



## Breathe for Me

*Rhonda Helms*

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## **Breathe for Me** Rhonda Helms

Isabel's been cursed since the Middle Ages.

Desperate to escape an arranged marriage, she made a hasty bargain with a demon, asking for liberation from an oppressive husband-to-be and the excitement of travel. But the demon's "gift" came at a steep cost. Each time he moves her to a new city, her memory's wiped. No one can touch her bare skin without injury or even death. And she sees the lifespan of every living being (and is, in fact, immortal herself).

All a constant reminder that she's different than other teen girls.

But New Orleans seems to accept her as she is. She has friends and a real life in this quirky, hot city. Then Isabel meets Dominic, whose deep soul and strong character draw her to him. Her growing love gives her the courage to confront the demon, insisting the curse be broken. But the demon's price for freedom is much, much higher than she could possibly give.

## **Breathe for Me Details**

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Author : Rhonda Helms

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## From Reader Review Breathe for Me for online ebook

### Ashley says

\*I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

I had high hopes going into *Breathe For Me*. I have some friends who enjoy the author and judging from the synopsis, it really piqued my interest. *Breathe For Me* started out strong but as the story continued, instead of keeping my interest, it started to wane and I ended up skimming most of the end.

An immortal being, Isabel has lived for hundreds of years. Unknowingly agreeing to a contract with a demon, her soul is sold, and she's trapped to him for the rest of her life. She cannot touch anyone, her skin will burn them, nor kiss anyone as it will kill the person. It's a lonely life she has lived. But as she's settling into life in New Orleans, making friends and falling for a boy, she's had enough, it's time for this curse to end.

I enjoyed the romance of the story. The leads bonding over poetry and history was delightful. They were cute with each other and I really enjoyed how Dominic tried his best to touch Isabel without getting hurt. Yes, he didn't know why she was always covered, but he did the best with what he knew. It was touching.

What really annoyed me though was when Isabel told Dominic about her curse. He just seemed to accept it and not even think twice about it. It's a really outlandish story that no one would really believe but he did, and very easily. The same with Isabel's best friend, Samantha. It just didn't make any sense. It was too perfect. A way to move the story along without any drama. Yeah, the plot had a lot of drama anyway because of Isabel's unhappiness, but I think this would have really made the story more interesting.

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### Liz's Book Bucket List says

{I won this book from a Goodreads giveaway}

I was really on the fence about how to rate this book because I really enjoyed reading it, but I also had several issues with it as well. When reading this book, it felt like a contemporary with paranormal aspects thrown in. I loved the plot and writing of this book, but I felt like some character development lacked and the ending was disappointing.

The writing of this book was absolutely amazing! I would say this is some of the best writing that I have read this year. I loved how the words just flowed so seamlessly and I loved the poetry that was in this book. I also liked how some of the words and sentences were in different fonts to make them stand out. The pacing was a little slow, but it never made me feel bored. The pacing was really consistent throughout the entire book; in fact, I don't ever recall it changing at all. Even the ending of this book was a little slow on the pacing and I never felt the urgency in the situation like I should have.

The plot of this book was fantastic. I thought that Helms introduced some really interesting and unique ideas. I loved that Isabel could see numbers above people's heads that would tell when they would die and I was really intrigued by the curse that Isabel had to endure. I am also very impressed with how well all the aspects

of the curse were thought out. Most of the time I feel like there is a very obvious way for the character to get out of a situation, but I really could not see how Isabel was going to break her curse. However, I did feel like the plot was a little underdeveloped at times, mostly the plot revolving around Sitri and his background.

I did really like Isabel as the main character because she was really down-to-Earth and relatable. All of Isabel's motives were really logical and I could understand why she was constantly pushing people away not to hurt them. I liked that she was kind, compassionate, and really cared deeply for the people around her. I felt like Dominic's character was a little bland, but after thinking about it more, I realized that he was more reserved than the typical cocky, witty dialogued boys that are usually featured in the books that I read. I feel like Dominic was someone who I would know in real life and I really like that. I also like that he did not make irrational decisions toward the situation and kind of allowed Isabel to save herself. I wish Samantha's character would have been developed a little bit more. I did not really feel anything towards her character and did not particularly like that parts that she was in.

However, my number one favorite character in this book was Sitri. I really, really wish that he would have been in the book more and that his character would have been developed more. He seemed like he would have such an interesting background and the fact that it was only hinted about, but no real answers were given, made me sad. I believe this book is a stand-alone and the fact that it left off without answering my questions about Sitri made me mark my rating down. I think this book would have been a 4 star book, maybe even 5 star book, if the chapters would have been alternating between Isabel's and Sitri's point of views. I wanted to know so much more about him! How was he turned into a demon? Did he love Isabel or was he just lonely? What did he do when he was not with Isabel? Did he have other humans under curses as well? What was the purpose of putting people under curses? I am glad that Helms added an epilogue in Sitri's point of view, but that just left me wanting even more.

The ending of this book also fell flat for me. It felt really rushed and wrapped up a little too nicely. I kind of felt like the ending was a little confusing about the logic behind what happened. I don't want to mention too much about the ending since I don't want to give it away, but I just wish it would have been executed differently.

Overall, I did enjoy reading this book and wish that there would be a second book released focusing on Sitri. I think that a lot of people would really enjoy this book a lot. The writing was really refreshing and the plot was unique. I feel like this book is targeted to girls and women, but I could see any age enjoying this read. I also think that the cover of this book is absolutely beautiful and would look good on any book shelf.

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**Kei • lovelypagesreviews • says**

**Don't make me rate this.**

Me *before* reading the book...

*...this blurb...*

*...the magic...*

*...the good...*

*...the evil...*

*...the love story...*

*...just...*

Me *after* reading the book...

I had such high hopes for this one and it was such a huge disappointment, **why?!** An amazing blurb that had me literally counting down the days and then... just nothing. The potential was there, oh how it was there but somehow this story circled around it like it had a broken gps, never quite finding the way to properly introduce the epicness that this story could be and it just ended up being a sappy, overly flat story with whiny and so unrealistic characters I'd rather read the blurb over and over than what I read... such a shame...

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**Teri Beth says**

*ARC provided by publisher via NetGalley.*

I hadn't read anything paranormal recently, so I picked up Breathe for Me after being intrigued by the synopsis. It ended up that there wasn't much more information in the story than there was in the synopsis. As I read, I was curious about Isabel's curse and the demon she belonged to but there was never much back story, it was always glossed over leaving me with more questions. I did like Isabel and wanted to see her free, but I never could connect with her. The romance with Dominic was sweet however everything about it felt entirely too easy. He just accepted the curse like it was nothing. And I wanted so much more from the ending. Breathe for Me is one of those books that I adored the writing, but the overall story was lacking.

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### **Zili says**

3.5 - 4 Stars in my Sky!

I received a copy from Spencer Hill in exchange for an honest review!

The concept of Breathe For Me is really clever and Rhonda Helms does a good job combining both contemporary YA with paranormal/fantasy.

The story focuses on Isabel as she tries to escape from the demon she's bound to so she can live life as a normal teenager. Isabel meets Dominic who gives her the courage to experience life more and to come to terms with her past mistakes.

Isabel's situation is definitely strange and interesting (I don't want to spoil anything by revealing too much). I really felt for her as she struggles with both the usual teenage problems and the more supernatural/paranormal ones.

Her unique situation means Isabel has to experience life very differently from others, so it was nice to see her begin to develop friendships and relationships. She just does this at a slower pace than we're used to these days.

I enjoyed Breathe For Me and was really hoping for a HEA. I would have liked a slightly longer and more developed ending, but the twists were clever and kept me guessing.

Also reviewed on my blog

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### **Katja Berger says**

Jeg kunne ret godt lide kærlighedshistorien mellem Isabel og Dominic. I sig selv var den ret forudsigelig og typisk for genren, men den fungerede godt, og jeg synes de var et godt par sammen. De komplimenterede hinanden, og jeg kunne godt lide forfatterens måde at binde dem sammen over poesi og historie. Egentlig synes jeg godt at den del kunne have fået en større plads i selve plottet, for deres ligheder fylder ret meget, i forhold til hvor lidt betydning det egentlig har for historien. Jeg havde gerne set plottet bære mere præg af historien, både Isabels og generelt.

Isabel var sød og let at holde af. Selvom man ikke kommer helt ned under fodsålerne på hende, så er hun helt klart den i persongalleriet der får mest karakter og fylde undervejs. Hun havde den interessante historie, men var generelt også bare en sød teenager. Dominic var jeg ret vild med fra start af, men i forbindelse med Isabel synes jeg han var lige lovlige letkøbt. Bogstaveligt talt, han hopper i med begge ben, da hun fortæller ham hvad hun er. De fleste havde nok skulle tygge lidt på nyheden, men åbenbart ikke Mr. Loverboy her. Han er bare med. Det samme med veninden, Samantha. Jeg mener, jeg ved godt at man siger New Orleans er ret spiritual og alternativ, men jeg ville nu alligevel tro at folk var lidt mere skeptiske i vore dage.

Desuden fylder kærlighedshistorien faktisk hele bogen, og selvom det var en sød historie og siderne hurtigt vendte sig selv, så savnede jeg altså stadig noget mere, noget der ikke kun handlede om teenagekærligheden. Jeg havde gerne set noget mere Isabel alene, og set noget mere af hendes liv og skæbne fra før New Orleans. Hele hendes fangeskab og forhold til dæmonen der reddede hende i første omgang, var nærmest kun en bi-historie, der bare forklarede hendes særheder. Det ærgrede mig, for der kunne være kommet meget mere ud af det.

På samme måde havde jeg gerne set en mere langtrukken slutning. Slutningen er meget hurtig og kvik i sin handling, og selvom jeg ikke synes den var dårlig så tog den mig alligevel heller ikke med storm, fordi den var så pludselig og kort i det. Den sidste del, ”epilogen” var jeg ret vild med, overordnet set. Faktisk elskede jeg den. Desværre savnede jeg noget optakt til den, for lidt af genialiteten sivede ud, fordi man på ingen måde havde fået et hint eller to om hvad var på vej. Jeg kan godt lide de slutninger, der får én til at sidde med et ”WTF?” ansigt, men bagefter vil jeg gerne – set i bakspejlet – kunne sige, ”ååååh” over forfatterens ledetråde.

Alt i alt var historien sød. Rhonda Helms har gjort det godt, og jeg kunne ret godt lide sproget i historien. Jeg savnede bare noget mere.

Læs alle anmeldelser her

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### **Elvina says**

Nice, romance again.... sorry if i keep reading romance stories...

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### **Sarah says**

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to Spencer Hill Press and NetGalley.)

This was a really good paranormal romance, and I really enjoyed it.

I really liked Isabel and Dominic. It was really sad the way Isabel was limited by the curse inflicted on her, and it must have been awful to have been unable to touch anyone, and Dominic was so strong in the way he tried to help her, even when it meant putting himself in danger.

The storyline in this was good, and I enjoyed it. I loved the way Isabel slowly opened up to Dominic, and I loved the way they both tried to be so strong for one another. The no-touching, no-kissing thing certainly

sparked some tension, and I loved the way the pair of them slowly grew to love one another, even against the odds.

The ending to this was really good, and I loved how high the stakes were right up until the end!

Overall; great YA paranormal romance,

8 out of 10.

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### **Nameless says**

A sappy wattpad fanfiction kind of a story. The only difference was that in the fanfics, the reader is already familiar with the character and every senseless thing like willing to sacrifice your life for the one you fell in love with by something like just spending 2 hours of two days together is tolerable. The thing is that... this book is not a fanfiction. The characters were not build properly. I did not like it at all. I can read 100 pages per day on average but this 200 pages book took me more than 4 days to finish... that's how depressingly boring and ridiculous I found it.

P.S the cover is beautiful but... the girl has curly hair in the book while the one in the cover seems to have straight hair

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### **Bobbie says**

Original and alluring, Breathe for Me is a welcome addition to the paranormal romance genre. We meet Isabel at a point when she is centuries old, yet still a teenager. She has lived many different lives, yet she remembers none of them. Such is her curse. Bound to a demon, unable to touch other humans, she has to stay removed from society. She gets to see the world, but what use is that when her memory is wiped each time she moves to a new place? But now she's in New Orleans, and the place speaks to her in a way no other has.

New Orleans makes Isabel want to be normal, to be a part of society instead of standing on the edge looking in. So she goes to school. She covers her skin, makes up an excuse of a rare illness to explain her inability to touch anyone, puts up with being labelled a freak, all so that she can fulfill her yearning to interact with other humans. She even manages to make friends. Then along comes Dominic.

Isabel's kiss is deadly, but that's never mattered before, as she's never wanted to kiss anyone before. But that was before she got to know Dominic. Dominic is an old soul. One of those dark, poetic types that certain girls are drawn to. He and Isabel bond over a love of history and English, and a sweet, innocent romance blossoms.

Helms weaves an addictive story, her characters full of realism and her New Orleans ripe with heat and magic. She is clever in her imagination, and the curse she has created, and its demon, are an intriguing basis for a very good story. Some younger readers might find the pace of Breathe for Me a little slow, as it's not all action and instant gratification like some YA books, but for me it works very well. The story builds with interesting twists, intertwined with a delightful romance. You have another fan, Ms Helms, and now I want to hear the demon's story, if you'd be so kind as to oblige!

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## Chrissy says

I can't deny that there is always a bit of hesitation before writing a negative review of a book so kindly sent to me, at no cost, for the purposes of providing a review. I mean, some person somewhere poured their time, heart, and soul into a book -- and then gifted me with said book -- and... it's not like I'm paying for anything, right? So, why put down someone's hard work and effort after being trusted to compose a thoughtful review?

But then I think of how disappointed I would have been, to have spent my hard earned money on trash -- and then I feel a little more justified in telling you...

... that I hate BREATHE FOR ME. Yuck.

Why do I hate thee? Let me tell thy ways.

1. I hate all of the characters. Isabel is dumb, sappy, and dull. She's been reliving different forms of her life for decades after making a deal with a demon to escape an arranged marriage back in the olden days of her existence... back when she was "mortal". But now, Isabel can read numbers above people's heads, burn people who touch her skin, and kill people who kiss her. Yet, for someone who has lived half a dozen lives or so, Isabel is just slow to pick up on anything. She reads like an overly romanticized twelve year old, trying to sound thoughtful-- but failing miserably at everything. I could have cared less of Isabel lived or died -- which made this story feel LONG.

Dominic, the love interest -- the guy who, I suppose, is meant to challenge this amateur "Shatter Me" type super-killer-power of Isabel's kiss -- is likewise boring, sappy, and downright cheesy. He tends to talk like an old, weary man, which made me assume that he was reliving a thousand lives over and over like his dull little love interest, Isabel -- but it turns out that he's just an overly creepy teenager who broods and rambles on about strange, slightly drunken-sounding phrases that really don't mean much.

2. I hate the "bad guy" in the story. The demon. He is a useless wimp with no powers who is completely unconvincing as a villain -- but not written thoughtfully enough to inspire any type of "is-he-evil-or-is-he-good" type discussion -- because he's just not really even worth mentioning. I mean, the evil demon rescued Isabel from arranged marriage, let her be immortal, gave her a sliver of personality with her odd superpowers, provided her with food, shelter, clothes, and everything else she ever wanted -- but I'm supposed to believe he is evil because --- why? And then his supposed "spell" on Isabel that is so hard to break that she's been fumbling through life over and over for hundreds of years? Apparently it's a quick simple fix that nobody bothered to figure out until many lives later -- which makes me wonder who might be more stupid -- the demon or Isabel.

3. I HATE INSTA-LOVE! Especially awkward, rambling, woo-woo, overly pseudo-poetry-ridden insta-love between two dumb characters who seem to have no grasp on reality. At first, Isabel just feels a little stalkerish in the way that she moons over Dominic from afar -- but then we realize, early on, that this is a match made in heaven! These two snoozefests are absolutely perfect for each other....

4. I hate overly dramatic, cheesy, corny, clunky, weirdo writing that seems to be intended to be emotional, poetic, and haunting -- but really ends up being one eye roll after another up until the last page. Everything is full of gasps and life-or-death word choices and constant lip biting and breath holding -- blah, blah, blah. The last time I enjoyed writing like this was probably when I was about eleven, mourning my life in a Hello Kitty journal that was SO overdone and SO over-lame in its immature emotional appeal.

So, if it were up to me, I'd just tell you to skip Breathe for Me -- unless you, for whatever reason, just want to read a random paranormal love fest between two of the dullest characters in fiction.

And to the author, I apologize for hating your book. I'm sure you worked hard at it, and I'm sure you have an audience for this somewhere -- it just doesn't happen to be me.

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### **ANCHE says**

(CONTAINS SPOILERS)

Okay.....next time I'll note myself to be more careful on deciding my next book to read.

This book was just dull, in so many ways. So boring. Immature. Never exciting. Never gave me a grip to hold onto.

It could have been way way better.

It took me longer than usual to finish this, since it's a quick-read, it should have only taken me a day to finish, but erm I guess I had more other better "exciting" things to do than read this. I even had to force myself to get this over with. I always had to count how many pages I had left so I wouldn't give up. I was so happy when it was finally over.

The characters had a lack of empathy, they didn't feel real, I didn't care for any of them, I didn't care if Siti took her to another place, didn't care when Dominic died, didn't care for their love (they didn't feel like they love each other, even twilight had a better love story). I wasn't happy when her curse was lifted, I didn't cry when he died or when he came back to life. It was just uh- so bitter, so emotionless. The book felt so empty, so many spaces to fill. So many gaps.

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### **Heather Wood says**

I was looking for a new paranormal romance read and I was intrigued by Breathe for Me's summary. It reminded me of Shatter Me, which is one of my favorite YA books ever. Breathe for Me was good, but lacked some of the edginess I expected.

Isabel was a good main character and I liked her unique perspective on the world. The paranormal aspects were well done and I felt for Isabel as she tried again and again to escape her curse.

The romance was pretty sappy. Normally, the sap can work for me, but I wasn't feeling it as much as I hoped. Dominic wasn't a bad hero per-se, but he didn't come off as memorable to me. Especially since he's the guy who Isabel is supposed to risk everything for to break her curse.

The climax was good and really elevated the story for me. I was happy with the way the author chose to end the book. I definitely appreciated that Breathe for Me is a standalone. I'd recommend the book to fans of YA paranormal romances.

Rating: 3.5/5 Stars

Thanks to the publisher for a copy of the novel for review!

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### **Meredith says**

I'm kind of biased because I work for Spencer Hill Press and I'm working directly on this book. But guys, this book was AMAZING and I loved every single second of it. If you haven't added it to your TBR, you should! If you love books about demons, curses, romance and friendships, then this is the perfect book for you!

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### **Kayla says**

Overall Review:

General:

The premise for *Breathe For Me* had me instantly intrigued, a girl who couldn't touch anyone for risk of burning them and couldn't kiss anyone or else they die? How could I resist something like that? Mainly I was interested in how Helms was going to pull something like this off and let me say, she did a pretty good job! There was a couple things that confused me, like how Isabel was immortal and how exactly her curse works, but otherwise I had a firm grasp on things. Helms did an amazing job with *Breathe For Me* and she really knew how to work with what she had!

*Breathe For Me* was very heavily romance-based, which was a little disappointing. I mean, I love me a good romance and I love to read romance based novels, but with a concept like this I wanted more. There needed to be more world building, more individualized approaches (instead of Isabel having Dominic around for practically everything), and there needed to be more solely Isabel. The romance was a part of everything and I felt it was too much. Like, take the romance out of *Breathe For Me* and you had absolutely nothing, and since this wasn't a pure romance novel this is not a good thing. While I liked Dominic and Isabel together, Isabel and the story relied far too heavily on Dominic and I wasn't a fan.

Rhonda Helms' writing is simply gorgeous. It's so deep, passionate, and gripping. You can tell there was a lot of emotion that went into it. Things were so vivid that I could clearly picture everything in my head, what was playing out as well as the feeling behind the characters. I think that Helms' writing is what made the premise of *Breathe For Me* turn out so well.

Character(s):

I felt so bad for Isabel. She was a sweet and kind hearted girl who has suffered a great deal in her life, more than someone should ever have to. While she's not exactly emotionally closed off, due to her curse she doesn't allow herself to get close to other people. Not that she has a problem with that, she's perfectly content being just another face in the crowd, and for her that's a good thing, but her curse and past held her back from all she could've been. Isabel had so much good and potential in her, it was plain to see from the very beginning, but so much held her down that she didn't try to reach to become the amazing person she was destined to be.

Isabel really didn't give herself enough credit. She was her own person but more often than not she didn't act

like it. While she didn't have a lot of people in her life, she relied heavily on the people she did know. There were sometimes when she was strong and independent but a majority of the time it didn't seem like she was her own person because she hardly ever thought or acted for herself, she needed someone to give her an extra push to do anything. While it wasn't entirely her fault, and she did intact really improve and slowly come into her own, I wanted to see more and learn more about Isabel and who she really was. Not who she needed to be to make things easiest for herself.

**Romance:**

I think the part that bugged me the most about *Breathe For Me* was the romance. I liked Isabel, I liked Dominic, I thought they were cute together, but the romance was far too much for me. It wasn't exactly insta-love but it was insta-ohmigodI'msoobsessedwithyouforsomereason and that's just as bad in my opinion. I mean, Isabel would constantly describe Dominic breathing. She'd just talk about listening to his breath. I'm sorry but nothing annoys me and creeps me out more than having to read about someone listening and obsessing over someone else breathing. That's just gross. I had no problems against Dominic and Isabel but their relationship, in my opinion, was way too unhealthy. They'd barely known each other closely for a week and already they were so close, intimate, and so freaking obsessed with each other. No matter how much I like the characters involved, I hate romances like that.

Like I'd stated earlier, the romance played too heavily on the story. It wouldn't have been an issue if this was a pure romance novel but since it wasn't, I didn't love the book like I could have potentially otherwise. The romance between Dominic and Isabel was purely emotional because of Isabel's curse, but because of their strong, obsessive emotions things moved far too fast and spiraled all over the place. The plot couldn't continue on unless their relationship did, otherwise it seemed like the story just stayed in place. The romance was the cause, reasoning, and solution for everything and since *Breathe For Me* had so much more potential and the timeline wasn't a long time from beginning to end, this made things very irritating and unreasonable. But despite my lack of interest in the romance, I loved Dominic as a character and the story was still very interesting.

**Overall Rating:**

I give *Breathe For Me* a 4 out of 5 star rating. Rhonda Helms did a fantastic job with what she had and I so enjoyed this story, though I didn't outright adore it. *Breathe For Me* was such an interesting read with a unique premise. I would recommend it to people who like the darker, poetic paranormal reads and don't mind a heavy romance element to it. I have a lot of unanswered questions, and the epilogue hinted at a continuation, so I'm hoping that *Breathe For Me* is the first in a series or that there will be a companion novel of sorts in the future. One can only hope!

~Kayla~

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**Author Bio:**

Rhonda Helms started writing several years ago. She has a Master's degree in English and a Bachelor's degree in Creative Writing. She also edits for Carina Press (an imprint of Harlequin Publishing) and freelance edits.

When she isn't writing, she likes to do amateur photography, dig her toes into the sand, read for hours at a time, and eat scads of cheese. WAY too much cheese.

Rhonda lives in Northeast Ohio with her family.

**Author Social Media Links:**

**Website:** <http://www.rhondahelmsbooks.com/index...>

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