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Catherine Ryan Hyde

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While duck hunting one morning, childless, middle-aged Nathan McCann finds a newborn abandoned in the woods. To his shock, the child—wrapped in a sweater and wearing a tiny knitted hat—is still alive. To his wife's shock, Nathan wants to adopt the boy...but the child's grandmother steps in. Nathan makes her promise, however, that one day she'll bring the boy to meet him so he can reveal that he was the one who rescued him. Fifteen years later, the widowed Nathan discovers the child abandoned once again—this time at his doorstep. Named Nat, the teenager has grown into a sullen delinquent whose grandmother can no longer tolerate him. Nathan agrees to care for Nat, and the two engage in a battle of wills that pans years. Still, the older man repeatedly assures the youngster that, unlike the rest of the world, he will never abandon him—not even when Nat suffers a trauma that changes both of their lives forever. From the bestselling author of *Pay It Forward* comes *When I Found You*, an exquisite, emotional tale of the unexpected bonds that nothing in life can break.

When I Found You Details

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Author : Catherine Ryan Hyde

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Sally says

This is a book about unconditional love for a child not related by blood. It also shows us that life may not go in the direction we planned, but still can be a rewarding life. Nathan, married and childless, finds a baby in the woods and from there, the writer kept me guessing. This would be a good book for teens and young adults, but it left a lasting impression with me.

Linda says

This was my first book by Catherine Ryan Hyde. I was thinking it was a 3 star rating for me but the more I read I realized it would be 4. There are so many life lessons and wisdom between the pages of When I Found You. I loved Nathan McCann and will carry some of his wisdom with me. A story of circumstances we have no control over and making the choice to rise above them.

Merri says

As a professional in the foster care, adoption and counseling field, I enjoyed the message this novel shares about committing 100% to a child regardless of how hard they push you, test you, infuriate or emotionally hurt you. Nathan was the type of surrogate parent every professional in my field looks for when placing abused and neglected children. I applaud the author's insight in understanding the loss and grief process children such as Nat experience and the unconditional support their caregivers must provide. The message to be truthful with children about their past and not to create stories they will ultimately learn are false is one that is paramount in securing the trust foster and adoptive children needed to heal. This novel also touched a bit on some of the struggles adoptive parents encounter such as the emotional walls Eleanor build to keep Nat out and the affect this had on her marriage. I gave this novel 4 stars vs 5 simply because it left me questioning the development and demise of Nat and his wife's relationship. I would strongly suggest this book for foster and adoptive parents.

Jesus (Ego) says

Lectura ligera para vacaciones. Fue un regalo de Amazon hace unos días y justo había terminado otra novela así que me lancé. No está mal. Tiene un estilo y enfoque muy de guión de telefilm pero guarda alguna que otra frase a subrayar y algún que otro personaje carismático. Aunque lo intenta, no considero que logra profundizar demasiado en los perfiles de manera natural pero sí muestra bien algunas aristas de las emociones y la conducta humanas que ciertamente no se pueden explicar. En general me ha parecido entretenida pero no remarcable.

Penelope says

I was expecting quite a lot from this book, so I was extremely disappointed with what I got. Hyde's writing is minimalist but emotionless (at least the majority of the time); books often bring me to tears but I could not even feel a twang in my heart. I love the minimalist style, but part of minimalism is not just saying few things and describing little; it's using as few words as necessary to pack a punch. It's meant to be like a 5 Hour Energy vs a Rockstar.

The pace of this novel is rapid; by the time I was digesting the fact that the baby had been found, he was already a juvenile delinquent. This means that important plot strings are picked up then dropped, and given no depth. Nat's relationship with Carol is meant to be deep and full of devotion, but we see her maybe twice before they're married. Their relationship does not grow within the novel, which would have added an extra layer to the story. They meet then they're married, which seems absurdly unlikely for someone who was sprung out of juvie two days prior and never had the chance to flirt with girls.

I found the novel's depiction of women to be repugnant; all three of the women who feature as wives are nothing more than dutiful wives acting as extensions of their husbands. They're pure and faithful (even Nathan's first wife, Flora, who I solidly disliked). Carol has no reason to exist other than for her husband and raises no objection even when he doesn't talk to her for nine years. She never sees anybody else. Flora and Eleanor both disappear from the story the moment they disappear from their husband's lives. (Well, granted, Flora died, but come on.) They are always somehow able to make beautiful, delicious meals for the table. Despite having four important female figures, none of them ever talk to each other or form a relationship. Three of them are extremely unlikeable. The only one who seems to have a kind heart is Carol, who is conveniently also a devout Christian who saved herself for marriage, adding a whole other layer of bad taste.

The only characters in the stories who seem to have real flaws are Nat, Eleanor, Flora, and Ertha. Everyone else seems to be living in some heightened state of awareness, even Manny, who allows Nat to skip out on his job. The character of Jack comes in as a major driving force in the story then disappears several chapters later; tantalizing hints are dropped about Jack and Nat's mother and father, but we never learn about them, leading to a keen sense of disappointment.

One other thing I would like to touch on briefly is Hyde's depictions of people of color; they are almost invariably colored with stereotypes in language or in behavior. Which is really kinda uncool.

All in all, I'm glad it only cost 99 cents; I have never read a book that frustrated me so much. I've never before rated a book one star, actually; the only thing that seems to redeem this is its basic plot.

Carmen says

Bonita, sencilla, intensa por la historia que cuenta que no tanto por la narrativa, simple y directa, en la que conocemos cómo un hecho puede condicionar la vida de las personas, para bien y para mal, y una lectura que te aporta mucho más de lo que crees y te deja con algo de resaca lectora.

Me ha gustado mucho la relación que se establece entre Nathan y Nat y todo lo que ello implica. Es verdad que no es una historia intimista a pesar de ser una novela de personajes, los cuales están muy definidos y trabajados.

Aidan Bizony says

BRILLIANT! BRILLIANT! BRILLIANT!!! 'When I Found You' by Catherine Ryan Hyde is possibly one of the best books I ever read in my life. 'When I Found You' embraces the ideas of unconditional love. It starts out when a duck hunter finds a two day old baby in the woods in October and from that moment on a long up/down story begins. 'When I Found You' was the book that made me start to love Catherine Ryan Hyde. I think that this book is (or should be) ranked as the best book about unconditional love.

'When I Found You' is a very compelling read. I for one found it almost impossible to put down. In all honesty I am sad that I have to shelf 'When I Found You'

Pam says

I probably would have rated this book higher if the last half wasn't a disappointment for not living up to the promise of the first half. It's an interesting premise for a story--a man finds an abandoned newborn early one morning when he's hunting in the woods. He actually wants to raise the child, but the infant's family is found and the baby is raised by his grandmother. The man keeps tabs on the boy throughout his young life but does not personally interact with him. The boy is troubled and when his grandmother delivers him in desperation to the man (rather than giving him up to the state), the man's determination to support the troubled teen kicks into high gear. The story of their evolving relationship and the boy's movement from adolescence into adulthood is the rest of the story.

Hyde's writing is eloquent and evocative ("The sensation was similar to that of dropping a heavy object into a bottomless well, and then waiting for it to make a sound. The news made no sound.") in the first third of the book. Then the plot becomes somewhat improbable. The main character (the man who found the infant) is almost saintlike in his determination to provide the home and anchor the boy always needed, but didn't really receive (the grandmother is not the bad guy--just ill equipped for parenting). The rich use of language ("One new thing to accept, that was difficult and exhilarating and stressful and wonderful enough. But kindergarten and a baby bird was almost too much. Like something in his chest might burst, and then that would be the end of him.") is sacrificed for the unlikely narrative.

John says

When I Found You: a masterpiece of human emotion...

Just read this short paragraph, let the words sink in, then close your eyes and visualize what you've read:

"Nathan McCann stood in his dark kitchen, a good two hours before dawn. He flipped on the overhead light, halfway hoping to see the coffeemaker all set up with water and grounds and waiting to be plugged in and set to percolating. Instead he saw the filter basket lying empty in the dish drain, looking abandoned and bare."

Sometimes when we read an opening passage in a book, the words fit together so well, so perfectly crafted, that it creates an indelible image that sticks with us. This is the case with Catherine Ryan Hyde's *When I Found You*, a stunningly moving story of honesty, faith, perseverance and the human spirit.

Nathan McCann was a middle-aged man, married but without no children. While out hunting with his dog, he found a newborn infant in the woods, and assumed that the child was dead. But when the baby moved, Nathan's existence was changed completely, and that event became the beginning of a chain of events that span a lifetime.

Nathan took the baby to the hospital, quite taken by this small life that he had found. He wanted to adopt the boy, but the child's maternal grandmother claimed it. Nathan couldn't forget him, so he visited the child's grandmother and gave her a request: that when the boy was old enough, that he was to be told the truth. The grandmother gave her word that at some point she would introduce the boy to 'the man who found you in the woods.'

The boy was named Nat in honor of Nathan, and for the next fifteen years lived with his grandmother. Nathan watched the boy from a distance, not involved in his life, and sent birthday and Christmas gifts. Because she wanted to protect him, the grandmother chose to not to tell Nat that his own mother abandoned him. Her reluctance to be truthful with him caused problems, and he began to grow into being a troubled young man. His misbehavior resulted in the grandmother taking Nat to Nathan to raise, as she could no longer deal with him.

The appearance of Nat into Nathan's life brought frequent turmoil and battles. Nat was an angry young man, seemingly angry at everything in the world; Nathan was a man of principles, believing in always telling the truth. The tumultuous relationship between a father and son who are not blood relatives had some profound effects on both of them and the others in their lives. Yet this story, spanning a period of about thirty years, will surprise the reader with it's range of human emotion and how bonds can be strained yet not broken.

There are many books that can touch ones emotions and tug at the heartstrings. But there are few that are as well written, that can delve so deeply into how one tiny moment can be the catalyst of lifetime of events, of how one flash of faith can set off an amazing chain of human emotions that can be so profoundly moving. It's a tale of unconditional love and unwavering faith that few can match.

Author Catherine Ryan Hyde has a way of writing, of putting her words together, that makes us visualize as we read her words. Her earlier work, *Pay It Forward*, resulted in not just the highly acclaimed film of the same name, but a worldwide movement that continues to grow to this day. As a personal note, that book had been my favorite of all her works until I read *When I Found You*, and now I have two... different books in all respects, yet with a common bond in dealing with perseverance, human emotion and spirit.

Note: This review originally appeared on Amazon.com, and can be seen here:

- Review of *When I Found You*

Books by Catherine Ryan Hyde referenced here:

- When I Found You
- Pay It Forward

5/4/2012

Rick says

Five tear-stained stars. This book had me blubbering like a baby at the end. Hyde writes characters that are flawed, yet so sympathetic, you can't help but love them and root for them. If you want a truly emotionally-resonant read, pick this one up.

R * A Reader Obsessed * says

I get it. I really do. The take home message here is that unconditional love is a powerful thing. It gives confidence and drive and a sense of self worth. The infallibility of Nathan who does so was the best part of this book - albeit frustrating. Nathan finds an abandoned baby and proclaims that no matter what, he will always be there for that child - and he surely delivers over and over as the boy Nat grows up and makes mistakes like you wouldn't believe.

And perhaps that is the message. People fuck up. And there will come a time when those people will alienate their friends and family... or in Nathan's case, not. The author is supposedly known for her other book Pay It Forward which promotes said powerful message - a tenet that is touched upon here. Nat finally redeems himself, finally gets it - but for me it was pretty much too little, too late.

Connie says

My first read of this author, I had expected a quick, perhaps rather fluffy chick lit story. Surprise when I found a heart wrenching, heart warming and touching book with men as the main characters. Well crafted and believable these were men that the I found myself rooting for.

Every young man, full of a difficult past and yearning for something should have a man such as Nathan in their life. Firm, yet kind and quieting, Nathan was yearning for something of his own to give his rather dull life meaning. He found it and more when he takes on Nat, and never quits on him. His take on the right and wrong ways to live a life was refreshing....and his belief in Nat did not fail him in the end.

Strong, well developed characters, and an easy writing style will have me returning to Ms. Hyde's work in the future.

A solid 4 star book!

Suzanne says

I loved this book, following the lives of young Nat, who was abandoned at birth, and his 'rescuer' Nathan. The story mostly follows the relationship between these two, it was interesting watching the building maturity of Nat, and the way he grows up, finding his way in the world and how he cares for his saviour. The

back story was boxing, a sport that has never interested me but was crucial to the storyline. I've read a couple of books lately where the characters have been such nice people, and this is one of them, you build a repore ~ it makes you feel like you're gunning for them and want the best for all involved. Written well, and easy to read while I have the distraction of school holidays and extra kids around, and all the other distractions that always seem to come my way. Highly recommended, a lovely book with beautiful characters and a very special relationship. The first of this author for me, and I have 'Pay it Forward' to look forward to.

Debbie says

This is my second Hyde book (I read "Walk Me Home" not long ago). Like the first, "When I Found You" is a great story--well-written, straightforward, and with the right amount of drama to hold my interest. A man finds a newborn in the woods and makes sure his life is intertwined with the boy he has saved. With skill, the author explores all the permutations of passion, love, trust, and honesty. The plot has a good pace and the characters are well-developed and likeable.

Hyde also wrote "Pay It Forward," which was made into a movie. "When I Found You" touches on the same theme as "Pay It Forward": when something good happens to you, you don't "pay it back" but instead you "pay it forward" to the next person. The fact that she uses the same theme in at least two books is interesting yet a bit annoying. One theme in two books? Can't the author come up with different themes? And the theme is so goody two-shoes; almost too Hallmark-y for me.

Another problem is that the story is written very simplistically, and at times I wanted something more sophisticated. I know she writes a lot of YA books, so that's probably the reason for the simple style. I couldn't help feeling like I was reading at a sixth-grade level. Also, both of the books I read by Hyde are really wholesome, which left me craving an edgier read.

There's one small editing mistake—the author reveals a secret in two separate chapters. At second mention, the character claims not to have heard it before, and the secret teller agrees he hadn't mentioned it earlier. It's a super minor point, but it bugged me.

However, as I said, the story is a good one and I was invested. I rate it a strong 3.5.

Therese says

You get what you pay for is believed to be true by many, including me, but I know there are exceptions to every saying and every rule, or so it seems, and this is definitely one of them.

As you can see I got this book for free, but it was worth so much more than that. I first came across When I Found You in another short story collection by Catherine Ryan Hyde and it grabbed me so much I was just about ready to go ask her where the rest of the story was. At the end of that short story collection I was told that it had grown into a full-length novel. Thank goodness!

Nathan McCann was out hunting with his dog, Sadie, early one morning when he found a baby wrapped in an over-sized sweater and a small little cap. He didn't even think the baby was alive, but when he realized it

was, he quickly took him to the hospital and knew that his life would never be the same. He wanted to adopt this little baby even though his wife thought he was out of his mind.

It was touch and go for the little baby, but they finally found the mother, arrested her, and put the baby in the care of his maternal grandmother. Nathan had to know what happened and so he looked her up and let her know that he wanted this baby. Of course she thought he was nuts, but she agreed to keep him posted on baby Nat, who was named Nathan after him.

Fast forward several years and grandma can't take any more of Nat, and so she shows up on Nathan's door wondering whether he still wants to be a part of this boy's life like he said because she is washing her hands of him, something Nathan will never do.

I am surprised by how many of the reviews are negative and don't believe that a man can be this good, honest, and steadfast, but I have been blessed to know two people like this, including my father.

This is a touching story and I know I will not forget Nathan McCann and Nat Bates for a very long time, if ever. I didn't know how the author would end their story, but it turned out to be just right although I'm really glad I had some Kleenex nearby.
