



Because of You

T.E. Sivec , Tara Sivec

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Brady Marshall has made a career of playing it safe. When he decides to do something rash and becomes a Navy SEAL, he thinks he's finally escaped the rigid structure of the high society life his parents forced down his throat. All he does is trade in one set of rules for another. He follows military protocol to a T, but it still results in the death of an entire team of Navy SEALs and puts his best friends directly in harm's way. He's struggled to stay afloat and not drown in grief, guilt, and booze, but he's losing that battle quickly. When his baby sister flees her abusive husband and shows up on his doorstep with his young niece in tow, he has no choice but to clean up his act. He will stop at nothing to protect them and never let them down again, even if it means taking a job that goes against everything he believes in. If protecting a pop star princess who thinks she's better than everyone means he can keep a roof over their head, what other choice does he have?

Layla Carlyle has lived a life of luxury. She's been a star since the young age of fifteen, and every record she releases shoots straight to the top of the charts. She has people surrounding her every single day telling her how amazing she is, how beautiful she is, and how lucky she is, but she's never felt more alone in her entire life. She wants nothing more than to break free and do what she really wants to do: write her own music, sing her own songs, and find a way to finally be happy with her life. The only thing standing in her way is her mother, Eve Carlyle. Eve has controlled every single aspect of her daughter's life and will stop at nothing to achieve fame and fortune, even if that means using her daughter to get there. When an overly-adoring fan's letters become increasingly more sinister, Brady will have to suck up his opinion of how the other half lives to take the job seriously. The pair will need to learn to trust each other and put aside their differences before the letters become a reality and someone's life is in jeopardy.

Brady has been to hell and back, and he refuses to let anyone else get close to him again. Layla has never lived her life for herself, and the emptiness is threatening to break her for good.

Sometimes our lives are already planned for us, but *because of you*, all of that could change in an instant.

Because of You Details

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From Reader Review Because of You for online ebook

Lana ❄️Dirty Girl Romance❄️ says

"I knew not to let anything distract me from a mission. "

"Don't you ever forget that, hummingbird. You can go anywhere you want to go, be anything you want to be. Play because you love it and for no other reason. The day you stop loving it is the day it becomes a job. Making music should never be a job."

The story of Layla and Brady sucked me in from the very first page. The book starts off with a bang, and doesn't let up until the very last page.

Brady is struggling with his demons; guilt from a mission gone wrong and a job that had a gruesome conclusion. All his focus is concentrated on taking care of his sister Gwen and her young daughter. The last thing he wants to do is to play bodyguard to some spoiled rockstar that was born with a silver spoon in her mouth.

Forced to take on the job in order to stay afloat in his business, Brady comes face to face with Layla.

"If I didn't know what kind of person this chick was, I'd have to say that she had been hand-picked for me with the concert t-shirt, the long legs, the natural face without all that gunk on it, and the blonde hair that isn't a fire hazard from all the hairspray...in other words, perfect."

When Brady and Layla first meet, sparks fly, but not in a romantic fashion. Brady acts like an asshole since his impression of Layla is from what he assumes to be the truth. Layla, of course, is not at all what he thinks.

I love the hate/lust at first sight scenario. So this hit all my happy spots. The progression of their relationship was filled with enough sexual tension to keep me turning the pages late into the night.

Brady was an asshole at first, but when he finally does see Layla for the girl that is truly underneath, sparks fly.

I loved Layla's character. She was dealing with her own demons, one of which was in the form of her mother. I kid you not, but the woman puts Mommy Dearest to shame, she was such a bitch.

Brady and Layla together were incredible.

"What we had wasn't just a thing. What we had was everything"

Layla hides her true self behind her public persona, but Brady is determined to break through to the real woman underneath.

"Please...don't," I whisper, my voice choked with tears I don't even realize are pooling in my eyes.

He either doesn't hear me or doesn't care. His need to get inside my soul is too great."

Brady of course is holding back secrets of his own. The progression of their relationship was extremely realistic. I really liked that it wasn't a case of insta-love. They are both dealing with trust issues due to traumatic experiences, and are weary to get involved. Of course, they simply cannot deny the pull towards each other.

I was with him because I wanted to be. I wanted him. I wanted to feel alive and desired, and I needed him to be the one to do it. Only Brady, with his piercing eyes that could see everything"

"Don't ever say this was a mistake, and don't think for one minute I can't read you like a book and see exactly what you're trying to do: push me away first so you don't get hurt. I'm not going anywhere, especially now that I've felt you come around my fingers and heard you cry out my name"

"We are absolutely going to pick up where we left off, and the next time you scream my name, it's going to be when I've sunk myself inside of you as deep as I can get"

Absolutely every little thing that I disliked in the first book was fixed in this one. I loved that we go back to first person perspective, seeing both Brady and Layla's. The scene transitions were smooth, the characterization was phenomenal.

I loved this book so much, I was even able to see past the fact that I figured out who the villain was about 40% in. There were so many twists and turns, suspense, action, and steam that I stayed up all night to finish this. The ending, even though I thought I had an idea about the identity of the villain, still caught me by complete surprise.

We even get a little preview of Austin and Gwen's book that is coming out.

Sofia Lazaridou says

Maybe if I had realised sooner, listened earlier, put way pride and belief that everyone has some good in them deep down, I wouldn't be where I am now- fighting for my life and wondering if the person I love cares enough to save me from this hell.

Brady after some bad decisions that led to some people's death. He can't cope with that and he has started drinking and going home with random women. When he can't pay the electricity bill he is persuaded to accept a job as a bodyguard to a pop star princess. Layla is not the diva he was expecting her to be. Her mother is forcing her to sing songs that she doesn't like and not her own (you can see a part of one and another complete) and the father she loved and thought he was the only person she could be herself with did not want her and was leaving her behind. With their past hunting them and a stalker threatening Layla, Layla and Brady will find true love.

Do I let the darkness swallow me?

Do I let go and finally be free?

This pain leaves a scar that you cannot erase.

Only the darkness can take away my disgrace

I really like that T.E. Sivec names her books after songs. Because of you is a song a love and I am sure you do too.

If read the lyrics and the book you will see the similarities they have. The heroine is afraid because of what happened and it's not easy to open up.

I love everything about The Playing with fire series. T. E. Sivec combines romance with military, less military in here but still plenty, but the book has some medium steamy scenes. I laughed a little but overall the book was serious. I liked A beautiful lie more, maybe due to the fact that I might have been wanting to read a book more similar to AB.L. and less to something I can read from another author. I loved the songs Layla wrote, the twists and the revelations, Brady who made mistakes and tried to find a way to fix them and I know that Because of you is the book worth reading. An hour hasn't passed since I finished it and I am already screaming "Where is the third book? When is soon?" . You should try the series and you will not be dissatisfied.

I am still not sure if Because of you is about her father or Brady. Both men are the reason Layla did something. Because of her father she became a pop idol and because of Brady she became herself.

Every day is another step closer,

to where I don't want to be.

Another smile, another laugh, another moment of this fake reality.

Because of you

I see clearer than I ever have.

Because of you

I cant let anyone else inside.

Because of you

I learnt how to be alone.

Because of you I am ashamed.

Just for a moment, I was back in time,
to a place where I belong.
Where dreams could lead you everywhere
and wishes could make you strong.
But then I wake up and my eyes are open wide.

Because of you
I see clearer than I ever have.
Because of you
I cant let anyone else inside.
Because of you
I learnt how to be alone.
Because of you I am ashamed.

Every day I lose
more of who I am
Afraid to cry, afraid to hurt because
you taught me it was wrong.
Someday there`ll be nothing left,
just a shadow of who I was

Because of you
I see clearer than I ever have.
Because of you
I cant let anyone else inside.
Because of you
I learnt how to be alone.
Because of you I am ashamed.

Elizabeth says

Well TE Sivec does it again! I LOVED this book. LOVED. More to come closer to it's release date. ♥♥

Christy says

5 STARS!

??All of Tara Sivec's books have been 5 star reads for me, wether they are hilarious or suspenseful, it doesn't really matter... So I'm not surprised with how much I LOVED this book! After reading A Beautiful Lie, I knew I had to jump right into this one!

Brady was born into a privileged family. His parents had expectations of him. Go to law school at an Ivy League college. Things he has no interest in at all. Brady forges his own path. He joins the Navy SEAL's and

his parents pretty much disown him, putting a rift between his younger sister, Gwen and himself. Over the years as a SEAL, and a cop, Brady has seen things. He has lost people who are important to him. He is coping while drinking and moping around. One night, Gwen shows up with her daughter Emma. She needs a safe place to stay after her rich husband beats her up. He has to get his life together. He needs a good paying job to support them. The only one that comes up is one he really doesn't want to do... Guard and protect a pop star named Layla Carlisle, who Brady assumes is just a stuck up princess/diva. He couldn't be more wrong about Layla.

Layla was born to make music. It is her passion. What she loves more than anything in the world- but the last few years, nothing makes her happy- not even music. Ever since she was 15 and her father left her alone in life, she is stuck with her evil bitch of a mother Eve. All Eve cares about is making money. She calls the shots. Layla can't write her own songs, or do anything that makes her happy. Eve manipulated Layla at a young age and now she is stuck. Eve is THE WORST! This is a fate her father never ever wanted for her. All her dad ever wanted was for her to be happy. Make music because she loved to do it.

'Don't you ever forget that, hummingbird. You can go anywhere you want to go, be anything you want to be. Play because you love it and for no other reason. The day you stop loving it is the day it becomes a job. Making music should never be a job.'

Layla has been receiving some disturbing notes from a fan. They are detailed and a little creepy. This 'stalker fan' is the reason Brady was called in. Layla is not happy with the arrangement. Neither is Brady, but he has a job to do. Brady and Layla have an undeniable connection. Even though they drive each other crazy, there is something there. Brady sees deeper into Layla than most.

"Who do you want to be, Layla?"

I want to be free. For one moment in time, I just want to be free.

Things started to heat up between Brady and Layla. She starts to develop strong feelings for him, it scares her.

Because she is afraid, she starts to push Brady away. The thing is, Brady knows exactly what she is doing and he won't let her go that easily.

Don't think for one minute I can't read you like a book and see exactly what you're trying to do: push me away first so you don't get hurt. I'm not going anywhere, especially now that I've felt you come around my fingers and heard you cry out my name.

Meanwhile, they are still having issues with the stalker. As things start to progress, Brady starts to see the real Layla even more. He loves what he sees. Things with her mom are still terrible, and things with her best friend/bodyguard Finn are still strained, but she is happy with Brady. For the first time in a long time, she feels something. The music is calling to her again.

Then comes the twist... I would like to say I saw it coming, part of it I did, the other part I was a little shocked. And saddened by. But the ending, the ending I LOVED!

“You were wrong you know. About what you said before. I’m not the one who made you stronger. You always had it inside of you. It was always because of *you*”

This book had it all!!!! Romance, suspense, drama, heat, and even some humor. It was a fast paced, emotional and sexy read! I loved the music, especially the lyrics Layla wrote. The writing was excellent. It was great to get Brady and Layla’s perspectives, along with flashbacks from the past. On the plus side, we get a little bit of Garrett in this one so I was happy! And book 3 is about Austin and Brady’s sister Gwen?!?! YES PLEASE!!! A fantastic read!

Brenna says

4.5 Stars

I loved this book! I was REALLY excited to jump into this one and get Brady’s story since I absolutely loved him in *A Beautiful Lie (Playing with Fire, #1)*.

Although a few things are referenced from book #1, these can absolutely be read as stand alones. This book picks up about a year or so after the events that happen in *A Beautiful Lie*. Brady is no longer in the Navy and has been having a rough time dealing with some guilt from his past. When his little sister shows up with her young daughter looking for refuge from her abusive husband, Brady knows he needs a steady job to help provide for his family. That’s where Layla Carlisle comes in. She is a pop star at the peak of her career that has been getting some threatening mail from an obsessed fan and Brady has been hired to find out who the psycho is.

Neither Layla nor Brady wants anything to do with this arrangement. Layla has trust issues with any person hired by her evil wench mother and Brady doesn’t want to be around a diva pop princess. Upon meeting though, there is no denying they are instantly attracted to one another.

Fuck, stop ogling the client. And absolutely stop picturing her naked.

...

I almost sniffed his fucking shirt. I actually looked him up and down like he was a piece of meat, which he obviously noticed. Son of a bitch!

There is this underlying tension about the crazy stalker who is tormenting them. I was immediately sucked into the suspense of the story; the prologue begins with actual letters from her “biggest fan,” Ray. I love that from page one the tone is set and the creepy factor is there. All the while you are experiencing the connection between Layla and Brady and getting sucked into their relationship. I absolutely love these two characters and their chemistry was HOT! There was such intensity between them, not only physically, but emotionally. Brady is so protective and yes, quite swoon-worthy.

I know I’m done for when it comes to this woman. She’s gotten under my skin, and I’m not sure if I’ll ever be ready to remove her. I can’t walk away and I sure as shit can’t ignore whatever this is between us.

It soon becomes clear that there is more going on than what meets the eye. The mystery goes so much deeper than just some crazy fan. Layla and Brady have so many ghosts and secrets in their pasts and it's unclear which ones are going to have an affect on their future and how the story is going to unfold.

Trusting someone is what got me into this mess. I trusted the wrong person, and now I'm going to pay for it with my life.

It was clear with *A Beautiful Lie* that Tara Sivec can absolutely write romantic suspense, but I feel like this book was a bit smoother. It's told in first person in both Brady and Layla's POV and I am so thankful for that change. I felt so much more connected to the story and the characters. I breezed right through this and read it in one sitting. I never felt like there was a lull and I was completely immersed in the story. What I wasn't expecting was the emotion it stirred in me. Layla's loss of her father, her being controlled by her horrible mother, and her music, all those feelings sometimes hit me out of nowhere and I LOVED it!

Sing what you want to sing, write what you want to write, and play what you want to play. Be amazing and be free. Let the music take you where you want to go.

ARC received in exchange for an honest review

*For more reviews go to Reality Bites! Let's Get Lost!!
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Ashley says

ARC provided by author in exchange for an honest review

*"What we had wasn't just a thing. What we had was **everything**." - Brady*

I can sum up this novel in three, little words: **HOT. AS. FUUUUUUUUCK.**

We all have that one author that holds a super special place in our heart – you know, the one that you took a chance on when they released their debut novel and you had absolutely no idea what kind of writer they were. You just bought their book and prayed that it was worth your time. And then when you were balls deep into the story, anxiously flipping page after page, something happened – you fell in love with someone you *didn't even know*. Then before you know it, you're creeping on them on their website, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace (God I hope no one still has a MySpace) and you're looking for any news on when they are releasing their next book and it's never soon enough...well, at least not for me because I never could grasp that virtue. By now you're probably wondering where this is going and since I refuse to be patient, I won't ask you to be either.....

Tara Sivec is that author that holds a super special place in my heart.

I have read every book she has published, and after I finished *Because of You*, I literally sat here thinking *"How the fuck does she do it?"* She has yet to disappoint with her work, and *Because of You* juuuust might top my love for *A Beautiful Lie*. The story of Brady and Layla evokes an array of emotions and has a depth that a lot of romance novels lack; this isn't just about the two main characters and their feelings for each

other. It's about Brady's commitment to his sister and niece, his willingness to do whatever it takes to provide for them, and his attempt to conquer his demons. It's about Layla's heartbreaking childhood, her terrifying run-ins with a desperate man who has made it his mission to have her for his own, and her attempt to please her mother...even if it means forfeiting her real dreams.

Because of You is so much more than your regular run-of-the-mill romance/suspense novel. It will make you grin, make your heart race, make you cry, and **oh yes**...it will make you so hot you will feel your heartbeat in your vagina. I'm not kidding. I felt my heartbeat in my vagina during a couple scenes. Or maybe my vagina was just fist pumping out of excitement. Either way, you get my point – it's **hot**. And I refuse to give away any spoilers, but I just need to say one thing right now. **THE ENDING IS JUST...IT'S JUST...JESUS TITS**, I can't even say anything without giving something away!!!! Just know this – your heart might stop for several minutes. I know mine did.

Tara's writing is near flawless, and is the kind that will make you stay up until 4 AM *even though* you have to work at 8 AM because it's absolutely impossible to find a good stopping point. I don't know how she does it, but I pray she never stops because I am so in love with her writing...and clearly my vagina is a pretty big fan, too. *Because of You* is just another 5 star piece of perfection that reiterates why Tara is *that* author for me. Now if you'll excuse me, I guess I'll try to go learn that little virtue called patience while I wait for the third book in this series.

Oh, one last thing! I present to you....Brady and Layla ;)

[image error]

Paula says

Because of You is the second installment in Tara Sivec's *Playing with Fire* series. It has everything you could possibly want in a romantic suspense: super sexy alpha hero, hot romance, suspense, mystery, fast-paced action, drama, and angst. This cleverly written story starts off with a huge bang and didn't let me go until the final page. I loved *A Beautiful Lie*, but I think I love *Because of You* even more – if that's even possible.

Brady Marshall grew up in a privileged life where money and status means everything to his parents. Brady hated this life and his parents expectations. Desperate to escape this superficial lifestyle, he joined the Navy SEALs. After spending years as a Navy SEAL and then a cop, he can no longer cope with all the losses throughout the years. Consumed by his guilt and grief, he spends his days drinking booze and sleeping with nameless women. That is, until his sister, Gwen, knocks on his door with her daughter in tow needing a safe place to hide from her very wealthy, but abusive, husband. Brady decides if there is anyone he is willing to get his life together for, it would be his sister, and he is determined to protect her against all costs. But his security specialists/private investigating business is not doing so well, and he needs money to help pay his bills. The one job that he really doesn't want but would help him get ahead would be guarding the diva pop princess, Layla Carlyle.

Layla Carlyle is a world famous pop singer, who has loved music all her life. However, the music she loves and is passionate about is not the kind of music she performs. Being a pop princess was not her dream nor was it what her father wanted of her before he died in a car accident. When Layla's father died, Eve took advantage of her young daughter, took over her father's recording business, Hummingbird, and manipulated

her into signing a contract where Eve basically owns Layla. All Eve cares about is making money, and using Layla as a money-making pawn to keep her wealthy. The woman is ruthless and evil. And because Layla is a good person all the way down into her heart and soul, she has let Eve control her through her best friend and bodyguard, Finn. Eve holds something over Finn's head that could potentially ruin his life. And Layla would do anything for Finn, even if it meant sacrificing what she wants most in her life – making the kind of music she loves.

When Layla and Brady first meet, they don't hit it off. Layla thought he was arrogant and bossy and didn't want him around. Brady didn't want to deal with the spoiled, bratty diva either. But, even though these two head strong people drove each other bonkers, there was still an instant spark of attraction between them they couldn't deny. As Brady continues to investigate and protect Layla, the sexual tension rises, and their growing feelings begin to take center stage leading to a very hot and steamy affair. And ladies, it's definitely smoking hot. Turn on the AC, you're going to need it.

"There's nothing more sensual than watching a man struggle to keep himself in check when he's looking at you, nothing more arousing than seeing his eyes darken with desire and his tongue slide out to lick his lips because you know he's thinking about kissing you."

Brady is a strong, protective, and honorable man, who would do anything to make sure the ones he cares about are safe and secure. Even though he still feels guilty for the things that happen in his past, he finds the strength to make sure his sister and niece are taken care of. In the process, he finds a woman that begins to mean everything to him. And once Brady finally sees Layla for who she truly is underneath the facade, he finds out that there is a talented, beautiful, kind woman screaming to be set free of *Mommy Dearest*. Joan Crawford definitely has nothing on Eve Carlyle. Because Eve has controlled every aspect of Layla's life, it was refreshing for her to be with Brady, where she is able to be more herself. Be free. But as Brady and Layla grow closer, Layla becomes afraid to let Brady into her world. As she tries to push Brady away, he pulls her right back, too stubborn to let this woman walk out of his life. Especially now that he knows who the woman is underneath the layers. He wants THAT woman. Soon these two learn that even though they come from different worlds, they are so very perfect for one another.

I know I'm done for when it comes to this woman. She's gotten under my skin, and I'm not sure if I'll ever be ready to remove her. I can't walk away and I sure as shit can't ignore whatever this is between us.

In the meantime, as things heat up between Layla and Brady, the stalker threats become more and more intense. It soon becomes clear the stalker issue goes deeper than just a crazed fan. The storyline is suspenseful and kept me on the edge of my seat as the twists kept coming. Miz Sivec has a way with writing mystery that will keep you spinning your wheels the entire time. Who is the stalker? Who is the true villain in this piece? Expect this story to be unpredictable and to be left feeling breathless and shocked when all the secrets are finally revealed.

I have to mention how nice it was to see some of the famous 'Sivec snark' shine through in this story. I laughed quite a bit, especially at Gwen's saucy remarks. And Austin. Happy sigh. I can't wait to get to know him. I'm definitely stoked to read Gwen and Austin's book, which comes out sometime in 2013, especially now that I got a little sneak peak at what's to come at the end of the book.

This may not be the most action-packed book of the two in the series so far, there is still a fair amount of fast-paced action and suspense to keep you reading into the late hours of the night. So, yeah, buying this book is a no-brainer. Miz Sivec has created a fabulous romantic suspense series you don't want to miss.

Rating: B+
Heat: Hot

-- *A Romantic Book Affairs Review*

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Tough Critic Book Reviews says

This book broke my rating system...

So, do I rate it based on how it compared to *A Beautiful Lie*?

Can I rate it less than four stars, but still give it my stamp of approval?

Will you still read it in spite of the things I didn't like?

Am I over thinking this?

Let me try and break this down. I totally **liked** this book. I most definitely **recommend** this book, and I absolutely **love** this series, but my star-dar malfunction is based on a few things.

I *more* than loved *A Beautiful Lie*. I fell so hard for Garrett and Parker that I had a hard time letting them go. Notice I said Garrett **and** Parker. That would be issue one. Though I fell in love with Brady from the very beginning of the *Playing With Fire* series, I wasn't a huge Layla fan. I just never felt the connection between Brady and Layla as I did with Parker and Garrett. Overall, I just didn't like this book *as* much as ABL, but it was still good. T.E. Sivec knows how to seduce us with a damn good plot.

My only other issue was the timeline and progression of events.

I felt like I was having a threesome with the past *and* the present. This was now, that was then. I missed out on parts of the plot that I really wished I could have experienced instead of being told about them later. The skipping around made it kind of hard to follow and I felt like I needed a flux capacitor to navigate all the time jumping. It was heavy.

All bitching aside though, T.E. Sivec delivered yet another unique, addictive, action packed plot filled with steamy romance and twists that make your head spin. Her stories are extremely hard to put down and are more than *just* entertaining.

So back to my star debate. My heart says four, my head says three, and my unmentionable girly bits say ten. So if I add the one, carry the seven and subtract the remainder I get, 3.5?

Either way, this is a really good book to continue an amazing series and I recommend it to anyone who has unmentionable girly bits (or...unmentionable guy bits if that's your thing, rock on). It's a solid, *solid* **3.5~Stars** and I can't wait for book three.

READ ON!

More reviews at <http://www.toughcriticbookreviews.blo...>

Arabella ~?AB?~ says

4.5 stars, I really enjoyed this story of ex Navy Seal turned P.I Brady and mega pop star Layla.

Layla has had such a sad life and Brady soon realises he shouldn't judge a book by its cover when he gets beneath the surface of her pop persona. Nice chemistry, bitchy mums and a good amount of action made this a great easy read.

There's a fab excerpt for book 3 at the end too, can't wait for that one!

Vikki ~ *squee* lite ~ says

3.5 Stars

I really like this one. All of my complaints about the last book (too many POV, randomly jumping in and out if everyone's heads etc) were all rectified in this one. I liked the addition of some levity between Gwen and Brady. I think that maybe, for me, there just wasn't quite the right balance between the mystery, and the building of the relationship. I just wasn't feeling the deep connection that Brady and Layla were supposed to have. I'm excited about the next one though - looking forward to Gwen's story.

Arlene says

It's easy to forget about all of the bad memories when the one shining light in your life is back and brighter than ever. It's easy to forgive the hurts and disappointments when the only thing you've ached for is standing right there in front of you.

Because of You is the second installment in Tara Sivec's Playing with Fire series, and I'm happy to share that she's done it again. Brady and Layla's story was a perfect representation of what Sivec does best... which is to command the reader's attention and entertain us with a well-developed plot and extremely likable characters.

For fans of her Chocolate Lover series, again I must say - don't expect to get the laugh out loud moments and silly scenes that had us cringing and guffawing in laughter. With **Because of You**, plan to engage in a storyline that's filled with steamy moments, serious action and constant intrigue.

I will admit that despite this being the second installment in the Playing with Fire series leaving me to assume that I should know what to expect, I was still somewhat waiting for Sivec to bust out her funny side. However, I think it's just fun to know that Sivec can shift her style with grace, but still deliver those hints of what else she's capable of. Talented author!!

In **Because of You**, we meet Layla Page Carlisle a pop star sensation with a stalker that has become increasing more dangerous. As a result, Brady Marshall is hired on as a Private Investigator to track down the man whose threats to Layla force her staff to take serious notice.

Brady has a tainted past with his career. He was part of a blotched Navy SEAL assignment that resulted in some of his close friends being killed. And later when he took on a position in the police department, a wrong move cost him his partner and two innocent victims in a domestic violence call. Needless to say, Brady has a tough weight to balance on his shoulders that only gets more complicated when his sister and niece come to him for protection.

When he lands Layla's assignment, Brady feels he has a lot to prove with no room for error. As Layla and Brady spend more time together, they strike up a complicated romance that not only endangers the person he's assigned to protect, but also the people that have come to depend on him.

Truly a great story that had me furiously turning the ePages with enthusiasm. I loved that Sivec altered her narrative style in this book, which was alternating first perspectives between Layla and Brady. It was exciting to see through the eyes and minds of these two as their action packed story unfolded. First person narrative is Sivec's strong suit and I hope she continues to capitalize on it.

Brady Marshall... oh Brady Marshall!!! What a treat! As much as I loved Garrett in book one of this series, which was a LOT, I loved Brady ten times more in this book. His passion, commitment and flaws made for the perfect complement to Layla's broken and empty life. I loved seeing these two come together and battle their demons with courage.

Overall, I'm a huge fan of Sivec. She has the ability to make me laugh, keep me entertained and hook me with her characters. She's proven her skill as a writer IMHO and I can't wait for her next installment. Pure joy!

Kathy says

I am now of the opinion that I love anything and everything this author does. T.E. Sivec, Tara Sivec, or whatever handle she chooses to use for whatever type of book she writes now has a stalker, groupie, and reader for life. T.E. Sivec can write about the creation and many uses of Butt Paste® and I will buy it because I know it will probably contain a twist that will leave me breathless. That is exactly what Because of You has done ... left me breathless. I only thought I loved Garrett in A Beautiful Lie, book #1 in the Playing with Fire series. My love for Brady has surpassed my affair with Garrett, and I'm not giving him up without a fight.

Because of You is a beautifully written romantic suspense novel that is exactly what I needed in my reading. I needed something to make me sweat, swoon, white-knuckle my Kindle, and bawl like a baby; and this book delivered all that and more. The true angst in Brady and Layla's story has fulfilled a desperate need to feel more than just a tingle in my cheeks and a hitch in my breath. I kept lowering my head to my Kindle while reading, getting as close to the screen as I could as if the book was pulling me into its very center, and I couldn't escape it, leaving me with eye strain and neck pain that I won't dare complain about because of the emotions dragged out of me from reading. I was so engrossed in the uneasiness, the romance, and the lyrics that held such meaning to the lives of the characters. Believe me when I say that Because of You is the best of the best from this author.

The story begins with Brady, whom we met as a side character in A Beautiful Lie. He carries so much guilt from things gone wrong in his tenure as a Navy SEAL and as a police officer after retiring from the military. He now works as a private eye and provides protection to his sister, Gwen, and his six-year-old niece, Emma, who are fighting their own battles. Unfortunately, his guilt has plagued and turned him into a drunken mess who spends his nights finding release in hookers and whores. Unable to pay the electric bills,

he is forced to consider a job finding a stalker of the famous pop artist, Layla Carlisle. Brady wants nothing to do with Layla, who to him looks like a Barbie on steroids, plastic and fake in every way. Gwen and Emma are huge fans of Layla's music and with much prodding, Gwen finally convinces Brady to take the job hunting down the person harassing and threatening Layla. The candid banter between Gwen and Brady throughout the story made me chuckle every time. In fact, there were many times that I chuckled and wore a wide grin while reading scenes in which Brady and his macho manliness was forced to do something that had him watching his own manhood fly out the window as he acquiesced to whatever Gwen or Emma requested.

We first meet Layla when she is only ten years old, as the author builds her back story and introduces us to those responsible for making Layla the person and pop star she is today. Layla's father, Jack, was a strong and loving force in Layla's life until he was taken from her in her youth. He was the mogul behind Hummingbird records and taught Layla to play the guitar, realizing early on that she had a natural talent. He encouraged her to play and sing what made her feel happy and only what she wanted to play and sing; and if she follows his advice, then it would never become just a job. He didn't push Layla to pursue a career in music, because he knew the toll it would take on her. He wanted more in life for his little hummingbird. Layla's mother, Eve, on the other hand had different thoughts on the subject. What can I say about Eve? Just slap a butch collar on the woman and give her a can of Alpo®, because that is who she is. She is nasty to the core and is out for cash and power, even if she has to use her own daughter to get it. I. Hated. This. Woman. She is all kinds of evil. Layla has never had the normal mother/daughter relationship with Eve that she would have liked. Their relationship is very strained and Layla is brow beaten and berated with every private encounter, but Eve is very much the doting and loving mother in the public eye. Layla's only support is Finn, the former marine and bodyguard who has been her best friend since elementary school. She trusts Finn with her life, and he is the only one who knows her secrets and dreams.

When Brady and Layla meet, it is not at all what Brady expected. He quickly learns that Layla is two different people, and he never knows which person he will see - the plastic Barbie doll who sings teeny-bopper songs that make his ears ache or the beautiful girl sans makeup who makes heartfelt music. While the attraction is there for the beautiful Layla minus the plastered hair and painted face early on, their relationship develops at a slower pace, allowing the reader to enjoy Brady and Layla just being together as the romance unfolds. It isn't rushed or hurried in any way, but paced nicely as they work closely together to solve the stalker mystery. Both characters are strong and plagued with brokenness in different forms.

You can't fix me, Brady. What you see is what you get.

Brady and Layla learn to lean on each other and attempt to find that trust in each other that neither possess. The heat is turned up when they do find their way together and attempt to trust with their hearts, even though both fear the hurt that can result. But, sometimes the fear of hurt and the realization of living in two different worlds can take over and decisions are made from raw emotion.

"Don't ever say this was a mistake, and don't think for one minute I can't read you like a book and see exactly what you're trying to do: push me away first so you don't get hurt. I'm not going anywhere, especially now that I've felt you come around my fingers and heard you cry out my name."

"We are absolutely going to pick up where we left off, and the next time you scream my name, it's going to be when I've sunk myself inside of you as deep as I can get."

Because of You is definitely one of my favorite romantic suspense novels. This book contains subjects of guilt, betrayal, extortion, murder, sexual assault, romance, and dreams. All of these things led me to repeated anxiety attacks, laughter, and sobbing ... no, it was more like bawling those ugly tears through which I cursed Mrs. Sivec for doing what I believed was the unthinkable in chapters 24 and 25. I was in complete denial. I

couldn't believe what I was reading. I wanted to throw my Kindle and pretend like I hadn't read those chapters, but I reeled it in and read on to receive the much needed closure that would allow me to breathe again. We do get a few cameo appearances from familiar characters that appeared in A Beautiful Lie (which I also highly recommend), and it's my opinion that these books should be read in order due to possible spoilers, but Because of You can be read as a stand-alone. The gripping plot, powerful and remarkable characters, and heartfelt song lyrics will transform the reader from spectator to active participant as the all-riveting events unravel. T.E. Sivec has once again proven that she can write anything, and I will read it.

Mo says

I LOVED the first in this series and was so disappointed when I did not get the great vibes for this one. It was OK, was seriously not going to finish it around 60% in. I knew what was coming. The next one sounds good with Gwen and Austin - here's hoping.

Donna ~ The Romance Cover says

4 stars!!

I loved A Beautiful Lie and was really looking forward to Brady's story. I wasn't disappointed but I enjoyed the first book so much more. This was different from the first one, not so action packed but full of plot twists and angst and romance none the less, it was a great read.

This book picks up a while after A Beautiful Lie, Brady is no longer in the Navy Seals and has set up a consulting company, sort of private investigation and protection..it is not going well, he has loads of bills to pay and no work and now has an extra two mouths to look after. His sister has come to stay with him with her daughter, she has escaped a brutal relationship and Brady feels that as he deserted her by leaving home he has to make up for it..he harbours a lot a guilt as far as his sister and niece are concerned.

A job comes in that looks too good to be true, it is worth a lot of money and his sister is pressurising him to take it on..Brady had been sinking into a spiral of despair, drinking and mindless sex to take his mind off his crappy life and his sister has been trying to pull him out if it..she eventually persuades him to take on the job of finding out who is stalking Layla Carlisle who is perceived to be the "pop princess" that everybody loves. The last thing that Brady needs is to look after a prima donna, he takes the job none the less. It does not take long for Brady to realise that Layla is nothing like her public image and that she is constantly manipulated nad belittled by her mother..she runs the show...but why??? Why does Layla sit there and take it??

Neither Layla or Brady are up for this arrangement...Layla does not trust her mother one bit and especially those people hired by her mother, they are all in her pocket one way or another and always seem to have ulterior motives, however, she cannot shake the feeling that Brady is somewhat different and she also cannot shake the fact that she fancies the pants of him and the feelings seem to be entirely mutual.

The little thought bubbles that appear during this book are hilarious at times..like when they first meet..

Brady – F*** stop ogling the client and absolutely stop picturing her naked!

Layla – I almost sniffed his f***ing shirt. I actually looked him up and down like he was a piece of meat,

which he obviously noticed. Son of a b***h!

They some become, somewhat friendly, it takes Brady to make the moves whilst out running for them to realise that they could actually become friends and she soon realises that he is not in her mothers pocket either, she slowly begins to open up to him. The crazed stalker makes his moves and soon things heat up...both in and out of the bedroom!!!

This book had great twists and turns, a bit of angst, some hot steamy scenes and a great romance story to boot. The back story of Layla was fab but the back and forth did get confusing at times. However, the chemistry was fantastic but the book was also extremely emotional, a thing that some authors cannot manage and I loved this element with this book. I totally connected with the characters.

I loved Brady and Layla and was so glad that they got their HEA, however, there was a lot to go through before they got there and I for one loved reading about it. I cannot wait for the next one in this story.

www.theromancecover.com

J says

******AMAZING... COULD NOT PUT DOWN... 5 STAR READ******

You know that feeling when you're reading a book and something washes over you.

A feeling that you know you are about to get dragged in and there isn't anything you can do about it.

It doesn't happen all the time. And you still enjoy what you're reading, still can fall in love with the story.

But sometimes something just grabs you. It's like the words that you are reading go from letters on a page to coming alive and settling in just beneath your skin. Causing your whole body to break out in intense goosebumps. Feeling every emotion seeping out with these words.

It might take a chapter or 2 to get there, It sometimes can be in the prologue. I have had it happen to me in the dedication.

But when you read that certain line or paragraph, and you react to it. You just know that you gone for.

~Oh God, this is the arm I play with. This is the arm that cradles the guitar at my side and the fingers that strum the notes that take me away to another place. Notes and melodies that bring me back to life and allow me to be who I really am.~

This was that line for me.

2nd page in, and I was like... "Yep, ok there goes my whole day"

T.E. Sivec is a freaking genius.

She managed to pull every emotion out of me and leave me hanging for more.

"Because of You" had it all. I couldn't get enough.

This was so much more than I was expecting.
She blew it out the park with "A Beautiful Lie."
But honestly this was even more amazing.

Brady is a retired Navy SEAL, Former cop, and current PI.
Brady has gone through a lot over the last few years. When his sister and niece show up on his door step needing his help, he decides to get his life on track.

Accepting a job to work for a 'Diva' is definitely not something he wants to do, but he's got to pay the bills.
After researching Layla Carlyle online, Brady is convinced she's nothing more than another spoiled, rich celebrity.

~"No amount of money is enough for me to follow around some pop star diva princess who has more money that she knows what do with and probably invented this little stalker because her name hasn't been in the tabloids in at least three point two days."~

But Brady has no idea how very wrong he is.

Layla is living a life that her heartless, manipulative mother, Eve, dictates.
She may be rich, beautiful, and talented, but she's not in control of her own life, nor is she happy.

Her mother, controls every aspect of her life. For Layla, there is no way out and has lost all fight.
No one other than Finn, her bodyguard- Best friend truly knows her.

After losing the one person who protected her. Layla isn't the person she portrays.
She is lost and empty and no longer can she feel the passion that flowed through her.

~I can't do it. No matter how hard I try, I can't get my fingers to strum the Hummingbird.

I wasn't free anymore. On days like today, I feel like I never will be.~

Until Brady comes along....

There is an instant attraction between Layla and Brady. Even though they try to show an indifference to each

other.

Brady is there to do his job, protect Layla, and catch the stalker that has his eyes set on the singer. But as they spend so more and more time together, Brady begins to see Layla as she truly is. And too soon it becomes impossible to deny their feelings.

~“I know I’m done for when it comes to this woman. She’s gotten under my skin, and I’m not sure if I’ll ever be ready to remove her.”~

He tries to fight his attraction and not become involved. But when they are both effected so much by the other, sooner than later they will cave.

~"There's nothing more sensual than watching a man struggle to keep himself in check when he's looking at you, nothing more arousing than seeing his eyes darken with desire and his tongue slide out to lick his lips because you know he's thinking about kissing you." ~ Layla

As Brady continues to protect Layla, from her Stalker, the sexual tension rises. Their growing feelings bring them closer together.

There was such intensity between them, not only physically, but emotionally. Brady is so protective, he sees past the public persona. See's what her mother has done to her.

~"I've just met this woman and suddenly I wanted to make sure no one ever speaks to her that way ever again. I want to see her smile more. When she does, I feel a tightening in my gut and an inexplicable need to have her smile at me, to shine that brightness on her face in my direction."~

These two were hot!

Smoking, sexy, panty dropping HOT.

TOO MANY MOMENTS to document but I think every time they came together, it was freaking on fire.

~"I haven't had a hand job since I was in high school. The women I'm usually with prefer to just hit and go home. I don't know if it's just the fact that it's Layla doing this to me right now or how on edge I am, but this is the hottest fucking thing I've felt in a long time."~

~"She's soft and tight wrapped around my fingers and I can only imagine how it would feel to have my cock buried inside of her right now, squeezing me and making me lose my mind."~

Brady is sexy but it was all the sweetness that got me. *GOD HE WAS SEXY SWEET.....*

~"I thought it was impossible for you to be any more beautiful than you already were," He whispers in my ear.

"Jesus, was I fucking wrong." ~

But with Brady and Layla getting closer, the stalker closes in.

~"You're going to be mine someday very soon, princess. I'm not ready for you just yet, but I will be. And you're going to be ready for me."~

You really are sitting on the edge of your seat wondering who it could be.
You have all these clues but your not sure who or what is going on.

As Brady slowly brings the old Layla back to life, can the two of them, who live two completely different lives, really have a future?

With Brady's tainted past and his need to protect his family, will he be willing to put it all on the line to be with the woman of his dreams?
Will Brady be able to save Layla before its too late...

~"Maybe if I had realised sooner, listened earlier, put away my pride and belief that everyone has some good in them deep down, I wouldn't be where I am now- fighting for my life and wandering if the person I love cares enough to save me from this hell."~

The last 30% was crazy intense and pretty sure I spent all of chapter 25 holding my breath..
Loved every second of it.
I can't wait for the next in the series..

+++ 5 AMAZING STARS+++++

Buy it.
Read it.
Love it.