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Unruly Red knows she's no one's idea of a sweet old granny. But with one long-distance phone call, the fortysomething bar owner with the tattoos and tight jeans is suddenly responsible for two young grandchildren she hardly knows.

Red's rowdy friends, late-night lifestyle and tiny apartment above her San Antonio saloon definitely aren't kidproof. And Red's pretty sure the hot young fiddle player she's been dallying with will run for the hills when he learns she has a daughter, let alone grandkids.

But Red is about to learn that age doesn't necessarily come with wisdom. That a nine-year-old girl can be as exacting as the strictest parent. That the school of hard knocks never had bake sales. And that her boy toy is more of an adult than she is.

Red's Hot Honky-Tonk Bar Details

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From Reader Review Red's Hot Honky-Tonk Bar for online ebook

Cheri says

I almost did a DNF but decided to hang in there. It wasn't bad but it wasn't really all that good. I did not click with any of the characters. Red the h got on my nerves way too much. Cam the H was a nice guy but too submissive for me. The storyline was mediocre at most. This was my 1st novel by this author.

Kara Jorges says

Every once in awhile, a nice, heartwarming story comes along, and this is one of those. It stars a flawed heroine in need of redemption, and a whole cast of lovable characters.

Red Cullens is a 46-year-old bar owner who wears tight jeans and low-cut blouses, and she goes through men like Kleenex. She likes her life of staying up all night running the honky-tonk and rolling around in the sheets with her much younger lover. It all changes, though, when responsibility for her two young grandchildren lands in her lap. Red's only daughter Bridge is deployed in Afghanistan, and when their caretaking grandmother suffers a stroke, Red must take the children in. She's certain her boyfriend Cam is going to run for the hills, but he surprises her by stepping up to the plate. Suddenly, Red finds herself opening up to the people around her and discovering she doesn't have to do everything alone. She gets involved in the children's school when she's drafted to the Cupcake Committee, and even find herself living in an upscale community when Cam loans out his house. Over the months with the children, Red is also forced to confront the past, something she had avoided for 30 years. The whole time, Cam is there, opening himself to her and gradually getting her to open up to him. Through it all, Red finds out that others don't judge her as harshly as she judges herself, and she burns bridges and mends others.

Though I never quite got a handle on her, I loved Red's character. She's an ex-stripper with a tattoo and outrageous hair, and she goes out of her way not to get too close to any man passing through her life. What a relief from the teenage virgins of yore! Red is a real woman with vulnerabilities who is also tough as nails. She has a self-deprecating view, but doesn't take any guff from snobs. Her provocative wardrobe goes hand-in-hand with a heart of gold. Those around her know it, and they surprise her by offering their help when she's in need. Cam sees who she is inside, even though she doesn't like to talk about herself.

Cam, of course, is wonderful, handsome, and sweet. It's also impossible not to love Olivia and Daniel, Red's grandchildren. The secondary characters, good and bad, sparkle with life. Everyone but the children seemed to have some sort of flaw that made them human, and their problems were heartwrenching and real. Even the happy ending had a tinge of reality to it that added to its charm. This book was a delight from start to finish, and it would make a great movie. I give it a high recommendation, and will definitely seek out more books by this author.

UnusualChild{beppy} says

synopsis:

red owns a bar in an area that is being renovated to become more upscale. she's sleeping with a fiddle player 15 years her junior, and doesn't do serious relationships. red is estranged from her daughter, who is in

afghanistan as a medic. the daughter's ex's mother is looking after her two children, but has a heart attack, and can't look after them anymore. the ex-husband is in the army and can't be found, so the daughter asks red to look after her own grandchildren. red has some period of adjustment, and having her children living over the bar is not the answer. red expects cam to leave, but he surprises her and sticks it out.

what i liked: i liked that cam was so supportive of red, and even though she thought that it wasn't serious, once things got difficult, he was the one that she turned to. the grandchildren were typical of children, especially ones who had hardly had any contact with their grandmother.

what i didn't like: red. she was kind of abrasive. she's got this young, good looking guy willing to stand beside her, and she didn't want anything to do with him.

Kelly Moran says

for amazon vine review...

Author Pamela Morsi has had over twenty novels published. She resides in Texas with her husband and daughter.

When Red's daughter calls from her military base overseas to tell her that she needs Red to take guardianship over her 2 kids, Red had no other choice. But she hasn't seen the kids in a long time, and she isn't so sure her boy toy, a man young enough to be her son, will go for the granny look. But as she settles into the life, Red realizes that she has a lot of growing up to do, and that Cam, her boyfriend, is way more mature than she is, handling everything, including her, in stride.

This book just didn't do it for me. Though Red grew up a lot throughout the book, and I adored Cam to no end, I just found the book so-so. Red was stubborn to the point of irritating, and as a mom, I had a hard time with how she viewed her grandkids at first. I'm not real fond of the huge age difference between them either, but that's a personal preference. The book had a lot of filler in my opinion, which left several dead spots where I lost interest. I will say though, the ending was great.

Holly Lee (Bellis Novella) says

I started reading this book thinking that it would be a fluff romance novel. It starts out appearing to be that way, but under the surface a lot of complex themes are at play. The book deals with families separated by war, by illness, and by complex interpersonal issues. It aims to teach the overall lesson to dream like you will live for ever, and to live like you will die today.

Red has had a rough life. She started out making her money in gentlemen bars, while homeless with a baby. Over time she managed to start her own honky tonk bar, and build it up into a thriving business. Her daughter has also managed to find her way in life, despite her unfortunate beginning, Bridge has 2 beautiful children and a job with the Army. While Bridge is stationed abroad, her childcare plans fall through, forcing her to have the kids put with the only other person she knows, her mother Red. Bridge knows firsthand that Red was never an exceptional mother, but she knows that Red knows how to survive when the chips are stacked against her.

What follows is an excellent story about opening up to other people, as well as to new situations, and finding out that sometimes what you never thought you wanted, is what you needed the most.

A must read!

Laura (Kyahgirl) says

1/5; 2 star DNF

I don't know if this is a good story or not. I gave it one star because I had such an aversion to Red, right off the bat, that I couldn't carry on. As a mother, I just couldn't find it in me to relate to her dysfunctional mothering and couldn't bring myself to give her a chance.

Marinella says

Molto carino! Ci ho messo un po' a finirlo perché all'inizio il personaggio di Red mi dava sui nervi e avevo interrotto la lettura al secondo capitolo. Poi mi è venuta voglia di leggere qualcosa di ben scritto e non fantasy, dotato di humor ma non autocompiaciuto, e quindi la Morsi è stata la strada più naturale.

Che bella storia. I personaggi si rivelano da soli, con le loro azioni e parole, e la vicenda si delinea in modo naturale e interessante, con guizzi simpatici e anche momenti di profondità. Le vicissitudini, i sentimenti e i pensieri sono mostrati, non spiegati, in uno stile onesto e convincente. La commozione non è cercata e spiattellata, ma sorge spontanea dal percorso e dall'interazione tra i vari personaggi.

Il setting è anch'esso interessante: il luogo dove Red ha il suo locale, alla periferia di una grande città, in cui si annunciano nuovi piani regolatori e lo smantellamento, insieme alle case e alle strade (che manco hanno un nome, solo un numero), di tutto un modo di vivere; e il quartiere bon ton delle villette in cui Red va a vivere con i nipoti grazie al suo ragazzo, quartiere che all'inizio le appare estraneo, ma che poi imparerà ad apprezzare. Ecco, forse la parola migliore per dire qualcosa di questo libro è proprio "imparare". E il personaggio che maggiormente aiuta Red, i nipoti, la sua stessa zia a imparare, è, nel libro, Cam, il giovane musicista che ha una storia con Red e che nel corso della vicenda si rivela un ragazzo che non vive affatto alla giornata, che sa leggere le persone a cui vuole bene e che ha già avuto la sua parte di sofferenza nella vita.

Una buona lettura, davvero consigliata!

Monique Lebrocq says

This book was less of a romance and more of a character study. Red, a 46-year-old bar owner, gets a second chance to do right by her daughter, Bridge, when she has to care for Bridge's two young children (Olivia and Daniel) while Bridge is deployed. At the start of the book, Daniel's estimation of Red's character is spot on: Mala Abuela or "Bad Grandma." Red is basically a selfish bitch. She is particularly callous to her amazing boy-toy, Cam. Cam is clearly desperately in love with the surly redhead despite their 15 year age difference. Cam is also the main reason that Red is able to build a loving relationship with her grand-kids. In fact, I can't say enough about what an all-around great guy Cam was. Sexy, loyal, strong, generous, and loving, Cam also harbors a terrible secret. He has a hereditary disease (Huntington's disease) that will likely claim his life in his forties or fifties. All Cam wants is to live what's left of his life with the women he loves. Luckily, by the end of the book, Red has been redeemed and recognizes the true gift she has been given. She marries Cam and together they promise "to dream like they'll live forever and live like they'll die today." Here's hopithematic have many happy years ahead. P.S. I wouldn't mind reading more about Cam and Red in Bridge's love story. The strong, dedicated, single mother deserves her own happily-ever-after.

BookLover says

Putting this one on pause for a bit. Been trying to finish this for almost two weeks now and can't seem to get into it.

Jacqueline J says

This one headed a bit more toward women's fiction rather than straight romance. In fact Borders sells it as General Fiction. I liked it in general. The older woman/younger man thing was pretty well done.

Shanu says

I don't always love Morsi's stories but i do really enjoy her writing style. In this one Morsi's characters are a bit more crude than usual, but it didn't affect my rating.

This was a nice story - i'd enjoyed it more if i had seen it on TV on a rainy afternoon than having to read it though. Characters obviously have a lot of issues, and it ends up with an HEA romantic ending.

Mini rant about Cam - the male love interest : i don't find it cute when a heroine desperately clings on her male lover and Cam was doing just that with Red. When heroines do it, it's seen as needy, but when heroes do it, it's romantic? Hmm... no. I understand that love makes you stick to the person you're with, but when that person repeatedly pushes you away, then maybe you should try to move on. In romance book, somehow, the efforts of the protagonist always pays off and they end up saving their relationship, but in real life, this doesn't happen. People don't change other people. Often, people don't change themselves.

Gail says

I liked this book a lot. It's set in San Antonio, which is kinda familiar and kinda not. My dad grew up there a very long time ago, but in what is now "the bad part of town." Anyway--Red is not your usual heroine. She owns and runs a honky-tonk along the San Antonio River, which is your usual Texas river, meaning that you have to look when you cross a bridge to see if there's water in it. Outside of downtown where it's dammed and tamed, it's not much of a river. And the honky-tonk fits right in. She has live music on the patio outside, and it's a little rowdy, but not too much...just like Red herself. She lives in a tiny apartment upstairs, dates one of the musicians who, as usual, is a decade or more younger than she is, and has her life set up just like she likes it. Then her daughter calls from Afghanistan (or somewhere) that she needs to go pick up her grandchildren, because their other grandmother (who's been keeping them) has had a stroke. And just like that, Red's tidy life falls apart--and keeps on falling. The kids call her "Abuela Mala"--Bad Grandma--her boyfriend won't leave, even when she gets mean, and her landlord sells out to developers who are gentrifying this section of the river. It's just an all round good book about how Red deals with all the upset, and with the lingering issues from her past. I really liked it.

Kathleen J says

This author really knows her craft.

Great telling rather than showing! "Showing" us people's actions rather than telling us about them really draws you in and makes you identify with the characters. You won't find all of those pages of angsty internal emotions and negative thoughts here--thank heavens.

Doesn't front-load the backstory! Like a writing teacher of mine once said, keep the back story a secret until the readers are begging to know it! She does that.

Great emotion--lots of characters who've lived through tough things, are now living through tough things or who will be living through tough things. People from the past effecting the present and working through of negative relationships. Kids--one working so hard to be grown-up and responsible, the other badly distressed--pull on our heart strings.

Good detail. Again it pulls us into the story, learning the details about the history and geography of the town for example. But not excessive detail.

A different heroine than most. Uneducated, working class, a little "low class" in her style.

My only serious complaint: we don't really see the H and h interact in ways that show us why the H was drawn to the h besides her looks, the fact that she isn't a talker (he wasn't either), she was strong, and passionate. Instead, we see only the friction between the couple resulting from all the problems they're dealing with so mostly she acts like a bitch toward him, even trying to hurt him at times to get him to back off. This changes toward the very end but we should have seen some of the good relationship stuff before that.

ksstannard says

Live for today because tomorrow is a ?

Not so takes on the big questions and gives us satisfactory answers wrapped up in a love story. Red and Can suffered travails, but triumphed in the end.

Tess says

4.5 stars

