



Tats of Honor

Vona Logan

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Kegan Andrews wears his heart on his sleeve, or rather his skin—his tattoo is a testimony to those he's loved and lost. The losses are piling up—like his young cousin's suicide and his fiancée's betrayal. He needs perspective, and the New Zealand trip he planned months ago seems to promise him that. Then Kegan meets Dominic, a man wrapped in so much grief and guilt it's as if his own heart died two years ago with his long-time partner.

Dominic can't move on—can't even imagine it until Kegan jumpstarts his frozen heart. Dominic knows Kegan isn't gay, so he fights his growing feelings, but Kegan embraces his new self-knowledge about whom he might love. Will Dominic stay mired in the safety of past heartbreak and become a distant memory etched into Kegan's skin, or will he risk himself for the promise of a new beginning?

Tats of Honor Details

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From Reader Review Tats of Honor for online ebook

LiveYourLife BuyTheBook says

3 Star

Kegan is still getting over the death of his best friend, when his fiancee dumps him for another man. He decides to make the best out of the vacation they had planned in Queenstown, New Zealand. He keeps himself busy doing all the outdoor activities he can find while he works through the betrayal. His cousin would be the first to tell him to live life to the fullest so that's what he's going to do. When he meets some new friends he should be thrilled with the attention Lisa throws at him but the strong attraction he's feeling isn't for her. It's for her male friend.

Dominic just moved into a new house after two years. It's a big step into letting go of the his lover of fifteen years but it doesn't mean he's okay. He's still completely heartbroken and can't make himself move on. His best friend, Lisa, calls him last minute to tell him she's going to visit. He'd rather wallow by himself and he knows she won't let him. She manages to pick up a gorgeous stranger for lunch one day and invites him to join them. Dominic thinks Kegan is a nice guy and Lisa sets her sights on getting a little action on vacation. For the first time in years Dominic is feeling something for another man but can he get past his guilt for a second chance at love?

This was a very sweet almost insta love story. That's not really my thing but I won't hold that against it. However I did have a few problems with some things. Kegan's sexual response to Dominic could be attributed to a long ago awakened desire of his attraction to men but he was very quick to embrace it. One sexual experience with a man in college and then years of only women makes me kind of expect more contemplation. I also found it odd that Kegan couldn't tell Dominic he was falling for him but was fine with planning on adding him to his tattoo. The P.S on the letter from his cousin threw me. I don't really know what the hell that was all about. Was his cousin supposed to be psychic? Or just know Kegan liked men? I don't think it added anything to the story and it took away from the letter itself.

The descriptions of Queenstown were great. I liked the characters and Dominic struggling with moving on was portrayed well without being too heavy. I was actually most intrigued by the little bit of back story we got on Kegan's cousin. I wanted to know more but obviously Kegan did too. Overall the story was good but I just didn't feel like it reached the level of intensity it was meant to.

Whit's review, and others, can be found at [Live Your Life, Buy The Book](#)

Cole Riann says

Review posted at The Armchair Reader.

Kegan lands in New Zealand alone and lost. He'd been looking forward to getting away with his fiancee after his cousin and best friend committed suicide. His grief is wrapped up in his love for his fiancee, especially when she ditches him at the gate for the restroom only to leave the airport, and Kegan to realize that he's been left while flying over the Pacific. The loss is compounded by the fact that Kegan knows that his fiancee was the main reason he removed himself from his cousin's life. He doesn't understand how he could let

himself choose a cheating and selfish woman over his best friend, and the thought that his actions might have contributed to his cousin's loneliness at the time he needed him most... it's almost more than he can bear. Kegan decides to take his vacation traveling around New Zealand alone and figure out his life and what he really wants.

Dominic is a Kiwi. We meet him first as he moves into a new house, finally leaving the home of he and his late partner. It's been two years, but Dominic is a shadow of the man he used to be. He has no problem admitting that he wish he'd died as well. Moving on without him is too hard. His best friend Lisa surprises him by coming to stay with him for a week, and it is during that week -- while Lisa drags him out of the house day after day -- that the two stop at a restaurant and end up sharing a table with a lonely American traveler, named Kegan.

The two guys have an immediate chemistry, but it takes both of them willing to move on and embrace a new time in their lives to have any chance at a relationship.

Of course, my biggest problem here was the insta-love. I mean, I would say that this ends in an HFN, but some might say an HEA. I just had a problem believing that after spending so little time together they could fall in love enough to propagate an around the world move to be together and also in that time have been able to move on with their pasts. I get that Kegan could maybe do it. I liked that the author made his move to New Zealand not only to be with Dominic, but also as a fresh start in his life and career. I could see him making the decision that he needed a fresh injection into his life and he might make that leap because he needed a chance anyway. But I didn't understand Dominic at the end of the story. There's a part right at the end, where Dominic... I guess he sees the ghost of his dead partner. It was a strange paranormal twist that I only partly grasped. But, I understood the message which was that he wanted Dominic to move on. It seemed like an easy way to make it okay for Dominic to let go and be okay for him to fall in love, when in reality it just seemed to rushed for me to accept and without a lot of the work he'd need to undertake. He was just so messed up in the beginning.

I'm sorry to say that I can't really recommend this. I've read one other story by this author which I enjoyed -- *Return to Destiny* -- but this story felt a bit unfinished to me. I think that I actually would have enjoyed learning more about Dominic's partner. In books like this that explore a new relationship after one person's (or two) previous partner died, I usually feel like it's important for the new love interest to learn about the previous one. And certainly, I think it might have helped this relationship between Dominic and Kegan to develop at a faster pace (since the time line was so short) because Dominic could let go of some fears and memories and share them with Kegan. I don't know, just a thought. But I definitely would have liked to know more about him. It would have shown us even more about Dominic.

Bea says

Update:

Interesting!

I re-read this book and actually loved it! What the heck was I thinking before?

Using this book actually for a blogpost.

Bea

Meh. I would have given it a three, but there are books way better than this one that I have placed there.

Although, to be fair, this book was not bad, just so predictable and stereotypical that I lost interest fairly quickly. I felt no passion or connection between the characters and we spent way too much time on Lisa.

Susan65 says

The writing style was just a little too off for me to fully appreciate this story. The potential was there, and I liked the main characters, but there was just too much telling and not enough showing for me to climb on board.

Candice says

2.5

I have mixed feelings about this story. While I liked the two MCs, I just couldn't connect with them, they both had tragic pasts, but that was all you were given, nothing more to really feel something for them. I was a little thrown by Kegan's sudden insta love for Dominic, for me it just was to sudden, especially since he was supposed to be flying to New Zealand with his fiancee and as soon as he see Dominic he is in love with him, that just did not work for me. The story was written well, but I think I was just expecting something different.

Cee Brown says

I am just going through my diary adding books to the section when I came across this.

The grief of losing someone is never something we as humans take lightly. Tats is basically a haunting story of loves lost and love found when Keegan decides to take a vacation to New Zealand.

I am going to reread this one.

Thomaidha Papa says

3 Hearts

Review written for MM Good Book Reviews

<http://mmgoodbookreviews.wordpress.com/>

This was quite a sweet and emotional story that follows Kegan and Dominic and their journey through pain to love.

Kegan has recently lost his cousin, who was also his best friend and more like a brother. His pain has overwhelmed him but he knows that the only way to go is forward, moving on and appreciating life while he still can. Two months later while boarding on a plane for a trip to New Zealand he is left taking the trip alone while his fiancé abandons him at the airport. Yet as furious and disappointed he is with his life his mind doesn't fail to recognize that all he has to do is keep going and live life as if every day is his last.

Dominic has been a living dear for two years ever since he lost his fifteen years partner due to a car accident. Not only hasn't he moved on, but he doesn't really want to, feeling a sense of guilt doing so when his one and truly love has died. Thus it takes him completely by surprise when he crosses paths with Kegan and the man's easy going nature and love of life stir something in him. Scared he tries to push these unexpected feelings away and continue his lonely life but it's nearly impossible resisting Kegan's charm. But shrinking away from life for so long becomes a habit and it's not easy moving on.

These two characters were very interesting; both plagued by death each dealing with it a different way and their personalities come crashing with each other when they meet. It was sweet yet agonizing seeing Dominic overcome his pain and muster his courage to face life again. It was almost devastating witnessing Kegan lose the most unexpected love, and yes I don't mean his fiancé.

However the story lacked a certain passion for me. While I liked it I didn't get engrossed in it. In addition I somehow felt a wonder with the approach on Kegan's character as he has been a straight guy all his life, except one night in college. So his behavior, how in stride he took his attraction to Dominic and their first time together somehow baffled me. Plus the insta-love plot is not really much of an appeal to me.

Still the story was well written with highs and lows at times, some emotional parts and some fun. If you like the kind and have a curiosity about being a tourist in New Zealand this read offers quite some interesting descriptions of the place where a very sweet love-story begins.

Thommie

Monika says

Review posted on World of Diversity Fiction Reviews

2.75 Stars

I started out liking this story but as I got further in it started losing me. This story was far from the worst I've ever read but I think it could have been a lot better. It was a painful and sweet story but not without its problems.

Both the MC's are going through a loss in their lives that in a roundabout way brings them together. I really liked Kegan and Dominic and I did feel the chemistry between them but I didn't like the insta-love/lust

Kegan had for Dominic. I can't figure out if I should call this a GFY or not. Kegan was engaged to Helen for two years having been with her for two years previous to that except for one small scene where he talks about getting together with a teammate on his soccer team in College there is no mention of him being gay or having any feelings in that direction. After the death of his cousin Kegan and Helen decide to head to New Zealand for a vacation unfortunately or fortunately for Kegan Helen bolts at the airport leaving Kegan on the plane and on his own only to find out once he lands that she has been cheating on him with her boss.

Dominic is still grieving after two years for his partner of 15 years after he was taken from him in a car accident. His friend Lisa comes to stay with him for a few days and the two of them meet Kegan. Lisa was fun but how she didn't see the looks between Kegan and Dominic I'll never know so her trying to get Kegan had me rolling my eyes...women

Some things in this story moved too fast, some things moved too slow and some things weren't necessary. I don't know why there had to be a fiancé for Kegan. The loss of his cousin would have been enough to have him want to travel somewhere with no memories of him and maybe make that place a new start for him. The paranormal aspect at the end came out of the blue and it did me in, it's the reason for most of the lost stars. If there had of been some paranormal things happening throughout the story it would have worked but the way it was it had me scratching my head.

This isn't a story I'd say "You need to read this" but it's also not a story I'd say "Pass this one by". If I had a heads up I think I may have enjoyed this more.

Page Crusherz says

I connected well with the MC's and I liked them very much. Some small niggles, but otherwise a great book.

Whit says

Kegan is still getting over the death of his best friend, when his fiancee dumps him for another man. He decides to make the best out of the vacation they had planned in Queenstown, New Zealand. He keeps himself busy doing all the outdoor activities he can find while he works through the betrayal. His cousin would be the first to tell him to live life to the fullest so that's what he's going to do. When he meets some new friends he should be thrilled with the attention Lisa throws at him but the strong attraction he's feeling isn't for her. It's for her male friend.

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The descriptions of Queensland were great. I liked the characters and Dominic struggling with moving on was portrayed well without being too heavy. I was actually most intrigued by the little bit of back story we got on Kegan's cousin. I wanted to know more but obviously Kegan did too. Overall the story was good but I just didn't feel like it reached the level of intensity it was meant to.

Review can also be found at <http://liveyourlifebuythebook.wordpress.com>

May says

Vona Logan's Tats of Honor is a gentle and hope filled book.

Two men in the flux of changing their lives find each other and love. The glorious setting of Queenstown provides a vista for seeing just what each man needed. Quite lovely indeed!

So let me say again, buy it, read it and love it

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

Review written for Hearts On Fire Reviews - **3 stars**

This story had a lot of potential.. Kegan is freshly getting over the loss of his cousin who committed suicide. They grew up together and were more like brothers who had drifted apart when Kegan began his relationship with his fiancé. Before boarding a plane for a preplanned trip to New Zealand, the fiancé ends up leaving him at the altar, or in this case, the airplane. Kegan decides to make the most of his trip anyway.

He soon meets Dominic and his friend, Lisa. Dominic is getting over the loss of his lover/partner of 15 years, Alex, who was killed in a car accident two years prior. Then there is Lisa, who is also interested in Kegan.

Eventually, everyone learns that Kegan would choose Dom over Lisa. Dom seems interested but he hasn't felt anything for anyone since Alex. He also believes Kegan to be straight. Kegan is interested but not sure how to get past Dom's barriers. Even though Kegan seems to awaken something in Dom, he is still too afraid and feels guilty to act on it. Unfortunately, Kegan is not able, nor does he want, to compete with Alex' ghost. It takes some soul searching and Kegan's absence for Dom to find the courage to go after what he wants.

Tats of Honor actually refers to the tattoo Kegan has on his arm which consists of a vine and different

flowers and things representing different people or events in his life. This sounded great until it was mentioned that there were names next to each item. At one point, he thinks about having to remove the ex-fiancé's name. This sort of made it less sexy to me, but I really liked the idea behind the rest of it.

My biggest issue with this story is that these guys spend most of the book thinking about, envisioning and daydreaming about how they would be together. In other words, there are more solo scenes than not. First Kegan does it, then Dom, then Kegan, then Dom. Aside from a brief hot, but somewhat disastrous, encounter, they don't actually have sex together until the end. I was really hoping for more interaction between the characters.

Cindi says

This book did not work for me for a variety of reasons. I never quite felt the relationship between the two main characters, Kegan and Dominic. It started out well with both men grieving. Kegan for a cousin who committed suicide. Dominic for his long-term partner. Unfortunately an annoying female character is given entirely too much time in the story. She took away from Kegan and Dominic. Also, I'm not that big of a fan of GFY and insta-love stories. This has both from one of the characters. I have read stories where they worked but I do not feel that they did in this case.

Full review can be found at [On Top Down Under Book Reviews](#).

This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Popcorn says

I liked the little paranormal bit at the end but it would have fit better if there had been other paranormal bits throughout the story! It seemed to be something just tacked on to the end like an afterthought. I enjoyed the rest, yes it was a little OTT but hey I need that sometimes.

Sylvie says

I really loved this story.
