

Always Been You

Beverley Kendall

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The best way to ruin a perfectly wonderful friendship? Have sex with your BFF.

A mistake.

That's what Troy calls what was easily the single best sexual experience of my life. He claims our "slip" was due to too much alcohol. I respond the only way I know how, which is by burying the entire experience under a six-foot mound of denial and regret. Lesson learned.

When I'm finally in a place emotionally where I can move on with someone else, Troy does a complete about face. Now he wants me. And he wants *more*.

That should have been the end, right? I'm getting what I've wanted since I was sixteen. But devastating news turns Troy's life upside down and soon becomes *my* cross to bear. And the only way I can get back everything I lost is to bare it all. Literally.

Now my boyfriend may be a progressive, twenty-first century kind of guy, but when it comes to his girlfriend posing nude for *Playboy*?

He's 100% Neanderthal.

Sneak Peek!

Unedited Excerpt from ALWAYS BEEN YOU

PROLOGUE

[The night that changed everything]

I'm probably a little tipsy but Troy *must* be drunk.

He doesn't look drunk. But then he's one of those sober-looking drunks. You know the type whose heavy-lidded eyes and panty-dampening smile may be the only things that hint at his true condition.

But you want to know the real reason I know he's drunk?

I've known Troy for over seventeen years—so since we were toddlers. He's the best friend I've ever had and probably the best one I'll ever have. We've seen each other at our worst and stood by each other through the good and bad times. Snort. We're a regular Hallmark card.

However, never in all those seventeen years has he *ever* squeezed my ass.

His hand is doing a good job of it right now.

It's about damn time.

Always Been You Details


Date : Published October 15th 2015 by Season Publishing LLC

ISBN :

Author : Beverley Kendall

Format : ebook 350 pages

Genre : New Adult, Romance, Contemporary Romance

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From Reader Review Always Been You for online ebook

Samantha says

4.5 it's always been you and I am sorry it took me so long to realize it stars. I do love friends to lovers stories because they are so realistic in that most times we become friends with those we find appealing. It is a reality of the world that we are all kind of shallow creatures and surround ourselves with people we find physically and mentally attractive. April and Troy are the perfect example of why friends first and lovers later can work wonders.

There's a moment in the story where the two are discussing why they didn't get together before college and my favorite thing said was how them being older and a bit wiser was the best choice. They had the chance to try other people, learn and grow, and could be good together and good for each other now. I found that part of the book to actually be my favorite because people think young 20 year olds are immature and don't really understand what it means to make a commitment or "be in love" which is unfair and these two clearly got it.

April is my spirit animal. Yes, that is right, I called her my spirit animal. She does what she thinks needs to be done in order to bury her feelings for Troy in order to keep him in her life, even if it is limited. It is hard being in love with someone who claims you're nothing more than a friend but then is jealous and territorial. I can understand April's need to "control" her life considering no one likes rejection, especially when it is from someone you hold so dear.

Troy, ah, I love Troy. He's the classic young male and I couldn't help but laugh. He shows all the signs of being in love with April yet it took him forever to actually focus all the feelings and to try. He's a "typical" guy in that he's a football player tracked to go to the NFL Draft, loves sports, is territorial, is sexual, and also protective. It isn't hard to realize how hard he tries when he comes to the conclusion he and April are it.

I enjoyed how the story showed both Troy and April's views because it is easier to understand their decisions and really get them. The novel splits where the first half is the two fighting to come together while the second half is the two fighting to stay together. The novel proves that just because you get together doesn't mean it is smooth sailing and that you'll stay together. Relationships are hard work and you have to be willing to go to bat for those you love.

France says

I liked a lot this book, I loved The H, funny strong caveman, and the h a strong bright woman. A wonderful book

Karlene Pitters says

Great read. I like this story the best in the Unforgettable Series. The characters were well developed and their love wasn't rushed. The heroine April struggled with her feeling thorough most of the book as she did the hero Troy. They're really great together and I could feel the love. This was a very good college romance, the characters were mature but still acted like college students. I highly recommend this book and the entire

series.

Well done.

Beverley Kendall says

Always Been You will be released in 2015.

Teaser #3

Troy's expression shutters as his gaze probes mine. "I didn't know you were still hung up on Steve."

Still? I almost laugh at that. I was never hung up on him to begin with, that was the problem. Oh, I love it that Troy thinks he has it all figured out. Steve's the guy I dated before Colin. We went out for six months and I broke it off after we had sex.

Not. A. Coincidence.

We had sex the one time. It took him six months to get me into bed and then he starts talking about us moving in together senior year. *One time*. Does that really sound like a girl who's going to shack up after dating less than a year? Not even close.

Obviously Steve wasn't the right guy for me. I was still getting over what happened between me and you-know-who and poor Steve ended up being on the wrong end of the rebound stick. As it stands now, I've only had sex with one guy in two years. Only one guy and one time—since Troy.

Sigh. I know, it's pathetic. Which is why I need to get back on the horse and ride that bad boy into the ground, bronco style.

"Listen, Troy, I'm not talking to you about my love life, 'kay?" I cross my arms over my chest, a clear indication that the subject is closed. Permanently.

When and who I have sex with is none of his business, I don't care how long we've been friends. We crossed a never-should-have-been-crossed line in our friendship twice—three times if you count today—but that shit's not happening again. That's a lesson I had to learn the hard way...Troy Ridgewood style.

What's that saying? Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, you caught me at a weak moment when I thought you'd come to your senses and realized how much you wanted to be with me. But fool me any time after that and I'll pull up my big-girl panties, bend over, and take the well-deserved kick in the ass like a woman.

Teaser #2

Teaser #1

“Don't tell me you're actually considering taking it?”

Troy's expression is a combination of stark horror and disbelief. His tone could not be more condemning, teeth gritted and jaw clenched so tight, I'm surprised he managed to get the question past his lips.

“I-I don't know,” I reply in an unc customary stutter. I knew he wouldn't be crazy about the idea, but I didn't expect the fury that had his body coiled and rigid.

His icy gray gaze rakes slowly down my body before tracking up to my heated face. “If you take it...” His voice fades off, the steel in it as inexorable as ever.

It's the ominous warning in his tone that snaps my spine straight and has me narrowing my eyes. “If I take you'll what? Not be friends with me anymore?” I'm all dripping sarcasm and challenge as I air quote the word. “C'mon, Troy, let's be honest here. We haven't really been friends since freshman year.” Nothing's been the same between us since we had sex.

If possible his jaw clenches tighter and some indiscernible emotion flashes in his eyes.

Here it comes, the explosion. After two years of tiptoeing around the elephant in the room, we're finally going to have it out. And *thank God* because we need this. *I* need this. I need to know if there's ever going to be anything more between us so I can emotionally move on from him if that's what I'm going to need to do.

In the lengthening silence, we stare at each other, his face a shuttered mask I can't see beneath. Troy finally breaks that silence when he turns and begins walking down the hall. A gunshot in a still and quiet night could not have had more impact. The shock of it keeps me rooted in place.

I'm still trying to process what's happening when I hear the resounding slam of the apartment door signaling his departure.

And exactly where we stand.

Karen says

I loved the book. I always get restless with the back and forth of stupid denial of feelings and/or lack of communication but story was well developed and had nice HEA.

Isha Coleman says

Always Been You is complex on so many levels. With this read Beverley Kendall explores the ever evolving relationship between April and Troy. As friends they work well. They can count on each other to get through the hard times and enjoy the good times. When one drunken night changes the dynamic from friends to lovers, the instability of the relationship starts to show. Can these two mend the rift before they reach the

point of no return? This is an interesting look at relationships. It tackles adult scenarios with fortitude and examines all the emotions first love entails. *Always Been You* is an impressive look at how love can cause mature people to make immature decisions.

Geri Reads says

3 stars!

Oh man, I'm really conflicted about this book. On the one hand, I liked the angst very much. Plus it's a friends-to-lovers story, which I loved but there are a few things that really kept me from rating this higher. I don't know if it's a case of having too high expectations or something else.

Anyway, Troy and April's story has been laid out over the course of the series. They grew up together and are the best of friends until their feelings changed. Suddenly, there was more. April thought -- and readers were also led to believe this -- that her feelings for Troy weren't reciprocated especially after they slept together and Troy acted like the biggest douche in the world afterwards. Since then, Troy and April's relationship became an unhealthy cycle of pushing and pulling.

Now, I both loved and hated this part because duh, angst. On the one hand, I could totally understand April's feelings for wanting to move on with another guy and forget Troy. But I couldn't understand how hard she clung to Colin despite having lukewarm feelings for him. I would have rather have her not date anyone else while still keeping Troy at a distance. But yes, her feelings were understandable.

Troy though is another story. He absolutely has no reason (I don't think they were good enough to be honest) to treat April the way he did. He pushes her away over and over again and it went on for far too long. By the time, he wised up and decided to pursue her, my patience was shot.

To be fair, their relationship wasn't all bad. I genuinely think they belonged together but man, they tried my patience so many times it was hard for me to enjoy their togetherness.

Nonetheless, they had some good times. They had things to work through but they were pretty solid. But then towards the end, another conflict arose, which added so much drama to the story. And frankly, I really didn't care for it. I knew that the (view spoiler) thing was a Chekhov's Gun waiting explode so that when the conflict concerning (view spoiler) happened, I knew where it will go basically.

Again, that was a bit out of left field because I really didn't care about their family drama, I'm sorry to say. I didn't really know them and I felt no connection to them whatsoever. I wanted to focus on Troy and April and that conflict, the way it was made to affect them somehow, felt contrived to me.

But that is just my opinion. I know it sounded like my feelings for this book were overwhelmingly negative than positive. It's not. I loved Troy and April from the very moment they were introduced in the series. Their friendship was everything and their chemistry was off the charts hot. But I just couldn't ignore those little issues.

Overall, an okay angsty read. I recommend that you read the other books in the series before starting this one. Although this can be read as a standalone, there are aspects of their relationship that wasn't highlighted here but was present in the other books in the series.

Sherry Badawi says

Update: Ok, so I read it. Despite my obvious frustration with the delay of the book, my 1 star rating is solely based on the content of the book and not the long wait leading up to it.

Honestly, I was seriously underwhelmed. I was torn between a 1 and 2 star rating, but ultimately decided on 1 because, although there was potential in the premise and I loved the glimpses of Troy and April in the previous books, it was vastly overshadowed by the whiny main characters and the desperate attempts to sneak drama in where it was simply not needed (uh, we're 85% into the book and NOW you want to bring in a ponzi scheme)? Maybe that could've worked better if the timing wasn't so off. Maybe if the whole plot centered on the ponzi scheme and working together to fix what broke helps them fix what was breaking in their friendship...and ultimately leads them to a relationship.

Personally, I would've preferred that to the first 24 chapters of their self-entitled whining in which they blame the people they're with for being jealous even though they give them more than enough reasons not to trust them. April cheated on Colin. Point blank. When she let Troy stick his tongue down her throat and lied and said nothing happened. When she teased him by grinding against his dick to squirm out of his lap and all their friends joked about whether they were married or not despite the fact she was in a relationship. That was irritating as Hell. And they were so entitled and unapologetic, especially Troy.

I honestly couldn't root for them. I was too busy cheering Mel, the psychotic ex, on when she caused a scene and humiliated them. Ok, not really, but I sure as Hell wasn't sympathizing with Troy and April even though it was clear I was supposed to. Like hell yes I'd make you choose between me and your friend you had sex with...or else just go date her yourself if she's so great. Which he did, so clearly Mel's reasoning was valid. But I'd never be with anyone with a best female friend they prioritize over me anyway so whatever.

And once they finally got together they kept justifying that they waited so long to get together because they're glad they were able to date other people despite being in love with one another all along. Yeah, I don't like reading that stuff in my books. Not one bit.

Ugh, I actually love best friends to lovers stories when they're done right. This one just wasn't, and I was really hopeful it would be. The teasers she released were altered and edited and the unedited one's were far more superior and promising.

I spent the book rolling my eyes and wishing these 2 would get together not for the sake of their HEA but just for the sake of sparing other people future heartache.

Honestly, this author just can't get her act together. The release date for this book has been postponed one too many times. The initial release date I believe was November 2013 then it got pushed back to fall 2014 afterwards to January 2015 then to February 2015 and as of today the book will (supposedly) be released April 2015. I guess it's not a highly anticipated book in comparison to her other series so she feels justified in

putting it so far on the back burner that the only time it is acknowledged is every couple months to change the release date. Personally, I wanted to read it, and maybe 10 years from now, when- no sorry if- it's actually released, I finally will. She's better off stating "unknown" rather than continuously coming up short on her commitments.

Moon Love says

The wait for this book was worth it. I didn't even realize the wait for this book was around two years, I had to look up when the last book in the series was released to find out. Thankfully Beverley Kendall published other books in the interim, but I was eager for April and Troy's story. Having had crushes on numerous childhood friends, this is a trope I've always loved reading. I knew with April and Troy being close since childhood and then going to the same college, their story was going to be juicy and I caught glimpses of it in the previous books in this series. For those who haven't read the previous books, don't worry, this can be read as a standalone.

April and Troy are perfect for each other. If only they could actually do something about it. They've never been single at the same time. Of course neither can ever stand who the other person is seeing, but they're too afraid to say or do anything about it. The fear of being rejected is too strong. Until one night Troy finally makes a move, and the world moves for both of them, or so April thinks. The morning after was brutal for both her and me because I could feel her pain at Troy's handling of the situation.

I liked April a lot. She's beautiful, smart, sassy, and determined. I loved how she was willing to do whatever it took to help her friends and family. I hated seeing her hurt unintentionally by Troy. I completely understood her need to try and put distance between them until it didn't hurt to be around him, whether that meant focusing on her boyfriend or avoiding him as much as possible. I adored Troy too, even if he could be so dense sometimes, especially when it came to April. I loved being in his head. It was one of the ways I could tell how much he into April he was, even if she couldn't see it. I also understood his fear of rejection, the one thing that was keeping him from being with April. Troy is a modern man, but when it comes to April he was protective and possessive even before they got together, and he was more blatant after. Just when I thought things were going to work out well for them, the story took a turn that caught me by surprise. It was relevant to the story and I like how the matter was handled.

The chemistry between April and Troy was scorching. I liked how this book started off with them at a high point and then gave them time to work out their feelings, while allowing me to get caught up with everything that happened between them. The story was paced well and I couldn't put it down. Besides April and Troy, I absolutely loved seeing Olivia, Zach, Scott, and Rebecca again. I even loved meeting Emily, another friend, who I hope will be getting her own book soon. I also loved seeing Paige and Mitch from *The Trap* and *Trapped* making a cameo in this book. I loved catching up with everyone. It was like seeing old friends again. Beverley Kendall knows how to deliver a great story with passion, emotion, humor, and intensity. I really do hope there are more stories to come in the Unforgettable You series, but I know I'll eagerly be looking forward to Beverley's next book.

Tracey says

Beverley Kendall is a great Author.... Great read!!!

L the Reader says

I was one of the lucky few to get an advance copy of this book. This has been a much awaited story about Troy and April, so I was anxious for it. Will it live up to my expectations etc. Well, I have to say, Beverley Kendall does not disappoint (she never has, and I have read all of her books). I LOVED LOVED LOVED it. There were lots of sexual tension, angst, just the right amount of sex, it was funny, but mostly there was a good story. It was well written and I read the entire book in one day, I could not put it down. Highly recommend it. The entire series is wonderful. I cannot wait for Emma and Graham's story (who are they? read Always Been You to find out. Beverley introduces them with a bang).

Amy says

I can't wait to read April's story!!

Laverne Brewster says

2.75 Stars. Mechanically, this friends to lovers story is okay, it has interesting and likable characters; but it also has some objectionable expressions: the use of food to describe the skin color of Black characters, green-eyed White people is rare, green-eyed Black biracial people is unique because only 2% of world population has green eyes and finally, the author had the heroine make some antiquated statement that for Black people spoke of behavior more than skin color, "I'm not white and I'll never be "black" enough for most people." , In this telling of friends/lovers, April Rose Wheeler, a Black mixed-race female and Troy Ridgefield, a white male have secretly held romantic feeling for each other since they were seven-year-old grade schoolers. After a night of partying and drinking, Troy and April have sex; but instead of acknowledging their love and starting a relationship, the author have them use 60% of the book taunting each other by dating other people. Their story is not angsty; the reader is aware that the author is binding her time before bringing the couple together; so you skip the crazy and go to the predictable conclusion. I like most of the this troupe and I try and support authors who diversify their characters and who write stories about interracial relationships. Having said that, I look forward to reading Graham's and Emily's story...WWWM. Perfect.

Heather andrews says

Troy is a good man when his woman is upset he offers violence to cheer her up, "he raises his hands in surrender and mimics waving a white flag. "Sorry. Did Johnson do something that's going to force me to kick his Armani-wearing a**?" Troy isn't a patient man, "here's the thing, I planned to take things slow with you—let things build naturally. But it kills me seeing you with other guys. I hate thinking about you being with another guy. And it drives me bat-***t crazy imagining you having sex with another guy. I'm the one who should be effing you senseless every night." Troy isn't bashful in asking for what he needs or wants, "and does that mean you're giving me a blowjob tonight?" His nostrils flare in arousal, his eyes hooded." I really enjoyed this book I loved Troy.

Casey says

Find this review and more at [Ramblings From This Chick](#)

Always Been You is my first book by Beverley Kendall, but this book is actually the third book in her Unforgettable You series. Each book is a standalone story though with the characters being interconnected. I am glad that I hadn't already read the previous books as it appears to have been quite a wait for this book and I am sure that would have drove me nuts. I have to say that I am really wanting to read Emily and Graham's story next, so hopefully there won't be a huge wait for that book. I have such mixed feelings after finishing this book. There were things that I really loved here and enjoyed thoroughly, and then there are things that I just didn't care for and didn't work for me.

Troy and April have been best friends since they were kids and grew up together. Their families are really close as well, with their parents being best friends also. Though April had always loved Troy as more than a friend, nothing happened between them beyond friendship until one night they slept together and everything changed. April was hurt when Troy acted like nothing had happened and moved on quickly. Trying to distance herself from Troy, April began to see someone else though she still was in love with Troy. But just when April was deciding to really move on with her life, Troy decides that he wants more. But can Troy and April finally take a chance at something more than friendship, or will they ruin everything between them by taking the risk?

Troy and April were all over the place here, and that is a lot of what really sealed the deal here for me. There were times that I loved each of them, and their friendship and connection was clear from the start. But these two were a disaster, and honestly their relationship was a bit toxic at times. They each hated every person the other was with, which was understandable considering that they had feelings for each other. But they went about things horribly here, and they never talked to each other about anything important. When they did have conversations they just seemed to fight and argue, constantly assuming the worst about each other. Even once they finally decided to give things a shot, they continued to jump to conclusions and treat each other terribly. I just didn't understand these two at all. While I wanted to root for these two, I had a really hard time doing that. They had moments that really sold me on their relationship, but honestly those were few and far between.

The other thing that I feel I should point out here is that there is a ton of drama here, and a lot of it was super cliched. The psycho ex-girlfriend and the preppy ex-boyfriend that can't accept that April and Troy were friends only while together and were convinced that something was going on the whole time to the point that they do super crazy things...it just seemed so predictable. The one thing I didn't expect was the random monkey wrench thrown in at 85% through the story that wasn't necessary at all. These two already had so much going on in the angst and drama department that it just seemed to be completely out of the blue and pointless. This book left me exhausted and I honestly think had it not reached the ending when it did that I would have thrown in the towel. I liked these two when they were together and talking to one another, but for the majority of this book they were just too toxic for me to really get behind their relationship. I am really curious about Emily and Graham though and what happened to make them go from being together to hating one another and how they found a way back to each other in the epilogue here. I am really hoping that their relationship is better than that of April and Troy. While I love best friends to lovers stories, this one wasn't my favorite and I don't know that I would recommend this book with everything that happened here. If you are a fan of the series or if this one sounds like something you might like, then go ahead and give it a shot.

Not every book is for every person, so even though this one wasn't for me it might be the book for you.

****ARC Provided by Publisher****
