



Here and Now

Cheryl Etchison

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The Rangers of the 1st/75th fight hard, train hard and play hard. They are physically strong and mentally tough, disciplined and courageous. But all their military training hasn't prepared them for falling in love.

Former Ranger Medic Lucky James feels right at home working long night shifts in the ER, but less so during the day, when his college classes are filled with flirtatious co-eds. When his 19-year-old chem lab partner shows up at his work with dinner for "her Lucky," he quickly enlists the help of Rachel Dellinger, a nurse and fellow third shift "vampire".

Rachel is a people pleaser at heart, but she's finally decided enough is enough when it comes to her on-again, off-again boyfriend. When Lucky begs Rachel to help him ward off the advances of his teenager pursuer, she blackmails him into helping move her things out of the apartment she shared with her ex into a place all her own.

From there a friendship is born between two people just trying to make it through the night. Neither are living in the past or planning for the future. Until one day changes everything.

Here and Now Details

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From Reader Review Here and Now for online ebook

Alex (HEABookNerd) says

SERIES: American Valor #2

This is my second book by Cheryl Etchison and though I didn't enjoy it as much as the first one, it was still amazing! I thought it was wonderful to have Lucky and Rachel be friends first; and real friends, not just people who have the hots for each other but hide it. Though they each find the other attractive, their friendship is real and builds naturally as it progresses into something more. I also loved the scene when Lucky admits his feelings to Rachel because he makes things very clear. Thank god for a man who can admit his feelings!

Lucky is hands down a great hero and I loved reading about him. We're told many times that Lucky is a genuinely nice guy and then Etchison backs it up by showing just how nice Lucky is. It was very refreshing to have a sweet guy as a hero who really knows how to treat Rachel like the most important person in his life.

Rachel was really trying to get her life on track and is certainly put through the ringer in this book. In the beginning Rachel is a really messed up woman; she doesn't really come across that way in her work or thoughts but when the reader gets more information about her past relationships it really becomes clear that she struggles with what a healthy relationship should look like. I was happy that Lucky could show her how things should be between two people who care about each other. Occasionally Rachel would drive me crazy. In reality she was acting the way a regular person in her shoes would act, so I can't really blame her. However, sometimes I wanted her to just trust Lucky and go for it.

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**Happily Ever After Book Nerd**  
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### E-Reader Addict says

I freaking LOVE this series, and *Here and Now* was SO good!

I originally skipped over this book in order to get to Michael's story (*From the Start*), who is the older brother from the first book in the series (*Once and For All*). I'll just confess that for whatever reason, I really wasn't that interested in reading Lucky's story.

### WHAT WAS I THINKING?!?!

Lucky and Rachel may be my favorite couple of the series (so far? Ms. Etchison, please, please tell me there will be more from this series!!!) Having known each other growing up, there is a bit of sad history between the two. But six years have passed since they last saw each other, and so much has changed for them.

After struggling to get through nursing school, Rachel Dellinger has now worked her way into her dream job

in the ER. But since she's low woman on the totem pole, she's stuck with the night shift. Add to that a cheating boyfriend and an extremely strained relationship with her parents, life has sorta beaten her down. But she's determined to make things better, no matter how long it takes.

Lucky James has left the army and his job as a special ops medic, and is pursuing his dream of becoming a doctor. Starting college at the age of 30 has unique challenges, not the least of which is dealing with silly college-age kids. After ten years in the military, he just has a different perspective on life. He takes classes during the day, but also works in the ER. As a tech. It's a position that's way beneath his skills, but it keeps him in the hospital and helps him pay the bills.

As you can imagine, Lucky and Rachel forge a bond working together at the hospital. Soon they're spending more time together outside work, and even though they've been adults for many years now, they're both still trying to figure things out. And watching them do it together is delightful. Watching them fall in love was even better.

Cheryl Etchison is a masterful writer. I love the characters she creates, and the realistic way she deals with issues the characters are going through. There's realistic conflict, and adults managing it in adult ways, without over-the-top angst. Her stories are heartfelt, but also entertaining. I can't wait to read more by this author!

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### **Maggie'may Reinders says**

Was rather slow moving and predictable

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### **Debbie I Heart YA Books says**

I fell in love with author Cheryl Etchison's writing style and the way she can pen a romance novel. The lady is truly amazing when it comes to Military Romance. Here and Now is the second installment in the American Valor series, and readers we are back again with the 75th Ranger Regiment. This time it's former Ranger Medic Lucky James to find romance with the woman that's his happily-ever-after. Rachel Dellinger is the lucky lady who claims Lucky's heart. Ever since they were in high school together, Lucky has had a crush on her, but he never acted on his feelings for Rachel, and then he enlisted. The first time Lucky meets back up with Rachel, she slaps his face. The second time Rachel hits him with her truck while Lucky is riding his bike. So yeah, talk about a rough start to Lucky's happily-ever-after with the woman who stole his heart in high school. Lucky definitely has his work cut out for him to win Rachel's heart.

Lucky is back in his hometown of Durant Oklahoma after twelve years of service as a Ranger Medic. It was never his plan to stay in the 75th Ranger that long. Lucky's original plan was to serve out his contract and use the GI Bill to pay his way through college, but year after year he kept renewing his contract and deploying with his brothers-in-arms. Now, it's been twelve years and he's thirty years old and just getting started with his college plans to finish his medical school. Lucky is also working at the local hospital as an ER tech, and this is where he meets back up—or rather, Lucky's hit and run—with Rachel. Yep, Rachel hits Lucky with her truck and Rachel did the running after she realized it was Lucky. Rachel works at the same hospital as an ER nurse. Rachel also has had a crush on Lucky since high school, but Lucky is Rachel's unicorn. Meaning

she never thought she would have a chance with this beautiful, mysterious, military guy who has traveled the world and seen and done amazing things with his life. She's just the girl that spent her entire life in this Podunk town of Durant, Oklahoma. Yeah, not a chance in heck Lucky her unicorn would fall for the Podunk town girl. But when these two need each other's help, it opens the door for Lucky and Rachel to finally acted on those high school feelings, and just when those feelings are turning into love, Lucky choice changes everything—a choice that Rachel's not sure she can accept in order to be with the man she loves.

Here and Now is a touch-your-heart Military Romance with plenty of humor and steamy romance, a story that pulls you in and won't let you go until you find out if the unicorn gets his podunk girl. Definitely a must, must read.

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### **KAS says**

I am enjoying this American Valor series about former Army Rangers coming home and trying to find their way after years serving their country.

Lucky was a medic with the Ranger battalion for twelve years and decided to leave the army to enroll in college classes in preparation for med school at the age of 30. Rachel is a nurse and was the sister of a good friend of Lucky's, who joined the military right out of high school, and within months, died in combat. Rachel blamed Lucky for his death.

Lucky and Rachel eventually become good friends working the same weekend night shifts in the hospital ER. Lucky also feels very protective of Rachel, who just left a really bad relationship. She is in no hurry to rush back into another one, although she longs to find the love of her life.

They find themselves spending all their free time together and their attraction to each other becomes combustible! Unfortunately, the timing is all wrong.

Really good story! 4.5 Stars!!!

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### **Jenica says**

Maybe 3.5? I don't like when people actually get it together because of an accidental pregnancy, but that's just me.

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### **Essie Kaye says**

I am a fan of Cheryl Etchison. Her books have made me a fan of military romance.

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### Gaele says

I don't think any of us have trouble understanding the difficulties facing those who return from war, but Cheryl Etchison brings a story that is all about moving forward, and avoiding glances in the rearview mirror.

Lucky is a former Ranger, a medic for his unit. After his military career ends, he's decided to return to school while working 3rd shift at the local hospital. Not interested in much more than getting through his next set of tasks, he's slowly reintegrating into civilian life. If only his classmates were as understanding as his work colleagues.

Rachel is one of Lucky's coworkers, and while they are 'friendly' they aren't friends. Until his chemistry lab partner shows up with a dinner and more on her mind. Quick thinking and desperation have Lucky begging for help in pushing off the young co-ed. But, Rachel needs something too: the relationship with her boyfriend is notoriously unstable, and she's finally decided that enough is enough. She'll help him, if in return, he puts those muscles to use and helps her move out.

These two are adorable together: tentative steps to knowing one another ignores that first spark of attraction as they both decide to be friends. Well, the friend zone is as dangerous to their hearts as any war zone that Lucky ever served in. Wholly competent and decidedly capable in an emergency, the whole 'feelings' thing has him in knots, with no way out. Rachel is desperately trying to become less of a people-pleaser, learning to say no, and speak for what she truly wants. But she never thought she'd want another relationship.

With secondary characters that add humor and moments with a couple from the first book, this story is sure to please people who want a little less angst from a military themed story, but still want to understand the characters' decisions, choices and motivations. A wonderful introduction to the series that works well on its own, although I'm now curious about Danny and Bree.

I received an eArc copy of the title from the publisher via Edelweiss for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

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### Debbie Dodd says

I enjoyed reading this story.

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### Kristin says

What a diamond in the rough I found! On a whim, I picked up Cheryl Etchison's **Here and Now**, the second book in her *American Valor* series. I didn't read the first book, but from reading the synopsis, it appeared to me that I didn't have to read the first book to understand what was going on in the second book. It certainly

didn't hinder my entertainment!

Rachel Dellinger has gotten herself into a rut of a life. By happenstance, she's ended up living with her boyfriends, one right after the other, and hasn't really lived on her own since leaving home. It's time for Rachel to be independent. But old habits of taking care of mean and nasty parents are holding her back and keeping her in her small town.

What appealed to me about this story is the military aspect. I love a man (or woman, I'm equal opportunity) who is brave and has served his or her country as part of the armed forces. After serving his country for about 10 years, Lucky James finally takes time from the military to get the education he's always wanted to become a doctor. But he's finding that the civilian life, with it's young, mindless co-eds and hospitals with strict rules, are harder than he'd thought they be. But if he wants to be a doctor, he has to pay his dues.

Lucky and Rachel have a past that includes Rachel's younger brother who used to idolize Lucky. So ten years later, when Rachel accidentally runs Lucky over in the Hospital parking lot where she also works, they aren't exactly glad to see each other. But what started as a cantankerous reunion ends up worming its way into a great friendship.

But this is a romance, where's the romance??!! Ahhh, it's a slow build type of romance. But being a quick read, we don't waste a long time on the slow burn. And THAT'S what I loved about this book! It got down to the nitty gritty of the romance - do you take a chance on risking your heart on a guy who may not stick around? Do you risk your friendship?

The writing is good, the story moves fantastic, the characters are well fleshed out. This is just a well done romance all around! Like I said, a total gem! I'm so stupid-glad that I took a chance on this! I will be continuing with this series. I just like what Ms. Etchison does with a military romance.

Military AND small town romance lovers!

Review appears on

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### **Casey says**

Find this review and more at [Ramblings From This Chick](#)

Here and Now is the second book in the American Valor series by Cheryl Etchison. I am really loving this series, and am becoming a huge fan of Cheryl's. This series is emotional and both stories so far have been so good that I couldn't put either one of them down. If you are a contemporary fan and love military heroes, this series is a must read!

Former Ranger Medic Lucky James is adjusting to civilian life and has decided to work nights in the ER while attending classes during the day. Things are working out for him until his 19 year old lab partner shows up with dinner one night looking for more. Lucky knows that he needs help and asks his coworker

Rachel to help him out. But Rachel is also in need of some help and agrees to help Lucky with his chem partner as long as Lucky will help move her out of her boyfriend's place so that she can finally break up with him. As Lucky and Rachel get to know one another, things start to change and both of them find themselves feeling far more than they expected. Can two people who weren't looking for love or a future find one together?

I really liked these two. I will admit that while I had liked Lucky in the first book of the series, I had been hoping to get Mike's story. But as soon as I started *Here and Now*, Lucky had me! Seeing him adjust to civilian life and start a friendship with Rachel was something that I couldn't get enough of. Lucky was such a great hero, and I thought that him and Rachel were fantastic together. Rachel was great as well, and even though these two weren't initially friends and didn't plan on anything more, they fit together perfectly. She helped him just as he helped her, and I felt like the connection they were forming was so real and genuine.

Overall, another great story in the American Valor series by Cheryl Etchison. I am so glad that I took a chance on Cheryl with *Once and For All*, because this series is everything I look for in a great Contemporary Romance series. I have really loved both books, and I think that readers will love these just as much as I have. Though I have never been through what any of these characters have, Cheryl Etchison has a way with words and I feel like there is something in each of these that anyone can relate to. Her characters are interesting and unique, and I have felt invested in each of them. I can't wait to read more from Cheryl Etchison, and I am still anxiously awaiting Mike's story!

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\*\*ARC Provided by Publisher\*\*

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### **Carrie says**

Gah! I'm loving this series so much.

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### **Cara Ross says**

Lucky James is not your average college students; for 1, he is 29 years old and an Army Ranger veteran, but when he left the 7th Ranger Regiment, he didn't think about the years of schooling ahead of him or the age difference between him and the other students; but also going from the adrenaline rush of protecting his brothers at arms from life or death situations to being a almost 30 year old college student and a ER tech! But the one person he crashed into (literally) was more than likely the one person who never wanted to see him again...Rachel Dellinger

Rachel Dellinger needed a change! She has finally decided to leave her no good boyfriend Curtis; now she just had to get through her first shift as an ER nurse and then she can put her plans into action. But when she crashed into Lucky, the person she lashed out at at her brother Ethan's funeral.

Now Lucky and Rachel are back in each other's lives, they cannot deny the huge spark that is between them! And just as things start going well for them, fate steps in and makes it difficult! With ex-boyfriend and a one off jealous date (and ER doctor) making life almost impossible, Lucky is missing his life in the Rangers. And when things become explosive at work, Lucky leaves and re-enlists.

But can Lucky have the job and the women he loves? And how will he react when he finds out Rachel is pregnant!

This is the first book I have read in the An American Valorous Novel and boy! Am I now addicted! I love the story of Lucky and Rachel and I absolutely LOVED their characters. Lucky is a strong and loving and just wants to fix everything for everyone. Rachel is a giver, but with the the loss of her brother and her freeloader ex Curtis took its toll on It it was truly her relationship with Lucky that made her stronger.

The author has written an amazing love story and has written it so beautifully! The writing was without fluff and the plot was fresh, clean and was not your average military romance, but more like a true story!

I give Here and Now 4 stars.

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### **Denept says**

Reading them all...

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### **Emmi says**

There were so many things I like about this book (Lucky, first and foremost), but I just could not bring myself to like Rachel. I wanted to, having grown up in a poor and struggling household myself. But this chick is so selfish. First, she hits Lucky with her truck and tries to blame him. Then their relationship is all about her, her, her. She dates a man who treats him, her "best friend," like shit on a daily basis, even when he tells her it hurts him. After he chooses not to have sex with her when she's drunk because that would be wrong, she has sex with him when he's drunk and grieving because she needs it (and seriously, he absolutely made the right choice not to have sex with her, and it's just as important for women to respect the boundaries of consent as it is for men). Then she freaks out and leaves him all alone because his first words after he drunkenly and impulsively had sex with her in the throes of grief weren't wisely chosen. Later, she's all shocked and surprised when she realizes that she was wrong to have sex with him in that situation, but only after she finds out she's pregnant - in other words, only after there are consequences for HER. Then, while he's enduring grueling Ranger training, she sends him only one message thanking him for the couch he bought her. No words of support or love. Just, no.

Not every decision Lucky makes is good or right, but hell if that man doesn't put her before himself 90% of the time. He deserves better.

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