He's lost. It all started when seven year old Nico meets a little girl with dishwater blond hair, and she changes his life forever.... He unburdens the broken women, but who is there to unburden Nico?

Kleenex. Keep them on standby. You will need them. This book deals with some sensitive subjects. I found myself shedding tears quite a few times with an occasional sob thrown in. But to lighten it up, JB Hartnett throws her signature humor into the mix. I swear she has some kind of magical secret formula or fairy funny dust because the humor adds perfectly to the story. If you were cracking up at *Inky* and her bedazzling of the t-shirt, then you will certainly appreciate what happens in *Nico*. I was laughing out loud on several occasions.

As usual, the story and plot are amazing and kept me glued to my Kindle. I simply did not want to put it down. JB kept the story real by not taking the easy way out. She wrote a story that isn't perfect; it has ups and downs and unexpected events. Yes, some sad things happen, but that's life. And, that's what I want from a book – real life. If a story is 100% perfect with an easy HEA, what's the fun in reading a story you already know??? There is nothing better than a book that ties me up in emotional knots.

JB truly created a loveable and sympathetic character in Nico. I absolutely fell in love with him. JB is amazing at character development. She develops them to the point you know and understand them deep down. You even fall in love with the secondary ones. Nico's parents play a huge role in the story. I really fell in love with them (especially his dad) not to mention Nico's friend, Zack, and the others that impact his life.

JB Hartnett is fast becoming one of my go-to authors. She's on my gotta-have-it-yesterday list. Her writing is absolutely beautiful. She has the ability to bring out your emotions and have you completely invested in the

characters. It's difficult to find an author with her level of maturity and eloquence. Her writing ranks up there with my favorite authors, AL Jackson and Jen Frederick.

Thank you for being an author that believes in epilogues. I think you would have killed me if there wasn't one. I could have used my imagination, but your epilogue was far more fabulous than anything I could have imagined in my head.

I will be honest. I debated about putting *Nico* down after the first chapter. I knew I was going to fall so head-over-heels for this book that I wanted to save it. I knew once I finished, it would be quite a while before I find another book that gives me this feeling. Yep! I was right. *Nico* is a book you can truly get lost in, and now I'm floundering to find something as equally amazing.

Just as *Inky* and *Cole* made my top reads list of last year, *Nico* has already earned its spot on this year's list!

(ARC received in exchange for an honest review)

Lana ✶Dirty Girl Romance✶ says

3.5-4 stars

Review to come during my blog tour stop on 2/13

ARC given to Dirty Girl Romance blog in exchange for an honest review

For more reviews visit

Karen says

THIS BOOK WAS OFF THE F*****G CHARTS IT HAD ME GRIPPED FROM PAGE ONE TILL THE VERY END.

I LOVED NICO EVEN THOUGH HE WAS A MAJOR TART AT THE BEGINNING BUT HE'S HEART WAS ALWAYS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AND LARK WELL THEY WERE TRULY A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN AND HIS PARENTS WELL IF I KEPT TYPING I WOULD RUN OUT OF SPACE.

THE WHOLE BOOK WAS EMOTIONAL/EROTIC AND ZACK JUST MADE ME LAUGH!!!!

J.B ALL I CAN SAY IS ANYTHING YOU WRITE I WILL ALWAYS BUY BECAUSE YOUR STYLE OF WRITING JUST GRIPS THE READER AND YOU NEVER WANT TO SKIP A SINGLE PAGE!!!!

FOR ALL YOU READERS OUT THERE THAT HAVEN'T BOUGHT THIS BOOK GET ONTO AMAZON NOW AND JUST CLICK TO BUY YOU WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED!!!!

Bethany says

“Teensy ruled his world, and he was lost without her direction. She was his true North, and it was kind of beautiful.”

I have to say, I love this Aussie author something fierce. I was first introduced to J.B. Hartnett with Inky, and I thought the cover was so absolutely stunning and the concept was so original that I MUST read it. Well, I read Inky, continued on with Cole, and now... I've fallen head over heels for Nico. The beauty in these stories is something that's hard to find. You still have the angst, love, lust, humor, and devastation that belongs in every great novel, but it's utterly unique how J.B. writes the story.

The self-discovery, loathing and purely powerful love driven characters are some that you'll not soon forget. Not only can you relate to the characters, but you feel as if you're there going through it with them. The depth behind each character just behooves me, and leaves me speechless. For being an Australian author, J.B. has created such a wonderful mental escape with the imagery provided. I loved the whole diary of important happenings that Nico wrote, too.

“Dear Dish...”

Of course, I loved Nico. I'm not sure I would want him as a book boyfriend though. Don't get me wrong, he is most definitely NOT lacking in any way in that department! I just see him as a big brother type, which is a big part of his personality – doing what he does for his “birds”. Helping people cope with the inner turmoil that almost destroyed them, Nico is intense and sensitive. Although he has that true arseholeness to him, he's so much more than that. He's just a beautiful soul and I love how J.B. captured that in his character. I also adored Lark. Beautiful, intelligent, exceptionally skilled at her artistry – she's the perfect match for Nico.

J.B. did a stunning job with keeping me on my toes throughout the entire novel. I had my theories, (which happened to be right) and she kept me guessing on whether or not what I thought was true, was actually true. When you find out, you literally sit there and say “AH HA! I KNEW IT!” with a big grin on your face because you're just that happy about it. Although... I did get worried for quite a bit there. Stupid Dee... Ugh, what a wench! I pretty much hated her character until the end of the book. I love love loved Nico's best friend Zack and his mate Teensy. They were definitely the comedic relief throughout the story.

As much as I loved Nico, I have to say that I am still more in love with the characters of Inky and Cole. They both have a different intenseness to them. I loved the appearance that they made in the book, to let the readers know that they're doing well after their story. Even though all of these stories are intertwined, Nico can be read as a standalone. I wouldn't recommend it though, simply because of the fact that Inky and Cole were such beautiful novels, and you get to see Nico in a different scenario, yet still the same. The HEA in these novels leave you completely satisfied and still wanting more.

Honestly, if you haven't read any of J.B. Hartnett's novels, you might want to get steppin to it, because you're seriously missing out. I've come to think very highly of my Aussie authors, and I have to say that each of them are sincerely talented, J.B. being one of them that I highly recommend. If you like any of the same books that I've read, and have any of the same feelings that I've had, then this is a MUST read Author for you.

Elizabeth (Perusing Princesses) says

these books are just so emotion evoking.... J.B. Hartnett has weaved her magic again, with the story of Nico... my heart bled for his tortured soul... read this story with some Kleenex nearby... several different times I shed a few tears and once I sobbed.
you get to see the characters from the previous two books which I absolutely adore when the author does that...
loved this book!

Romancerwblog says

I received and ARC in exchange for an honest review.

This was my first J.B. Hartnett book and to be honest even after reading the synopsis I had no idea what to expect. In the end I was pleasantly surprised. At his core Nico is this incredibly decent man with a sensitive heart who longs to help women deal with pain in their lives. He listens to their stories and together they come up with a design and then he tattoos the design on their body, for the women this is a freeing experience, a way to get out the pain, heal, eventually move forward in their lives. However over time the burdens of his "birds" have become too hard to deal with alone, he needs an escape and unfortunately that escape has been one-night stands with women. But as with all crutches eventually they break and now even one-night stands aren't able to take his edge off. His parents urge him to find a woman, a woman who will take his breath away, who he can marry and who will help carry the load of his burdens.

This story has some seriously intense scenes and it tackles some pretty tough issues. I have to give mad props to J.B. Hartnett for weaving such an interesting story. While I felt at times the overall progress of the book moved kind of slow my desire to keep reading never let up. I wanted to follow Nico's journey. Outwardly he may have come across as this emotionless playboy, but because he's the one telling the story you know it's not true and your heart breaks for him, for his pain, for his loneliness. My desire to see him get the HEA he so deserves is what pushed me to stay with his story.

I absolutely loved the way Lark's character was written. Nico may have thought she was fragile but she is anything but and I loved how her reactions and actions not only surprised Nico but myself as well. She may have been pushed around in the past but her relationship with Nico has given her the confidence to become the strong woman she was always meant to be.

I urge you to give this book a chance, it was a very unique journey and while its intense there are also some pretty humorous moments (Nico's father being one of the major contributors...loved him! He is written with perfection) and lots of moments where you really see genuine displays of love...romantic love, friendship love, parent-child love, sibling love. It really was a touching story.

<http://romancerewind.blogspot.com/201...>

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

G&J ~ 3.5 Stars

Gitte: I was so excited to get to Nico's story as I loved what little we knew of this amazing and dark man who brings the light back for damaged and abused women. I'd heard it was dark, gripping and emotional and because I love the previous two books in this series as well as this Authors style of writing I couldn't wait.

Now, I really did enjoy the story of Nico; I loved where this heroic man came from, the work he does and I loved the fact that he was a mature bloke who had real passion, intensity and humility. At times I read with tears in my eyes at the beauty of his poignant childhood moments as well as his empathy and the hope he brought to women who'd been dealt a real tough hand in life.

“When I was seven, I met this little girl. She gave me a sort of peace I haven’t found since. I can’t explain it – “

I did have a few issues with him though, I found that his inner monologue was a perfect balance of alpha, beauty, realness and sensitivity despite his sometimes arsehole behaviour, which I kind of understood. Yet, once in a relationship he begins to speak in clipped sentences where every other word is babe, to the point where this sentiment loses all meaning. I was gutted, because I really fell in love with Nico and once he embarks on a relationship with Lark it was as if he became two people instead of the original much loved character. He was a complex character with so much to give, wanting to settle down with the one who takes his breath away and gives it back. He was astute and quite brilliant yet I felt his character was let down because Nico was so much more than just....babe!

‘Seeing that beaten and bloodied woman led me to my destiny of helping women, but also brought new nightmares to my life. For whatever reason, abuse in all its forms, grief from what was or what wasn’t...I gave those women tattoos to help them heal.’

It almost seems a contradiction in terms, so I guess what I'm trying to say is that the premise of Nico's story was great but the execution just wasn't there for me. At times it felt like the story was confused on what it wanted to be. It felt forced in some parts and rushed in others. I don't know Jenny, do you not think it seems as though something's changed with the writing compared to the previous two books? I guess it doesn't help that I just didn't connect with Lark's character either, maybe. I have to mention though that I'm glad this story had some real humorous scenes to balance out the emotional ones, I loved the shark who stole boxers. I also loved spending some time with Inky, Cole and the gang too. It's always nice to catch up with much loved characters!

“If you can find something or someone that gives you peace when everything else around you is chaos, never let go, baby.”

Jenny: I absolutely loved the premise of this story Gitte and like you, I was so intrigued by this mysterious tattooist who featured in Inky's life and was an integral part of her healing and her story. Who was this man who seemed to take the pain, the hurt and the sorrow from these damaged and broken women and release them from their inner demons and tragic pasts?

“You can’t always be perfect, Nico. It’s okay.”

I adored this author’s style in Inky and Cole, two books that really did consume me when we read them last year and I jumped in to reading Nico with gusto.

“I can’t have relationships because I have nothing else left to give. I can’t do it.”

I have to say, I’m conflicted in my feelings about Nico the story and Nico the man. Whilst on the one hand I did enjoy Nico’s story, I have to say that my feelings do mirror yours in that Nico felt as if he became someone else in this instalment. Or more to the fact, it was as if he had a split personality, or maybe as you say, the writing has changed. I’m not so sure, but something felt as if it changed with Nico. On the one hand, we had Nico the beautiful, tortured and eloquent man he was when in his own headspace, and the man he later became....someone quite different, very alpha, complete with the clipped sentences you mentioned and yes, I wholeheartedly agree that when a term of endearment is used to the point of exhaustion it does lose its meaning as “babe” did for me in this book.

The insights into the broken and damaged characters Nico assisted were quite emotional and these damaged women really did cling to the hope that Nico was in some way their saviour. My heart soared when Nico found Lark. Even though he felt he had nothing to offer in terms of his heart, here was a woman who would take on Nico’s troubles and doubts and be the thread that held our tortured hero together.

G&J: So, whilst we enjoyed Nico we did have a few issues which meant that we didn’t experience the love we did with Inky and Cole. It’s with a heavy heart that we say that because this author really does have a beautiful way of telling her stories.

Nico is a great character, he’s one of those you find yourself falling in love with for so many reasons and you want him to have his happy ending and to get in return what he so clearly gives to others. There were some real beauty in this story that shone like a beacon. Yet there were also moments where we thought the writing suffered, consequently influencing our connection to characters and the storyline.

We have to say the way the J B Hartnett brought this story to its conclusion was beautifully done and the last part of Nico’s story absolutely filled our hearts, as did the bond between Lark and Nico. Overall we do love The Leaves series and despite our feelings not exacting those we felt in the first two books, we would not hesitate in recommending this series.

ARC supplied by author in exchange for an honest review

Jennifer says

I have to admit that I absolutely adored the books Inky and Cole, at the end of each book I felt like an emotional wrung out mess. This book did the same but yet in a slightly different way.

Nico was the tattoo artist who provided comfort to women who had gone through terrible things, his 'Birds'. He was a pivotal figure in the previous books in the series and here he gets his own story.

As a young boy he provides comfort to a young girl at her time of need and in the years to come he refers to her as Dish and writes his thoughts and feelings to her through his journal. Lark on the other hand has had an

ex who managed to destroy her confidence. This leads them to going slowly and having read Nico in the beginning parts of the book then you will know how completely out of character this is for him, he really is a love 'em and leave 'em type.

Nico is a guy you will end up falling for in a big way. The way that he helps his 'Birds' and how he reacts to all that has trusted to him is truly heart warming. The interactions between Lark and Nico are fantastic but some of the things that they have to go through, from personal experience, I wouldn't have wished on anyone and the response that they get from 'experts' is unfortunately all too common. Lark's 'sister', grrrrrrr. That's all i'll say about her!

There is one other character that is introduced, Frodo, well you'll love him and when Nico walks in on him!!!!!! Priceless.

The way the book was heading, for me anyway, was obvious, but seeing it unfold was lovely. Unlike most of the romances out there the first 25/30% of the book is the back story of Nico and Lark isn't really involved at all. This really helps you to understand what has shaped Nico into the man that he became.

Please note that I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Mara De Guzman says

5 Emotionally Beautiful Touching Stars!

"Because of your heart, Nico. It's beautiful. You're a good man who lost his way."

Nico is a beautiful story very beautifully written in a way that I felt it and saw it like a movie playing in my head. It didn't start off as a typical love story, J.B. Hartnett introduced Nicolas "Nico" Grant slowly, carefully, in a way that would surely leave his mark on you. Yet, it was never boring or dragging. I was hooked. I was kept interested until the very last word.

This is not a candy-sweet angst-filled love story, but it does have "aww" moments and some alpha-male show of affection (yes, especially during love scenes). I cried and laughed and felt the emotions I'm sure J.B. Hartnett wants the reader to feel.

"If you can find something or someone that gives you peace when everything else around you is chaos, never let go, baby."

I loved Nico.

I loved Lark.

I loved Nico's Pop and Mom.

I loved Zack, Teensy, Frodo, and all Nico's "birds".

Nico dipped into the issues of abuse and illness, this isn't a very light book to read but not dark either. Just a more realistic, emotional one and I couldn't tell you enough how moving Nico's story is.

Stars: 5 stars!

Recommended to: EVERYONE!!!

POV: First person. Male POV. (I loved it!)

Series: Yes. But can be read as a standalone.

Cliffhanger: No.

EXTRA COMMENT: Have some tissues ready for your tears!

Debbie says

I received this book from the author and Paranormal Romance & Authors That Rock, for a fair and honest review.

what the blur says....

When I was a boy, I met a girl.

She didn't know it then, but...

She changed me.

Now.....I am a man.

A man who is broken by the stories of the women who come to me.

They are my birds with broken wings.

I help them heal, help them to make them strong, so they can fly free.

Lark changed me. Loved Me. Made Me Strong.

With her, I am free.

I write...

To the girl of the past.

To the girl of my present.

And, the girl of my future.

Dear Dish...

which doesn't actually tell you very much! We meet Nico at a point in his life, where he sleeps around, and drinks to get through the effect of his job. He is a tattoo artist who specialises in cases of women who need to deal with something. Rape, abuse, miscarriage...the list goes on. He calls them "His Birds" He comes across as an arrogant piece of sh*t except when dealing with these women and he knows it.

After a one night stand that touched him in ways he never sees coming, and a brutal attack by a would-be client's husband, Nico meets Lark. And its nearly half way through the book that they meet! His life will never be the same again.

I found the story moves along, sometimes slow, sometimes speeds along! It had me interested as I could not see, for a long time, where it was gonna go, or how. Not til Lark appeared.

There is a great deal of pain in this book, and I was in tears at many points, but so much love too! It didn't take me too long to click on who Lark was, and I'm not giving anything away here so no more said on that! Delicate and difficult situations are dealt with, but dealt with sensitivity and realistically. This is not a fluffy romance book!

Its written from Nico's POV, the whole way through, and while I was reading it, I thought it would be nice to

hear from Lark. Now, I have since learnt that this is book three (the characters from those books appear in this one, *big brownie points*), and the first two books are written from the male lead, and the female lead, in the same story, so I wonder if the next book will be Lark's. However, I have not read these books, SO I have added them to my wishlist!

If you like your characters to have a little something behind them, and can deal with some difficult subjects, this is the one for you.

Shayna says

Shayna Renee's Spicy Reads Top Pick

Nico is book #3 in The Leaves Series by the amazingly talented J.B. Hartnett. The Leaves series is a series that will stick with you long after you finish. Nico is a very powerful, heavily emotional, love story that I think everyone should read as soon as possible. I think Nico could be read as a standalone novel, but I don't recommend it. To get the most out of this book and this series, you really should start at the beginning. Believe me, you will not be disappointed.

Cole was a Top Pick of 2013 for me, and when you have two great books and you release a third, there is so much pressure for that next book to blow the others out of the water. I believe the author surpassed my expectations in that regard. Inky and Cole were so hardcore in the emotion department. I don't think I have ever been that emotional while reading a book before. But Nico is a character who we were introduced to previously, and we had just barely scratched the surface with him. I can't tell you how damn excited I got when I learned he was getting his own book! I just had to know more about this beautiful man.

Nico is a character that might not come off as "damaged," like most main characters in romance novels. He had a wonderful mother and father who loved him very much. He was raised with good morals and ethics. Both his parents helped disadvantaged women and children, and that was passed down to him...he just has a different way, his own way, of helping people. When a person walks in Nico's shop to get a tattoo, he is doing more than just marking their body to help them heal. Nico offers affection when there is none left. He offers safety, he offers compassion. Nico sees and hears so much sadness and devastation, it's like he carries that hurt for them. Ugh, I could go on and on, and I'm already getting emotional while typing this up, so I digress.

"It takes everything out of me. I can't have relationships because I have nothing else left to give. I can't do it."

Even though we know so little about Nico going in to this book, you might find him off-putting at first. He is a one night stand kind of guy, no room for emotion at all. But you will soon find out why he does what he does, and the toll it takes on him on an emotional level. Nico falls in to this pattern. I have to warn you that some parts are dark and hard to read, especially if you or someone you know has gone through something that broke you. But don't let that deter you. Even though some parts will weigh down your heart, you will get to a point where you let out a deep breath and it will lift, and you will probably cry (like I did) and you will smile, and you will feel like you have read something very special.

"If you can find something or someone that gives you peace when everything else around you is chaos, never let go, baby."

Nico by J.B. Hartnett is a love story that will be forever embedded in to heart and soul. It will take you places you might not want to go, but you will come out a better person. The characters and the story line had so much depth, so much intensity, that at times I was overwhelmed. I think when you can relate to any of Ms. Hartnett's characters, the story will take you to a whole new level, and that's what Nico did with me. Plain and simple, if you have not started this series, you NEED to ASAP. You will thank me AND J.B. Trust Me!

ARC provided by the author

Cassie says

I loved Inky and Cole. Nico was always this in the background character you didn't expect to have such an epic story despite the role he plays for Inky through her tattoo but damn.

First of all, I loved that this book had substance. What I mean is that Nico's story starts several years earlier then you expect it to and you actually learn SO much about his past in a way that builds the man he is not just the shit that he did or has happened, but real growth, real struggle, a real back story. It was seriously the first 1/3 of the book or more before you even hear Lark mentioned.

Then their build up as a couple is a beautiful story all of it's own. So much emotion, so much real depth to these characters. This book reads like real life, like a memoir not a fictional story. It's beautiful. I loved that the characters are mature which you would expect adults in real life to be in their 30-40s. I loved that the age wasn't even a big deal. The characters are relatable no matter their age, it only made their story so much more resonant and touching.

Seriously the only thing wrong with this book is that the characters spend over 30 years without each other.

Kelly 'Perusing Princesses blog' says

Nico's story is truly inspirational. His playboy ways and hard outer shell hides a multitude of sensitive traits that unfold through the pages of this emotional and deeply intense journey of self-discovery.

A tattoo artist who lives in a world plagued by violence and domestic abuse. Experiencing the aftermath second-hand time and time again, he is the saviour for many broken birds. His calling came early when Anika showed up on his doorstep – her tattooed leaves a reminder of the pain inflicted upon her throughout her life. He became her ear, her crutch and an unlikely support in a time when she needed it most.

With each new story, came a new list of clientele as they reach out to the man who gives them what they need – an outlet! A way to expel their hurt and turn it into something beautiful – using their body as a blank canvas, Nico paints their pain, giving them back the power of expression and a way to move forward. But their stories, their suffering lingers and takes hold, having a profound impact on a man who still seeks something from his past...

Dish...

The girl who cried in his arms at 7 years old - she has haunted him since that night in the shelter and he knows on a conscience level that his ability to reach out to others stems from that one night when they ate cake and fell asleep holding hands. Her five-year old self irrevocably broken after witnessing the death of her Mother - the small girl with the dishwasher blond hair changed his outlook on life, forevermore.

Intense, emotional and inspiring, Nico is a man of worth, even though he feels none. This is a tale in two halves. In all his six-foot, tattooed, muscular tanned glory is a man lost, lonely and isolated from the world; his only form of refuge is finding comfort in mindless sex with nameless faces. He may be a good ear and deep down have a good heart as he strives to save those who need to expel their hurt in various forms... but in the end, who is going to save him?

With his Mother battling cancer and his Dad applying the pressure to settle down and find that someone special, Nico believes all hope is lost, until she breezes in one day, and literally takes his breath away...

Lark.

Nico is a poignant, deep, thought-provoking read of a man who stumbles in the dark, only to have a girl with her own pair of broken wings, shine the way. This book holds a strong message: A good deed never goes unrewarded; that karma, good or bad, always finds a way of coming home.

Oh and one last thing, I couldn't end this review without mentioning my new book hero: Pops. Nico's Dad is made of win and I loved him. He made this book for me. Watch out for a scene at 69% is all I'm sayin'... funny, funny guy! <3

If you enjoyed Cole and Inky, then read Nico – you won't be disappointed!

4.5 Stars
