



Time Stands Still

Lori L. Otto , Christi Allen Curtis (Photographer)

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Emi Lost & Found series - Winner of the Best Happily Ever After of 2013 - HEA Bookshelf

“Intense doesn't begin to cover it. I cried. I sobbed. I bawled. A lot. Constantly. Take my word when I say that you and Emi will become one. I felt every emotion as if I was in the story. I could have been Emi.” - Kelli, Alphas, Authors and Books Oh My

Emi Hennigan could never have predicted her life would be like this. After wasting more than ten years being “just a friend” to her true love, Nate Wilson, Emi feels more than a little regret. Her future was set, though. Nate loved her as much as she loved him, and they were moving forward with a romance that took them both by surprise. They already knew their bad habits, quirks and the subtle nuances of expressions, but the love was all-encompassing and new to them both.

No man could compete, Emi thought, until one night – one evening, one party, one journey, one second alters her course completely.

That night, her brother’s confident best friend, Jack Holland, comes back into her life with a mission: to spend more time with Emi to prove he is the right man for her. A romance with him is the furthest thing from Emi’s mind, though, staying loyal and steadfast to a trusted man that she will always love.

In a year’s time, though, Emi must learn to make changes she’d never before considered after being impacted by unexpected events. While her fragile spirit takes time to heal, Jack slowly finds a comfortable place in her life. Only time will tell if it’s right for Emi – and enough for him.

Photography and cover design by Christi Allen Curtis, assisted by Katrina Boone

Time Stands Still Details

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From Reader Review Time Stands Still for online ebook

Megan • Reading Books Like a Boss (book blog) says

It's nearly impossible to write a review for this book without spoilers, so I'm going to write two reviews: A non-spoiler review and a spoiler review.

My non-spoiler review:

I'm going to come right out and say it. Book one gutted me, but I loved that it did. My own personal type of book crack are books that make me have insanely strong emotions and almost give me an anxiety attack. Twisted, I know. I think it's amazing that twenty-six letters jumbled into words, then formed into sentences can make me so happy, sad, and so incredibly angry in a span of a few hundred pages.

One of the best things about series books is seeing how the characters change throughout each book. I didn't know how I was going to move on after book one. I had no idea how the characters were going to move on from what happened. But they did. They moved on and it was beautiful to see the character development and evolution play out on the page. I was amazed at Emi's strength throughout this book. Emi's stages of emotion from the beginning to end was very well done. Bravo, Lori Otto. I felt every emotion Emi went through, it was raw, realistic and extremely touching.

I heard that several readers quit the series after reading the first book, but I would urge you to move on. Read the rest of the series. Read the prologue. Experience these characters and this story. This series deserves your time. I am so glad I took the plunge. Reading this series has been a highlight in my reading this year.

My Spoiler-ridden review: STOP READING IF YOU HAVEN'T READ THE SERIES!

After reading the last sentence of book one I thought, (view spoiler) I was too busy trying to sort out exactly what I was feeling. I was so sad I couldn't even cry. And yes, I was so very, very angry.

I loved every second of it.

Remember how I said I liked emotional book? This was exactly what I loved and craved. Otto turned the characters' world upside down and ripped it to shreds and in the process of doing so, she broke my heart.

Time Stands Still opens with the biggest GOTCHA ever. I had the biggest smile on my face. I was even tweeting about my elation. Open the champagne, people. Let's celebrate! HOORAY!

And then Otto pulled the rug out from under me and took away my rainbows. It was all a dream. There was no celebration. Go home everyone and give me all the booze. I need to drink myself into a coma.

Emi wakes up to find herself in a hospital room. Emi family has to break the news to her about Nate, her fiance and best friend. What follows is one of the most realistic portrayals of grief and despair I have ever read. Otto did a brilliant job at portraying the emotions of a woman in complete shock and denial. Despite being told repeatedly, Emi continues to believe that Nate is still alive. Her mind hasn't caught up with reality. I was so heartbroken for both of Emi's losses.

Emi and Nate's family and friends band together to help her cope. I was so touched to see the outpouring of love for her. I could feel how much everyone cared for her and Nate. After she is released from the hospital,

she moves in with her brother, Chris. He tries to make the environment comforting for her but all Emi feels is numb.

"If I could get up and walk away, I certainly would. I would walk away from it all. Run from the reality of life. Find Nate and the child we would never have in this life...where they are, that is where I want to be."

Emi's mother brought things from her apartment to make Chris's apartment seem more like home, but what was most noticeably missing were reminders of Nate.

"...none of the paintings Nate had given me over the years are here. As much as I don't know whether or not I'm ready to see them, their absence is undeniable and deliberate."

For some reason, this really got to me. The love of her life and best friend had just died. She didn't get to get to go to the funeral because she was hurt and she has nothing around her to hold on to. Anna, Chris's fiancee, saves the day and brings Nate's tie to Emi. This is where the water works began for me. I could picture this whole scene in my head. Listening to Anna empathize with Emi and tell her that if the tables were turned she would want something around that reminded her of Chris made me SOB!

Let's talk about Jack. We met Jack in book one technically at the college party from Emi's college days, but most notably he was at Chris and Anna's engagement party. His little eyebrow raise towards Nate made me not like him. Whatever animosity I felt towards him melted away in Time Stands Still. He was Emi's savior and rescuer. He was her foundation. I fell in love fast with Jack.

Jack's selflessness and thoughtfulness shone so bright in this book. He was persistent without being pushy. Loving without being intrusive or insensitive. He was Emi's friend during a time when she needed him the most, which then turned into something more. Jack wanted to take things slow with Emi, so they agreed to just hang out together with no expectations and no romance.

For me, the reader, coming to terms with Nate's death was very difficult. Having read the Not Today, But Someday first, I got almost two novels of Nate's point-of-view and seeing Emi and Nate together. It was jarring to me to have him ripped from me so suddenly. But I think that only added to the emotional impact.

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Kelli Spear says

I wasn't going to review each book individually. I thought my review of the complete series would be satisfying, but it's not. These characters and this story WILL NOT LET ME GO. I'm going to apologize for the rambling and possible incoherence in advance. It probably won't be in any sort of order – just my thoughts and feelings as I think them. There also may be some spoilers in the mix, so beware!

And now for the book that gutted me and made me question my sanity.

After my self-imposed break at the end of book one, I decided to jump back in. Because let's face it. You HAVE to know. You're fearing the worst. Your stomach is in knots. Your heart is somewhere near the vicinity of your throat. Your gag reflex is about to kick in... and then? Everything is fine. OMG!! Cheering, laughing, and smiling I sent a message to my friend. It basically said, "HE'S ALIVE!!!!" with a HUGE smiley emoticon. My organs all returned back to their correct places and I was ready to keep truckin' with an almost sad story. And then I turned a page or two and BAM! It was a lie!! I was teased! My shock turned to anger and then full-blown grief. This could NOT be happening! She couldn't do this to us (me and Emi)! I closed my iPad case and sobbed. I, too, started out in denial. I wanted that fake reality. But this wasn't a fairy tale so I cried. I cried harder than I have in any book ever. The sobs were uncontrollable and racked my body. It felt like I cried for hours. Maybe it was fifteen minutes? Thirty? I still don't know. I do know that after that development, I couldn't read for a few days. I wanted to... really, I did. And I remember Lori tweeting that Emi needed me. And maybe she did. But all I could think was that we needed Nate. By this point, I felt as if I was Emi. We were one in this journey of loss and devastation. It was incomprehensible to me. How could he be gone? The hits kept coming. She missed his funeral. She lost the baby. That nearly killed me. I sobbed again because the baby was my hope that she'd at least have a piece of Nate forever. I took break after break after break during my consumption of this book. I just looked it up on Goodreads and it apparently took me six days to finish. SIX DAYS?!?!?! I swear It felt like the year it was in the story. The difference? I'm not fully healed. Still.

Emi's pain is nearly unbearable to witness. By witness, I mean FEEL – because you will. It will feel as though he was yours and YOU lost him. We don't get to experience the full grieving process though. We don't have a Jack to help get us through. The title "Time Stands Still" is perfectly accurate. How can you move on when your heart has been crushed into dust? The answer is simple. It takes time, and though it moves slowly, eventually it works. Will she ever fully let go of Nate? No way. He was a part of her for so long that seems impossible. But time will make the gut-wrenching pain fade and leave her with her memories.

Time Stands Still is the toughest of these three books to get through. At times it feels like it will be impossible to finish. The mere mention of Nate's name would send me into bouts of grief and sobbing. Not to mention saying goodbye... ugh. I was glad Emi was getting support from Jack, but it also felt like a betrayal. At times I was rooting for him and others I'd be angry at her for trying to move on. Crazy, I know. I couldn't help it though! I blame Nate or Lori for making me love him so much. The ending once again had me in tears. Would it ever end?? Can I be happy with Jack, too? And now you see why I need therapy. It truly felt as if I was a part of this book. It hit me as if I lost my best friend and soul mate. Chalk it up to fabulous writing and storytelling, folks. You'll feel it too.

Robin says

5 stars. I found Time Stands Still to undeniably be the strongest of the three novels in the Emi Lost & Found series. Time Stands Still is written from the point of view of Emi Hennigan and is her story of immense grief and heartbreak. Time Stands Still is also her story of letting go, healing, new beginnings and trust. Emi experiences an incredibly long and difficult road leading to closure with Jack Holland at her side, giving her strength and comfort. I have read many, many novels, but have never experienced the level of sadness that I did when reading this novel. It is a testament to how invested I was in Nate and Emi as a couple, and it is the reason why I returned to my review of the first novel in the series and gave it a higher rating. It is important for readers to read the novels of this series in order. I absolutely loved Time Stands Still.

Lauriesa says

I loved the first book so much I read this book only a couple of pages to find out what happened to Nate no one can dispute this author is talented she really makes you care but I couldn't complete the book it feels like I was cheating Nate. This book is just sad, I loved Nate, I loved Emi they were a brilliant couple to me it will always be Nate and Emi for me. Reading some reviews Jack seems like a great guy but my heart was invested in Nate. I guess this book hurt me, It made me cry and I can't seem to let go of Nate, maybe one day I will complete this book but for now I want to have fond memories of Nate and Emi. You are very talented Lori Otto hope to read more of your books but for now I will stick to Lost and Found where I imagine Nate and Emi they live happily ever after with their baby. Emi may have moved on but I can't

Daniela (Lost in a Book Blog) says

Love ya, Em. Hold me.

Love ya, Nate. <3

Ok, so... How do I start this review? Ok, yeah. Saying this book is an emotional roller coaster is an understatement. So, I'll give you a piece of advice, you should buddy read this. Don't do it alone, because you'll need the support. Trust me. I actually read this with a friend of mine, and even so, I was still a mess. Oh, and get a whole box of tissues (or maybe ten).

This is the second book of the Emi Lost & Found series, and I have to say, it was a little hard for me to read.. Not because the book was hard to understand, or the characters were unbelievable (well, Emi was sometimes, but for different reasons), or bad or anything like that. No, in fact, it was the entire opposite.

Time Stands Still is from Emi's POV, you get to know her a little better, how she deals with every situation she has to face. You get to know her, like her, dislike her, be mad at her and mourn with her. In my case, I was pretty upset with her a great part of the book. Wanna know why? Well, sometimes I just felt she wasn't appreciating her relationship with Nate enough, like she was second-guessing it and just leaving him behind. And come on, Nate's her soulmate. I know it, you know it, everyone knows it. How could she think she was wrong about that? Oh yeah, because of Jack, but I'll talk about him later. So, in my frustrated moment, I asked for some guidance, right? Because I couldn't believe how Emi was acting. So this great and wise woman (thank you Lori L. Otto) told me I had to give Emi a try, be patient with her. And that's what helped me get through this whole situation. I decided Emi has the right to question everything and, eventually, move on. And I know, deep in my heart, she won't forget him. **As in ever.** And that gives me peace of mind.

So, back to Jack. This guy is...wow! He made me feel guilty the whole time, just like Emi felt at the beginning of it all. He was always showing up and doing the sweetest things for Emi. And I liked him (here comes the guilt haha), and that's a whole new thing for me, since (like I've said in other reviews) I don't

usually like "the other guy" of the story, but I know this situation is different, so I've allowed myself to actually like him and give him a chance. And why wouldn't I? He's considerate, sweet, patient, adorable and he cares for Emi deeply, you can see it.

But still, I love and miss Nate. I don't think I'll put this whole thing behind me any time soon. Every time I remember what happened I start to cry and cry and cry. Like I said, I'm a mess when it comes to my emotions and this book haha.

So, overall.. I loved this book. It may sound weird, since I was crying the entire thing, but really, this story is heartbreakingly beautiful at the same time.

Thank you Lori, for giving me the chance to meet these beautiful characters and their story <3

Beatrice ~ Confessions of a Pinay Bookaholic says

One of the most heartbreakingly beautiful books I've ever read. EVER.

I started this book last March and I put it down because the first few chapters just **broke my heart in pieces**.

I am **emotionally drained**. The feelings are just too raw and it's so tough to get into it. I've read lots of books that will make you cry, but **THIS BOOK** just made it to my list of the **Best "Ugly Crying" Books of All Time**. My God. It hurts and I'm still a mess right now from crying.

I don't know if I will give you a *little sneak peek* of this book because it will be a **HUGE** spoiler. But I'll try my best not to spoil.

Maybe I'll just give you a clue.. (maybe a little spoiler)

In every love story, we think there's always a happy ending. Years of friendship grew into something more and finally got the person you've always wanted in your entire life. Together, you're both excited to conquer the future. At some point in our lives, some things come unexpectedly.

Imagine this, you're experiencing the best moments in your life. One event happens and everything you love has been taken away from you all of a sudden? After all years of waiting, it's gone.

Is it possible to recover from it?

How long does it take for someone to move on from such misery?

(view spoiler)

Bianka Lazarre says

Here I was wanting a nice light little story to help me get over the heartbreak caused by "Forbidden" (book I read before starting this series). But NOOOOO! Tears kept flowing non stop for the first Half of the book. Now almost every time Nate was mentioned I choked up a little. I'm really trying to like jack, but I was so invested in Nate. All this time and effort! he FINALLY got everything he wanted and BAM! The whole thing was really not fair!!

JA says

I really, *really* have to stop making assumptions about books before I read them. I try to never read the synopsis of a subsequent book because I HATE having books spoiled for me. So, I finish book 1, read the blurb for book 2, and start getting pissed because I didn't want to see them caught in a love triangle after all they had been through.

Yeah, if only I could be so freaking lucky to have it be a love triangle.

A few pages in and I am crying. Like with snot running and covering my mouth so I don't sob out loud and make my family think that I have lost my ever-lovin' mind. I would have finished this book in a day if I didn't have to keep stopping so I could jump into a "safe" paranormal or dystopian book (my go-to type of book when I need to recover from a book that traumatizes me like this!). I just finished a book the other day that had my eyes running so much that I had to stop at one point, but then I got over it with the help of a wonderfully strong drink and finished the book without feeling depressed.

Alright, I *know* I've been crying a lot lately while reading. I'm going to blame it on f*cking PMS. Or PMDD. What the f*ck ever.

Anyways, with similar books that make me ~~ery like a pathetic nerd girl~~ emotional, I usually run the gauntlet of emotions with the main character, heal with them and then move on. At least, that is what a really good book will do to me. With this one? For the love of all that is holy, I seriously felt like **I** had lost a Nate in **my** life. Lori Otto writes in a way that made Emi's pain seriously palpable. I was an emotional wreck throughout the *entire* book. Even on the last page I was still ready to sob as much as I did at the beginning. This was my inner conflict at the end:

Head: It's just a damn book.

Heart: *sniffles* But it feels so real *sniff snort*

Head: Cry me a river, build a bridge and get the f*ck over it.

Heart: You don't understand *sniffles* It *sob* just *sob* hurts!

Head: You really are pathetic.

Heart: F*ck you. *sob* I'm starting the next book! *snotty sniffle* *choke*

Seriously, I am such a nerd girl that it is beyond being funny.

I started with Not Today, But Someday so I really grew attached to Nate before I even started Lost and Found. Somehow Ms. Otto was able to make me fall for Jack while still hanging on to Nate right along with Emi. Here are just a couple of the times where I had to stop:

"Goodbye, Nate," I tell him, now beginning to sob. Goodbye Emi and Nate. Goodbye to the time we shared, the love we exchanged. He is gone, and I am forever changed, different. Never the same Emi.

Nate...do you ever miss me? Do you feel sadness where you are? Come comfort me, please. I need you...so badly. I can't do this without you. I want you back. I want a family. I would do anything, Nate...

Fuuuuuuuuuuck.

I've seen where other people have said they couldn't finish it but might try later. Let me tell you, I totally sympathize with them. It is raw and painful to read while still having an underlying sense of hope for what could be. But to me, that is what makes Ms. Otto's book so beautiful. It is so worth the gamut of emotions you will be forced through. I really need to start Never Look Back so I can hopefully start to get rid of this aching that keeps following me around. It can only get better from here, right? ;)

Megan McCooey says

This Review originally appeared on www.turnthepagebookblog.blogspot.com a book review blog focusing on Indie/self-published authors!!

My Review: 4.5 out of 5 Stars.

So as I was saying at the end of my review for book #1, I was devastated and confused. While I was grateful I had this second book, I was so emotional during the first few chapters I had to read some other reviews, which I never do, while I am reading. I hate the idea of stumbling onto a spoiler... but there was a part of my that was conflicted with the emotions I was experiencing, especially since I had first hand-personal experience with both of the tragedies Emi was facing. I read several other reviews online and was actually frustrated that people would stop reading this series as a result. I was thankful, as I read through, I hadn't read these reviews before finishing book #1, because they spoiled most of it's ending... and that would have annoyed me to no end. I then started wondering why I was even reading these reviews. What did I hope to find? I suppose I wanted to be reassured that all these emotions would be worth it... and they totally were.

While the events at the end of book #1 certainly caught me off guard, It still made me want to read more to understand why... why had the author chosen this path for her characters, why was this necessary, and how would this all turn out. I suppose that is what separates us as readers. The ability to appreciate a writers artistic creativity and the bravery that comes from making such bold moves. Unlike all those readers who got mad and said they refused to read on, I disagreed with them. I wondered if they had ever felt this kind of pain before - that raw pain that leaves you broken. Books that make you feel these kinds of emotions are the rare ones, the good ones.

Had this mind boggling, devastating event never occurred, well the series wouldn't have had a whole lot further to go. It could have been wrapped up all pretty with a sparkly bow and everyone lived happily ever

after, but life isn't about being wrapped in a pretty bow where we all live happily ever after. It's about real pain and devastating events that we don't always understand how we learn from those events - how we pick ourselves up and move forward!

After I read through those first 100 pages of *Time Stands Still*, I took a moment to reflect on the emotions I had been feeling and still felt. And then, I applauded the author for her bravery in showing us this heartache. So many of us have at some point, I am sure, have felt this pain and know it all too well. I believe the author captured the emotions well, and I found myself crying A LOT throughout this book. And even through the heartache there is some good that begins to shine through... and we are reminded that life does go, even if we aren't willing to move forward with it. Jack helped with this... he refused to let time stand still for Emi, he refused to let her accept her life for what she believed fate had handed her... he forced her to move forward.

Can I just say for the record, I am in love with Jack!! oh yeah, love love love him. What a patient, kind, honest, and loyal man. He reminded me a lot of my husband (wink), which helped make him more realistic. He was such a beautiful character who was fantastically written and developed. I also loved the development of Chris and Anna, and I loved the relationship that both healed and blossomed between Emi and her sister. In the prequel they truly struggle and this slow appreciation for one another is so wonderful.

Again, this book felt too long as well... but I still really really enjoyed it. I loved all of the ways that Jack helps Emi overcome all of the loss she experiences and I especially loved what he brought out in her. I can't say much more without giving important details away... so with that I will move onto the review for the third and final book, stating simply that I really enjoyed Book #2 and I willingly and with childlike impatience and enthusiasm, turned the page toward book #3 so hopeful for how this story would end....

Lady Vigilante (Feifei) says

4.5 STARS

Time Stands Still is not a standalone. You must read at least *Lost and Found* first.

In all my years of reading books, whether it be for enjoyment or out of necessity, this book was the hardest and toughest for me to get through. There were many times I considered throwing in the towel and just move on from the series.

But how do you move on from something that pretty much obliterated your world? The last word in book 1 blew a hole through my chest and with book 2 my emotions completely overwhelmed me. There wasn't a single page that passed by where I wasn't crying (of course it didn't help that I had sad music playing in the background).

I'll be honest; **THIS** book is the reason why I shelved the entire series away so long. I knew I wouldn't be able to face the reality of what happened at the end of book 1 in here, and yep I didn't. Even after finishing this second book, I'm still struggling to cope and come to terms with where Emi is now.

I can't review this book without giving out spoilers so the next section is for those that need more details but just know that with all the heartache and unimaginable pain there is hope. A light at the end of the tunnel. Experiencing the sorrow makes the healing process more precious. Read this book. Read this series. You will emerge as a better and changed person. I know I have.

****This next section contains spoilers and is only for those that need more details. Obviously, this will also have spoilers for book 1 too so proceed at your own risk.****

(view spoiler)

Tessamari ♥Many Waters...♥ ~ Sweet Spot Book Blog says

So after the ending of Book I, I immediately started on this book. Before I go on, I became interested in this series because I thought it would eventually turn into a love triangle type of story. I love reading about love, jealousy and something emotionally charged. Nope. No love triangle involved. Love, yes. Emotionally charged, most definitely. As I started to read Book II, I found myself crying and getting even more emotional. This book is the reason why I now have a shelf entitled *Refrigerator Books*. Have you ever seen the TV show Friends? Whenever Joey reads a book and finds it too difficult to read, whether its getting too scary or too emotional, he would hide his book in the refrigerator. Well that's what this book has done to me. I can't continue with it. I found myself tearing up and like Emi, (view spoiler)

I just don't know if I'll ever be strong enough to read the rest of this series. I know if I can just get through the first few chapters, I know it'll be a wonderful read, but I just can't. I just can't, at least not now. Ugh! So frustrating!! How could you Ms. Otto? How could you? :::sniff sniff:::

Tom says

Emi wakes up in her fiancee Nate's luxurious 5th Avenue penthouse, the sunlight streaming through the window. Something has happened, but she's okay, and Nate has only minor injuries. He talks about how much he loves Emi, and how they'll always be together, they and their baby girl.

The reality is that Nate died at the scene of the New Year's Eve car wreck that ended book one, and Emi has been in a coma for three days. She refuses to believe that Nate is dead--she just saw him, and he was fine!

"Time Stands Still" is the second installment of Lori L. Otto's "Emi Lost & Found" series. Book one, "Lost and Found" traced--through Nate's voice--the circuitous route that best friends Nate and Emi finally risked their friendship to gamble on romance, and it worked out wonderfully. Emi was happy with their relationship; Nate had just completed a huge, high-profile design project, and they were both looking forward to becoming parents.

Then, book one's gut-punch ending happens, and we're left wondering.

Nate really died at the scene.

Where "Time Stands Still" begins Emi is spiritually and emotionally crushed. Not only did she lose her absolute best friend, she also lost the man she'd been sure was her soulmate. In another dream/vision, Nate brings the couple's unborn daughter to meet her mother. She's a happy baby with Nate on the Other Side. The whole "dead lover appearing every night in a dream" motif would have grown old very quickly, and Lori Otto uses it wonderfully and sparingly.

Emi suffered some serious injuries. She spends the first month living with her brother, Chris, who is engaged to his longtime girlfriend, Anna. She and Chris are very close, and Anna is like the older sister Emi never had. (note: She DOES have an older sister, Jen, but she's kind of an idiot) With her brother's love, care, prayer, and support, Emi slowly regains her strength. Chris loves watching sports, and his best friend from college, Jack, comes over a lot to enjoy the games as well. For the first of these sports nights, Emi agrees to shower, brush her teeth, and put on clean clothes, if only she can have a few glasses of wine. Emi and Jack had a long, enjoyable conversation the night of the accident, and they immediately resumed their easy camaraderie.

It becomes clear that Jack likes Emi, but he respects her space, and that she's not ready for a relationship beyond friendship. Jack also has this ability to cheer Emi when she's mourning, depressed, angry. He's fine just seeing her at group events or at Chris & Anna's apartment.

Just as "Lost & Found" traced Nate & Emi's friendship and verrrry slow-blooming romance through Nate's voice, "Time Stands Still" puts us right inside Emi's head, and Emi's head is a rollercoaster ride.

Not only is Emi trying to grieve for Nate, she also mourns their unborn daughter, who died a few days later. Emi has mountains of rage to loose on the driver who ran the redlight and killed Nate--the driver was a

teenaged kid who'd been drinking; it doesn't matter. The kid died. No target.

If you've lost someone close to you, you can probably relate to Emi as she cries for Nate; then curses God for taking Nate from her, then tearfully asks why she wasn't taken too, so she wouldn't feel so lonely.

Eventually, Emi starts to notice that her big brother's best-friend Jack shows up in random places where she happens to be. Jack is far from creepy, though. Indeed, he is the perfect gentleman, understanding and loyal friend, who happens to live near Emi's Manhattan loft. He's a wealthy and outgoing business consultant, who knows everyone, and whom everybody loves. So, along with her Nate grief and guilt, Emi now has a burgeoning romance on her hands. Her biggest opponent regarding Jack's acceptability as a boyfriend--he has great scores: money, great looks, "transcendent" kisser--boils down to this: can Emi ever love another man as fully as she did Nate. In Emi's mind, we see that it's not so much that she was soulmates with Nate, but that if she commits to a lover, that lover could be snuffed out in an instant.

There are moments of brightness and laughter in "Time Stands Still," especially with Emi's force-of-nature five-year-old neice, Clara, and Emy's sister, Jen. Also, the events leading up to Chris and Anna's wedding have moments of hilarity.

There are also black days that turn into weeks, which become months. I've been there. Severe depression is a bastard of an illness, and you can't explain it to people. People will insist on asking, "What's wrong? How can I help?" and there is nothing anyone can really do.

Emi gets this unwelcome treatment, with friends and family hovering constantly, trying to get her to "open up," to "leave it behind," to "get on with the rest of your life." These are easy steps, perhaps, for anyone OTHER than the patient.

With Jack's help, Emi finds that she can laugh again. Can Jack be the great love of her life, based on a misremembered 14 years-ago drunken kiss??

If you liked "Lost and Found," you will love "Time Stands Still." The first-person narrative in book one kind of made me think Nate was a dick early on, so it took awhile for him to win me over. In "Time Stands Still," we're already acquaintances of Emi's, so we can judge just how heavy is her heart, and we are privy to her wild thought tangents regarding a potential new romance with Jack, as well as her sometimes overbearing--but well-meaning--family.

This series is just not what I normally read. Two weeks ago, if you'd given me a one sentence summation, I'd probably have passed on it. Author Lori L. Otto has written a huge, sweeping trilogy (plus a delightful prequel). But the sweeping nature of these books all occurs within one person's mind per book. That's a lot of information to filter through one person's eyes, and Ms Otto does it with seamless aplomb. Well done. Sure, two weeks ago, I would have passed. Two weeks later, I've finished the first two books (plus the awesome, relatively short prequel), and book three is go for launch on the Kindle.

Highly recommended (especially if you have two X chromosomes).

Jill says

[The way she described her pain was so real I felt like I had lost my soul mate! (hide spoiler)]

Nikki says

UPDATE: Second time around, and I love it just as much as the first time I read it. It's hard to watch friends suffer and it's great to see them experience real joy. The characters of these stories become your friends, and you feel everything with them. I will certainly keep revisiting these friends.

This is the third book I've read in my entire life that made me cry. In fact I was sobbing through a good few chapters. Lori Otto makes you feel as if you are feeling the emotions she is describing. Its so real and you can relate so easily to the characters that any loss, happiness, excitement or despair the characters are going through, you go through yourself. Its a roller coaster experience but a worthwhile one. Loved this book.

Heather M. Orgeron says

It is really hard to express how affected I was by this book. I feel like I literally had my heart crushed over and over and over. I grieved. I cried more than I have ever cried reading a book. Don't get me wrong, lots of books have touched me and brought me to tears. This book was brutal... Most books will break your heart and quickly put it back together. This is not that book. Emi's reaction is SO real.. Her loss so great and her pain all consuming, gut-wrenching,... just heartbreaking.

"...love ya, Em. Hold me."

HOLY SHIT! Grab the tissue and buckle up for a LOOOOONG cry.

The first few pages of Time Stands Still broke my heart... and the first chapter crushed it... I felt like I was living my worst nightmare.. truly experiencing it with Emi.

He had changed me for the better. He showed me love, like I never knew it... only to have it stolen from me way too soon. We didn't have enough time.

How do you pick up the pieces of your life, when you have lost your reason to live?

"Are you hurt?"

"Yes."

Where?" he asks, his hands lightly touching my shoulders.

"My heart," I exhale in a sob."

SOB SOB SOB SOB... I cried literally for HOURS.. just when it seemed like things would settle down.. WHAM! Exactly how I imagine this type of loss would be. You don't get over it quickly.. its not something that will ever truly heal.

"...I know I'll never stop loving you. I can't imagine not missing you, every minute, every hour, every day. I don't know if it will get any easier. I hope it does... but I hope you know that if I cry fewer tears, that doesn't mean I love you any less..."

This book is beautifully written... I don't think anyone has ever captured grief so honestly. The pain and suffering, the anger and sadness, and the guilt of trying to move on. Emi suffers so much with what she "should" feel.

I don't remember being concerned at all for our baby. I don't know why. And I feel guilty.

"...there is no timeline for grief, no one-size-fits-all plan for healing. Everyone has different needs..."
