



Ricky

Ashley John

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On the surface, Ricky Thompson's life is one long party. His razor sharp wit and unwavering sexual confidence masks his true pain and suffering, and that's how he wants to keep things. Ten years after the death of his fiancé, Ricky has completely given up on the illusion of love. Wild nights in the bar and even wilder casual sex have become his coping mechanism, and he wants to keep the party going at whatever cost. When he is attacked in a dark alley and left for dead, Ricky's life takes an unexpected turn and the party suddenly comes to an end.

Chase Brody doesn't know where life is taking him. Between running his gym and raising his son, Dylan, the only time he puts himself first is his once a week trip to the gay bars. His family has convinced him he needs to find a mother for Dylan, so he keeps his sexual desires secret. He always believed women were for love and men were for sex, but he is forced to reevaluate everything he thought he knew when he stumbles across a helpless man in need of his help.

After Chase takes Ricky to the hospital, he offers him free self-defence classes, but it soon grows into something more complicated and both men are forced to listen to their hearts once again. Chase doesn't know how Ricky will fit into his difficult life, and Ricky can't seem to let go of his past heartache. With so much at stake, will these men admit they were wrong about love and surrender their hearts to each other, or is the risk too great?

Length: 100,000 words.

Standalone: Yes

Cliffhanger: No

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Ricky Details

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From Reader Review Ricky for online ebook

Susan says

DNF at 12%

I normally don't rate books I DNF at 12%, but this was so so bad, I have to give it a rating.

When I read the blurb I got al giddy. This looked like such a great hurt/comfort book! But boy, this really really sucked.

For me it was hate at first sight with MC Ricky. He calls everyone sweetheart in a condescending tone, and have everyone treat him like the queen he is. He also just leaves his best friend at a flea market they're both at, to go screw some guy he just picked up there. And when he is still tying off the condom, he literally kicks that guy to the curb, naked. A real gem this guy.

And let me tell you about the other MC, Chase.

Chase is a single father of a 6 year old. But this poor man has 'only' 1 night a week to go clubbing. So he arranges a babysitter every Friday night to pick up guys. Yes, he has a hard life.

And oh, even though he fucks a different guy every week, he's not sure he is gay. He could be just curious....

And let me tell you some more about Chase. This guy does not have a cock, he has a MANHOOD. Such a sexy word don't you think. Oh yes, come here with your manhood.

And also this monster is 10 INCHES LONG. That is a lot of manhood dude! Does he have to roll it up to get it in his pants?

I stopped reading after Chase's anaconda came out to play with some random guy he picked up at the bar.

Morgan Skye says

This is a long book, over 300 pages. It takes a long while for our boys to go from acquaintances and friends to something more. Chase is determined that while men might be for sex, women are for love and his son Dylan needs a woman's influence in his life.

Chase isn't looking for entanglements either. He's been hurt in the past by love and recent events only make him more paranoid not to trust, not the reverse.

I thought the writing was very good in this and the characters were really well developed. For the most part I enjoyed this and found it very satisfying.

What prevented this from being a five star read for me was three things. 1) the length. I think it was too long. While there was a lot for these guys to overcome, I found myself sort of flat-lining between the 30% mark and the 75% mark. There was a lot of waffling going on (for both guys) that got a bit tedious. 2) Chase's unwillingness to identify as gay. Even toward the end he was unwilling to own his sexuality and it bothered me that he was so stuck on this. 3) Ricky ran from everything and was set to run again then – on a dime-turned around to stay and I wasn't sure we were given a really good reason for that.

Those things, when added together, took this to a 3.5 star read for me. It was still really good, just not great.

If you're looking for a story with a lot of character and angst – this is for you!

3.5 of 5 stars

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

2.5 stars

I hate to say it, but I just didn't like Ricky. I wanted to, and the blurb caught my attention right away because I love hurt/comfort stories. I also tend to like stories where men get past traditional opinions of raising children and who they should raise them with.

Well, I felt a bit misled. There was no mention of Ricky being a drag queen. Honestly, I don't have anything against them. I've actually met some lovely drag queens, and I'm a HUGE fan of Chi Chi LaRue, RuPaul, and God, I love Dame Edna. However, I just don't find them to be particularly...sexy. Please don't think I'm being prejudiced. It's just a personal thing. I figured, though, since I had committed, I'd give it a go, rather than trying to DNF it or ask someone else to do it.

Let's start with Ricky himself. There were a lot of times when I actually cringed. His overuse of the word sweetheart started to drive me insane. If I was to do a shot every time it was said, I'd have passed out before the middle of the story. Then there was the meaningless, anonymous sex. I've read so many books where one of the MCs is a very promiscuous, but Ricky, with his rules and his behavior, started to be more than just a trope. I was angry with him from the start, to tell you the truth. He was out with his friend when he saw a handsome man. Ricky sends his poor friend out to get some coffee for him and his potential conquest, and when he seals the deal, he leaves with the man, literally walking past his friend and leaving him holding the coffee. So, by 3% I despised a character I'm supposed to fall in love with and become invested in his happily ever after. Not cool.

Read Kenna's review in its entirety here.

Emma says

2.5-3*

All the way through this I kept thinking that these characters were familiar. It was only long after I was done that I realised that I had started, but failed to finish, the first book (Timing) months ago.

This time we are following Tom's friend Ricky as he overcomes a few traumatic experiences. one old and one new. To help him with this is Chase. Ricky and Chase are on opposite sides of what I think of as my grandfathers gay dividing line. Those he can see because you can always spot a gay man (Ricky) and those he can't see because sorry Grandpa but "they" don't all look the same (Chase). I quite liked character of Ricky. Mostly because in the M/M books I have read most fall into the Chase category. Not many are as stereo-typically over the top gay as Ricky. I wasn't thrilled with his self analysis at the end of the book but what can you do.

Chase on the other hand annoyed me a bit. How can he not know he is more than bi-curious when he is getting his jollies with a different man almost every Friday night. I mean I suppose someone could be in that much denial but then perhaps he is the one in need of some analysis instead of Ricky.

Still overall I enjoyed it and might read more by this author in the future.

Chad says

What an incredibly beautiful sequel to Ashley John's book Timing, Ricky finally has his HEA ❤️??❤️?. I miss Ashley and his male romance voice ;-)

Debra says

Review originally posted at Sinfully.

3.5 stars

Although this book is a standalone, if you've read Timing you'll remember Ricky as Tom's friend and also remember his alter-ego, Miss Kitty Litter the drag DJ. I really liked Ricky in that book and was glad to see more of him here, though it may be harder for you to warm up the brashness that is Ricky if you haven't already seen his sweet, caring side.

Ricky equates love with heartbreak. He has spent last 10 years having meaningless sex, following rules that keep feelings out of the picture. He's basically a "one and done" kind of guy. He says he's happy the way he is, but his friends Tom and Cole aren't convinced. Soon even Miss Kitty Litter isn't enough to keep Ricky from cracking.

Tattoo covered, muscular gym owner Chase lives for his six year old son. He works and goes home except

for the occasional nights where he finds a hook up at one of the gay bars. He tolerates the father that walked out on him and his family when he was a kid for the sake of his son. His brother seems to be a lot like his father and his bitchy sister-in-law harps on him non-stop about his parenting skills and finding Dylan a mother. The only one who seemed tolerable in the family was Barbara, the woman his father left the family for, but she really didn't have a lot of page time. He allows his awful family to shape the way he thinks, and is convinced he needs to find a mother for his son, so he hides his attraction to men.

When Chase is on his way back to a hook-up's apartment one night, he finds Ricky badly beaten in an alley and calls for help, staying with Ricky in the hospital until he wakes up. When Ricky takes him up on his offer of some self-defense classes, they strike up an unlikely friendship that soon turns physical. Chase's brother makes it clear that he doesn't know why Chase is wasting his time hanging around Ricky and Chase's bigoted father turns out to be the officer who is investigating Ricky's case. Chase tries to keep the nature of his relationship with Ricky secret from his family and Ricky tries to keep Chase at arm's length.

These two have plenty of secrets that slowly come out and some hurt more than others. The real crux of the problem however is can Ricky let go of the past and risk his heart again on Chase and, does he even want to? For Chase the problem is bigger. Even as he starts to admit that he's not completely straight, and starts to accept himself, he still allows the family that thinks so little of him to have a lot of sway over his life choices, and they've convinced him he needs a mother for his son. He is afraid to come out to this horrible family for some reason and goes to great lengths to hide Ricky from his family and his family from Ricky.

I was a bit hot and cold on Chase. I understood he was trying to figure out his sexuality and trying to do what was best for his son, but one moment he's being a doormat and the next saying he didn't care what anyone thinks, it was pretty frustrating at times. Ricky was pretty consistent throughout although he does take some drastic steps when all the feelings between him and Chase got too strong. I would have liked to see Ricky interact more with Chase's son Dylan as the little time we did see them together was pretty awkward and adorable.

The two had great chemistry and I did enjoy much of their time together. They are both trying so hard to fight the best thing to have happened to either of them in a long time though and it did, at times, become a bit repetitive. I think a bit of editing would have definitely helped the flow of the book.

There was a lovely bit of support in Chase's elderly neighbor Annie and of course, Cole and Tom are back and have plenty of interaction with the guys too. The book definitely had its highs and lows for me, but I think if you liked Ricky in *Timing* you're going to want to read this. There was a lot of back and forth, but not a lot of angst. If hurt-comfort is your thing and you don't mind occasionally wanting to knock some sense into your MCs as they really fight against getting to their HEA Ricky will probably work well for you.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

This got better as it went along. Review soon.

Note- now it's been too long since I've read this. Forgot all the details... :(

Danna Iuliana says

I regret buying this book. It was boring and the overuse of the word sweetheart was ridiculous. I don't understand how you could write the word practically in every sentence. Ok, maybe not in every one but it sure felt that way. Also, Ricky was an idiot and Chase a doormat. After treating Chase like crap he should have groveled so much more, instead Chase is the one who runs after poor little Ricky, and forgives him in 2 sentences and 6 sweethearts.

Waste of money and time for me!

Elizabeth says

I hate to do this because I have enjoyed this author's work in previous reads but I felt absolutely nothing here.

Ricky is a party boy and has sworn off love because his fiancé died 10 years ago. So now his life is an endless party filled with hookups. Chase owns a gym with his brother and is a single father, he has a homophobic father who is a police chief, he seems to be surrounded by people who are dumbasses the only good in his life besides his son seems to be his elderly neighbor that helps with his son sometimes. Chase keeps his desire for men a secret.

Ricky is attacked one night leaving the club in which he is a drag DJ and is left for dead when Chase on his way to a hookup finds him and helps.

There is good here. The concept is good and the story ultimately is about a second chance and self acceptance however, we took a long time to get there and there were a lot of issues sprinkled in that annoyed me to no end.

1. I never could like Ricky. He has his moments where his true persona comes through all the bullshit he puts up, but in all honesty he is super annoying and uses the word sweetheart constantly.
2. Chase could never seem to accept himself fully it's like he was scared to say he is gay or bisexual, I'm not saying labels are important but come on you are banging a guy you are a little more than just straight-ish.
3. Ricky is not that nice to his best friend, someone who obviously cares about him deeply.
4. Ricky seems adamant to not let anyone in ever again to an alarming degree. I mean he goes to great lengths to destroy his relationship.
5. No burn, I didn't feel the burn. There are sexy times but no pining for each other I wanted more of a connection.

There is a good HEA, and even though Chase's son is the most important part of his life, the child doesn't over saturate the story like sometimes children in books seem to do.

It's not all bad might be a better read for someone else. I think my inability to warm up to Ricky kind of threw me off right from the get go.

Tina LoveBooksDK says

If you're looking for a sweet, funny and light romance, this book is for you.

This book was really good, but would have been better with a couple more sex scenes.

Ricky and Chase is so complete opposites, but oh so right for each other <3

Ricky

Chase

OMG, I felt so sorry for Chase, with a family like his who needs enemies!!!!

Seriously the abuse of the word **sweetheart**, will piss you off **BIG TIME!**

Karen says

How many times can you use a word...

Well apparently in the case of Ricky you can use one word a lot and I do mean A LOT!!! Ricky's favorite word is 'sweetheart' that's right, it's his tagline if you will. He calls everyone 'sweetheart'. He actually uses the word somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 times give or take a 'sweetheart', that's right I counted. I have to admit overusing a term of endearment is one easy way to haul me out of a story, but ironically in the case of this book it didn't seem to bother me that way. I suppose it was because Ricky used the term the most of us would use 'he' or 'she' or 'hey you', it really didn't hold any personal intimacy.

I found Ricky to be an interesting character. He was flamboyant, totally over the top, he ran a bookstore by day and was a Drag Queen DJ by night. He was also brave and outspoken and fearless when he needed to be. Except when it came to his personal life than Ricky was a runner whether he was actually running as in packing his bags and getting the hell out of Dodge or running figuratively by making rules that kept people at arms length, rules like...1. No names, 2. No second dates 3. No breakfast and 4. No falling in love. He'd loved once and he'd lost, making emotional detachment his coping mechanism.

Ricky lost the love of his life 10 years ago and he wasn't going through that again if he could avoid it. I can empathize with that, I understand not wanting to feel that kind of heartache again but seriously I'm of the 'better to have loved and lost' school of philosophy myself. So on this level I just couldn't quite connect with Ricky, other than to say it made me sad that someone who was so vital and vibrant and had so much to share with the world was hiding...such a waste of life.

This brings us to Chase. Chase is handsome, covered in tats and mouth-watering muscle. He runs a gym with his brother, he lives for his son, Dylan, the happy result of a one night stand that ended with Chase becoming a single father nine months later when there was a knock on his door and a baby delivered into his arms.

Chase's commitment to Dylan was 100% except on that one night a week when he went out. The one night that resulted in him crossing paths with Ricky...a beaten and badly injured version of Ricky but still one that Chase felt compelled to help and found himself drawn to.

'Ricky' ended up just being ok for me. It was a bit on the longish side and I felt like it could have been a bit shorter and probably delivered a better paced story. The other thing that took away from this story for me was the number of secondary characters that just were not likable and ironically this was also one of the things that impressed me about this book, so let me explain...

Probably the only secondary character that I really liked was Chase's neighbour Annie. She was a sweet and kind grandmotherly type and I loved the lack of judgement that she had and her quiet but solid acceptance of Chase. As for Chase's family...holy crap!!! I have to admit, that a family like this produced a nice, sweet guy like Chase is astounding. His father was simply a jerk from the word go, his brother was following in daddy's footsteps and the sister-in-law had a bitch level all her own. The step-mom didn't do much more than blip my radar but I think she might have been ok. And last but not least we have Chase's son, Dylan.

While I by no means disliked Dylan, I didn't really like him either. I don't actually recall the last time I encountered a child real or fictitious who left me feeling so ambivalent. For me Dylan just had no personality and given the emotional response that this author drew from me in regards to secondary characters I'm a little surprised and disappointed at the lack of personality displayed by Dylan. For me it just didn't feel right.

Also I just need to quickly mention Ricky's friend Tom. I'm not even really sure why but I just didn't like this character. I didn't think he was bad or evil in any way. He just struck me as whiny and not someone I'd care to know.

The fact that the author created secondary characters that long after I've finished the book can still bring out a bit of a visceral reaction in me...case in point the sister-in-law, Natalie, she was definitely my least favorite person in the whole book. Natalie was the personification of a pretentious, self-centered, self-absorbed bitch (sorry, I just don't have another word for her). That the author was able to draw such strong feelings from me about a secondary character, for me, speaks to the author's skill as a writer and his ability to create vivid images.

Unfortunately when my emotional responses are stronger to secondary characters than they are to the MCs than there's just something not working quite right for me. So while I am impressed with the authors ability to create these strong visual and emotional responses within me, as a reader I needed to make more of an emotional connection with the MCs than I was making in order for the story to really work.

A copy of 'Ricky' was graciously provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Jewel says

2.5 Stars

Hmm.... I'm not sure what to say, here. I've been wanting to read this author for a while, but I think I should have gone for one of his shorter stories to get a taste of his story telling and writing style before tackling a full length novel.

Ricky Thompson, 38, has sworn off dating of any kind. Since his fiancé died about a decade ago, Ricky just cannot let himself get close to another. So he hides behind his snark and behind the mask his drag queen persona, Miss Kitty Litter, allows him and insists that all he wants out of life is an endless string of one night stands (well, more like an hour or two). He doesn't want to know their names or anything about them. Just fuck and be gone. If he never allows himself to actually be happy, then he doesn't ever have to feel miserable, either, right? Sure, that makes sense.

Chase Brody, 32, is the single father of a 6 year old son, Dylan, from a one night stand he had. Dylan's mother was a party party girl and way too into drugs to raise a kid. So she left Dylan with Chase and then went her merry party way until it killed her. Chase's homophobic family is always around and telling him he needs to find a woman to settle down with because Dylan needs a feminine influence and every child should have a mother and a father, and all kinds of other traditional family and gender role BS that made me twitch. Insistence on more traditional gender and family roles does have a tendency to piss me off. And that Chase was buying into it, regardless of the fact that he rarely found women sexually attractive, just did not sit right with me.

I don't want to say it was all bad, though, because it wasn't. I liked that Chase was so dedicated to his son and that when he saw Ricky in the alley after his attack, he insisted on staying to help. Chase is really a good guy. And Ricky, though he certainly has more issues than National Geographic, is a man who is hurting, but who doesn't want anyone to know it. But he's not a bad guy, either. He's caring and funny and, when he allows himself, very loving. Plus, there seemed to be a reference to Heidi Cullinan's book, *Let it Snow* that I totally approved of. The overall theme of self-acceptance and second chances at love, I thoroughly loved. And the cover is rather delicious. Ricky's a beautiful man. And thank goodness for Chase's 80-something year old neighbor. She was one of the only adults in the story with some sense when it came to what really makes a family.

But there was so much tedium wrapped into all that, that I had trouble enjoying the story.

Ricky seemed so determined to never ever take another chance on love, and I just don't get that. Yeah, life can sure be shitty sometimes, but it also goes on whether you like it or not. And Ricky constantly runs away. I'm sure there are people out there, like Ricky, who are determined to hide from life instead of actually living it, and I pity them as much as I pitied Ricky in this story.

It also bothered me that Chase seemed to be so freaking scared of the words "bisexual" and "gay". He was obviously attracted to men, considering he was a gay bar every weekend to find one to fuck. And, though he did also seem to at least be somewhat attracted to women, or so he claimed, anyway, he was most definitely attracted to men. He presented, to me, like a 4 or 5 on the Kinsey scale. Probably a 5. As far as I can tell, the only woman Chase has slept with was his son's mother, and that was only once. He mentioned that she was the first woman to show him interest.

But he has avoided dating women ever since that one night stand, because I don't think he has the attraction for most women. So why insist for so long, that you're straight-ish? Especially to the guy you can't keep your hands off of? I get that everyone needs to come out in their own time and in their own way, but this bit got just as annoying as Chase's family drama and Ricky's overuse of the word "sweetheart". In spite of the fact that Chase knew several married same sex couples, he clinged to the 'men are for sex, women are for

marriage' attitude so long, I wondered if it weren't among his many tattoos. He's either a deeply closeted gay man, or he is bisexual. But he is nowhere near straight-ish.

I honestly think I would have enjoyed *Ricky* more if it were edited to about half its length. As it was, the story line got too tedious and repetitive and family drama just dragged me down. Between Chase's super homophobic father and brother, his family's insistence that children need a mother and a father, Chase's insistence that he is really straight-ish (almost to the end!), and Ricky constantly running away, I just wanted it all to end. I wanted to enjoy the book. Hell, I **want** to enjoy every story I read. That's why I read. Sadly, though, I didn't, all that much.

*Review copy of **Ricky** was generously provided, by the author, in exchange for an honest review.*

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

Review by The Blogger Girls.

This is not normally my kind of story, but having enjoyed Mr. John in the past, I decided to give it a go. It is always a pleasant surprise to end up really enjoying things that would normally send me running. I love when an author has the ability to do that for me, and this one was a success.

Ricky is a bit of a hot mess. After suffering the loss of his fiance quite a few years ago, he has adhered to a set of rules that have enabled him to live happily, or so he believes. Or, that prevent him from even remotely getting an opportunity to put him in that heartbreak place again. Whenever anything starts getting to him, he puts it all away as he takes on the persona of Miss Kitty Litter, the drag queen DJ. But things change a bit after he is attacked and left for dead on the sidewalk.

Enter Chase, the totally tattooed up hottie who, with his brother, co-owns the local gym in town. Chase is a bit on the fence about his sexuality, due mostly to his family's intrusion and bigotry. He believes he needs to end up with a woman to be a mother to his child but isn't able to deny himself completely of his male encounters. On his way with one of those encounters, they come across Ricky and Chase can't just leave him alone in that state. They begin a friendship after Chase offers to train Ricky in self defense, but their attraction is quickly apparent.

It doesn't take long before Chase has managed to get Ricky to break his rules, without either really realizing it. It isn't easy for these guys though. They both keep secrets from each other and neither really believes they can have anything long-term, even if they want it. Chase has his family to deal with and is worried about doing what's right for his son while Ricky is still set on not caring for someone enough for him to get hurt again. But neither can deny their feelings for very long. It is more a matter of them believing they could be more and actually making that happen. There is a lot more to all of these aspects giving the characters much more depth than it seems here.

I loved these guys! Ricky, even though he was a mess at times, broke my heart every time he took what people threw at him. He was unapologetic about who he was – if you don't like the Ricky he's showing you, move on down the road, sweetheart. :) But it was easy to see the real him behind his walls and makeup and

how everything affected his feelings and actions. And Chase was just a big ole hunk of caring and compassion rolled up in a sexy tatted package. He didn't care what others thought, as was clear by his full-body tattoos, unless it affected his son – then everything mattered. I loved that he decided he had to listen to his heart and not his homophobic father and brother while doing what was best for Dylan at the same time.

Ricky was angsty, but never felt overly deeply. There was plenty of it, but it never really gave me the gut wrenching feels that might have made it too much. There was just the right amount, in my opinion, and enough of the good parts and rest of the story that kept me interested in seeing these guys succeed and turning pages until it happened. I'm glad I gave this story a chance, because Mr. John came through, solidifying my feelings about his writing which is just as good as I remembered. I'll definitely be on the lookout for more.

Amy says

Ashley did it again!!!! I so wanted Ricky to be happy and not be a bitter lonely guy. So happy he has friends like Tom & Cole (Timing) to help him. When Chase helps Ricky out in an emergency, things feel different. Chase has a little boy to think about and Ricky is far from any commitment. But neither can move away from each other. This book has so much packed into it, a slow burn, fun, emotionally filled story. Sometimes moving forward is hard but with the right person saying goodbye to your past is easier. Ricky is scared to love again, Chase is scared of his family finding out. With everything happening, love may still conquer all!!!

Ashley John says

Ricky is OUT NOW!

Grab your copy on Amazon (FREE on Kindle Unlimited) <http://mybook.to/rickyashleyjohn>
