



Laying a Ghost

Jane Davitt , Alexa Snow

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When John McIntyre sees Nick Kelley step off the island ferry, he's instantly attracted, and fairly certain that he knows what Nick is keeping secret, because he's been doing it himself for years. When he discovers Nick's real secret he's drawn into a world he never knew existed, one haunted by grief and guilt and ghosts. In the shadowed world of the spirits, Nick's power is all that the ghosts have to help them. But Nick is still mourning the death of his lover in an accident he believes he caused, and John's determined to keep their relationship secret.

It's going to take a lot more than attraction and really good sex to solve their problems but will they be lucky? Or will one week be all they have before they're left alone again?

Laying a Ghost Details

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From Reader Review Laying a Ghost for online ebook

Trio says

That was fantastic! I know I'm going to fly right through the next three books, these characters are totally addictive. I love a good ghost story and this one has a great blend of paranormal, fun and witty regional characters, and incredibly hot sex. Even these two fall head over heels for each other in like 24 hours it is done really well. The way they're drawn to each other just works with the plot perfectly and the authors totally pull it off.

Excellent book and I can't wait to start the next one.

Georgie says

I'm fairly sure I enjoyed this so much because it reminded me of the Scottish island I was brought up on- the atmosphere is spot on and an important element of the book. The paranormal side maybe didn't draw me in so much, although it was well integrated with the touching love story.

ttg says

A very good contemporary romance with an underlying paranormal story--underlying because one of the MCs can see ghosts, but the main crux of the story is about two characters coming together, overcoming a few obstacles, and finding something that neither thought they could ever find.

The story focuses on Nick, an American with psychic abilities, ones that he finds less helpful since being interrupted by creepy ghosts stresses him out. He arrives on an island off Scotland to check out a house that he inherited from his late uncle, and meets lifelong islander John. Their attraction is immediate, but both men are cautious about revealing their secrets, especially closeted John who knows how unwelcoming the island community would be to him being gay. But for both, it was like they were meant to find each other, and soon, even fears of rejection, hatred, and unwelcome ghosts can't stop them from wanting to be together.

This is a quiet book, especially compared to other paranormal romances. The focus is very much on the characters, their developing relationship, and how they quickly grow over to become so important and necessary to each other. Nick was very sympathetic, especially as you learn more about the traumatic event he was fleeing from, and the stress of dealing with needy ghosts, but my heart really goes out to John. I loved how stalwart and steadfast he was, and even though he was scared to be out-ed, his want for Nick, to protect him, to be with him, to love him, surpassed his fears. I loved how both authors would move past convention and have the characters talk out their issues, rather than simply running away.

John does runs away at one point early on, but it was understandable. For the most part, he holds his ground with Nick, and you can feel why--because he's so close to having something that he never thought he could have, so he really makes the effort to keep it. I loved how the characters communicated and acted rational with each other. Refreshing!! I also totally dug that they made the John MC on the cover wear a sweater. That was a nice call-back to the book.

I also appreciated that this was one of the authors' earlier works, but it didn't show in the writing. Overall, it

was very smooth, and balanced well the characters, the story, the Scottish island setting, and the sprinkling of sexy times. The only sign for me that this was an early work was the pacing. It's a very "well-paced", quiet story, which in some ways is great, but sometimes felt slow, and some scenes and dialogues felt a little too long.

As a heads-up, I don't think the page count on the GR page is correct. It says 221 pages, but the story is actually much longer than that. (ARe says it's over 109,000 words, so probably around 300 pages or a bit over.)

Overall, it's a very good story. I recommend going in knowing it's quiet, somewhat leisurely-paced, but still a meaningful read. There's some drama with ghosts; there's some pain about coming out to a very closed community, but overall, it's a very sweet romance about two men finally finding love, and wanting to work at keeping it.

It reminded me a little of the also quiet, meaningful, set-in-Scotland romance Scrap Metal, but without the crime subplot (and is far less sad, although I got a little teary during one of the ghost scenes.)

This is the first of a three-book series, so I'm looking forward to checking out the rest.

Kassa says

As a fan of other work of the authors', I really wanted to like this book. The setting and plot all seemed to create an interesting and thought provoking story. Unfortunately the execution needs some serious work and I struggled to finish this. I put it down several times and although I was motivated to get to the end, it wasn't always easy. The pacing is off, the characters are shallow, and the plot seems to meander without a clear focus. There are hints of interest and the main couple is nice, unfortunately not interesting enough to continue with the series. However other readers may feel differently and want to give this a try.

John McIntyre and Nick Kelley fall in love at first sight. Unfortunately love is not that easy for these two as Nick has a secret past, he's psychic, and John is a closeted homosexual. Given the close knit nature of the community, these two have a lot of hurdles to get over to be together including ranting ministers, homophobic communities, and angry family ghosts.

The plot is somewhat generic and often makes fun of itself for being cheesy, which is appropriate and not necessarily good. The actual focus of the story seems to be lost and meanders about without a real driving force, which is part of the pacing problem. Since the two men fall in love instantly, their relationship has very little internal conflict. They're determined to be together somehow so instead the story focuses on external conflicts in the community. However none of these conflicts are really the focus and for the most part, easily resolved. There is the conflict with the mostly homophobic community but other than a few vague angry yelling matches, nothing comes of this. There is the problem with Nick's psychic ability but he seems to lay each ghost to rest pretty easily and the later scenes in the book regarding the ghost of John's father is ridiculous, eye rolling and completely cheesy. So unfortunately there is no strong guiding force in the story and thus the writing and plot wanders from scene to scene without real purpose.

Not helping matters is the weak writing. The story and characters constantly tell the reader what is going on so they don't fail to miss any nuances. The characters often dismiss problems and clichés by acknowledging such and then explaining why it's ok this time. The setting is by turns overdone and erroneous. The book makes a point of trying to infuse a Scottish island feel but the dialogue and word choice of the islanders felt forced and overdone. While the book tries hard to continually give a setting, it often injects false steps and

improbably ridiculous stereotypes that don't seem to fit. Such as the theme nights in such a small town that only occasionally sees tourists. This was an amusing detail but felt completely false and overdone. Additionally the community itself is rather flat and stays within very predictable bounds from the religious ranting minister to the penny pinching market owner and even gossipy, vindictive females. Any classic small town stereotype you can think of is used to very little positive effect here.

The main characters themselves are interesting but they lose this with their instant love. John is a small town fisherman that lives in a family home and does odd jobs around town. He's deeply closeted since of course the community would never approve of a known son being gay so his instant pursuit and love of an outsider seems jarring. Nick is not much better as an equally flat character, supposedly a wary and tortured soul ridden with guilt over the death of his best friend and occasional lover. For all of Nick's issues and past problems, he also falls in with John too easily. The two men have vigorous sex right away and thus are deeply in love from that moment on. The characters attempt to play this off with long internal monologues about how it may be a cliché but it's still true. This just highlights that even the authors' know the relationship is cheesy but attempt to explain it away.

Ultimately this book came across as boring and unevenly paced. The beginning is heavy and filled with a plethora of unimportant and distracting details, lengthening the opening scene to an unending information dump of every character and setting. From there the book picks up some when the men are interacting and the first graveyard scene is particularly effective. Unfortunately the book then drags in several places, only to pick up slightly, and then drag again. The relationship between the men has numerous holes and really questions the ability to stay together, just as the psychic issue is ill conceived as it jumps from problem ghost to problem ghost with an almost never ending stream. I certainly liked parts of the book and I finished to the end but this story would have benefited from tight, careful editing with more attention to what detail is important and authentic to the story versus random and distracting. Although I wouldn't recommend this book, some readers won't mind the problems and the instant love with numerous sex scenes certainly speaks to the romantic.

Kaje Harper says

A contemporary/paranormal romance with ghosts. John is a gay man living on a fairly remote Scottish island, and deep in the closet because of the small-town church-centered life there. Nick is American, and has inherited a house on the island. He's recovering from a bad accident, and also looking for a place to go where his ghost-laying talents can be set aside for a while. But an old house looking out over the graveyard may not be the best place for peace from roaming spirits.

I enjoyed this book. It's an easy read, although a bit heavy on the sex scenes. It took me a while to be convinced that the relationship was deeper than just convenience and physical attraction, especially on John's part. The fact that John believes Nick about all the aspects of his abilities would no doubt be very appealing to Nick though, so I could see a basis for his rapid attachment to John. The book is as much or more about John's closeted life as the paranormal, and most of the secondary characters were well done, although the minister was a familiar type. I liked this well enough to be immediately pulled into the sequel.

Teal says

**** 4.5 stars ****

This has everything I want from m/m fiction -- plus ghosts. The MCs are believable and nuanced characters in a distinctive setting who confront issues and conflicts in a mature, credible way consistent with their backgrounds and personalities. And the dialog is great: I could actually hear John's Scottish accent in my head, just through the authors' word choices and the cadences of his speech.

The plot centers around Nick's effort to manage (and hide) his psychic abilities, and John's struggle about coming out to his profoundly conservative family and community. When I believe in the characters so deeply that I no longer care whether there's a plot -- when I'd be perfectly happy to just hang out with them as they go to the store or putter around the house -- then I am well and truly lost in the author's world, and happy to be there. That was the case here (view spoiler)

As I read I kept thinking that if *The Druid Stone* and *Scrap Metal* ever had a baby, this novel would be the result. If you liked *Laying the Ghost*, try *The Druid Stone* -- set in Ireland, it has a darker story, more action and a more intense paranormal element. But the writing is excellent and the main characters amazing.

Bree Cheese says

Thanks, not-so-secret-santa for my surprise gift!...Enjoyed this sleepy-small-town Scottish romance with an underlying ghost story.

Raj says

A closeted hot Scottish fisherman, a bereaved psychic & an island full of ghosts & prejudice. My next stop is going to be book number 2.

Chris, the Dalek King says

Nick Kelley has never been to Scotland before. Never been to the home of his mother. Never met the uncle who left him his family home on the island of Traighshee. But after losing his best friend and partner, Nick badly needs to be somewhere--anywhere--he has never been before. He hopes that the memories (among other things) will not haunt him as badly there.

When John McIntyre--part-time taxi driver, part-time fisherman, part-time whatever the hell is paying-- gives him a lift up to Nick's new home, he does not have a whole lot of expectations. Not for the house and not for his life. But the house--despite its age--feels like someplace to one day call home. And John, well he feels like someone Nick could at least call friend, if not more.

But Nick is hiding a secret--one that has already cost a life--and the chance that John will stick around once he learns the truth is pretty slim. And that is not even factoring in John's reluctance to letting anyone know about his more than friendly thoughts towards Nick.

This turned out to be one of the few books that I've got a pretty good memory of, even years after having read it. That being the case I had a good idea of what happened during the course of the story before I even started. Not that that did much to diminish my enjoyment of it. Because while the plot was simple, the characters were not. They were wonderfully complex and had a staying power that reminded me exactly why

I loved this story to begin with. And why I was determined once and for all to get it off my One Day list.

I love the simple yet deep romance that forms between Nick and John. It is not complicated. It is not full of angst and constant pitfalls. It is steady and heartfelt from nearly the beginning. That is not to say it was without its problems. John was determined to stay in the closet. Nick can see dead people. Both those were bound to make the relationship interesting. But thru it all I could feel the emotion behind it all. I tend to be a bit dubious about I Love Yous spoken within the first few weeks of meeting, but for these two I had no trouble buying it. It was honest and real from almost the get go.

There is not a lot happening plot wise outside of the couple. There are a few instances of ghostly visitors, but for the most part this story hinges on the relationship and its issues. The ghost just make it a bit more fun. I'd have loved for there to be some more outside influence, but for this story the way it happened actually worked for the best. Nick and John were fully able to support the weight of the story and they made it a joy to read.

4.5 stars

This book was provided free in exchange for a fair and honest review for Love Bytes. Go there to check out other reviews, author interviews, and all those awesome giveaways. Click below.

Ami says

Let me get minus points out first, then I will talk about the plus ones :)

What I dislike

- + The overwhelming love-making scenes and ... I have come to that point, where I appreciate just one or two love-making scene and focus on character/story building rather than having so many of that scenes spreading around in almost every chapter.
- + The long conversation about issues that have already been said over and over again is overcooked. At one point, I want to knock Nick and John's head and tell them, ENOUGH!
- + There is no real focus on the story ... is it about Nick and his ghost sighting ability, is it about John and coming out to his family and friends after 17 years (he first realized he's gay in the age of 14), is it about the ghosts (that seem to appear in random) and what they want from Nick ...

What I like

- + Despite the boring storyline but there are enough scenes that are interesting in between. I enjoy the mountain climbing or the fishing or just the two of them sharing their life story.
- + I can imagine the idyllic small town scenery and it's a change of pace than the usual big cities

I know there are two more sequels; but I don't know whether I will continue with them ...

Paul says

I liked the premise of this book but felt like it was trying to accomplish way too much within one novel. It wasn't like a storyline with sub-plots. It was like multiple major storylines which didn't work for me. I wouldn't say they clashed but it was like playing storyline hot potato with bad transitions. Surprisingly I didn't find the insta-love as annoying as I usually do, it still irked though, it was way too quick. The saving grace of this book was the MC's and even though I found the plots all way too strong it was still well written. I'm also no prude but the amount of sex immediately began to detract from each new storyline that I thought were emerging sub-plot and ended up getting frustrated to the point it almost became a DNF for me. I mean it felt like one fifth of the book was them fucking, yeah it's explicit hot steamy sex scenes and they're well written ones but c'mon, enough already, to me it actually felt like filler and greatly detracted from the main reason I bought it. Which was for the paranormal aspect that I felt basically got swallowed as I've outlined below. I don't like writing negative reviews, actually I usually don't bother writing them. It's well written but poorly constructed with too much sex for me personally.

Major Storylines: 1. MC moves countries from the US to a tiny Scottish Isle where his mother and family are from, due to the loss of his partner, he has no family left yet is left the family house back in Scotland, he's so lost he returns to his mothers roots. This very quickly gets absorbed by storylines, 2&3 simultaneously, 2 He's a powerful psychic who has trouble controlling his power which got lost even faster to, 3, He meets a closeted man on a tiny Scottish Isle who comes out accidentally, 4, Insta-love with point 1 and resulting fallout out from family and small community, actually 4, could pass as a sub-plot.

Another MAJOR bone of contention is that book one of this series was \$2.75USD for 336 pages, it's 10 years old. Book #2 is around \$7USD for 174 pages WTF? @ NOV 12, 2016.

Lily says

3.5 stars

Laying A Ghost is the first book in the paranormal trilogy of the same name and was a nice enjoyable read.

Our heroes, John and Nick, first meet when Nick, who is recovering from an accident in which he lost his lover and business partner, moves from the United States to the small Scottish island town of Traighsheel. John is a fisherman and the town's taxi driver and has lived his whole life in the small town along with his extended family.

When they meet both men feel an instant and powerful attraction to each other which is a big complication for John as he is in the closet to everyone except his two best friends. They give into their passion very quickly and almost immediately fall in love. However things are a bit more complicated than a simple case of love at first sight as Nick explains to John after a bizarre incident that occurs when he first arrives.

Slowly, as if admitting that he buggered small sheep in his spare time, Nick muttered, "I'm psychic." Before John could do more than gape at him, Nick went on, "God, it's such a cliché, isn't it? A psychic medium goes to a remote island in Scotland to live in his recently deceased uncle's house and starts seeing ghosts? It might as well be the plot of a cheesy romance novel."

I enjoyed reading this solidly written story and found the paranormal aspect of it interesting. I liked John and Nick, they each have their issues to deal with but are at heart nice, decent men and while their love is lightning quick I enjoyed the development of their relationship. There is a bit of angst when John's secret is exposed and the reaction of most is negative and quite hurtful. However, everything that happens serves to bring John and Nick closer as they help and support each other throughout the story.

This was a really nice start to this series. I've enjoyed other books I've read by these authors, both alone and as a team, and recommend this book to M/M paranormal readers.

Bea says

Basic Plot:

John McIntyre is a fisherman/taxi-man on a small, remote Scottish island (Hebridean islands). John meets his fare, Nick Kelly in the town of Traighshee and they quickly find a friendship. As they learn more about each other, will these differences be too much and is John willing to risk everything for Nick? Can Nick let go of the past to live for the future?

I have read a few of Davitt and Snow's novels which had a large emphasis in BDSM. In those books, there is a dark intensity there, often following a "traditional" romance formula. So I came to this book with a bit of hesitation, not because I did not like those books, rather that I did not know if that their only style. However, I found this book to be both charming and endearing.

The island itself is a character, which can be a challenge for a writer not to overwhelm the protagonists. In this case, the atmosphere of the town of Traighshee explains so much about the background of John that we understand his motivations almost instantly and helps to pull us into the story. By the end of the first chapter I was drawn into story and the slower pace was actually welcoming. Like watching an Emma Thompson Regency period movie, you just sit back and immerse yourself into the culture and environment.

I read a review on either Goodreads or Amazon that thought the writing quality was not good enough. Ironically they said that English was not their first language, but I wonder if that was part of the reason that they had difficulties. This book has such a foreign feel to it, this coming from an American. I love finding a book that gives me a taste of a world in which I do not live. Davitt is English, so she brings in her personal background to make a vivid portrayal of the environment and culture. I loved this, but perhaps someone might not like the slower pace. Quite frankly I can think of nothing to improve the book.

I found this book because I yearned for a book that was well written, had some sexiness, but was more heartwarming than extreme sex scenes. Laying a Ghost, by Jane Davitt and Alexa Snow has all of these things, but above all it made me think. It made me realize not to give up on myself or my dreams, and anything worth doing will require sacrifice. This is certainly a wonderful book and I am looking forward to reading the rest of the series.

?? Michaele ♡ says

4.2 Stars

I really, really liked this. It was very romantic, sexy and smart. I could see the setting so clearly due to the vivid writing. And the little bits, the secret touches, the longing looks, the desperate need, was so very hot. Thumbs caressing the edges of ears while holding someone's head for a blow-job, sitting on a beach and mindlessly piling sand tiny bits at a time on the hand inching closer for a clandestine touch...Gawd - those

things really got my heart racing while making it ache so sweetly!

Also, absolutely no BDSM or kink. And yet, holy hell were the sex scenes still erotic. Not the usual fare from these authors when they team up - and yet I am looking forward to the next 2 installments because it is such a nice, refreshing and rewarding change of pace. (Taking out the titillation kind of makes the writing shine, too, IMHO.)

Ula'ndi Hart says

Overall book rating: 4

Audio Book: N/A

Book Cover: 3.8

I really enjoyed this. Even with everything going on in the end. Absolutely loved John and his accent and I loved Nick as well.

They just made the perfect little warm fuzzy feeling for me. The ghost's was an interesting addition without having everything turning around them instead of the two MC's. I think the ghost parts could've maybe been done a little more intense or dare I say "real" maybe but who am I to complain. I'm no expert and I enjoyed the hell out of the story.

John was my favourite though. I have a soft spot for him. Again, I really just loved being on the journey of these two guys. Complicated? Yes but also No. I'll definitely read the rest.
