



## Can't Walk Away

*Ashlee Taylor , Madhat Books (Illustrator)*

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Christianna Thomas' life was boring, When her sister Alexandra convinces her that it's time to live a little, she embarks on a night out but manages to retain no memory of the event. She contents herself, however, with her new career as a writer - something she's always wanted to do.

During an event held for her father, she comes face to face with a man she though had only been a dream.

Nicholas Prescottti, too, has been haunted by that night and this woman he's only seen in flashes that he doesn't believe are real. It took one moment for Nicholas to see Christianna before the memories of that mysterious night come flooding back.

As they find in each other something the never could have anticipated, their lives are overshadowed by the danger that threatens them both.

When Christianna learns of the truths and dangers, will she leave Nicholas or will she discover that she can't walk away.

## Can't Walk Away Details

Date : Published May 19th 2017 (first published July 28th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Ashlee Taylor , Madhat Books (Illustrator)

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Romance, Romantic Suspense

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# From Reader Review Can't Walk Away for online ebook

**Lillian ? Cloud 9 Books ? says**

\*\*\*\* 3.5 Stars \*\*\*\*

I really liked the plot and the characters. I just got tired of all the details on what they did each day. I didn't mind the details in the beginning as I got understand the characters. But at some point, the story needed to move.

I also thought there would be more action because **Nico** was going to be the future leader of a mafia family. When I was at a part where there was finally some bloodshed, I wanted to scream... 'GET ON WITH IT.'

The POV switched off between Nico and Christianna. I enjoyed reading it in each perspective, but there were some parts that seemed repetitive.

This really had a lot of potential. There was mystery and some steamy sex. But I just wished it was less repetitive and there was more violence and action.

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**Sienna Logan (Lost to Books) says**

I won this book back when it was released, but I never got around to reading it. I was skimming through my list of freebies when I found it again and thought I'd give it ago even though I had completely forgotten what it was about.

Due to the fact I didn't look it up to remind myself of the blurb, I went into this book blind and I was surprised by what I got. I didn't expect a mafia romance based on the cover, but it was a nice surprise. I had just been thinking about trying to find one since that was what I was in the mood for.

Anyway, this book held my attention brilliantly. I liked the story, the emotions, and the characters. It all unravelled well and the the suspense element kept me intrigued. I got through this book a lot quicker than I expected because I couldn't put it down.

Nico was a complex character for me to understand. There were clearly two sides to him--loving family man and then mafia boss. I thought the author did a good job of creating a likeable character with a dark undercurrent. The mafia element didn't overpower this book and the balance between light and dark was good. There was also plenty of chemistry and hear between Nico and Christianna.

My only minor complaint is a few times I wished events hadn't been repeated from both characters' points of

view. I hate it when authors do this because it slows the pace of the story and is generally unnecessary. Reactions and actions from the character narrating are enough to know their thoughts, I don't need to re-read the events from their view too. However; I was pleased the author didn't do this with every chapter.

Overall, I didn't expect to get what I did with this book based on the cover, but I couldn't have been more pleased. It held my attention and drew me into this author's world easily.

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## **Stef - British Book Binge says**

ARC from netgalley.

I really wish I could give this book more stars but unfortunately I can't. I can't fault the storyline, it was very intriguing and is why I wanted to read this book, and why I've rated the 3rd star.

This story had the potential to be amazing but everything kind of just fell flat for me. I felt there was no emotion behind the writing. It just felt like two people saying "I love you" all the time without ever adding a description in.

I never really understood how much time had past, the timeline was all over the place. I think there was only a couple of times it mentioned a passage of time passing. It seemed in one sentence it had been overnight then in the next sentence it alludes to it could have been weeks passing.

Also there were no distinctions between paragraphs (maybe that hasn't been done yet due to the fact it's an ARC) it was talking about one subject, the sentence finished and bam it's another time another place.

I liked the characters but felt there was not enough (again) emotional depth to them to connect and invest myself in them.

Christianna just kept running away all the time by the second half I ended up skimming and had to force myself to continue reading.

I had such hopes for this book and unfortunately I was disappointed.

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## **Carlene Inspired says**

Christianna wakes up in a hotel room with little to no memory about what happened the night prior, she knows there was a handsome man and that he won't ever leave her mind.

Nicholas has thought of a beautiful girl for over a year, he thinks of her when he's with other women, yet he has no idea how he knows her or what she means.

Nico and Christianna come from powerful families, powerful in different ways. Nico is set to take over his family's business and Christianna has a blooming writing career, but when they cross paths again everything changes. After realizing how much they mean to each other, even after one night so long ago, they give romance a shot. With that romance comes danger though, as the past and their powerful ties come back with

a vengeance.

This one has a lot more suspense than you would think and kept me reading till the very end, even when I was ready to put it down. With a vague summary, everything in this book will come as a surprise to readers and I promise to keep it that way. There is a lot of family drama intertwined and the characters are dealing with not so favorable circumstances (view spoiler) when they find each other again. While Christianna runs away easily, Nico pushes and shows both a dangerous side and a loving one. He puts Christianna and his family above anything else, even power. There are some serious smut scenes in this one, keeping the fiery draw between Christianna and Nico burning strong. There are also adorable moments that will just make you say "awe."

Character development was severely lacking for me, Ashlee Taylor is really good with detail, providing a lot of it for day to day life, but not enough for the characters. I wanted to know Nico and Christianna as individuals, but I feel like a lot of the character is more visible in the minor characters. (view spoiler)The bad guys really come across as bad, as the vile characters you don't want to know, but Nico and Christianna are just two people who deal with each situation in a flat way and love each other. That's another thing, this is a serious case of insta-love, in such a way that I really wasn't sure why they loved each other and if I'd missed some important moment somewhere. Unfortunately, it is entirely possible that I may have, as it is easy to start skimming in this book, as the details take up pages and pages. I literally felt like I was in the shower with Christianna at one point, which might have been exciting had Nico been in there as well, but really we (since I was in there too) just showered and shaved. Additionally, this is a book that switches POV and when it switches from character to character each scene is taken back about halfway into what you already read to see if from their perspective. This got frustrating, I could understand taking it back to the last big emotional moment, but sometimes it went back to just eating lunch.

Overall, it is an enjoyable mafia style story. I would like more mafia moments, especially with the positions that both families hold. I would like to read the other family member stories, even Christianna's dad sounds like he could have an interesting one based on his past and where his family used to be in the Italian mafia. I will be hanging around for book two and look forward to the Thomas family and their role in everything (view spoiler).

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## Angie says

I received a copy of this book through NetGalley from Limitless Publishing for an honest review. I really, really liked this book. Its one I immediately clicked with the plot and characters and didn't want to see end. The synopsis might be a little too vague and mysterious so I hope that doesn't keep people from reading it. It's a mafia romance/suspense. Christianno meets Mason (Nicholas/Nico's middle name) in a club and they spend the night together. The problem is neither is sure it was real as they remember bits and pieces, but both woke up in different places alone. Christianno gets pregnant from the night, but has no idea who he is until she runs into Nico 7 months after their daughter is born. That's the main setup for the book and from there it's non-stop action and suspense.

It might be a touch of instalove, but I loved how there was no drama and angst for how these two felt about each other. That's not where the drama centers and it only made me enjoy the book more. Additionally, the side characters were wonderful and I'm anxious for future stories (it is called the Thomas Family Chronicles after all - Thomas is her family). Alex (her sister) and Luke (his friend) is the natural couple for a future story, but I really hope we see her brother, Ethan, first. Since her father is an Attorney General, I expected

the Romeo/Juliet battle between him and Nico's mob family. Instead, their families are childhood friends and Jonathan has a different side to him than you expect. I'd love to explore that more and felt like there were hints with Ethan with that part of their world.

I can see some being turned off from what seems like the lack of a really good proofreader. It doesn't need a copy editor or beta reader to tinker with the storyline - that was great and solid! It does need someone to go through and help with rewording sentences and sentence structure. I'm a HUGE fan of dual points of view. When we switched POVs between chapters, this one would go back too far in the previous scene to give that character's insight. A lot of times it didn't add anything and was confusing or unnecessary. For me all of this had very little impact on my enjoyment of the book. My hope is others overlook this and enjoy the story itself. I feel like Ms. Taylor's writing is only going to become stronger with each book and I will be right there buying them as they're released.

To sum up... READ THIS BOOK! It's a great romance and suspense that you won't be able to put down.

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### **Renee at Book Happiness says**

excellent read!!! I think I was in love with Nicolas in the first couple of pages... This mafia story kept me interested from start to finish.... LOVED IT!!!

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### **Dottie says**

When Jenn told me Ashlee Taylor had approached her, asking us to read and then review "Can't Walk Away" for her, I was intrigued by the synopsis of the book and readily agreed to read it.

Obviously, by giving this book four stars, I liked it. But there were a few things I had a few problems with that I just want to get off my chest so we can move on. One, there were just a couple of editing errors - but given that fact this is her first book, those are pretty easy to overlook (they were pretty rare so they didn't really detract from the story). Second, although I cannot begin to say I've ever lived a life within an organized crime family, and I have no idea whether any of that part of the story is realistic or not - there were a few things I felt my eyebrows raise about (regarding the realism of the situation).

I won't say there was insta-love here; as you've seen in the synopsis, these two had a night together and neither of them has clear memories of that night - just brief flashes of what might be memories. He's fantasized about a gorgeous, dark-haired woman. She's dreamed about a silver-eyed man; even going so far as writing love scenes (she's a romance author) into her books from her fantasies about this man. Imagine their surprise when they are both attending a political dinner and each sees the object of their fantasies but now, in real life, from across the room! And so it begins - but things don't begin as smoothly as you might think. He's suspicious of her, she's weary of him once he appears in front of her to get answers from her (about their past introduction) in a way that would cause anybody concern. Once they clear up any misunderstandings, things progress a bit quicker between them than I would normally enjoy. They went from virtual strangers to very involved almost immediately. But then, sometimes when it's right, you just know it. And in this case, these two definitely did and there was chemistry there to prove it!

And the other thing - I'm a nurse in my other life. There were a few things I don't want to get into her because they would be spoilers but I wish the author had done a bit more homework about a few of the things that happened in this book. There's just some stuff that's current now that this book doesn't reflect; it reflects old practices and thinking. And I'll end this thought right here. It's just something that bothered me

because of my knowledge of the subject.

Now, with all of this, I bet you're wondering "What's with the four-star rating?," right? Here's the thing – it's ultimately a really, really good story! This is a story that held my attention, made me laugh, made me angry, made me swoon, made me feel fear for the characters, as well as made me enjoy the characters within this book. The woman, Chistianna, blows hot and cold a bit – you think she's going to kick Nico's ass (he's her guy) and he deserves it from time to time, but when it comes down to it, she lets it slide. There were a couple of times where I think she over-reacted a fair bit, and yet, by the time it was time for her to kick his ass, she realizes she had over-reacted and chills out instead. But on the other hand, this is one strong woman! She's got a great family and she's carved a niche for herself with her writing career against some serious odds. Overall, I really liked her, but as a woman, I wished she'd really, actually given him hell one of those times for all of woman-kind!

Yet, Nico (or Nicholas) was pretty awesome. He ultimately was the kind of guy each of us probably have secretly fantasized about at least once in our lives. He's loyal to a fault. He's focused. He's strong. He's sexy as all get-out. He's a good son and a fantastic boyfriend once they get together. He was a bit old-school at times; ordering for her at restaurants (although she seemed okay with this) but that can be forgiven for that with the rest of his actions. Once he learns his fantasy woman is real, he lets nothing stand in his way of integrating himself into her life; and this guy is determined to enchant her into remaining in his life, permanently, whatever it takes! And he does a pretty fine job of it most of the time.

When things get dangerous for her to remain at her house (this is an organized crime story, after all), he brings her to stay at his house, which is a virtual fortress. And this, of course, gives him easier access to her heart, and to her body...

I walked to Christiana's door, prepared to knock when I noticed it was open an inch. I could see through the small opening that she had just taken off her dress and was in the process of putting on a tank top when I pushed the door open to fully see her. She was wearing a pair of plain white cotton panties, just the mere sight of them told me they were going to be the bane of my existence. She stopped moving as if she knew that I was standing there. Reaching out the tips of my fingers, I touched the bare skin of her shoulder. She let out a sigh as I ran my hand down the length of her arm. My mouth angled down to her ear close so I could whisper to her. "I've dreamt about touching you for over a year, wanting nothing more to be here close to you." Her breathing increased, I watched her breasts move up and down as I spoke to her. Moving my crotch, I pressed against her to see how serious I was. "Can you feel me? Do you feel how much just touching your skin has turned me on?" When she nodded, I used my free hand to brush her hair off her neck so I could press a kiss to the soft spot behind her ear...

I know this review must sound like I'm all over the place too! This book is difficult to review without spoilers. And for that, please accept my apologies for sounding a bit divided in my opinions about this book. Because this is not only a romance novel, but also a book within the realms of organized crime, you have to know that there are some pretty bad guys hanging around. There are people who are obviously enemies, yet there are people who are enemies posing as friends. There are "families" who are friends, and "families" who come together in unexpected ways as allies when the chips are down. There is intrigue, there are crimes, there is violence, and then, of course, there is love. It sounds like it could be a dark romance book, yet for whatever reason, it didn't feel very dark or gritty. It felt balanced.

Would I recommend this book? Yes, absolutely. But when you read it, just keep in mind that although there's a couple issues, this story will pull you in and make you want to keep reading until the very last word. It's very good. Will I read more from this author? Yes, I absolutely will! I think there is a lot of talent there and reading this book, as I mentioned, completely captured my attention and I found myself reading it intently, ignoring the few little irritants and becoming engrossed in the outcome with every turn of the page. Please give it a try, I think you'll probably like it. I did. And just for the record, if she writes Alex and Luke's story – well, I'm all over that (and yes, Ms. Taylor, consider that a strong hint!)

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## Virginia says

Can't Walk Away is a really enjoyable read! The story itself is well thought out. It's action packed with a lot of drama and suspense, while it's also sweet and steamy. Nico is a sweetheart. He's kind and lovable and he protects what is his no matter what he has to do. This story has an insta-love in that the attraction between Nico and Christianna is instantaneous and they jump into things head first. Sometimes that works in books and sometimes it doesn't but to me it works here.

The characters are well developed and every one brought something to the story. Nico and Christianna may be the main characters but Luke, Alex, Anise and the rest of them are all are excellent additions to the story. Told in dual point of view, which is one of my favorites, the writing has a lot of attention to detail and description. Ashlee can definitely write steamy scenes and there are plenty of them- like you will need a few cold showers while reading this book kind of hot and steamy.

I loved the ending!

Loved it!! It is really exciting and fast paced and brings it all together perfectly. I am really anxious to see how it all continues in Book 2 and to read Ashlee's other works!!

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## Cathleen Tasse says

Can't Walk Away by Ashlee Taylor - Great read

This is a romantic mafia story with some spicy scene, unconditional love and devotion.

The main character resembles your everyday women having to go through live with all the pressure of being a girl, a women and a mother. If you add to the mix: people out to break anything that gets in their way, a lovely man willing to move heaven and earth for those he love's... There's no limit to where this story will lead. The intrigues keep you reading and the author was able to make you dive into the feelings of the story.

This book had me: in love, scared, cried but most of all laughs, it's a great read!

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## Louise says

READ AND REVIEWED ON BEHALF OF FICTIONAL MENS PAGE FOR BOOK HOS

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## **DJ Sakata says**

My Rating:

4.5

Favorite Quotes:

I'd been sick for the past couple of weeks, having dizzy spells along with trouble keeping anything down. Several scenarios were running through my head, and the internet had diagnosed me as having everything from scurvy to cancer.

I tried hard to pay attention to them. I couldn't; I was still on the island of disbelief and desperately looking for a raft to get the hell out of here.

My Review:

Can't Walk Away was packed with intrigue, sizzle and an engaging and well-crafted storyline. I relished the dichotomy of the hardened Mafioso characters going all sweet and marshmallow soft and gooey over a child and love interest. I was easily caught up in the original and entertaining plot and enjoyed the surprisingly sympathetic and endearing characters. The writing flowed smoothly and was colorfully descriptive, well-paced, stunningly sensual, cringe-worthy, and easy to follow.

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## **Michelle Cage says**

I really enjoyed this book, the characters and the plot kept me reading. The only thing I found kind of hard was how the dual pov was. I don't have a problem with the dual pov, it just gets a little confusing at times. I am looking forward to seeing if she gives Luke and Alex a book.

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## **Romance Readers Retreat says**

1.5 stars

For me, there are some major flaws with this book and I'm going to be brutally honest with this review, I felt that every single one of them was down to the fact that none of the characters display any individual personality. The dialogue should have clearly emphasised their differences, but to me they became just words on a page.

Here we have families who are supposedly a part of the Mafia world, one of which being the most revered of all the families and in all honesty they could be just your average Joes. I felt it was hard to distinguish between gender let alone what they did for a living.

I feel that the story the author has created just hasn't transferred onto paper.

A large portion of this book is about the fact that Christianna and Nico have a child together called Layla. Layla was conceived after one night together and neither of them can recall that particular night very well. The fact that neither one is sure who the other one is when they meet again just didn't ring true, because both were drugged after the event, so why aren't their memories clear from before the drugging. Every now and again one of them would randomly have some memory of that night. So from the very beginning I had my doubts and throughout the book I found myself questioning many of the scenarios.

There's also a huge emphasis on Layla and the general day to day rituals of having a baby. For much of the time it read like a first time parents diary and then throw in a few sex scenes between characters I just couldn't relate to, made it quite honestly a difficult read for me.

Another thing that I became concerned with, with this book, was the use of certain surnames, such as Costatino, Prescottis, Thomasorio, Michelino, Balducci. These names just didn't work for me, they felt too stereotypically Mafia, which is fine, but when the characters themselves don't display Mafia type personality traits then it just becomes clichéd and not at all plausible.

The confrontations between characters appeared forced and juvenile, especially when Anise, Nico's ex is involved.

Sadly this book wasn't for me. The idea itself is a good one and I tried so hard to become absorbed into the story, because the synopsis is what attracted me to it in the first place, but when I can't define the characters and scenarios become implausible enough that I'm constantly having to refer back to check I've read it right then that sadly makes it a very difficult read for me.

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### **Lisa says**

I received a copy of Can't Walk Away in exchange for an honest review.

I absolutely loved this book. I fell in love with Nico and Christianna (beautiful name). The relationship between them is beautiful and dynamic.

The love Nico shows to Christianna is astounding. He really proved that a bad boy can be a good man. I can't wait to see what Ashlee brings us next. I need more!!!! Loved it!!!!!!

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### **Julie says**

I haven't had the opportunity to read anything by Ashlee Taylor before and I probably won't after finishing Can't Walk Away. Unfortunately, I just had too many issues with the book to pursue this author again. Dammit. I just hate it when this happens. I want to love everything that I get my hands on but that just doesn't always happen.

I think that the first thing that really bothered me was the switching of the POV. Just alternating between characters doesn't bother me. I frequently enjoy reading both sides of a story. But only when the switches are seamless and it doesn't get in the way of the story-line. This time it did. In a massive way. At least for me. So

what the author has done is when she switches between Christianna and Nico, sometimes there is a bit of a rewind and you're rereading what has already happened but from the other point of view. Again, the rewinding isn't really an issue, I enjoy that. But it didn't happen every single time and it became confusing because you didn't know if you were reading about some new situation or reliving one that has already happened. Basically, it was unnecessarily muddy. As if that wasn't enough, it didn't switch POV with each chapter, it was multiple times within a chapter and it is a bit difficult to turn off one person's inner dialogue and then switch to the next so frequently. I've read so many books with alternating POV that I was surprised when this one just irritated me. I think that it just goes back to not being seamless.

The story itself was pretty interesting. You've got this mob dude and an unsuspecting lady ... the story should have been just amazing. I think that the bones of the novel were great but the way that it was put together just didn't really flow and make sense to me. Maybe it was because things were dragged out when I don't think that they needed to be or maybe it was because of the POV issue or maybe it was because the entire novel read very unrealistically.

The story didn't feel authentic. I mean, how many of us readers know how the inner workings of a mob works? Probably a very small percentage but even not being super familiar with a concept shouldn't make the book feel like an impostor but that is exactly how it felt. I don't want to give away any massive details but there is this one situation where someone is being held at gunpoint and then they calmly ask to give a child a bath and then that's okay with the guys holding the guns? Give me a break. I just don't see that as something that would actually happen. There were tons of situations like that where I was just left thinking what was going on was ridiculous.

At times, the dialogue was reading almost ... juvenile. That's not what I want to encounter when I'm reading a romantic suspense novel. These are adults. They shouldn't sound like children. And holy shit balls. The sex dialogue. O. M. G. Do people really say some of this shit to each other?!? I would hope not. Because instead of reading as this sexy thing, it was a massive turn off. Telling someone something about lapping up everything they give you. Gross. Maybe I'm a prude or something, I don't know. I've never had an issue reading raunchy stuff ... is it my cup of tea? Well, no. But people pick up books to escape their normal lives and live vicariously through someone else, even if it is a fictional character. But this was just too damn much. Again, it didn't read as authentic or realistic or anything close to being something that would happen in real life. Maybe if this book was listed in the genre of erotic suspense ... maybe it would work. But in no way were the sexual encounters in this book romantic. Juvenile, sure.

This one just wasn't for me. It's just too bad. But it has received a bunch of high ratings, so there are a lot of people who have enjoyed it. You should just pick it up and see what you think. I'd be interested to see if others feel the same way that I do.

*\* I received this novel in exchange for an honest review \**

Check out more of my reviews at [Little Miss Bookmark!](#)

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