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First Crush (In The Garden Book 2)



Synopsis

Third-grade teacher Maddie McCormick was thrilled when the greenhouse classroom actually came to fruitionâ”but she hadnâ”t counted on angering the local street thugs, or their threats. Police officer Ben Belliston hadnâ”t planned on fatherhoodâ”everâ”but gaining custody of his orphaned niece had him rearranging all of his priorities. She and Maddie, her new teacher, bonded right away, so he was happy to provide a little off-duty security in the greenhouseâ”it was more than a fair exchange for the way Maddie helped his niece from her shell. He hadnâ”t expected to begin seeing his best friendâ”s little sister in a new light, or the way it would make him question all of his future plans.

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Customer Reviews

Maddie McCormick and her friends have been working on getting the greenhouse up and running not only for her students but for the community as well. When the local gang wants to take back what they think was their's, Maddie has no choice but to turn to her long time crush, Officer Ben Belliston, for help. She has been beyond frustrated with him because he can't seem to see her as anyone other than his best friend's little sister. Ben Belliston did not have a great childhood. His

father was an abusive alcoholic and his mother was the punching bag. She refused to leave his father and Ben had no choice but to deal with the abuse. With role models like his parents, he refuses to ever get married or have a family. He will not take a chance of ever turning out like his father. Little did he know that one phone call would change his life forever. When his niece, Felicia, comes to live with him after her mother's death, he has no choice but to turn to Maddie for help. Will these two ever realize how perfect they are together? Or will the past and their pride ruin what could be the best thing to ever happen to all of them? First Crush was a fun addition to the In the Garden series! I loved seeing all the characters from Hello Again! And the addition of little Felicia was perfect! I have actually been on a single parent finding love kick lately and this book did not disappoint! There is just something about little kids pulling at the heart strings of big alpha males that just melts my heart! I love it! Heather Tullis has become an auto-buy author for me! She has a way of sucking me into her books and not letting me go until the end! I am definitely looking forward to the next book in the series! If you haven't read anything by her yet then you are missing out! I highly recommend this series as well as the DiCarlo Bride series. So fun! :)

I could hardly tear myself away from the book, but that's totally normal when it comes to Heather Tullis's books because I love them all so much! This book follows "Hello Again" (Book 1 of In the Garden) and it's not necessary to read the books in order if you happened upon this one first. The first one does give background on getting the location for the garden secured and the fun and problems that entailed, but if you missed it you can totally enjoy Maddie's story. But of course, you should go back and read "Hello Again" because it is fantastic. I'm also a teacher so I could really feel Maddie's love for the garden and her students and the heart that she put into the project hoping that it would be a success. The push-back from the gang had me captivated and I knew in my heart that the good would overtake evil (that's what we all hope for) but the tension kept me on my toes. Ben is a little clueless at first when it comes to Maddie and accepting help to care for his niece Felicia. The eight-year old moves in with him at the beginning after her mother dies and Ben becomes her guardian and he has to shuffle his bachelor life around to become her full time guardian as well as deal with some unexpected challenges that pop up out of the blue. Ben and Maddie have been friends for years, well been in each other's lives for years because Ben is best friends with Maddie's brother Jason. I enjoyed their relationship and seeing them fall in love with each other. I love series because I can get more involved with characters and you feel my addiction :o) I'm already totally looking forward to seeing Jason & Adelyn and Comfry and ????

I loved this book. I loved Ben he was so great to Felicia and so patient with her as he took her into his home. Ben had such good instincts on caring for her from the get go. Maddie is a fun girl who's been pinning for Ben for way too long. When Felicia joins her class she is so sweet to her and Ben. I loved learning more about the green house project. She has some spunk for sure I loved when she finally told Ben don't you ever wonder... great writing!! I loved this story overall. I was so impatient for things to be wrapped up in the end. Love this series.

A great sweet story to curl up with - Maddie and Ben are such lovely characters - you really love going on this journey with them. Little Felicia is adorable and I love how Ben really steps up and takes seriously his role of father and protector, Really great hills and valleys in their journey - but a wonderful resolution. I love Heather Tullis and am a great fan of the Di Carlo series - so I am loving this new "neighbourhood".

I loved this story! There were so many great characters dealing with everyday life issues that people can relate to. I loved the main couple in the story and how their relationship changed and progressed through major challenges they had. I would LOVE to see a continuation of this story. It was awesome!

I'm a sucker for life-long friends that finally see their relationship can be more. Probably because I was friends with my own husband for ten years before we were old enough to get married. :) Anyway, Maddie is a sweetie. Kind, considerate, gentle. She's exactly what Felicia needs after her abusive mom overdoses and leaves her alone. Ben doesn't realize it, but Maddie and Felicia together are what he needs to heal the wounds of his own troubled past. Tullis does a great job creating believable characters who are suffering from real situations. Maddie is a normal woman whose been in love with her brother's friend for a long time. She tries dating others in the hopes of moving on, but it just isn't the same. Ben carries the baggage of an alcoholic dad and an enabling mother. Felicia lives in fear of disappointing other and being slapped around for it. Ben and Felicia need to learn to trust and accept the love that's being given to them. Maddie's steadiness is perfect. I felt the story progressed naturally and believably. There was just enough tension from the gang members threatening the greenhouse to cut the sweetness of the romance. The only bad thing I can think of is the ending came really fast for me. I wanted Ben to have to work harder to earn back Maddie's trust after his declaration of love. Don't get me wrong, it was good and I enjoyed it, but for some reason I can't put my finger on, I wanted just a little more. I give First Crush a solid 4.1-5 scale

and what it means:1: I couldn't even finish it / just plain bad2: I hope I didn't pay for this / disappointing3: I didn't hate it, but it was still missing something / forgettable but inoffensive3.5: On the line between good and ok / like, not love4: Solid mind candy / worth reading4.5: So very close to perfection! / must read5: I could not put it down and I'm still thinking about it! / a true treasure

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