



Aidan

Abby Niles

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Is the gift of eternal love a blessing or a curse?

After years of counseling grieving shifters, psychiatrist and half-shifter, Dr. Jaylin Avgar has become jaded on shifter mating. She wants to marry a human and forget about the love for eternity crap. Then she meets Aidan O'Connell, an infuriatingly laid back shifter who represents everything she doesn't want. Yet, the more he pursues her, the more she craves a future with him. Only one thing stands in her way: death. Can she overcome her fear of losing Aidan to the one guarantee in life?

Millionaire consultant, Aidan O'Connell knows he'll one day meet a woman who'll awaken an unrelenting mating instinct. Unfortunately, that woman is Jaylin, who has no qualms about telling him that he and his so-called eternity can shove it. When she pushes him away, he takes a drastic step so she can no longer escape. The close proximity throws the instinct into overdrive. Can he control the need engrained in him until he's certain she will reciprocate the bond, or will a moment of weakness doom him to hell on earth?

Aidan Details

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From Reader Review Aidan for online ebook

Rhianna says

Wangsty Heroine, Complicated World-Building

Half-shifter Jaylin Avgar chose to specialize in helping shifters going through the stages that follow the loss of a mate. Watching their grief and struggles has her determined that she will never mate with a shifter. All she wants is an uncomplicated human husband and to no longer work with anguished shifters. But when Aidan O'Connell contacts her to help one of his closest friends, Liam, whose human mate rejected him, she finds herself sucked into their world again.

As the pair try to help Liam get his life back the attraction between them begins to sizzle. Aidan knows she's his mate, the only one for him, but Jaylin is terrified of what will happen to them if one should die. When Aidan uses his talents as a ruthless businessman to force Jaylin to give him a chance the result could be disastrous for both. Can Jaylin move past her fears to see the love that's waiting for her or is she set to destroy Aidan no matter which life she chooses?

I hate when I love an author's ideas but find the execution less than pleasurable. If you read and enjoyed Niles' **DEFYING CONVENTION** (which I loved hardcore) you know what I'm talking about in regards to an author with great ideas. Alas, I found **THE AWAKENING: AIDAN** strangely tedious to read. Conceptually, I totally dig the pseudo-science of the world even if I'm not a big fan of fated-mates as a trope. It's the overall way it's done that just had me cringing and sighing.

If you love fated-mates you will seriously dig the concept as it's set up. Shapeshifters have their own religion of sorts, or rather, their own version of heaven. Humans go to Heaven (and have God) and Shapeshifters go to Anavrin (and have Dea, their goddess). Half-shifters get to choose which they go to when they die. Mates' love goes into Anavrin with them so the concept of eternal love is very important to shifters. This is Jaylin's big traumarama and for me as a reader, a big pain in the butt. She's so wangsty about dying (or having a shifter mate that dies) that she annoyed me before I'd even finished two chapters. I mean, I do 'get' that, but I found that she was so over-the-top against accepting the bonds with Aidan that when she flipped her decision it felt forced, very forced.

What ultimately saved **THE AWAKENING: AIDAN** from being unlikable was Aidan. Niles had me at 'ginger'... I'm a bit of a closest redhead-fancier, so I was instantly a fan there. But more importantly, he was pretty multi-dimensional. He's a caring friend, has a big secret that gets revealed that made him extra interesting, and though he was under-handed in how he tried to force Jaylin to give him a chance... it's never Alpha male jerk-tastic in nature.

While I only found this to be an 'okay' read for me, I very much look forward to seeing more of this world—though I hate the BDB series like terminology style: ie. Dsershon, Fewshon, Bahrraj. I think other readers will really love it if they can wade through the annoying wangst-fest that is Jaylin.

Notes: ARC received via publisher.

Mara says

A potentially very good idea destroyed by the way it was written.

For once a mated couple story that deals with the idea that one half could be uninterested. I guess I should know better.

The story went downhill from the beginning, as soon as we were shown she's no real, professional person, but a walking bag of hormones. The woman is often portrayed as two-faced in Pnr. What she says and what she wants are never the same. In some stories it gets worse.

Anyway after he forced a bond on her, he had the gall of accusing her of robbing him of choices and kidnapped her, I decided I really can't stomach this kind of novels. Not in this mood.

Some other time, maybe. :-)

Sophia says

I read the blurb on this story and thought the background of the characters and the shifter world building made it sound interesting. The heroine is a former therapist to shifters and left her position because she got burned out because in this shifter world building males can't help the mating pull and females have a choice. The thing that should have flagged me was that the blurb also said the heroine wanted nothing to do with mating for herself because she was afraid of she or her mate dealing with what happened when the mate died. And so any dissatisfaction I felt reading this one is on me. The writing is good, the characters were well developed, and the plot was decent. The world building about the fated mate was fascinating and creative.

The story begins when Aidan is dealing with his friend, Liam, going through the grief called Dsertion when he marks his mate, but gets rejected. Liam goes into a catatonic state so Aidan calls on a specialist, Dr. Jaylin Avgar, to help him. She reluctantly agrees to come.

Jaylin, a half shifter half human therapist, made the decision to stop including shifters as part of her caseload. She can't handle the heartbreaking stuff they go through as a result of their mating issues. Her heart is tender and she can't in good conscience resist helping the traumatized shifter who is only a short drive away when there are no other specialists close enough. When she gets there to the cabin in the woods to help Liam, Jaylin is bowled over by her instant attraction to his friend, Aidan. Aidan is obviously in the same state she notices. She wants to runaway fast even though she stays for Liam's sake.

Thus begins the cat and mouse game when Aidan tries to convince Jaylin that she is his mate and they should be together. She puts up walls and he scrambles to quickly tear them down. When she really digs in and denies all the obvious, he pulls out his old hated persona and plays hardball with her. His move does have the desired results, but even then she's still willing to pull back. It takes a tragic circumstance to open her eyes, but it might be too late.

As I said before, there are many really wonderful elements to this story, but there are a few things that really annoyed me. Good elements were the worldbuilding particularly the side story about Liam's tragic love affair and the enjoyable storytelling style. I am so curious about Britton's reasons for distancing himself from his own shifter world. I loved the changes in perspective that allowed me into everyone's heads to see what they were thinking. I liked most of the characters.

Unfortunately, one of the annoyances was a biggie. I didn't like the heroine much of the time. This gal is so far up the River Denial that she's exploring the headwaters. I was okay with this at the beginning until it went on too long for me. The other issue about her that angered me was that she of all people shouldn't have been so ignorant about the truth since she not only grew up in a loving family home with a shifter for a parent and knew other shifters and half-shifters, but she also had a nice dandy higher education that should have kept her open and objective. Nope, didn't help because she willfully saw what she wanted to see (and to be fair, later she admits this). Truthfully, I found it ironic that a therapist was in need of therapy. This was obvious to me from the beginning. She spouted that she'd only take a human mate because of not wanting to deal with the death issue and the old phrase about the only things you can count on being death and taxes kept cycling through my head (hello honey, humans die too; bereft humans grieve too). Even her friend observed that she really shouldn't be closing herself off the way she was. I just can't understand the difference that she draws the line over. So the fact that much of the story was about her running as hard and as fast as she could from Aidan and her own feelings just irritated the heck out of me. It was late in the book when she had the epiphany moment of 'oh, wow how did I not see the truth before?' and I could only roll my eyes. I also was none too pleased from a few times when her behavior came across as a cruel tease- hot & cold, come hither physical displays while her mouth still said 'no'. I doubt the author intended for her to appear that way and Jaylin's tender side kept me from really believing it, but yet again it was still harming Aidan and making it harder for him. Now just to be clear, I wouldn't have been upset if this was about her telling a guy 'no' and having no interest in him, but it was obvious even in their first encounter and afterward being privy to her internal monologue that she was just as interested as he was. He knew her feelings were as strong as his own which is why he pushed.

Alright, I'll wrap up my thoughts with this. Yes, I went on and on about what irritated me, but I also want to leave the last impression to be that this is an enjoyable read that had many wonderful qualities balancing things out. What bothered me may not bother someone else. I would definitely read a book about Aidan's friends Liam or Brit or Jaylin's friend Pam because the author is a good storyteller. I recommend this to those who love steamy shifter romance and want to delve into a new shifter world with a unique idea about the destined mate.

Heather says

I'm always looking for a fresh spin on shifter romance, and Abby Niles gave it to me. I LOVED this!!!

Dr. Jaylin Avgar is a psychiatrist for humans and shifters. She's recently gone to only counseling humans, because she's burnt out on dealing with shifter grief. Between counseling shifters after the death of their mate, dealing with shifters who were rejected by their mates, and watching her mother go from fun-loving mom to a woman who compulsively cleans to deal with her mate's death, Jaylin has decided she wants no part in shifter mating. Especially after a certain case that involved a very young woman. I have to admit after I learned this I couldn't blame Jaylin from being skittish about the bonding for eternity thing. There are definitely a lot of bad things that can go wrong.

Jaylin was refreshing. She's a strong heroine and she's upfront with Aidan at all times. I liked that. No coy games. No miscommunications. Just upfront, this isn't what I want. I respected that.

Aidan doesn't care that she doesn't want it. Aidan was really fun to read. There are two sides to him that made him very interesting. When we meet him, he's has a more relaxed personality. The more Jaylin tells

him that an eternity with her isn't going to happen, the more another side of him starts to come out. And that other side's motto, as Jaylin puts it, is:

When refused, play dirty.

And he does. Aidan will go to any lengths to get what he wants. This could've been a break it moment for me. Because the change in him is a complete 180. And I'm not huge on the corporate, alpha, will throw my money around, heroes. However, Abby Niles does a fantastic job with his thoughts that makes the motivation for this change clear and instead of getting angry at Aidan, I understood where he was coming from.

Great world building that had a fresh twist, hot sex scenes and two characters that speak their mind.

Now, I have to mention Liam. He's Aidan best friend and is currently going through the effects of being rejected by his mate. Liam broke my heart, and really showed some of the downside of the "one-mate" idea. Niles has built a mating world that is filled with possible heartache and Liam is definitely going through it, and I hope, somehow, he's able to have a happy ending of his own.

Some of my favorite lines:

"What I refer to you as is neither here nor there."

"Really. Then it shouldn't be a big deal to call me by my first name." He stalked closer. **"Here let me help. Aidan."** He stretched out the syllables.

"You are such an ass."

The luxurious inside was even more shocking now, and it did scream male. A powerful, wealthy male.

"Who are you? Some freaking James Bond?"

A wicked twist she'd never seen before quirked the corners of his lips, making him appear all the more dangerous. "I'm not the good guy, Jaylin. I'm the villain."

Katya says

3.85 Stars!!!

Dr. Jaylin Avgar knows first hand what happens to shifters when the bond between mates is unfulfilled or broken. She is a Psychologist who has been treating shifters for this condition and has sworn off mating with a shifter despite being a half-shifter herself.

Then she meets Aiden, a wealthy business man and shifter who drags her from her office to see his friend Liam because he is suffering the effects of being rejected by his mate whom he bonded with. The problem is she refused to bond with him, broke it off and now he is psychologically damaged. There is no un-bonding.

Aiden recognizes Jaylin as his mate and sets out to bond with her. They are both attracted to one another. His instinct tells him to go after her. But she is firm that bonding will not be happening and would prefer to avoid him to make sure they are never tempted.

Aiden tricks Jaylin into spending time with him and she is having a hard time denying her want of him. How

the author resolves this problem is quite unique and they do get a hea to their story.

The world building or shifter existence is rather complicated. And I am not so sure it makes the story more interesting....rather it distracted me. What I liked best about this story is the pace, the characters both main and secondary.

I also thought there were moments when, as a reader, I was touched by the feelings that developed between the two. If I were to change anything it would be to make the heroine, Jaylin a little less paranoid and stubborn about bonding with her mate.

All-in-all I liked it and will read any future novels this author puts out with the characters from this story in the future.

Shelly says

I started this one completely based on a recommendation. I'm happy to say that I'm going to be taking those recommendations from now on because this is a really good story, so much so that I'm hoping there's a series coming because the premise is a good one (shameless plea #1).

Niles has built an entire world around shifters and their mates that's resembles nothing (in a good way) that I've read in the past. This is story of meeting the one that's your eternal love, not just in this but in the afterlife too.

Aidan is in a pickle because his fellow shifter and friend, Liam, is in serious trouble and the only one who can help is Jaylin Avgar. Half shifter Jaylin is one of the few psychiatrists who not only knows what ails Liam, she also knows what needs to be done - this calls for a house call. Once she arrives at the cabin to see about Liam she meets Aidan O'Connell and the sparks fly. Oh boy, do they ever! Aidan knows of the stories that tell what will happen once he meets his mate but he's not prepared for the roadblocks that Jaylin puts up about why she doesn't want him. The fun's about to start so buckle up.

Aidan is the shiznit – plain and simple. He was cool, calm and collected and let me put this out there – he played nice with the imaginary retinas, which is all good. His likability was high considering he's a guy with a not so great past but he's worked hard to make a change and I appreciated him that much more for it. The relationships that he had with his fellow shifters spoke highly of the person that he is but it was the relationship that he wanted to have with Jaylin that made me just heads over heels for him. Aidan knew what he wanted and his willingness to go the extra mile to make her want the same thing was admirable because there were a couple times when smacking Jaylin on the back of the head seemed appropriate.

Jaylin's character was well written; she had a complexity and vulnerability that I could empathize with...up to a point. She's stubborn as heck and is convinced that she knows what's best and although that's admirable (kinda sorta) her unwillingness to allow Aidan to make his own choices got to me a little bit. Thank goodness that Aidan had the patience of Job to try and try and try some more with her.

Once this story takes off, it doesn't take long, I realize that is not about this short life that we live but about whom you're going to spend your eternity with. Because the world that Niles builds is focused more on the eternity that a bonded couple will share and the negative effects that can occur if the human female chooses not to bond. I'm completely fascinated to find out what happens to Liam – that's a shameless plea (#2) for a

sequel.

If you enjoy a different way of looking at forever love and wouldn't mind a little smut with the tale – then I'd recommend that you pick up Aidan's story.

Happy reading folks!

Rating: B+

Review posted at www.redhotbooks.com

Trish says

ARC provided by NetGalley

Jaylin Avgar is a half-shifter and a psychologist, who, until recently counseled grieving shifters. But the torment that they suffer when their mate either dies or deserts them has left its toll on her. And she refuses to let its claws sink into her own heart. She is through with alpha shifters.

Aidan O'Connell knows that Jaylin is his mate and he is determined to have her. But he cannot understand why Jaylin would refuse him. Why would she consider a human as a possible mate, when he would do anything for her?

Abby Niles does a fantastic job of world building with this paranormal series. It isn't overwhelming or confusing. There are terms that when you take a second look at them, make complete sense.

Dsershon--when a mate leaves or is abandoned by his unbonded mate.

Fewshon-- a "buzzing" sensation--the overwhelming urge to bond with your mate.

Wydow--a death of a mate leaving the living one waiting to be reunited after death.

Bahrraj-- (yeah, that one is a little bit more difficult, lol)- an episode that is like a trance, where the shifter is "stuck" inside his own head, connected to his mate. Very difficult to return from.

Aidan's buddy Liam is suffering from dsershon after he has bonded with his mate. She was unable to accept the fact that he was a shifter. She was human. He is experiencing a bahrraj episode and no matter what he does, Aidan cannot reach him. He calls for Dr. Avgar for help.

Jaylin is sympathetic to Liam's peril but she tries to keep her distance from Aidan. Even though there is a very obvious attraction, she refuses to leave herself vulnerable or Aidan vulnerable to the fewshon. She knows the horrific psychological damage that dsershon brings upon a shifter.

But Aidan wants her and he uses everything in his power to make it happen. Even a bit of trickery.

What follows is Aidan basically trying to woo Jaylin. Court her. Make her see how wonderful things could be between them. Fate has chosen them as mates for a reason.

Jaylin cannot help but fall a little for Aidan. He is charming, loyal, protective, and they do seem to fit like pieces of a puzzle. But she tries to keep him from falling susceptible to the fewshon--something that could make Aidan lose control and bond with her.

But when a storm engulfs the island, fatally injuring Jaylin, Aidan's attempt to save her puts him at risk to lose everything. Even the connection to the animal inside him.

Although the tug-of-war between Aidan and Jaylin was a bit vexing at times, I could understand why Jaylin kept rejecting his endeavors. The Awakening put a unique twist on the whole mating ritual in shifter romances and I look forward to reading more.

Hopefully, poor Liam will find his HEA in a possible upcoming book? Inquiring minds want to know, Abby Niles.

Melindeeloo says

2.5 stars - pretty good - This had an interesting premise. Since I love shapeshifter romances and the whole mate connection bond idea, it was interesting to have the twist of consequences mate bonds rejected or 'broken' by death.

Leading lady Jaylin is a half shifter grief counselor, who until recently included shifters and humans in her practice but who stopped treating shifters until, cougar shifter Aidan convinces her to take on his brother's case. In Aidan's brother Liam, we get to see the devastation of a rejected bond and in Jaylin's explanations of his condition we get a whole slew of cheesy terms that go along with the broken mating process - fewsion, Dsershon (say 'em out loud for full effect) - so that we know the pain that Aidan faces when he decides that Jaylin is his mate, only to discover that Jaylin doesn't see the mate bond as something wonderful and is adamant that she will never bond with a shifter ever. Of course, Aidan's instincts are not to be denied, he takes Jaylin's words as a challenge and sets out to play dirty in order to win her.

So that's where the execution of the idea work less well for me, Aidan basically kidnaps Jaylin and put her in a situation where she has to be around him and then goes all cold and controlled on her to prove that he can fight his instincts. Jaylin, who I didn't find at all likable even before that point, gets a bit muddled by his 'rejection' and starts regretting pushing him away, so they decide that their time together is going to be just about sex. Which of course insidiously forms a connection she's still not willing to commit to until events occur which cause her to see the light just as fate looks to separate them forever.

So... well everything works out in the end, but I didn't end up wanting them together, because I was able to forgive more readily Aidan than Jaylin who ends up being a seemingly smart woman who came to some dumb conclusions and treats him really badly. I realize that it sounds like I didn't like the story at all, but that wasn't entirely the case but on the whole The Awakening:Aidan was just an interesting idea that was tough to carry off while making the heroine determined but still sympathetic and I have a hard time with 'I want you, but I don't want to want you' as a mechanism for making a pair work for a HEA when it is sort of adversarial.

Sapphyria says

Aidan O'Connell is still learning to deal with his roommate, his friend Liam. Liam is nursing a broken heart after his human mate rejected him and his shifter ways. This rejection has caused serious problems with Liam and the only way to help him is for Aidan to call a half-shifter psychiatrist named Jaylin Avgar. As soon as she stepped on the porch, Aidan's inner beast knew she was "The One."

Dr. Jaylin Avgar hasn't treated a shifter in months, having completely removed them from her practice. The horrendous consequences of their eternal mating has Jaylin completed jaded to the point that she will never mate with a shifter. Being eternally linked to a shifter with the potential of having to live life without her mate, or her mate having to live without her, in case of an early death doesn't sit well. Jaylin is only going to seek out human companionship because she thinks it will be safer for her heart.

When Aidan and Jaylin meet, there is a definite change in the air. They both know when Aidan's beast symbolically marks Jaylin as Aidan's mate. Jaylin fights the attraction tooth and nail, rejecting Aidan before even giving their relationship a go. Seeing that she's going to be difficult, Aidan falls back to the guy he used to be in order to persuade Jaylin. Aidan even goes so far as to fake a psychiatric case to get her on a plane to the tropics. Will Aidan be able to convince Jaylin that all she feels about the mating instinct is false and that they truly do belong together?

The shifter aspect was a bit different than the norm which gave this book an edge. I almost wasn't sure about this story at first, though. The beginning is heavily devoted to Liam and the rejection by his mate, Ava, so I wasn't quite sure who the book was supposed to be about. Especially so, since the book description clearly spoke about Aidan and Jaylin as being the main characters. The information, however, is detrimental to the plot and is a great set up for not only Aidan and Jaylin's story but Book 2, The Awakening: Liam (which I started immediately after finishing The Awakening: Aidan).

The author wrote Jaylin pretty well and brought out her emotions, paranoia, and feelings with intensity. Aidan was a strong male character but he also had emotional depth. These two were not superficial nor 2-dimensional; they were very much full of life, regardless of the emotions they were feeling at the time. Jaylin really felt that she had a handle on her life, the ways of shifters, and how to avoid the unhappiness that mating would cause. She was woman enough to admit her inaccuracies and fully realize what mating means. Aidan tried and tried to get her to understand that the patients she's seen in the past were not part of the normal shifter population. His patience began to wear pretty thin toward the end and a situation arose that forced Jaylin to rectify the issues she had and accept who she was and what her relationship with Aidan meant ~ although, it may have been too late (you'll have to read the book to figure it out).

I enjoyed this story very much.

Review Copy Courtesy Of: Entangled Publishing, via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.

Christi Snow says

My Review:

This book was really good. It took a totally different spin on shifter mates and I liked it. In this world, women hold all the power in mated couples and about 1% of the time, the male's mating instinct is "off" and leaves him in a situation that will eventually lead to madness if untreated. For the males, it's completely about animal instinct, but females can reject that...even after they've bonded, leaving the male lost and alone in this mental and emotional circle that needs his mate.

Jaylin is a psychiatrist who, until about six months ago, specialized in treating shifters in this mental maelstrom. She finally reached the point where she couldn't handle it anymore mentally, because it's such an awful place to be for these bonded males. She can't deal with the stress and sadness of it all anymore. But her practice has affected her other ways too....she never plans to bond to a male because she doesn't want to do this to a shifter. The mental repercussions not only affect rejected shifters, but it also affects widowers. They can end up in a catatonic, barely functioning state.

Aidan's best friend, Liam, is a rejected shifter. He's on a mental precipice so Aidan goes to Jaylin for help....he doesn't care how much it costs, as long as she will help. But what he finds, in addition to help for his friend, is his mate. One that his cougar is clawing to get to. Suddenly Aidan finds himself feeling much more empathy for what Liam is going through....because Jaylin won't even consider him. They aren't even bonded yet and his animal is throwing a fit. The thing is Aidan is a very successful businessman....he got to that point by not accepting "no" for an answer.

Like I said, I really liked the little twists of creativity that Abby Niles inserted into this world. It made for a super-entertaining read that I couldn't put down. I read it in one sitting and then dreamed about the book all night long afterwards. I liked both Aidan and Jaylin as characters. They worked for me. I loved how Aidan refused to be put off and that it was Jaylin's empathetic heart that kept her from ever wanting to find a shifter mate. They are both good people in a situation that's really difficult to control.

I'm intrigued by Liam's situation and am kind of hoping that this is a series and we'll find out more about him in a later book. I just get the feeling that there is more to that story that we got glimpses of.

Then there was the island getaway...I want it. I'm not a beach person, but this locale that Abby Niles envisioned sounded like pure heaven. I want to go there...NOW!

It was a great book. I really hope that there are more coming and that this is the start of a series.

I received a complimentary copy of this book in return for an honest review.

Sandy S says

3.5 stars

REVIEW: THE AWAKENING: Aidan is a contemporary paranormal, shifter romance storyline that builds upon the various emotional and physical states of shifters when the male is rejected by his female mate. Although this particular installment focuses on Aidan (a cougar shifter) and Jaylin, much of the story's premise is driven by a mass of world building and, the emotional and psychological breakdown of Aidan's friend Liam when his mate rejects him after she has been marked.

The story follows Aidan as he is desperate to find help for his best friend and 'brother' Liam, who six months after rejection, is bordering on permanent withdrawal and suicide. Much of the novel's focus is dependent on world building with an influx of terminology for each of the various stages of finding one's mate, bonding and rejection. As an introductory storyline, The Awakening: Aidan is awash in plenty of background information and psychological description, courtesy of Aidan's future mate Jaylin Avgar-a half shifter who wants nothing to do with shifters in both her personal and professional life. As you can imagine, Jaylin's rejection of Aidan sets into motion another shifter spiral into the depths of despair and despondency

over the potential loss of one's mate.

The character building is fairly fluid, but Jaylin's personality and need to prove her rejection of everything shifter got to be a little too much at times. She was annoying and difficult to like especially when at every opportunity she gave mixed signals to the shifter who wanted nothing more than to claim and bond with his mate. It was even more frustrating watching the hurt from Jaylin when she realized that Aidan was no longer going to play her games and walk away. What did the woman expect when she continued to reject and deny her mate! Jaylin knew that Aidan was her mate but after watching so many shifters go through life despondent and depressed, she refused to put herself into the position where the death or loss of a mate, meant death for the other. But it will take another shifter, one who survived the death of his beloved, to prove to Jaylin, that life does go on, even in death one's happiness is not always dependent on another.

THE AWAKENING: AIDAN is an interesting storyline, with a bit of a twist on the shifter-bonding premise. Abby Niles's world building is detailed but will pull you into the storyline with the continued use and application of the various psychological stages of shifter mating so that by the end of the book, hopefully everyone is on the same page-so to speak.

see all of my reviews at : thereadingcafe.com

Kathie (katmom) says

Thank you, NetGalley and Entangled, for the opportunity to read xxx

While I liked the premise of this story, shifter mates and the why's and how's that happens, I began to be seriously annoyed by Jaylin's thought process. She has decided to never allow a bonding with a shifter mate. Even if he IS her mate. The reasoning behind this is that she has seen her mother languish, yearning for death, after the death of her bonded mate, Jaylin's father. Perception is key here. Jaylin perceives her mother's suffering and her wishes to die so that she can be with her husband for an eternity. Her dad has been gone for 20 years. And she feels that's a LONG LONG LONG time for her mother to miss someone so intensely.

So...she decides she will never bond with a shifter because then if HE dies, she'll be sad until she dies. If SHE dies, then he'll be sad until he dies and joins her in shifter heaven.

To thwart that, she plans to marry a human...because then when either of them dies it won't hurt so bad. What? Because humans don't care that much? I found this reasoning to be faulty. Which leads me to believe that this author didn't write this book for me. There are many highly rated reviews for this book which proves that she did write it for a wide group of people. Just not me.

There was lots of world building, including an assortment of words to name the various stages of bonding between shifters and their mates. That was pretty interesting.

I will be watching the next one in this series to see where she takes it.

Gigi staub says

The Awakening: Aidan
Is the gift of eternal love a blessing or a curse?

After years of counseling grieving shifters, psychiatrist and half-shifter, Dr. Jaylin Avgar has become jaded on shifter mating. She wants to marry a human and forget about the love for eternity crap. Then she meets Aidan O'Connell, an infuriatingly laid back shifter who represents everything she doesn't want. Yet, the more he pursues her, the more she craves a future with him. Only one thing stands in her way: death. Can she overcome her fear of losing Aidan to the one guarantee in life?

Millionaire consultant, Aidan O'Connell knows he'll one day meet a woman who'll awaken an unrelenting mating instinct. Unfortunately, that woman is Jaylin, who has no qualms about telling him that he and his so-called eternity can shove it. When she pushes him away, he takes a drastic step so she can no longer escape. The close proximity throws the instinct into overdrive. Can he control the need engrained in him until he's certain she will reciprocate the bond, or will a moment of weakness doom him to hell on earth?

Review

Ms. Niles gives us a new take on shifter romance and she makes a good start. I enjoyed the story and would read more if she were to keep going with this series, but I was a little confused at the beginning. In building her world of shifters the different terminology she used threw me and it may have been helpful to have a primer at the beginning of the book. It was slow going in some parts of the book, but the ending was worth it.

The story revolves around Jaylin, a half shifter and psychologist and Aidan, shifter and businessman. The story starts with Jaylin coming to help Aidan's friend, Liam who has bonded with a human girl that leaves him once finding out he is a shifter. In this world, it is almost like a death sentence where you will never have another mate, can feel the emotions of the lost mate which puts you into a trance like state; for me that was a real downer for the story. Jaylin has seen this happen to many shifters and their mates (including her mother) and does not want to mate with a shifter and avoids them at all costs. Well, you can see where this is going....Aidan is course her mate. Then most of the book centers on them helping Liam and trying not to bond (if you are Jaylin) or bond (if you are Aidan).

For so much of the book I wanted to knock Jaylin up side her head. I understand she has only seen the negative in the bonding to a shifter, but thank goodness she gets over that. She really comes around in the later part of the book and the intimate scenes between them are hot.

Aidan, I loved! He understands that Jaylin does not want to bond, but after a kiss Aidan is already going down the slippery slope to bonding. He is such strong character; he tries to do what Jaylin wants and needs while fighting his own instincts and the lengths he goes to for her put him in jeopardy.

A good read, which if there are more I hope they build on this book and get better.

Anna says

A very well written, well thought out and well executed story. So different from what you can come to expect from shifter stories, although perhaps a little too focused on the negative aspects of what can obviously become a great and enduring love, it still had truly amazing moments. I loved Aidan and would have happily made him mine, which only made feeling sympathetic toward Jaylin that little bit more hard with her stubbornness not to believe anything but what she 'sees' as truth. A great story and I think the rest in the series will be just as good.

Jeannie Zelos says

Shape-shifters and romance – great combo for me...and having never read any of Abby's work before there's the excitement when you find a new to you author.

Well, it started promisingly with lead male Aiden introduced to us right in the first paragraph. I like to get to know my "heroes" and love to see them quickly into the story. Abby has created a shape-shifter world where they share many of the usual histories, including the "one true mate" concept but she adds a new twist in that if the female rejects the male, then he is left with a problem where he can lose touch with reality and sink into deep depression. (she gives names for various stages but that's the basic concept). This only happens to 1% of shifters but has happened to Aiden's good friend Liam, who has so far refused help and been living with Aiden for past six months. Liam suddenly moves on a stage and Aiden phones a local specialist for help. Jaylin has given up shape-shifters as clients having seen too much heartbreak treating people in this situation but Aiden persuades her to see Liam as an emergency as he is by then comatose. When she arrives one look and scent of her, and Aiden knows she's his mate. But there's a problem....Jaylin doesn't want to be anyone's mate - she's got personal reasons but has decided she will never get involved with a shape-shifter – Aiden decides he's not taking No for an answer and the book follows their up and down, one step forward two steps back romance.

Aiden is a great hero – strong and single minded and very caring, Jaylin is equally strong minded about holding out against him – its fun reading just how each of them deal with it. There are some pretty spicy sex scenes where they do get together, with Aiden convinced he can change her mind and Jaylin sticking to the friends-with -benefits line.

Its a well written and edited book, the main plot is their romance, nothing very dramatic and adventurous, just a sweet easy to read romantic tale. If you're looking for an in-depth read this isn't it but if you just want an easy to read, feel good romance with paranormal elements this is perfect. Its what I think of as a train journey book, or one to read while you're waiting for an appointment (my kindle goes everywhere, a few spare minutes and out it comes) when you want something you can pick up and put down easily, without losing the thread of what is happening.

Stars: it does what it says – romance. Its a one off read for me – fun to read but won't join the keepers as its lighter than I like for re readers. So four stars from me.
