



The Proposition

Elizabeth Hayley

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Professional hockey player Ben Williamson doesn't quite know how he got himself into this situation; hiring someone to be his date to his brother's wedding is way out of character for him. But with family pressuring him to settle down, going stag just isn't an option. It would just be one more thing his polite, cultured family uses as ammo against him.

Ryan Cruz is having a bad day. Wait, make that a bad year. Broke, technically homeless, and living on a friend's couch, she's now also unemployed after her sharp tongue gets her fired from her job. So when a handsome stranger approaches her out of the blue with a proposition--he'll pay her to be his date to his brother's wedding for the weekend--accepting his offer is a no brainer. She needs the cash and figures it wouldn't be in the best interest of a professional athlete to murder her.

What starts as a simple business arrangement soon becomes more as these opposites attract and get caught up in the wedding magic. Will Ben and Ryan be able to turn their relationship into something more? Or is love based on a proposition too much of an obstacle to overcome?

The Proposition Details

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Author : Elizabeth Hayley

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From Reader Review The Proposition for online ebook

LeeAnne says

This is an enjoyable read with an original plotline that had me intrigued to the very end. Though I've read the first in the series I still appreciated that this one can be read as a stand-alone with no confusion while still giving us glimpses of the characters from the previous book!

Ben is a professional hockey player who has been on the outs with his brother for years. His brother is getting married and Ben doesn't want to face the wedding alone, especially since his brother is marrying Ben's ex-girlfriend... One of Ben's bestfriends, Gabe, recommends that he hire an escort and then suggests doing so at a strip-club, where Ben comes face to face with the beautiful Ryan. Ryan is running low on funds and life keeps kicking her while she's down, she's resorted to working as a waitress at a strip-club but loses that job when someone makes advances that she quickly shuts down. When she bumps into the handsome Ben outside the club and is mistaken for an escort Ryan can't bring herself to turn down the money that Ben is offering. In order to get to know one another well enough to pull off fooling Ben's family Ben insists Ryan move in with him until then and the two really hit it off.

I love how fast paced this book is, I couldn't put it down. My favorite character in the book was definitely Gabe, he's absolutely hilarious and I'm already highly anticipating him getting his own book! I also really enjoyed that this book has it all, romance, intrigue and angst – Ben and his family drama is so relatable and it had me in tears when he and his brother are talking at the end. This is great read and I highly recommend it!

I received a free copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads.

Pelusa Rivera says

Received an ARC for my fair review for netgalley. This is the second book in the series. This was Ben's book, he needs a date for his brother's wedding, whom he does not get along with, and you read the story you find out why they are the way they are. Gabe has this brilliant idea of Ben hiring an escort to the wedding. I love Gabe he is crazy. It was also good to read about Jace and Ally's relationship still going strong, they are from first book, the Bet, and I think you really should read it to give you more insight, plus I liked it better. Ben hires Ryan, who really is not an escort, but a waitress down on her luck. I wasn't crazy about Ryan, and I am sorry, but I could not accept that Ben would have her move in with him so soon, and thinking she was an escort. Anyway, with all that I still will read next story.

A.BookNerd.Bookseller&Bibliophile.Blog says

I am a HUGE fan of Elizabeth Hayley's writing and The Proposition is yet another great reason why I love their books!!!!

I loved how Ben and Ryan began their "relationship", the premise of it was perfectly done. My heart shattered for Ryan when secrets were revealed.

This is the second book in the series but I believe can be read as a stand-alone.

Reviewed by: Dana D.

Coral says

Plot: 3/5

Characterisation: 3.5/5

Prose: 4/5

How much I enjoyed it: 4/5

Rating are rough estimation. Read this in December 2017 but didn't remember much.

Alison says

This is a series about three best friends: Jace; Gabe and Ben. Each star athletes in their own fields, they have also been best friends since college. In the first book they are invited to join an exclusive sportsmens club - think more teen boy heaven than anything sinister - which serves as their go-to place to discuss man stuff and play pool/ darts without being bothered by fans and groupies.

This book centres on Ben Williamson, one of the few black men in hockey and certainly the most successful, yet to the rest of his family he is somewhat of a disappointment because they wanted him to be a lawyer or a doctor. His mother has just guilted him into being best man at his elder brother David's wedding, to Ben's childhood sweetheart - yep, his brother and his girlfriend cheated behind his back and now (admittedly six years later) they want him to be the best man? His friend Gabe, who admitted appears to be playing with only half a deck of cards sometimes, suggests Ben hires an escort to go to the wedding with him - that way he doesn't look like he is still pining over Natasha AND he avoids his mother setting him up with some worthy but unattractive daughter of a friend.

Showing a surprising lack of common sense they guys go to Daisy's, a fairly low rent strip club, looking for a high end escort and are naturally disappointed, but when Ben steps outside he literally bumps into a woman who might very well fit the bill. Ryan Cruz is a woman barely scraping by, alone since she was 16 years old she has held a series of low-paid jobs, the latest one as a waitress at Daisy's ends when she smacks a customer for getting handsy and the manager refuses to take her side. As she is leaving the building the door slams back into her face and she sees the most attractive guy she has ever seen, when he thinks she is an escort she sees a way to make some much needed cash, after all she is sleeping on a friend's couch, and agrees to accompany Ben to his brother's wedding.

Things really spiral from there, Ben soon realises the enormity of pretending to be a couple in front of his friends and family, who will all want to interrogate Ryan about everything so he suggests a series of intense 'getting to know you' sessions over several days, then he suggests she moves in with him temporarily. And mostly it's because they need to know more about each other for the wedding, mostly. But of course the real fun begins at the wedding!

This kind of reminds me of the film Pretty Woman, especially the shopping scene. But Ben is nothing like Richard Gere's character, in fact he is the kindest, sweetest guy ever.

My only criticism would be that Ben's family was portrayed one way at the start of the book and another way at the end of the book, maybe the first impression was coloured by Ben's feelings rather than reality and the the later impression was more reflective of the way things really were. Also, I got really irritated that all of Ben's family thought HE ought to apologise to his older brother/ make the peace when his brother had NEVER once apologised for stealing his girlfriend and yet still seemed to get himself cast as the victim.

Nevertheless, I stayed up until 3am to finish this book so a great sports romance with a sexy, caring hero and a sassy, funny heroine. I can't wait to read Gabe's story - I bet it's a doozy.

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in return for an honest review.

Sarah says

4.5 stars - I was given a copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads.

This is a sweet, fun and easy read. The premise is a little bit Pretty Woman. The idea of a professional athlete hiring an escort for a wedding may not very plausible but it does make for a good story.

Ben and Ryan are a great combination. Ryan's background has made her a survivor and she's been caring for herself from a very young age. Ben comes from privilege and his biggest worry is his family's disapproval of his hockey career. These two connect immediately on a physical and emotional level but they really don't understand each other's worlds. Ryan's reactions to Ben's casual entitlement are brilliant.

The angst in this book feels contrived at times. There are several secrets in this story and some of them feel unnecessary - they're only introduced to create or draw out conflict between Ryan and Ben. I really enjoyed Ben's family and I loved Ryan's friend, Camille.

As in the first book, the friendship between Ben, Gabe and Jace is really special. As their lives diverge, these three spend less time together. I found Ben's sadness at the loss of some of the closeness really moving.

I love that the story and the characters are completely different from those in the first book. On the surface, a cocktail waitress and a doctor might have very little in common but Ryan and Ally are both wonderfully strong women and they are both women worth getting to know.

Danielle from Short and Sassy says

Another book I have read lately that I skimmed most of it. I had a few issues with this one. I won't go into it in much detail. But this book has been done some many times now, that without anything super crazy happening, it is over done.

Alex (HEABookNerd) says

Series: The Players #2

But the idea of there being more to life, things they owed it to themselves to experience, that was what made Ben's mind work overtime. Because even though he loved hockey, he also wanted something that could love him back.

Another enjoyable Elizabeth Hayley book with fun characters, silly situations, and a pretty good romance. I really wanted more tension between the characters. The reason I love the fake relationship trope is the tension between being a loving couple in public and resisting each other in private. Ben and Ryan sleep together so early in the book that the relationship based tension is gone. They're pretty much a real couple the whole book.

Ben was a great hero whose genuine, sweet, and respectful to Ryan. I loved his awkwardness when he was hiring Ryan and his attempts to act the way he thought he should around an escort. I also enjoyed his quieter, more humble nature. The family dynamics between Ben and his brother were written really well. Ben might have needed a buffer between him and his family but I liked that they weren't all portrayed as bad people; Ben's mother was particularly sweet. I'm also happy that Ben was able to clear some of his festering feelings about his brother, even if it did hurt Ryan in the process. The man clearly needed to get some things off his chest.

Ryan's determination and will to survive was certainly admirable. I don't know that I could pretend to be an escort in order to make money but I respect the hard decisions she's had to make in order to get by in a life that has continually kicked her down. However, I felt it was painfully obvious that Ryan wasn't an escort. She was really bad at pretending and she even tells Ben that she can't act, which I think is the first requirement for an escort. She's endearing but not the best at pretending. The scene where Ryan goes off on Ben about his living habits just really didn't work for me. Some of the things she pointed out contradicted the down to earth, sweet personality that Ben had and it just made Ryan seem slightly crazy. The bickering was supposed to act as tension that propels them into bed, but it just didn't come across that way to me.

I voluntarily read and reviewed an advanced copy of this book provided by Netgalley. All thoughts expressed in this review are my honest opinion.

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**Happily Ever After Book Nerd**

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## **Heather andrews says**

Ben is such a flirt, "I've learned that you look really good in my shirts." He let his finger toy with the hem of his flannel she had on." Ben likes to make sure him and his girl are confrontable, "time to move to a bed. This couch isn't big enough for both of us." I liked this book, I fell in love with Ben.

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## **Mary says**

I received a free copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads.

I really enjoyed this book. Its not your typical man needs a date to a family wedding so he hires an escort to play the part. Its a story about struggle: the struggle to be more than what people expect you to be, the struggle to find good in bad situations, the struggle to overcome the demons of the past.

Ryan has seen more than her fair share of struggles, however she has never faltered in her belief in herself, of being more than her drug addicted mother, of living a life she would be proud of. Her struggle has led to be a waitress in a strip club, it's decent money and is helping her pay her part of the bills as she couch surfs at a friends.

Ben is a professional hockey player, who on the surface seems to have it all. Beneath the facade, Ben is still struggling from his brother's betrayal. Ten years ago, Ben's girlfriend decided that his brother David, was the better man. Ben has carried the sting of that hurt with him ever since, and has distanced himself from his entire family so that he didn't have to witness their relationship first hand. During the times the family was together, it was tense and often led to disagreements which led to Ben staying away longer and longer.

With David's wedding fast approaching, Ben knows that he doesn't want to go alone and face the demons of his past. He also doesn't want his mother playing matchmaker. Gabe comes up a brilliant idea to hire an escort to play the part of his girlfriend. He's hesitant at first, then he meets Ryan and suddenly it doesn't seem like such a bad idea.

The relationship between Ryan and Ben starts off a little shaky but they quickly form a bond, sharing secrets and dreams. As the wedding gets closer, so do they. The question they both ask themselves: what happens to them after the vows are said?

~~Wicked Reads Review Team~~

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## **Manon says**

*I was provided an ARC via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

The Proposition is a New Adult romance. It is the second book of the Players series by Elizabeth Hayley. I've read the first book in this series thanks to NetGalley and was happy to jump back in.

The book is about Ben and Ryan. Ben is in a bind. He has to go to his estranged brother's wedding in a month or so and still doesn't have a date. And as we know, professional hockey players have trouble finding dates, so his good friend Gabe suggests that he hires an escort.

Ryan is in serious need of money. So, when, right after quitting her job as a waitress in a sleathy stripclub, she stumbles into a hockey player mistaking her for an escort, she just cannot afford to say no...

This was a fast, enjoyable read and exactly what I was in the mood for/needed. It made me feel the exact right amount of things and the characters were flawed and interesting. I liked them all a lot. I saw a lot of me

in Ben, especially in his flaws but I still really liked him. I liked the dynamics between all the characters and the whole thing around the wedding was fun. I really had a good time.  
All in all, a cute but still forgettable romance.

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## **Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says**

3.5 stars

I enjoyed *The Proposition* by Elizabeth Hayley until nearly the end of the book. Ms. Hayley is a new-to-me author, and *The Proposition* is the second book in a series, but she did an excellent job of working in characters from the first book without leaving the reader lost and confused. I always appreciate when series books are able to be read as standalones. The basic premise of Ben needing to hire an escort to act as his girlfriend while accompanying him to his estranged brother's wedding, and the manner in which he and his friends go about finding an escort was a little unrealistic, however, I liked all these characters so much I was willing to go along with it. *The Proposition* is filled with misunderstandings, some with good reason, others not so much. Ben is a professional hockey player from a family of academics, who feels his family neither understands nor accepts his choices, and is disappointed in him. I guess there are people who would be unhappy if their son was a NHL star. I don't know any of those people, but I'm willing to believe they're out there. Ben makes his family out to be jerks, so I was surprised to find they really weren't. I was confused about his belief of how they thought of him, it didn't make a lot of sense to me. In his relationships with his friends and Ryan, he's pretty straightforward. It was one of the traits I liked most about him, in fact. For that reason, the entire reason for thinking he needed an escort didn't ring true. The animosity between Ben and his brother rang true, however. There is an incident near the end, a very important plot point, that seemed to come out of nowhere and felt very contrived to me. In fact, it completely changed how I felt about this book. I guess I didn't understand the unresolved issues between Ben and his brother, and the inconsistency didn't work for me. I did, however, love Ben and Ryan together. She was a very strong, independent, feisty heroine, and Ben was fun, generous, and very sweet with her, although a bit clueless. His friends, Jase and Gabe added the voice of reason, and a sense of playfulness, respectively. My biggest issue with this book was in the main conflict in Ben and Ryan's relationship. I felt it came out of nowhere. I was shocked and appalled by his behavior. I knew what would happen, but I didn't see it unfolding in the way it did. I'm not often surprised, but this one took me by surprise for sure. Honestly, it would have been a deal breaker for me. Other readers may not agree, however, and for that reason, I am still recommending this book.

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## **Avid Reader says**

*The Proposition* (*The Players* #2) by Elizabeth Hayley

4 stars

M/F Romance

Triggers: Cheating

I was given this book for an honest review by Wicked Reads.



This was an interesting story. On the one hand, you have Ben who seems pretty put together. However, when you get deeper in to his character, you find that he's struggling just like everyone else around him. He feels an inadequacy that stems from his family home life and he can't quite shake it.

For Ryan, she is just trying to figure out where she's going to get her next pay check. She has survived a lot and won't let anything get her down. She has a strong moral code and despite sometimes having to do things she doesn't like, she holds tight to her morals.

Ben and Ryan's meeting was kind of hilarious. However, they recovered and began their journey of hiding who they really are. This story was full of family dysfunction, love that developed organically and of learning each other in a way that was forced, but in the end, exactly what was necessary.

Ben really was kind of an immature jerk a lot of the time. I wondered if he would ever grow up. His brother was equally a jerk and I never really liked him. Ben's family - parents mainly were also so clueless throughout the story that I ended up feeling bad for Ben. Ryan had her own struggles but since she was used to hardship, I liked her a lot more. She persevered and overcame a lot.

Ben and Ryan's chemistry was hot and they had some great scenes. I felt that despite the quick "get to know you" part of the story, their relationship worked well.

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### **Dana says**

I am a HUGE fan of Elizabeth Hayley's writing and The Proposition is yet another great reason why I love their books!!!!

I loved how Ben and Ryan began their "relationship", the premise of it was perfectly done. My heart shattered for Ryan when secrets were revealed.

This is the second book in the series but I believe can be read as a stand-alone.

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### **Jeannie Zelos says**

The Proposition, Elizabeth Hayley

Review from Jeannie Zelos book reviews

Genre: romance

A fun read, but a one off for me.

I loved Ben, couldn't understand why he wanted to go to these lengths though just to fool his family. It seemed a bit nut and sledgehammer, and I couldn't see why he just didn't say No to them. When more about his past came out it was a bit easier but it still sat a bit weird with me. He's a nice guy though, very honest and straightforward - apart from the whole lying to his family thing ;-)

Ryan, I really thought I'd like her - I didn't dislike her, but there were times when I wanted to give her a shake....I understand independence, and she had a horrible background, but she a long time past that now. " What does your mother do?" "Let's just say she works in pharmaceuticals"

Reminded me of when I was working, we had to get the staff to fill in a police check as they were working with kids. One guy said he had a traffic offence - yep, traffic(ing) heroin.....Words are easy to mislead.

The chemistry between them was great, but for someone so allegedly famous, who's career was at risk if this all came out I was surprised he never got Papped when out with a lady, never got followed by those who wanted a story. That usually follows fame, but he seemed to live a pretty sheltered, private life.

You know at some point the secret will come out but I didn't expect it to get done that way, caught me by surprise and I love it when that happens. I like to be kept on my toes when reading, for the unpredictable to happen.

I loved the other guys (and girls) too, made for a good cast of characters. I did find the ending and the family issues a little quick to get resolved, they felt a bit rushed and too much too soon but....

Stars: three and a half, a fun read, but not a re-reader for me.

ARC supplied for review purposes by Netgalley and Publishers

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