



Kiss Your Scars

Avril Ashton

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Being the king of Atlanta's underworld used to have its perks, but lately all undercover agent Renzo Vega has seen is the downside. Someone is auctioning off women in his city, and he's damn sure not about to let that offense stand. Just as he's set to make a move, Renzo's club is ambushed and he's shot. Unsure of who to trust, he turns to the one man he definitely knows wants him dead.

Yanked from his bed, blindfolded and spirited away in the middle of the night, Lowell Scott is shocked to find the darkly gorgeous Renzo bleeding and in need of his help. The very last thing he wants is to come to the aid of the man responsible for his cousin's death, but the knife at his throat doesn't give Low much options.

Close proximity doesn't temper the hatred Low harbors for Renzo, it only brings up new problems. Like the vicious attraction Low struggles to control, and bullets that won't stop flying. It's a tough sell to believe there's anything good in a man as unapologetically dangerous as Renzo. And even if Low could forgive the unforgivable, Renzo is still shadowed in secrets. When they're exposed, those secrets will bring far-reaching consequences that could sever not just their shaky bond, but Low's family ties as well.

This is book three in the Loose Ends series, but can be read as a standalone

Warning: Contains references to subjects that may be triggering. Please read with caution

Kiss Your Scars Details

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From Reader Review Kiss Your Scars for online ebook

Natalie says

4.5 Stars

Avril Ashton is a dirty, dirty girl. I like that about her! This the last Loose Ends story (boo!) but another spinoff will feature some secondary characters in this story (yay!). Low's character was great and I enjoyed learning a tiny bit about Granadien culture. I'm going to Google more but the vocabulary and speech was handled wonderfully in the narrative. I also loved the connection between Renzo and Syren Rua from the Brooklyn Sinners series. Having names and people from past series woven into other stories is something I look forward to.

Much like previous stories, there's a dark and painful history that drives Renzo and he carries secrets about Low that he can't reveal. Also like previous stories, is the consuming, passionate connections that draw these men together like magnets. Then there's the raw, filthy sex scenes that nearly melt my reader. Holy shnikes! I'll never stop enjoying the author's particular style and brand of storytelling, the cops and criminals in lust and the racially diverse cast of characters rarely present in erotic romance.

Ele says

One of the best by this author but only if you're familiar with Avril Ashton's work. I recommend against reading this as a standalone. Definitely OTT but, as always, hella inclusive and with so much heart.

Chris says

I love the grit of this series - the flow, the pace and the heat. Renzo and Low closed this out with the typical, I hate you, I want you, I'd die for you, you hurt me formula... but heavens did I love it. The cross over of characters from other series added depth and again the loyalty amongst killers made me feel a protective warmth for them. Yes it was a bit dramatic in parts but what I know is I read this book into the night without stopping - clearly hooked ! If you're an Avril fan you should love it

Elise ✕ a.k.a Ryder's Pet ✕ says

[Mauricio Costa (hide spoiler)]

Anja says

2.5-3 stars

I'm a huge fan of Ashton's books. The angst, the drama, the intensity, I love it! But unfortunately "Kiss Your Scars" fell a bit flat for me. I mean it took me almost two weeks to finish it because I just wasn't too drawn to

the story.

The intensity that Avril usually masters so well felt kind of forced here. Just one too many one liners trying to ramp up the intensity. And if I had to read about desire being described like fire one more time, I would have thrown my Kindle. There was instant lust/love too, but I just didn't feel it. Low and Renzo are basically throwing out I love yous after their first or second time together. I mean I did feel their connection but it wasn't enough.

I did quite like the two as a couple, they complemented each other well and there was some delicious enemies to lovers! Renzo has a terribly dark and tragic past though and I wish they would have delved into that one a bit deeper and no magic dick cure! That guy needs a lifetime of therapy for Christ's sake. They did mention therapy but only very briefly at the end.

Every so often I would get the genuine feeling of intensity and angst and deep love between the MCs I appreciate so much in Ashton's book, but I just didn't fall in love with this story.

Nile Princess says

So this author is one I drop everything to read. I was just about to hit the hay, and saw that one of my friends was reading this and whoa, what? It's out?? Ok, maybe a couple chapters. Ten chapters later...

Let's talk about what I really liked.

The glossary made me warm and fuzzy from the door. I absolutely LOVE the Caribbean/West Indian representation in this author's work. It seems like we're in for even more of that in the spin off series (roll on Preacher) so I am EX.CIT.ED! Btw, author, you know good and well when Caribbean women 'pelt that waist', 'wuk it up' and 'bruk it down' that is wining, no h. Don't even put that option in there for the misspelling to continue lol. Thank you for putting the right one in the book itself. Also, I did not know oil down was Grenadian. Amazing how foods are shared across the region.

Renzo's recollection of his experiences - powerful and really well done. Awesome writing here, but I expect nothing less.

The first 30% of the book was FIYAH!! I'm talking delicious anticipation, warm, 'tingly sensation in your gut' sexual tension, the push and pull of Low and Renzo's attraction, just perfect. And then we got to the Daddy kink. The first time Renzo says to Low, "Will you call me Daddy when x,y,z?" I almost melted right off the chair. Yesssssss. Perfectly done but then....

What didn't work:

The Daddy kink:

I went into this book with some trepidation because submissive/switch Daddy is just not a thing for me. Daddy on his knees in submission, not just for something sexual, is just no. I know there are obviously Doms who switch, but a switch Daddy to me is like being a switch MASTER, which is just...not a thing imho (at least not switching with the same person you Dom). But I will read pretty much any Daddy kink cause I'm desperate like that (ha ha!) so I decided to give it a try. Renzo on his knees ended up not really bothering me, mostly because I didn't see him as a Daddy at all.

The problem with the Daddy kink here is that we literally have zero idea why it is a part of Low and Renzo's relationship. There is no build-up, insight, or explanation, on either of their parts, as to why Low calls Renzo Daddy. That may work for a 20-page erotica where one character just calls the other Daddy during sex (it just does what it says on the tin), but this is a full length novel. It just felt 'off' the whole time and I couldn't settle into it. I was confused as to how Renzo knew Low was into that in the first place; why didn't Low ever question how Renzo knew that about him? They never discuss it, not even to say, 'Is it weird when I call you that?' And, even if they never uttered the words to each other, Low was never introspective as to the WHY of it. WHY does it turn him on? Does it make him feel silly, guilty, weird? Does it make him think Renzo looks at him differently? Is it none of those and he just likes saying it? All we needed was a few lines. Again, this is a full-length relationship that's being built, not a few sex scenes thrown together where we're just like, "Ok." Renzo said, once or twice, that his brain turns off when Low calls him Daddy. Why? Is it just sexy? Or does he feel 'Daddy' emotions towards Low? Protection. Nurturing. Guidance. Wanting to make each other happy, and wanting to be there for each other...that's just a regular couple. DK is more than just one partner being older with slightly gray hair (there are lots of May December couples where it doesn't factor in), and more than just one person calling the other Daddy over and over (and over and over and over! Why??). What makes them see each other in this particular way?

So pretty much the Daddy kink did not work for me, but not for the reason I thought it wouldn't. I pretty much cringed and quick-skimmed my way through the sex. Apart from all that, nothing about Renzo screamed 'Daddy'. He was so broken with PTSD, nightmares and the inability to sleep or properly function, that he really couldn't be anyone's D-type. Clearly, theirs was not a traditional D/s relationship (there's no real D/s here) but, with Low being slightly broken and Renzo being horribly broken, it just made the whole Renzo being called Daddy thing all the more unpalatable. For me, the book would have been better without the whole thing.

As for Low and Renzo themselves, they were ok. Their relationship felt more promising before they got together. Once they did it just seemed like a repetitive loop of sex and I love yous with me not understanding how they got there so fast. By 50% I was ready to bail, but held on because I wanted to know the secret Renzo was keeping. That revelation (really well done, and Low's reaction hit me right in the gut and made me teary eyed) brought another round of drama of Low leaving when he wanted to stay, and then abruptly making a u-turn that gave me whiplash. Just too much angst all around. Atta's story was also well done and I ended up having more empathy for her than I thought I would.

One last thing. What usually makes these books great, even if the featured couple doesn't WOW me, is the character cameos from past books. The problem is that I don't like any of the secondary characters that showed up. I couldn't get into Daniel Nieto and Stavros as a couple AT ALL, Tek is interesting but (I feel) unworthy of his boo, and Syren Rua is a character I started off liking but then became meh about because his connections, knowledge, hand in everything, all knowing persona just became too fantastical.

So this book was a bit of a miss for me unfortunately (2.5 stars), but that excerpt for Dax and Deacon - yes, goodness, yes!! Dax was actually my favorite character in this book. I LOVVVVVVVED him and can't wait to see how his story unfolds. The depravity is strong with this one lol.

I know that the author took some time off and this is her first foray back, so I really hate that I didn't love this, but even when I'm not giving her books five stars, they are head and shoulders above the competition. I love her writing and will always rush to read anything she writes.

Nakristianna says

4.5 Stars

Lorraine Lesar says

Twinkle, twinkle little star
How we wonder who you truly are?
Up in the world of sex and guns
Like a king in the violent skies
Twinkle, twinkle little star
How we wonder who you truly are?

Well we certainly found out who Renzo truly was and it was....heartbreaking!

Mauricio no longer existed in waking hours, only in his sleep when the past comes back to haunt him and rips him to pieces. But in waking hours, he's Renzo Vega, criminal club owner who can handle anything, anytime and totally untouchable.

But even the untouchable can find that a bullet is true and straight. The untouchable suddenly becomes very reachable. Only one man can save him from bleeding out, that man also hates his guts and would like nothing better than to see not only him vulnerable but dead as well. That man is Lowell Scott.

Does anyone write better hate to love characters than Avril Ashton? I don't think so, she has the crown and wears it regally. This. OMG. This...was riveting reading. I wanted to kiss Renzo's scars away, hold him in his sleep, but that is Lowell's job and he has become rather possessive over Renzo and claimed his licking rights well before I came on the scene ?. I'm not surprised though, Renzo is The Man. The King. Avril Ashton gave us another amazing character to add to our growing collection. She never let up on the pace, no time for a little breather, it was green lights all the way ?. As always she didn't pull her punches, she hits hard and it hurts. It's graphically violent, so much angst and heart wrenching with scenes of child sex abuse that had me in tears.

But for you fans out there....she was on it!

4* Renzo0000000 stars from me.

Dia says

3,5 stars actually

I've started this one right after finishing Call the Coroner. This is my second book by this author and maybe I had too high expectations. Well after Call the coroner of course I had high expectations. I absolutely loved that one!!

As much as I enjoyed this one, it wasn't phenomenal. I had some problems with the story here. The biggest would be the Daddy kink. I am not a big fan and even if I find it bearable sometimes, here it wasn't. I like age gaps and here we get 16 years between the MC's, but the Daddy kink didn't work for me.

And I must mention the insta-love because for me it surely felt like it.

Overall the story was entertaining, I've read it in one sitting and the ending was amazing. Looking forward to reading more from this author!!

Mimi says

4.5 stars

First I would like to say "Say Daddy for me". Daddy kink is a turn on for me and this book was %#ing HOT!!! The passion, torment, lust, love and violence all were written to perfection for me. I maybe in the minority but I don't mind being alone with Low and Renzo.

But if you are reading this series PLEASE read " The Coroner " after book two in "The Loose Ends" series. Daniel Neito and Stavros Konstantinon are featured in book three and you are going to want to know how their dark, crazy, psychopathic story ends.

New series coming soon, Hell ya! Priest, Prophet, Deacon, Preacher and Bishop. Can not wait. Now onto The Coroner.

Makhda says

[Heads up. There's unwanted hookup (Low and his fuck buddy, Chance). But fear not. Our MC's not in a relationship yet. Kind of off-page sex scene. I dismissed this. Ignored. (hide spoiler)]

Karla says

3.5 stars!

Lisa says

I was absolutely, positively looking forward to this book and while I didn't hate it I also can't say that I loved it. As the series drew to a close my first thought was, "wait what the heck happened?" There was so much story and so many words yet I didn't feel like anything happened except for one long tangent.

At the end of the book I was also frustrated that yes these books can be read as standalones but if you only read this book you would never even know it was part of a series. When I read a series I also want to be able to follow up on previous characters. Renzo kept mentioning his contact at The GBI, but he never once said his name. He never interacted with him. Why would the author prevent readers from having a look into the lives of the characters from her other books?

And believe me I ADORE Syren and was so grateful for the follow up. I also thought the connection between the characters was great and handled well, but at times it became a little too Syren heavy and then BAM it was over.

The entire book just felt like a lot of build up in order to just be let down.

There's also no epilogue which I assume is due in large part that a spin-off series is looming. My issue with that is judging from this series we may never see Renzo and Low again. And that would be awful because

both characters have so much more story to tell. The author has always connected her series so why would she make this series so different?

Renzo and Low, wow! How heartbreaking they are and at the same time what a beautiful love story. It was a little bit too instalove at times even though we are told that it has been YEARS of build up, but since we never saw a flashback the readers don't get that connection.

Dax's story I am definitely looking forward to as he is an incredible human being. He better make his brother WORK for it.

For me this book was just okay and it saddens me to have to write that. I was so excited to read it since there has been such a promotional build up from the author yet the book just didn't live up to the hype. There were so many characters that it made the book feel all over the place. I think the entire book occurred over the span of a month or perhaps not. The pacing was so odd that you couldn't figure out if days had went by or two hours.

I usually re-read Ms. Ashton's books multiple times and while I will re-read this book within the next several days as I know I probably missed a few things I can't see any re-reads after. And the Daddy thing. Yeah, I wasn't feeling that. I may have skipped a few sex scenes as a result which is in large part why I need to do a re-read.

Here's hoping we can get a little something extra for Renzo and Low on Patreon from the author.

DarienMoya says

KISS YOUR RENZO

I don't know if I can write a review for this. I love it so freaking much!! My favourite in the series no freaking challengers.

All I wanna do is run through the streets screaming Renzoooooooooooo. Like I don't acquire much book boyfriends but for the few I have, Renzo is in the top 10. This man had me swooning and floundering around on my bed like some teenage girl.

Renzoooooooooooo

So through most of Ms Avril Ashton books we have been hearing the name Renzo Vega, and now we finally get his story. And what a sad story it was, having suffer great abuse from the hands of a monster and taken away from his family. But Renzo turned out to be a survivor and now he's one of Atlanta's most feared criminals. He's still haunted by his past and it affects him greatly, but even though he moves in the dark he still manages to bring light to some caught suffering through abuse. He bad, but he also good.

“But the fact was, the waiting had come to an end. He was about to fuck up Low's life.”

When he gets a whiff of Lowell Scott he knows that the man is his, too bad Low hates his guts and can't

stand sigh of him. But hate can't stop overflowing chemistry and Low gets damn putty in his hands. Low hates him for one reason only; and blames him for the death of his cousin who was also his best friend. Too freaking bad for all that, Renzo is out to get his man.

“Because you and I, Lowell Scott? We’re about to burn each other to the ground, and I will speak your fucking name when I’m covered in the ashes of us”.

Low moves in his own shadows keeping the secret of his sexuality from his Caribbean family who have very wrong misconceptions about gay men and homosexuality. While he hides who he is, he also hides how he is feels for one Renzo Vega. The man isn't someone he should want but his treacherous body isn't taking the cue. Low has fought for a long time to resist Renzo and its taking care of the man's broken body that leads him to a realization that he can't not be with Renzo, and for that man he's willing to lose the love of his family. While Renzo might be used to the shadows Low refuses to keep him there.

**“You-You’re a criminal.” He was the only person who required that reminder.
“That’s Right.” Renzo murmured at his ear. “And I’ll fuck you like one, too”.**

I don't even know what happened in this book my mind was just strictly all Renzo. Again Ms Ashton is good with the words, like sex is all good ad shit but the things my Renzo be spitting had me damn near weak for the entire book. Like plot pops up and all that but in all its entirety it could have just been Renzo saying shit and I'd still be uber happy.

“Will you call me Daddy, Low?”

The books goes to some serious topics, such as child sexual abuse and growing up in a Caribbean family while also being gay. I'm just gonna touch on the Caribbean stuff, being Jamaican myself and growing up hearing the harsh things said about gay men. The bible and god always come into play when discussing sexuality and the labeling of them deviants akin to those of pedophiles. So, reading about it in Kiss Your Scars was like my little old self listening in on adult conversations as a kid. Not quite understanding but knowing that without a doubt it was something they hated. So, Low's struggle is not just fiction it's real life things that gay men of a Caribbean background have to navigate.

I just had a real connection with this one, with the food, with the family values and just the overall tone. Another culturally diverse book with two MC of colour and I am on the win. Always gonna give props to the author for her books, love or hate her work she's one of few giving you black heroes, giving you Latino heroes and then writing them as couples. Then giving you both sides of what it's like to be a person of colour from many backgrounds.

Also Renzo!!

There's a scene in the book that caused the complete disintegration of panties, and that was the elevator scene. If you know about Caribbean people then you know how we dance and Low putting it on Renzo like that. Deceased!!

Hands down my fave in the entire series. I love Renzo he's a beautiful man and I am planning on how to steal his ass from Low ?. *Kiss Your Scars* was a good finale to a series that I really enjoyed and while I'm sad to see it end. I'm looking hella forward to what's to come, because my man Renzo got friends and his friends need to fall in love.

SideNote- I do have a little problem with something in the book. So Renzo has suffered great abuse, I'm talking things no child should face, but he made it to adulthood without extensive therapy. I find that way too disbelieving. He was a god damn mess and needed help and it just irks me when things like that don't get addressed. Renzo get your ass some help please!!!!

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### **Songs**

**Feel It by Jacquees**

**Drip by Cardi B, Migos**

**DayDream by J-Hope**

**Don't by Bryson Tiller**

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### **Nazanin says**

DNF @ 36%

The push/pull made me so frustrated, it was too much and I didn't even read the first half!!

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