



Badge of Loyalty

Jude Tresswell

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Warning: Strong Adult Content

Mike Angells is an openly gay CID inspector based in North East England. There are three men in his life: Raith Balan, Phil Roberts and Ross Whitburn. Mike is particularly close to Ross.

Following a routine but significant investigation into thefts of farm machinery, Mike investigates the suspicious death of a footballer. The suspect's father threatens to expose a crime Ross committed many years earlier, unless Mike withholds evidence that would incriminate his son. Mike must choose which badge he is loyal to--the one he was given when he joined the Force or the tattoo he wears that symbolises polyamory. His decision leads to a brutal conclusion when two men who bear grudges, an ex-con and Balan's ex-lover, combine to exact revenge.

Interspersed with Mike's story are comments made by Raith, Phil and Ross about Mike, each other, and the nature of their polyamorous relationship. It works for them, but, as Phil explains, they work at it.

Neither full-on erotica nor hard-boiled crime, and with many light moments, this is a story about love, hatred, and the price which is paid for loyalty.

Badge of Loyalty Details

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Author : Jude Tresswell

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From Reader Review Badge of Loyalty for online ebook

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

3.75 stars

I chose this story because I'm interested in understanding how relationships with more than two romantic partners are portrayed. To date, I can only recall one other book that focused on a trio of men, and that felt more like a pair of lovers with an a third wheel thrown in by mutual agreement. In Badge of Loyalty, I feel like I had a more rounded view of a polyamorous relationship. Trusswell goes out of their way to try portraying the effect and reality of this relationship and its impact on the various members by including snippets of narration from Mike's lovers' perspectives. In that regard, I think the book was a great success. For the record, it was clearly established that Mike and Ross are more of a traditional couple—Mike himself admits that while he loves all his men, it is Ross he could not live without.

Read Camille's review in its entirety here.

Joey says

This was a lovely read. I enjoyed it although I had a hard time deciphering the language. I didn't mind so much as it helped keep me focused on the read. I don't want to give too much away but there are so many twists and turns and this is not a typical love story!

Natalie says

Received from Netgalley. I really don't know what to say about this one. Four men in a relationship, each with their own issues but bound together through effort and affection. For me the story felt very factual, as if someone was reading an essay. There's lighthearted parts but for the most it's serious. Once I got to grips with what was happening, everything flowed smoothly down a bumpy path. I'd say the story focuses on all four of them equally but not all four of them together. Raith the artist, Phil, Mike the cop and his chosen partner Ross. I did like the tattoos and how much emotion the characters give off. Didn't like Fortune or Peri. This story left me reeling when I was done oh and does deal with dark issues.

Jason says

While I felt the writing was extremely good, and engaging, I had issue with how the book was structured and the story itself. In reading the mystery I found myself having to go back and reread sections to try and figured out what was actually happening, some parts where suggested but not stated and I missed some points. I also was not thrilled with the sub plot of the polyamorous relationship of the main character—I don't feel it

added anything to the story. over all I felt this was two different books mashed into one. Personally, I think it would have worked better as one mystery and one novel about Mike and his relationships.

Truuss says

Well put together polygamy romance slash crime story. Four men, a crime and big decisions to make. Will it be the badge or the tattoo.

Somewhat sweet relationships and a lot of observations and thinking. The crime within was good woven. I loved it how the revenge was put down and how it ended.

All four had their own characters and were their own individual... their dynamic was good. This story is not entirely my thing but the writing was really well and clear done.

Kindly received an arc from the publisher

Gillian says

Reviewed for Just Love

4 stars

Trigger warnings for suicide of side character, mentions of child abuse and mention of sex with a minor.

This book was a bit of an enigma. It's not a romance, although love is a motivating factor for the protagonists. It's not really a police procedural, although much of it takes place in a police department. It's not exactly light-hearted, although the dark themes don't override the more amusing moments. I guess what I'm trying to say is that it was a bit different than a lot of the books I've read lately – and that's a good thing.

Mike Angells is a respected CID Inspector in Northern England. He lives with his partner, Ross, but is also involved with Phil and Raith. Although Ross is only monogamous to Mike, he considers Mike's lovers to be family. And while this may seem unconventional to outsiders, the men are committed to each other and to the success of their relationship. Communication and honesty are key.

When a dark secret from the past threatens both their relationship and Mike's career, Mike has to decide where his loyalties lie – with Ross or with a job that he loves. But his decision will have a domino effect that threatens to topple everything he holds dear.

This isn't the kind of book you breeze through in an afternoon. There are POV changes and flashbacks that help move the story along and often give you clues as to what might be coming next. Not that the story is hard to follow, it just helps to pay attention to the motivations of each character – because everyone has a motivation.

Admittedly, I haven't read a whole lot of books featuring polyam relationships, and certainly not one where one of the characters is only involved with one other person. But I liked how it worked for all of them. Just a heads up though, one of the characters does cheat (does not obtain the consent of the others in the

relationship) so if that's a dealbreaker it might be best to pass.

It feels weird to recommend a book that probably won't appeal to everyone, but I definitely feel it's worth reading if you need to break out of a book slump, or if you're just looking for something different. It does end in a way that might feel a bit jarring but not in a cliff-hanger sense. FWIW there is a second book in the works so maybe keep that in mind as you read.

Copy received from NetGalley

Sofia says

To tell her story, Tresswell uses a kind of voiceover interspersed with direct personal touches from the people revolving around the main character Mike. This creates a kind of duality, the voice over made me feel like I'm above, watching the story play out with a touch of foreboding. The personal bits creates more intimacy, personal touches, a need to know more. So on the whole I think Tresswell's method worked well for me. Her exploration into polyamory feels authentic as it feels like it is not created to please but rather to bit by bit explore the good and the difficulties parts which all relationships have. I always imagine that polyamory has more 'problems' than a duo but thinking/reading about it allows me to see that it might have advantages as well as difficulties and the results as in a duo relationship all boil down to how much work/commitment is put in.

I am looking forward to reading the sequel which is coming out soon.

an ARC gently provided by publisher/author in return for a review

Lillian Francis says

Officially I dnf'd when Ross revealed his secret, but I skimmed to the end and really wished I hadn't.

willowdog says

This work had so many wonderful things going for it. It takes on the subject of a polygamous relationship of four men, rarely seen in the literature. It is treated with relevance and dignity, not in a homoerotic sense, but in a caring and intelligent way. The narrative from each of the characters perspective is well written. The mystery within is complex. And finally, the story of the gay character in a very straight occupation points out the underlying nature of homophobia in the workplace.

However, at some point, I believe authors have to move on from the LGBT character as flawed. Unfortunately, Tresswell gives into this.

The warning in Goodreads regarding Strong Adult Content is deceiving. It is not.

Thank you Net Gallery and the publisher for this ebook.

Jodi says

Spotted this book on goodreads, read the blurb, downloaded and was very happily thrilled to have a book draw me in and not let go! I've been in a book funk and this was just what I needed. This is Mike's story, a british cop in a relationship with three other men. Now I love mmm or mmmm or mmmmm but this was unexpected in such a delightful way. Mike is in love with Ross, but has sex/love/like with Phil and Raith. They don't live together, sleep together but they do talk and have open honest communication with each other. Mike story's is complicated, painful and calls on his very soul to be true to himself and how he sees himself as an honest, loyal, dedicated cop. There snippets from the other three that help to fill in how they met, how they view each other, come together and just observations. Raith's story that nearly destroyed Mike, at the end of the book was a bit jarring, but I am hopeful that we get more of this in book 2, which I am very much look forwarding to reading.

Aaron Bloom says

THis story is about four gay polyamorous men who live in the north of England. Part crime story, part romance. (A lot of affection rather than erotica) . Great cover (not visible when I submitted this review) The four men in silhouette with infinity heart tattoos on their arms or neck. The tattoos are like badges which symbolise their lifestyle.

The story focuses on CID detective Mike Angells. He has to choose which badge he is loyal to - his police badge or the tattoo. There's a neat literary device going on here. The main narrative, MIke's story, is in one font while the comments of the other three men appear in a different font. They talk about each other, Mike and what polyamory means to them.

YOu have to read carefully because the story has a very regional feel to it and there are several time changes and flashbacks. IT's worth persevering tho' to learn about the four men - all interesting characters - and to discover what happens at the end.

Plenty of scope for sequels here with stories about the other three.

Lena♥Ribka says

2,5 stars rounded up

While I **REALLY enjoyed the writing**, I have some **SERIOUS problems** with the story and the demeanour of *some* characters - to put it mildly, I was very much PISSED OFF , so that I HONESTLY was at least 2 times VERY closed to DNF it. Let me tell, there are four BIG issues for me in this novel I just CAN'T ignore.

1. **Mike Angells.** *Angel Baby.* Cock of the walk. I honestly doubt that such polyamorous relationship that the author describes could work for a life time, most likely the chance it could even exist at all is basically zero, but no harm in dreaming, right? We talk here about 4 partners. (FIVE!!!)

There are easier tasks than making a polyamorous lifestyle work. It works for us because we work at it. [Phil]

Sorry, Phill, it doesn't work. And *Angel Baby* demonstrated it. So why not just to name it an *open relationship*? What all these efforts in a performance of different POVs for? Why not just to show Mike and his long-term partner Ross living together and picture Mike as a slut and Ross as a loyal sweetheart who understands the needs of his over-testosteroned lover? (Considering the fact that Mike is an everyone lover in this relationship, but not every one in this relationship has a sexual intercourse with the rest of the *family*.) But it is not SOLELY infidelity. The worst is HIM as ONE OF THE BEST DETECTIVES being unprofessional. In MANY aspects in regard of THIS case.

2. **Ross.** I found him very likeable. **Before** his very dark secret-bomb exploded. WTF. No, I didn't buy his cheap unconvincing explanation about his NOT KNOWING about the age of his lover in the past. The brother of the lover was his roommate, FGS. Why he didn't care about what happened in front of him, I don't know. I needed a better explanation.

3. **Raith.** I dislike/don't accept his prison's phase. One doesn't form his sexuality in prison.

4. **Flaxby.** This beating action...a NO-Go-Area.

I REALLY would like to read a NORMAL mystery novel by the author WITHOUT her performance of a polygamous relationship. Her writing style has the potential to become a bestseller.

****ARC provided kindly by the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.****