



## Battered Not Broken

*Ranae Rose*

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## **Battered Not Broken** Ranae Rose

Ryan Moore forged his own path when he defied his wealthy family's expectations by joining the United States Marine Corps as an enlisted man. After a period of service that's cut short by an IED explosion, the lingering physical and mental effects of war result in an isolated struggle to exist in the civilian world. He throws himself into competitive MMA fighting – the one thing he's still able to excel at, even if every match is a risk he can't afford to take.

His first encounter with amateur female fighter Ally Rivera ignites a spark of desire he hasn't felt since before a bomb left its marks on his life and his body, but his flirtation with her turns out to be anything but harmless. She's struggling to hold together a family ravaged by violence – a feat that isn't easy when her father has been imprisoned, leaving her vulnerable to relatives who run a local gang. Can two unrelenting fighters overcome challenges they couldn't defeat alone, or do the wounds of war and crime run too deep for even love to heal?

## **Battered Not Broken Details**

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Author : Ranae Rose

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Genre : Romance, Warfare, Fighters, Contemporary, Adult Fiction, Erotica, Contemporary Romance

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# From Reader Review Battered Not Broken for online ebook

## Musing says

Battered not Broken by Ranae Rose was a sizzling contemporary romance about two incredibly different people who have been battered by life's traumas, feeling discouraged and alone, yet throughout the story, endeavoured to rediscover hope, meaning, purpose and love.

Worldly wise, heartrending Ally Rivera, was a passionate, self contained young woman. From a sickening incident in her teens, her family core had been shattered beyond repair. Ally was crippled by guilt. Survivor's guilt. Carrying her burdens instinctually, she justified their permanence with 'what ifs', believing that she was responsible for the chain of events that the crime created. Ally's life was repetitive and predictable. Her only visible passion was as a fighter in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in her city of Baltimore. That is until Ryan literally bumps into her at the gym at which she trains.

Seriously gorgeous with a mix of mischief, reserved Ryan Moore was a former Marine turned MMA fighter, having recently returned from Afghanistan. Having 'survived' an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blast, like Ally, he suffers from re-curing nightmares as well as debilitating migraines. Ryan was stubborn, trustworthy, gallant and scarred, both internally and externally. Yet, Ryan seemed contradictory to Ally. On one hand, his meticulous attention to detail especially toward his spotless car, yet on the other hand, his total disregard for his health; fighting in the ring, which could literally kill him. His decision to start afresh in Baltimore, forging his own path, defying his unsupportive, wealthy family, proves to be a fated move. Ostensibly, he is trying to rebuild his life. In reality, he was trying to find a reason to live.

As their relationship progressed, it was a poignant and momentous moment when Ally believed she could be 'someone who healed instead of hindered'. In many ways, this woke her up out of her quiet, derailed existence. Ryan made her feel. Ally loved selflessly, was mature beyond her years, and was gutsy; especially evidenced when she tackled Ryan's rejection, while common sense urged retreat. In Ally, Ryan found purpose, direction, joy, and saw the chance to heal.

The story was told from Ally's POV, although, at times, I would have loved to have been inside Ryan's head. Occasional repetitive phrasing proved distracting as I read. (How many times do we need to read how blue Ryan's eyes were?) Despite this, Battered not Broken was an engaging and engrossing book. There was mystery, tension, pain, joy and danger all vying for and receiving thorough attention.

Ranae Rose has a wonderfully descriptive prose.

"Their bodies were so close that the sound of his pleasure seemed to physically permeate her, making her every nerve ending in her body hum with the thrill of his gratification."

The title was apt (and I have to say, I loved the cover – so realistic!). Her comprehensive research into all things related to sufferers from, and carers of those afflicted by TBI's must be applauded. In addition, she skilfully enabled the reader to have a terrific grasp on the angst and sorrow of those who return from war. This was not a light read, but one that is sad yet hopeful, ascetic yet sensual, sorrowful yet jubilant. If this is an example of Ranae Rose's writing, I can fervently say that I'll be back for more.

Thank you Ranae for giving me this ARC for an honest review.

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## **Awilk -never sleeps- says**

### **4.5 Stars**

I have always known not to judge a book by its cover, but with this one I did, and it wasn't a mistake. The hottie on the cover was justified by the hottie in the book.

Ryan has come back from war with physical and emotional injuries. His story put a little crack in my heart, but because I could still see his strength, it didn't completely break it.

Ally had just as many scars, if not more. She was also still strong. I liked her very much. Even though she had a strong personality, she was still feminine and not afraid to love and care about others.

Together this couple was amazing. I enjoyed the journey that they took together. It was most certainly not smooth sailing, but the ending was worth the trouble it took for them to get there.

I found that I hated to put this one down so that I could sleep, but finishing it was the first thing I did this morning. Renae Rose is becoming an auto-buy author to me, and the next book I am going to read is one of hers as well.

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## **Mariann {at} Belle's Book Bag says**

First off....I LOVE this cover!! The book starts off with a lot of unanswered questions surrounding the characters. I wasn't really sure what Ally or Ryan's story was~especially Ryan. Then there was Ally's father that was in prison and the mention of her estranged brother. As the story progressed these questions were answered and an interesting and entertaining story unfolded with a hero and heroine that I wanted so desperately to get their HEA.

I loved the concept of this story with both Ryan and Ally being MMA fighters. But it was so much more than MMA fighting. It was a story about a heroes struggle to adapt and maintain some sort of "normal" life after returning from war with mental and physical injuries. And a heroine who was struggling to hold her family together while still living her own life. Both the hero and heroine were battered by life in different ways but found peace and love and safety in each other.

I have a soft spot for stories featuring soldiers, especially wounded soldiers. I also have a soft spot for heroines that stick by their heroes and offer support and comfort when their heroes need it the most but don't make it easy. I just loved these two together. Ally was such a great character and I loved how she was with Ryan. And...Ryan \*sigh\*. They were another couple that I just wanted to wrap in a hug. Ryan and Ally both had their demons but remained loving and strong. Just perfect for each other. I loved how Ally didn't hide her feelings for Ryan or what had happened to her in the past from him. I also love how she tried to protect him and worried about him and genuinely cared for him and wanted to take care of him, even though it was hard for him at first. I thought that it was sad to read Ryan struggling with his injuries and being so alone before meeting Ally. I just love when Ally told Ryan that he was not broken but battered. \*sigh\*

Just a wonderful book that hooked me from the start. The story was told strictly from Ally's POV and I wish there was just a little of Ryan's POV. Oh...and the sex...on the kitchen counter, on the couch, on the

bathroom sink and in the bed. \*shivers\* I was so happy with the ending but wished the epilogue was a few years later to see the progression of their relationship and find out about what happened with Ally's dad.

I think that this is my favorite book from Ranae so far and I definitely continue to be a fan. Definitely a keeper to be reread. 4 out of 5 rating!!

\*\*\*ARC provided by Ranae Rose~Thanks!!

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### **T.M. Smith says**

Battered not Broken is an adult themed story that follows the rocky relationship between Ryan Moore and Ally Rivera. Warning, this book is NC17, intended for mature audiences due to some intense violence and gritty love scenes.

Ryan Moore is an Iraqi War Veteran struggling to make a life for himself in the "real world" after his short stint in the military left him with a brain injury from an IED. Determined not to accept the assistance his wealthy family offers, that comes with strings attached, he throws himself into the violent world of MMA fighting. The only thing he thinks he's any good at.

Ally Rivera has suffered a different kind of violence that led her to the MMA world as well. Her father is in jail for assaulting the man that assaulted Ally when she was just a teenager, and her brother is neck deep in gang violence. She works in her mother's salon, works out at the local gym and fights women's MMA on weekends. It's at the local gym she first meets the reserved, sexy new member, Ryan Moore.

Sparks fly immediately and soon these two are an unlikely and inseparable couple in and out of the ring. When Ryan's injury becomes harder for him to deal with, he takes it out on Ally, and pushes her away. He quickly realizes his error in judgement, but Ally's brother's gang affiliation not only adds another kink to the chain, but costs a few people their lives as well. In the end will Ryan and Ally still be standing? And if they are, will they be able to overcome all the obstacles life throws at them in order to be together?

This book is a wonderful tribute to our Military men and women, showcasing the struggle some soldiers have living their lives in the aftermath of the ugliness that is War. Rose's unbiased account of Ryan's struggles with the lasting effects of injuries sustained from an IED in Afghanistan, and how it spills over into his everyday life was spot on. She definitely did her research into the topic, and poured that knowledge into the character of Ryan.

Rose steams up the pages with her usual sexy as hell style! Her attention to detail is that perfect balance of just enough, but not too much. Ryan is definitely battered; on paper he is a dud, but he loves Ally ultimately and selflessly, proving he isn't broken. The scars he carries and his rawness just make him even sexier. I give this one 5/5.. but that's just my two cents. \*I received a copy of this book from the author, in exchange for an honest review\*

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### **Kelli C ~ Jack Sawyer's Heart says**

2.5-2.75 Broken Stars

I will freely admit, this is one of those reads that is good...not a real problem at all...but it just didnt work for me. Battered Not Broken has two completely likeable characters, a good story line, a bit of drama, and scorching heat. So what is my issue? That is just the thing, it is just "my issue." I think I have been sucked into the darkness and need a bit of bad for my literary mind to perk up!

The book flowed along nicely and progressed without a hitch. It was a basic girl and boy meet, they are attracted, they date, they make love, they fall in love. Good Stuff, but perhaps in my "been sick with the yuckies" mindset, this was a bit boring for me! Just overall, MEH'

I think many will enjoy this read as it was a good love tale. It did end a bit abrupt with an "is that it feel?", but that is kind of how the whole thing was...just "is that is?" Dont let my pissiness toward this affect you...read and enjoy!

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## **MsRomanticReads says**

This review can also be found on my blog.

A sizzling contemporary romance featuring a former Marine turned MMA fighter and an equally kick butt heroine – literally. While I have read three other stories by this author (and I have yet to post my reviews for two of them #fail), this is by far the most sensual and probably her best work.

What I loved about this story was that the author not only chose a hero and heroine from different backgrounds – one rich, one poor - but also a different heritage and family dynamics. While Ryan decided against joining the family company in favor of becoming a Marine, that decision put a deep rift between himself and his family. They never proclaimed to have been proud of him or his choices. Then we have Ally Rivera. Her father is in jail for murder, her estranged brother has joined her uncle's gang, she lives with her mother and is utterly devoted to her, and Ally enters MMA fights for the prize money. The contrast between the two families couldn't be more different on the surface. But beneath it all are misunderstandings and secrets.

The story flowed really easily, and I got completely caught up in Ryan and Ally's instant attraction and the sparks flying off of them whenever they locked eyes.

He took half a step toward her, his gaze still locked with hers. The way his blue eyes shone was crazy – streetlights didn't flatter *anyone* like that. Except for him. “Ally Rivera,” he said, all traces of his recent grin gone from his mouth, “if I sit down and have dinner with you, it's going to be a date. So if that's not what you're offering, I'm going to have to say no thanks.”

We get hints as to why she's very cautious to the point of being paranoid about him, but it didn't make sense until much later. In the mean time, the build up of sexual tension had me thinking back to my first serious boyfriend. It was kind of cute to see these two adults take baby steps. When they finally came together it made the wait so worth while. I think I swooned a lot up until then. Heck, Ms Rose even made putting on a condom sound ridiculously sexy!

"You have no idea how hard it is for me to hold back when I look at you. There are so many stupid things I want to do – even stupid things I want to say. I could use a lady with a makeshift weapon and a dose of maternal instinct to keep me from spoiling our perfect first date."

As the full story about Ally and her family unfolded, I got a much better understanding of her character. Her turmoil over her brother's actions made me a little emotional, as well as Ryan coming to her defense the only way he knew how. This story is so much more than the allure of MMA fighters or military heroes. This story had heart and conflict, and two people from the opposite sides of the spectrum coming together and finding their own brand of happiness.

My favorite line from the story had to be the part from which this book gets its title. Ally couldn't have been any sweeter.

4.5 rounded up to 5 stars.

*Disclaimer: I received a review copy from the author in exchange for an honest review.*

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## **Kristin Anders says**

This book was recommended to me by my book group, so I bought it from Amazon.

The first half was pretty good. I would've preferred less repetitive words and phrases, because when a hero thinks something then says the exact same thing a few paragraphs later it pulls me out of the story, but it was a great premise.

I liked the hero; I liked the heroine. I **loved** them together, their issues, their families, and the all around setup.

Manny is an excellent addition. I love heroine not having a license. There were so many little things this book did well I really thought it was going to be a 4-star. (A 4-star instead of 5 because of repetitive phrases.)

Where it all went downhill for me was 80% through the story--when hero left the hospital with Manny. Manny was on a hunt for vengeance and hero, who previously had no affiliation with Manny or his Manny-related things, suddenly decides to go with him so he can protect heroine. He even says *"I'd die for you... I'd kill for you..."*

...but the heroine *was* protected. At the time hero left, heroine was safe and sound. And even if she wasn't, Hero is the hero--he should found a heroic/noble way to help her.

Or there could have been a reason to *make* hero protect heroine the way he did. There's not.

I'm also unsure why the heroine became "safe(ish)" because the hero participated in Battered Not Broken's evil theme. It's the evil theme. What happened is the equivalent (and forgive the Wizard of Oz reference) of Dorothy getting home by acting like the Wicked Witch, yet the Witch is never redeemed.

And it's never addressed why none of the characters (Manny excluded) consider calling the cops.

The next not-so-great turn in the story for me was what happened after the Manny-related events. Hero's evil-deed-to-protect-heroine is finished and he realizes heroine will never be fully safe. The nature of the problem guarantees that. The threat was never just one or two people. He didn't notice that before he tossed out his morals and went against his character?

Heroine's still un-safeness leads to hero making a (good) Big Decision. It was the right decision...but it could have all been addressed in an Epilogue.

It wasn't. And the Big Decision causes the story to then move cities. It changes secondary characters, gives hero and heroine new wants, new sets of problems and the story ends. New problems aren't resolved.

I rated this book this morning, then went back and read the last 20% again. I think what I'm suffering from is un-attachment to the story because there were new characters, motivations, and problems introduced in the last half of the book. (Last 12%, really.) 12% is not enough times for me to bond with all these new aspects. So I didn't. And I feel the story I started reading--the first 88%--is left unfinished because of this.

And hero doing an evil thing that's out-of-character and not really necessary is confusing.

But most everyone else I know liked it. And I have to say--the first 80% was really good.

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### **Lisa says**

I'm conflicted on how to rate this book. There was so much potential for this story but so many issues were either glossed over or never fully developed to the point that I was skimming just to finish.

Ryan and Ally were very likeable and had great chemistry. Unfortunately I wish there would have been more time focused on Ryan's back story with his family and military life. I felt like I was missing a huge part of who Ryan was by not knowing more about him.

Ally was very sweet and I really liked her loyalty and devotion to her mother and father. I would have really liked to have known more about Manny. He just popped in and out of the story and I never felt any connection to why he was living the life that he was or if he missed his family.

The ending came really fast and at one point I found myself looking at my kindle thinking I was missing pages. Guess not.

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### **Denise ~The Procrastinating Book Diva~ says**

*Great premise, horrible execution.* I love boxers/MMA heroes and absolutely LOVED the idea of one these



sexy guys being paired with a MMA heroine - too bad the weak storyline, rushed romance, the author's need to detail every inconsequential nuance, and lackluster writing ruined what could have been a fantastic story. I must admit, despite struggling to get through this, there was something that compelled me to finish it. However, in the end I think my (slight) OCD was responsible for me not giving up on a book that had promise and had lingered on my TBR shelf forever.

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## **Kame says**

Some books boast they have military heroes, others say they have characters involved in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA); when you read them you realize they have a character that was in the military but their military career was idealistic, and a lot of MMA characters go to a gym but you never read about an actual fight or training. Ranae Rose has dealt with both of these types of characters, all in one and done so in the wonderful package of Ryan Moore.

Ryan is a Marine, honorably discharged after he was injured during an IED blast. He has visible and invisible effects of that blast. He is all alone in the world, as he has distanced himself from his family because he wanted to make his own choices in his life. He could not go home and he did not want to be near his Marine buddies so he settles in Baltimore. He is just "existing instead of really living." He was interested in MMA before the blast, and now finding a new gym has given him peace. Ally Rivera discovered MMA out of encouragement from her mother. She is one of the few women at the Knockout club. She fights in a few exhibition matches to earn extra income. She does it because she loves MMA, and she and her mother really need the money. Ally notices Ryan the instant he walks into the gym, he is staring at her and her sparring partner and best friend Melissa's direction. His eyes are the bluest blue she has ever seen, and the tattoo on his back catches her eye. Even if he noticed her, it wouldn't matter; Ally has a standing rule of not dating strangers. An incident causes her to put that rule aside, their first date has an atypical ending and is the start of one of the most unpredictable romance progressions I have read to date.

"When I was in Afghanistan, I wanted to come home. When I did, it wasn't like I'd thought it would be. And then I didn't want anything, really, because I didn't know what to want. Until I saw you."

This book is a solid 4 star read for me. I liked Ryan and Ally's characters. It seemed I got to know their characters better as the story progressed, same as you get to know a person as you progress from date to date. Their dialogue was realistic, Ryan and Ally talked like a new couple would, asking the questions you do when you are getting to know another person, and their disagreements are believable. They did not instantly fall in love. I would trade in one sex scene for more character development; specifically more of their thoughts in a few tense situations. This book was described to me by the author as an erotic romance. Please do not let the term erotic steer you away, this is by far not the hottest book I have ever read, and all the intimate scenes are what I would characterize as mainstream. The intimate scenes are plenty and varied, just like a real couple.

This was a refreshing read. I am thankful to the author for giving me an ARC of this book and I look forward to more from her; hopefully more stories like this one!

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## Anne Boleyn's Ghost says

**2.5 stars rounded up.** I'm slowly adopting Goodreads' rating system. No more lukewarm or bordering-on-ranting-reviews coupled with 4 stars ?It was *just* okay. But I appreciated certain aspects *just* enough to round up.

In fact, *Battered Not Broken* had flashes of brilliance. But they were ultimately overwhelmed by too many details, too much repetition, and a too busy ending. Major props, though, for **a diverse cast of characters, working-class leads, female MMA fighters, and showcasing veterans' issues.**

See? There was so much promise. Your mileage may vary depending on your tolerance of slow-moving contemporary romances. But I'm not sure that I would have finished if I didn't need it for a challenge.

*Read for SBTB Best Picture Quarterly Challenge: A romance with a female athlete.*

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## Jeannie Platt says

I have to say I loved book. Ranae Rose wrote a wonderful story about an Ryan MMA fighter/former marine who's was injured in afganistanand unseen. There is spicy sex,ups and downs and serious notes that bring attention to TBI's and how they affect not only the marine but their partner. The story line is full and brings two people who are very guarded together.It takes a strong asskicking woman to be parterned with the hero in this book and I think that Ally fills that part wonderfully. As as Marine Wife whos husband suffers from headaches due to a TBI and PTSD i was very impressed with the book... Great read and I will be reading more from this wonderful author.

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## CT says

3.5 stars. A light minimal angst read with some nice sex scenes and fight scenes. Ryan is a rich ex marine MMA fighter and Ally also a fighter but has her own family issues. Together this was a great basis for a good storyline, unfortunately I didn't feel the connection between the two characters.

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## Donna says

Ally Rivera's father is in jail. She works with her mother at a salon as a nail technician and avoids her brother who is number 2 in in a local gang. She also does amateur female fights every other Saturday. It is while working out at the local MMA gym she meets hunky Ryan Moore. The former marine is trying to rebuild his life after being processed out of the Marines after an injury from an IED makes him unfit for duty. He has come back physically enough to fight competitively but still suffers migraines. Can these two so battered by life be complete together?

I am surprised at how much I enjoyed this story. I asked to review it because it involved a military man and I do love a military man. I am not however enamored of MMA. I just don't get how people can enjoy beating

each other up. I understand wanting to challenge yourself physically but I just don't get fighting. But Ranae Rose makes it work. The MMA might as well be a metaphor for these characters struggles in life. The love scenes between these two smolder without being crass or gratuitous. I was pulling for Ryan and Ally both in the ring and out.

I'd like to thank Ranae Rose for giving me the opportunity to read and review this story.

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## **Liz F says**

**\*\*Review copy courtesy of the author in exchange for an honest review\*\***

Ranae Rose is a new author, to me, and after reading Battered Not Broken, I think she's going to do pretty well!

Let me be honest - The first thing I noticed about this book was the cover image. Really, I didn't read the blurb, I didn't know anything about it. All I saw was the hunk on the cover and I begged Kindle Gal ([www.kindlesandwine.com](http://www.kindlesandwine.com)) to let me read this one! LOL! I wasn't disappointed. There were some things that I didn't love about the book but there were a lot more things that I DID love.

We're going to start with Ryan because he was my favorite part of the book (duh). I just love him and he seemed seriously real. I loved how the author described him; he practically jumped off the page for me. So many details, from the rippling of his muscles to his tight sexy butt! I love that he wasn't perfect. He had his issues and in some ways, he was a stereotypical man, ignoring his problems as a way of dealing with them. Ryan was a US Marine but an injury has pushed him out. Now, he's going to put that Marine strength and determination into competing in the local MMA circuit. He's just started training at KnockOut Gym, which is where he meets Ally.

Ally Rivera was a pretty great heroine. She's REALLY tough. She's an MMA fighter, so she HAS to be tough. But the author also made her...normal. She's nervous about her fights but is also excited. She gets mildly irritated trying to find a decent sports bra. See? Normal! Her dad is in prison and her brother is estranged from the family. So now, its just Ally and her mom, Maria, holding down the fort until her dad comes home from prison. Ally isn't too comfortable around men in general but when she sees Ryan practicing at the gym, she's drawn in by his beautiful eyes and his kickass skill!

One of my minor issues with this story was that we aren't given large enough pieces of the puzzle to figure out what is important and what isn't. For example, the reason for Ally not feeling comfortable around men...it was vague but as we got more details you realize that it's SUPER important since its related to her father's imprisonment and her brother's estrangement. But then, it felt like the author was again being vague about Ryan's military injuries. So I thought it would have some kind of significance in the future and it didn't. In fact, the details are in the book's blurb (remember - I grabbed the book after I saw the cover!)? Something else I didn't like was that Ally was hispanic AND her brother and uncle were gangsters. I thought it was a teensy bit stereotypical. BUT once you get more and more into the story, the WHOLE thing is brought together and it makes more sense. It just takes quite a while to get there.

I wasn't so sure I'd love the MMA part (since I don't watch MMA or boxing or wrestling) but it was a pretty minor story point. They're at the gym a few times and we experience a fight or two but I was worried it would be a huge, major part of the story and it wasn't. Ally and Ryan are a great couple, being that they

come from very different backgrounds. But I think that's why I liked them so much - watching them go through the growing pains of a new relationship which pushed them father apart AND pulled them closer together. I mean, it was awesome. I thought that I saw somewhere that this was labeled as Erotica. I don't think I would go quite that far but it was very hot. There's plenty of sexy time and that sexy time is excellent!!

Overall, I really enjoyed this book. I would recommend this to anyone, anytime, anywhere! Give it a shot - you'll love it!

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