

The background of the entire page is a gradient from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. Overlaid on this is a complex network of white dots (nodes) connected by thin white lines. Some nodes are larger than others, and the connections form a web-like structure. There are also some faint, larger geometric shapes like triangles and polygons scattered across the background.

The Girl He Used to Know

Written by Tracey Garvis Graves

Published by griefconvention

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The Girl He Used to Know

By Tracey Garvis Graves

The Girl He Used To Know

Annika (rhymes with Monica) Rose is an English major at the University of Illinois. Anxious in social situations where she finds most people's behavior confusing, she'd rather be surrounded by the order and discipline of books or the quiet solitude of playing chess.

The Girl He Used To Know Book

Jonathan Hoffman joined the chess club and lost his first game--and his heart--to the shy and awkward, yet brilliant and beautiful Annika. He admires her ability to be true to herself, quirks and all, and accepts the challenges involved in pursuing a relationship with her. Jonathan and Annika bring out the best in each other, finding the confidence and courage within themselves to plan a future together. What follows is a tumultuous yet tender love affair that withstands everything except the unforeseen tragedy that forces them apart, shattering their connection and leaving them to navigate their lives alone.

The Girl Hellberg Lyrics

Now, a decade later, fate reunites Annika and Jonathan in Chicago. She's living the life she wanted as a librarian. He's a Wall Street whiz, recovering from a divorce and seeking a fresh start. The attraction and strong feelings they once shared are instantly rekindled, but until they confront the fears and anxieties that drove them apart, their second chance will end before it truly begins.

“Are you going to kiss me?”

He laughed. “I was planning on it, yes.”

“Okay. I’m ready.”

While I enjoyed witnessing this story unfold and truly appreciate how Graves approached certain themes within this book, my true determination to reach the last page was because of the beautiful flower we meet called Annika Rose.

"Romance"

While yes, this is a romance novel filled with all the kisses and warm moments you'd want in one... I'd like to think this was more-so a story of hope. Hope

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"Romance"

While yes, this is a romance novel filled with all the kisses and warm moments you'd want in one... I'd like to think this was more-so a story of hope. Hope for a strange and gorgeously odd girl that never really got the manual for life. I loved the way we saw Annika find herself and grow through the years

and tears.

This story begins with Annika meeting her ex-college boyfriend Jonathan. At the start, we don't know why they split up or why this is the first time they are seeing each other after ten years but we know that somehow, it foreshadows to Annika's fault. Which after finishing this book, I can most confidently say that Annika deserves so much better.

"But I will call. I'll apologize. Ask him if we can start over. "Clean slate," I'll say. Such is my desire to replace the memories of the girl he used to know with the woman I've become."

The story itself moves from past to present POV's from both Jonathan and Annika. We watch as their love unfolds and Annika becomes someone she is proud of. I won't give away too much, and really I think it's better if you go into this one blind. Although there were a lot of sub plots and story arcs, I felt like it was easy enough to follow.

"Where do we start?" I ask.
Will smiles. "I've always found the beginning to be a good place."

Before I address the parts that I felt really took away the magic of the story. I'm going to go through the parts that I really adored. I struggled to decide whether I should give this a 2 or 3 star rating and am still hesitant. Maybe as this review writes itself, I'll find out my final answer ;)

The Characters

Firstly, Annika has my whole heart at the moment and I am not afraid to throw down anyone who says she isn't the purest angel. She is kind and warmhearted towards everything and although she may not understand the world around her, she knows love. Annika was truly the winning piece in this story and I felt so comfortable reading her POV. It felt like being inside her head with all the weird fragmentations and beautifully blunt observations.

Secondly, Janice. Janice was the kick ass, bad ass girlfriend that everyone needs in their life. Especially through college when everything feels like it's constantly changing and you can't keep up. I really enjoyed that the author put in a girl advocating another girl instead of bringing her down trope. It makes my heart sing whenever I see cliches like that kicked to the curb.

Now... for Jonathan.

My mother warned me about men like him.

"His touch grounded me and made me feel as if nothing bad could ever happen as long as Jonathan had a hold of my hand."

The Girl He Used to Know

I would really like to say that he was selfless, mindful of Annika's health and disorder, loving and noble. In truth, we were made to believe he was. However, reaching the end of the novel and watching everything come to light, I saw a wolf in sheep's clothing. The whole time we think that Annika did something, and without giving anything away - she went through such hard shit in her life and continues to blame herself for everything. Then enters Jonathan, who all but doesn't want to give her a "second chance" because he agrees!?!?

Next comes the dialogue and trust between the two of them. By the second half of the book, it truly came across that Jonathan felt like he was just settling. Annika loved him way more than he did her and it really fleshed out that way. We saw her constantly battling to be a better version of herself and there comes a point in the book when Jonathan all but tells her that he may never find his perfect girl, so Annika is good enough.

This man frustrated the living fuck out of me. He was selfish and under the surface manipulative. He reminded me of a lot of toxic people that wear a mask in order to pretend they are actually fucking living light. Every time I thought there would be some sort of redemption and justice, he went and mentioned how pretty she was.

"Thereâ€™s something about having a pretty girl on your arm and knowing sheâ€™s into you that makes you feel like showing her off.â€•

The Writing

Having read Graves previous work "On the Island," I have really come to enjoy her simple yet subtly poetic writing. I loved that this wasn't a magic dick syndrome story or another "love can cure me" one either. It showed how important it is to take hold of your own life regardless of who you want to please or who you want to be with.

Overall, I enjoyed some of the warm moments that this story had to offer, but I wish there was more. Thinking now, I feel like this is a 2.5 stars, all because of Annika and the way she held herself and her dialogue. The other half of the rating was lost due to the endless amounts of sub-plots and Jonathan. Because fuck him. ...more

The Girl He Met Online

Sweet read about first love, heartbreak, and second chances.

Annika and Jonathan first met while in college in 1991. Annika, awkward, shy, and socially inept, has trouble connecting people. She is on the spectrum, but it is 1991 and Autism was not a common diagnosis. Annika struggles during her time as an undergraduate. She has one close friend and spends a lot of her time in solitude. When she is partnered up with Jonathan during a chess game, Jonathan sees her in a different light than other

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Fast forward to 2001--Annika lives in Chicago and is working at her dream job at a library. A random shopping excursion at a grocery store, she runs into Jonathan. They broke up 10 years ago, but the reader isn't aware of why. They rekindle their relationship, but a terrible event puts their relationship in jeopardy.

The narrative switches between 1991 and 2001, alternating between Annika and Jonathan's earlier relationship and back to 2001 where they are trying to put the pieces back together from what broke them up in the past. Both of their POV's are shared, but I was more interested in Annika's chapters than Jonathan's, even though both characters are likable, there was just something more compelling about her voice.

There's an ease about *The Girl He Used to Know*. From the first page, I was sucked in by Annika's voice and couldn't stop reading. Graves does a nice job of capturing Annika's feelings of anxiety and sometimes exclusion. The romance with Jonathan, especially during their college years, was super sweet. As much as I loved reading this, when I got closer to the ending, I put it aside for a while because I knew by the date what was to come and I didn't know how things were going to play out--I was terrified the ending was going to be painful and awful, but it was not. The ending seemed a little rushed, and I was left wanting more.

Overall, this was an enjoyable, light read with likable characters and a compelling romance.

Thank you to Marissa from St, Martin's Press for sending me a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. ...more

4.5 Stars!!

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpr...>

I REALLY enjoyed this novel.

Chicago 2001 - Annika is picking up groceries when she hears a familiar voice call her name. Though she only sees the person out of the corner of her eye, she knows it's him! Jonathan. It's been ten years since she's seen that face or heard that voice. She wants to run but a voice inside her head tells her to stay put.

“Don't run, take responsibility, be yourself”

Annika takes a deep 4.5 Stars!!

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“Don't run, take responsibility, be yourself”

Annika takes a deep breath and says hello. When they hug she still feels the safety and comfort she always felt in his arms. As they leave the store, Annika impulsively asks if they could get together sometime. Jonathan hesitates but eventually agrees.

The University of Illinois 1991- When Annika attended the University of Illinois you could find her at the Wildlife Medical Clinic, the library, or at chess club. Annika loved playing chess. During a particularly tough time at University, Annika considered moving back home. That's when her friend, Janice took her to a chess club meeting, urging Annika to give it a try. Chess club gave her a chance to interact and be a part of something. Then Jonathan Hoffman joined the club.

Annika felt awkward and nervous around most people. She spent hours studying people, their behaviors. “Why were there so many things to think about? To remember? Why couldn't I figure anything out in the moment instead of days or weeks later?” There were few people she could be herself with.

Jonathan was instantly smitten with Annika and was thrilled when she eventually agreed to go out with him. Being with Annika could be challenging at times, but Jonathan loved the things that made her

The Girl He Used to Know

different. He understood what many others didn't. He also seemed to know exactly what to do when Annika was upset or overwhelmed.

Annika usually felt invisible, but it was different with Jonathan. With him, she felt safe, and so much more. Their relationship was strong. But then something drove them apart.

Now that they have reconnected, is there any hope for their relationship? Will they be able to move past the hurt and anger?

A terrific novel that I read in just one sitting.

The story is told from Annika and Jonathan's point of view, alternating between 2001 and 1991. The author's descriptions made me feel like I was in the minds of these well-developed characters and I fell in love with many of them. There were a few parts of the story that may have seemed implausible, but I found those easy to overlook and just enjoyed this wonderful and heart-warming story.

A compelling and sensitive read about love and second chances. I am absolutely looking forward to reading more from Tracey Garvis Graves.

I'd like to thank St. Martin's Press for providing me with an advanced copy of this novel. Opinions stated are my own.

...more

The Girl He Left Behind

When past mistakes make you into a stronger individual, for the sake of wanting the one true person that makes you better, that's what this compelling romance does to the wonderful characters...

Never have read this author before, so you should all know that I am very sensitive when it comes down to new authors, especially authors in which come from a line of very little known romance that I have heard or read from. But to my surprise, this novel did not upset me in any sort of way. On the cont
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Never have read this author before, so you should all know that I am very sensitive when it comes down to new authors, especially authors in which come from a line of very little known romance that I have heard or read from. But to my surprise, this novel did not upset me in any sort of way. On the contrary, it had everything that I was hoping would get me out of my book slump. Everything a romance should entail when it comes down to emotional in depth struggles, to having a second chance at true love in which will have you as the reader, emotionally drained for more.

I am not the biggest fan of flashback chapters, but this novel was one that I was able to tolerate due to the fact that Annika and Jonathan have such a complex back story in which had me questioning as to why they ended up separating in the first place. As previously mentioned, this is a second chance romance. That in itself is also another triggering point in which I would have never picked up this novel. But thank goodness that I did because I would have regretted it otherwise. Annika is such a unique character, one in which has social concerns that make me want to hug her and become her next best friend. Jonathan has known her for a while now, so after seeing each other after so many years, his attraction towards Annika is one that never seemed to diminish. A bond that made them the ideal partnership both physically and emotionally.

Overall, Tracey has outdone herself with the creation of this romantic novel that will have you swept from your feet. I am glad that we can have the chance of reading romance such as this one that makes you slow down and truly find that one person that will have your heart in the best way possible by protecting it cherishing it, and knowing when to do what's best. Thank you to SMP for sending over this novel as I will not be on the lookout for more of Tracey's novels.

ARC kindly provided by SMP, in exchange for an honest review...

The Girl He Used to Know

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4 Undeniably Unique!! Stars

I was beyond thrilled to have received an ARC for this book having loved every single, solitary word of "On The Island."

Once again, Ms. Graves writing skills transports you to an alternate universe of uniqueness. Honest to goodness, if you are looking for a romance which is a far cry from the usual, this author fills the bill. I couldn't have been more engrossed if I tried.

We meet two individuals whom I immediately fell in love and connected with. The beautiful Annika, 4 Undeniably Unique!! Stars

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We meet two individuals whom I immediately fell in love and connected with. The beautiful Annika, whose social skills would be deemed "awkward" by society's standards; and Jonathan, who is smart, personable and terrifically good looking.

While this is a sweet romance, there is also an important secondary storyline making this such an extraordinary read.

To say Annika is "odd" is an understatement. The way in which she copes with the challenges and adversity of everyday life captivated and endeared her to my deepest core. And Jonathan ... wow ... he is a humble hero.

"Marched to the beat of a different drum, did she?"

"She marched to the beat of an entirely different band. One you've never heard of and under no circumstances ever expected to like."

Annika and Jonathan meet and start dating during their senior year of college and when they unexpectedly bump into each other again, ten years have passed.

The Girl He Used to Know

The telling of the story goes back and forth between “then and now” and with a dual narrative, which works seamlessly.

But, what I really craved was an epilogue. Like really, really craved! Did I get my HEA? I think so, but needed more, a lot more.

Of course, I went into this beautiful story with blinders on, and hope you will too. It is an unforgettable and unparalleled read.

...more

The Girl He Never Noticed

my first ARC for 2019 and i honestly couldnt have hoped for a better book! maybe its just because my past week or so has been very fantasy heavy, but i really needed this sweet contemporary romance.

i have never read a "second chance at first love"™ story that i didnt enjoy, and this is no exception. this story is rather simple. the writing is fairly basic and when it comes to annika and jonathan, there isnt really much that happens in regards to a plot. this is just a story about two people who c my first ARC for 2019 and i honestly couldnt have hoped for a better book! maybe its just because my past week or so has been very fantasy heavy, but i really needed this sweet contemporary romance.

i have never read a "second chance at first love"™ story that i didnt enjoy, and this is no exception. this story is rather simple. the writing is fairly basic and when it comes to annika and jonathan, there isnt really much that happens in regards to a plot. this is just a story about two people who come to love each other and then later learn that that love never went away. but i think that by keeping this story simple, it adds to the integrity and sincerity of the characters. also, i love reading about someone on the spectrum. it makes me so happy that this has become common representation in books lately!

i will also mention that i was let down by the ending. the last couple of chapters feel like an entirely different story to me and i am not quite sure why it took the direction it did. i can kind of understand if the author was trying create an intense moment for the reader to become more emotionally invested in annika and jonathan, but the manner in which she did it did not seem necessary to me. it is very out of place, rushed, and just not feel like the right conclusion to this story.

but overall, this is a delightfully wholesome novel. and it may have been my first TGG book, but i doubt it will be my last. "

thanks again to st. martins press for the advance copy and i hope you guys keep an eye out for this when it releases in just a few months! :)

† 3.5 stars ...more

*I'm so excited this book is finally out! One of my favorite reads in the last year. Happy publication day!
4/2/19

It is such a wonderful feeling when you read a book and you fall in love with the characters. Sure, many books have enjoyable characters but it's not often you get to meet someone special. I absolutely adored Annika. She shares some similarities with another character in a book I read recently, but while that book was an okay read, this one truly captured my heart.

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Back in the early 1990s, Annika and Johnathan were seniors at the University of Illinois. Annika gets anxious in social situations which is probably why she enjoys the game of chess because it doesn't involve much talking. After playing a few games against Annika as members of the university chess club, Johnathan finds her intriguing and admires how she remains true to herself even if she comes across as different. While the two form a connection, something happens that tears them apart. Ten years later, they run into one another in Chicago and slowly start to get to know each other again. But with so many things left unresolved from the past, is it even possible to move on and give love another shot?

Hopefully, my synopsis doesn't read too much like a typical second chance romance because in my opinion this book was so much more than that. There's a pretty big theme going on in the story that I'm sure most people will pick up on early but the author doesn't fully address until pretty far into the book. Despite the fact there are many differences, I found myself relating to some of the aspects of Annika's personality. And yet it was also really easy to relate to Johnathan and how he tried to adapt so he could bring out the best in Annika. I just really enjoyed seeing the two of them interact, back as students and also meeting back up again ten years later.

This was such an incredible read for me. So many touching moments and passages I would read and then have to pause for a bit because I was so moved. Maybe this won't be a perfect read for everyone but I do think it is absolutely worth it to give it a shot. One of my favorite reads this year!

Thank you to St. Martin's Press for the opportunity to read an advance copy! I was under no obligation to post a review and all views expressed are my honest opinion. ...more

The Girl He Used To Know Ending

4 Stars.

If you Believe in Anything, Believe in the Power of Love.

1991:

Annika and Jonathan meet at the University's Chess Club. For Jonathan, there is just something about Annika that stands out. She challenges him in a way that no one else ever has.

Annika has never been comfortable around people. Every situation makes her anxious and being in college pretty much freaks her out. Working at the animal clinic, being at the library and playing chess are the only times she feels normal. When Jonathan approaches her for a game she freezes. Playing with someone new isn't something she does - it's out of her routine, yet she gives it a chance and tries to act normal.

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Jonathan underestimated Annika from the start. Though she tries to push him away he won't let her. Boy is she lucky. Soon they begin spending every second together, only to be torn apart.

2001:

When Annika runs into Jonathan at the Grocery store in Chicago she immediately knows what she has to do: grab hold and not let go. Soon they are catching up like no time was lost. Things aren't that simple however. Love never is.

"The Girl He Used to Know" is a love story - it is sweet, full of heart and it will bring you close to tears. Annika and Jonathan are as real as they can possibly get. Tracey Garvis Graves writes about people and situations close to each of us: love, life and heartache. Most elements of this story rang very true in my opinion, except for one and that was a big one for me and that is the reason why I deducted a star from the rating. This is however, a beautiful, compelling, heart wrenching novel and I highly recommend it.

The Girl He Used to Know

A huge thank you to Dana at St. Martin's Press and to Tracey Garvis Graves for a galley of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on Goodreads, Twitter, and Instagram on 11.23.18.

Will be published on Amazon on release date of 4.2.19 ...more

At its core *The Girl He Used to Know* is a story of love, acceptance and second chances.

Annika and Jonathan come face to face in a grocery store...after 10 years. The two were college sweethearts and it is instantly apparent that the connection they shared is alive and well even after years of absence. Annika and Jonathan's love story was heartwarming, endearing and unique. I enjoyed watching their relationship unfold through the dual timelines both for the first time in 1991 and the second time. At its core *The Girl He Used to Know* is a story of love, acceptance and second chances.

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Annika is beautiful, intelligent and quirky. She is also on the autism spectrum. Although she is considered to be high functioning, she suffers from social awkwardness. Through the course of her life this has led to people taking advantage of her, mistreating her and dismissing her. Yet, as we come to know Annika we realize she is strong, brave, caring, loyal and trusting to a fault. Graves did a phenomenal job developing Annika's character. I found myself rooting for her and wanting to be her friend.

Jonathan loved and accepted Annika for who she was. He was so sweet, gentle and understanding of her needs and quirks. They truly balanced each other out with their relationship. He was a sense of security for her. With him, Annika tried new things and discovered more than her usual routine was possible. In turn, she offered Jonathan a fierce and unyielding love.

Although Annika and Jonathan were the main characters Graves solidly built secondary characters that were an integral part of the story. I adored Annika's best friend Janice who was truly a light in her life. Janice helped Annika navigate the world socially. She acted as her translator, confidant, and guide. Their friendship was just so emotionally satisfying! I adored that Annika had this strong friend who accepted her and saw all she had to offer others.

The one negative I have for this amazing story was the ending. It felt rushed after the time spent building their relationship. I didn't see the traumatic event coming and while I felt a bit like it came out of left field, I was ok with it. I simply didn't appreciate the abrupt ending after everything Annika and Jonathan (and me!) had been through together.

The Girl He Used to Know

This was a strong debut from Tracey Garvis Graves. Annika is the kind of character that will definitely remain strong in my memory and her story was well developed, emotional and left me feeling content.

Thank you Tracey Garvis Graves, St. Martin's Press and NetGalley for the opportunity to read and review an arc of this book. ...more

The Girl He Used To Know Epub

4.5 stars

"Life isn't easy for anyone. We all have challenges. We all face adversity. It's how we overcome it that makes us who we are."

I love Tracey Garvis Graves writing, so when I saw she had a new book, I jumped in right away. I didn't read the synopsis and the cover didn't really call to me, but I am so glad I picked this one up. I adored this story and these characters so so much.

Annika and Jonathan meet in chess club their last year of college. Annika is a truly gorgeous girl who is

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Annika and Jonathan meet in chess club their last year of college. Annika is a truly gorgeous girl who is on the autism spectrum, and Jonathan falls hard for her. Their relationship has its ups and downs, but it's so beautiful. Annika has a lot of trouble dealing with her autism at first, but she works on learning how to cope.

"I never know what people are thinking. It's like visiting a country where you don't speak the language and you're trying so hard to understand but no matter how many times you ask for juice, they keep bringing you milk. And I hate it."

This book is set in 1991 (their college year) and 2001 (the present for them) and I think seeing how Annika is accepted with her behaviors is a true indication of how people perceived people who are autistic back then. Jonathan never makes Annika feel like anything less than the amazing woman she is and I loved that for her.

Annika and Jonathan's relationship was so sweet and pure. What I loved most about it is that Annika was allowed to 100% be herself and Jonathan loved her for it. She's autistic, she does her best, and it's good enough for him. Where are all the Jonathans of the world? I hope they exist for the Annikas of the world.

I also felt this was the most real depiction of an autistic character I've ever read about. Being in

The Girl He Used to Know

Annika's head helped me to truly understand the thoughts and behaviors of someone different than me and I appreciated that. Annika had the best heart and I loved her so much. Jonathan, too. They were both incredible.

"How can you want to be with someone like me? How were you able to fall in love with someone who acts the way I do?"

"It was easier than you think."

As much as I loved them both, their relationship wasn't perfect. There was some conflict and a pretty big gap of time they were separated, but I understood it and did feel it was necessary for both characters growth.

I loved most everything about this book. The characters, the writing, the progression of the story. Honestly, I think had we gotten more of an ending/epilogue I'm sure it would have been a 5 star for me. I feel like after all we went through, we deserved more than a quick hfn. I wanted the real deal of an ending for Annika and Jonathan.

I cried all the tears towards the end of this book. I was so immersed in the story, I had my airpods in at the grocery with tears streaming down my face looking like an emotionally unstable wreck, but it's okay. It was better than the alternative, which was waiting to finish this book!

If you're looking for read that is emotional, heartwarming, and just a truly beautiful second chance romance with complex characters and spectacular writing, pick up The Girl He Once Knew. Side note, the audio was fabulous!! ...more

Wow, wow, WOW. This book was amazing.

"It's like everyone around you has a copy of the script of life, but no one gave it to you so you have to go in blind and hope you can muddle your way through. And you'll be wrong most of the time."

Annika Rose is different from other people. She's much more comfortable with solitude, and would much rather be in the company of animals, hiding under her comforter and reading a book, or getting lost in a competitive game of chess than spending time with her fell Wow, wow, WOW. This book was amazing.

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She dreams of life as a librarian, surrounded by books, but she often doesn't notice social cues, and she

The Girl He Used to Know

wishes that people would be more direct about what they think and feel rather than make her figure it out. Luckily, Annika has her roommate, Janice, to help her navigate through the confusing and anxiety-provoking world of college.

When Annika meets Jonathan Hoffman in her senior year at a meeting of the school's chess club, she can't quite understand why he's interested in talking to her, or continuing to play her once she beat him, badly. She knows she's attractive (she's been told her face is "aesthetically pleasing") but she's sure that he'd be more interested in someone more comfortable in social situations, a girl who wears makeup and enjoys going to bars and listening to loud music.

But Jonathan keeps coming back, and after a while he makes it clear that he's interested in Annika, and he's willing to help calm her fears and understand the things that make her nervous or anxious, because he wants a relationship with her.

The two fall deeply in love and begin to plan a future together in New York City after graduation. It's not always an easy path—sometimes Annika misses Jonathan's signals, or is unable to do the things he hopes she will—but with Jonathan, for the first time since leaving home, she feels safe, understood, and loved. But even the intensity of their love isn't enough to withstand an unexpected obstacle which tears them apart, leaving them to chart the course of the future on their own.

Ten years later, Annika is living in Chicago and working at a library. She's a much stronger person than she was in college, and she understands her role in what happened in her relationship with Jonathan. But despite keeping up a strong façade, she's utterly unprepared to run into him in a grocery store. He's back in the area after a career on Wall Street and a divorce, and seeing Annika again rekindles all the old feelings. But can he trust his heart to give her a second chance?

Annika is determined to show Jonathan how much she has changed, and is willing to take it slow if that's what it takes. Can a relationship that was so intense the first time pick up where it left off, after so much has transpired between them? Is Jonathan still willing to accept Annika the way she is? Can they move past the things that drove them apart, and can they finally have the future they had dreamed of?

The *The Girl He Used to Know* is an utterly fantastic book which blew me away. I read the entire book on a plane ride home. Tracey Garvis Graves has created an incredible set of characters, with such complexity and depth, and this love story is a special one. There are so many books out there that similarities with other novels are expected, but I really felt this was a beautifully unique story, despite a few more familiar plot twists.

I read the plot synopsis of this book a few weeks ago, so I honestly didn't remember what it was about when I started reading it. I loved where Graves took her story (although I'll admit I wanted more) and I just love the way she writes. There are moments in this book—not even the highly dramatic ones, but the quieter, "ah ha" moments—that just took my breath away.

The Girl He Used to Know

Run, don't walk, to get this one.

See all of my reviews at itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com.

Check out my list of the best books I read in 2018 at
<https://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com/2019/01/the-best-books-i-read-in-2018.html>.

You can follow me on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/yrralh/>. ...more

The Girl He Used to Know

The Girl He Used To Know Read Online

The Girl He Used to Know was such a unique, sweet, and uplifting romance story.

I loved Annika and Jonathan!! I wasn't sure what to expect when picking up this book... and it turned out totally different than I envisioned in my mind.

Annika and Jonathan meet in 1991 at a Chess club in college. Annika is stunningly beautiful but due to her autism she has challenges with her confidence in relationships. Annika and Jonathan fall in love but a tragic event occurs between them that causes the relationship to end. The Girl He Used to Know was such a unique, sweet, and uplifting romance story.

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Annika and Jonathan meet in 1991 at a Chess club in college. Annika is stunningly beautiful but due to her autism she has challenges with her confidence in relationships. Annika and Jonathan fall in love but a tragic event occurs between them that causes the relationship to end. The storyline takes place in 1991 and present... so naturally the readers are aware something happens between the two to break up the relationship.

Presently, Annika and Jonathan run into each other at the grocery store and end up rekindling their relationship. Can Annika and Jonathan rekindle their flame despite their challenges of why they broke up to begin with?

Tracey Garvis Graves does an amazing job with characterization. The characters feel so real, raw, and beautiful. I couldn't get enough of the story of Jonathan and Annika. Do you ever have just those perfect effortless reads? Well.... this is definitely one of them my friends!

I highly recommend this book. Sweet, unique, and amazing!

4 stars!!

Huge thank you to St. Martin's Press and Netgalley for the arc in exchange for an honest review.

Publication date: 4/2/19

Published to Goodreads: 1/28/19 ...more

An extraordinary love story brimming with heart, hope, and second chances!

Tracey Garvis Graves has stolen my heart with this evocative and emotional story. I read "On the

The Girl He Used to Know

Islandâ€• A few years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. Going into this book I knew I was going to be treated to brilliantly developed characters and an intriguing storyline. What I was not prepared for was the emotional toll this book would have on my heart! This book both destroyed me and pieced me back together again. I seriously feel a little squeeze on my heart just thinking about this book! If you enjoy stories with characters that will worm their way into your heart then this is a canâ€™t miss!

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The story bounces between 1991 and 2001 and is told from both Annika and Jonathan's perspectives. In 1991 both Annika and Jonathan are attending the University of Illinois, where they meet while attending chess club. Annika is a bit socially awkward, a little anxious, a little oversensitive to her surroundings. She is on the autism spectrum, however in 1991 this was not a common diagnosis so people saw her as quirky or just plain weird. Jonathan was immediately drawn to Annika and saw through to who she truly was inside. What follows is a beautiful and intense romance that was so special to read about. Watching Jonathan so tenderly and cautiously try to understand Annika and her needs was so sweet! He legitimately made my heart melt, I might've fallen a little in love with him myself. Sadly tragedy struck and the couple was torn apart. 10 years later Annika was at the grocery store when she hears a familiar voice, it must be fate because there is Jonathan in the bread aisle. Annika and Jonathan try to rekindle the flame, but has too much already happened to prevent this? Can Annika and Jonathan open their hearts up to each other again, regardless of the past?

In case you missed it, I really loved this book! The characters popped off the pages and the story was so well told. There is something about a second chance romance that really resonates with me. It's definitely not that I want a second chance with anyone I've ever been with *shutters* I think it is the idea of hope, and this book had that in abundance.

Beautiful and moving, I cannot recommend this book enough, be sure to have Kleenex on hand before reading!

*** many thanks to St. Martin's Press for my copy of this book *** ...more

The Girl He Used to Know

The Girl He Left Behind Book

The Girl He Used to Know is one of the (if not the) best books I read this year. It's an instant add to my Favorites shelf and as a story, I savored every second of reading it!

In 2001, Annika is grocery shopping in Chicago when she runs into Jonathan, her ex-boyfriend from college who she hasn't seen in 10 years. The story shifts between the present in 2001, and their college days in 1991 at the University of Illinois.

In college, Annika is kind of shy though she can be a bit direct in social. The Girl He Used to Know is one of the (if not the) best books I read this year. It's an instant add to my Favorites shelf and as a story, I savored every second of reading it!

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In college, Annika is kind of shy though she can be a bit direct in social interactions, which she finds to be exhausting. She needs alone time and prefers books and animals over people. She can be quirky but is also caring. She plays chess in a club at school and there, she meets Jonathan. They're friendly and compete against each other, regularly interacting at the club. Eventually friendship turns into more.

I enjoy stories that include past and present time frames, particularly when they are well-done. Here in The Girl He Used to Know, they are great. I enjoyed reading about Annika and Jonathan's relationship and was curious to see what drove them apart in 1991. I really liked the present time frame too, as they attempt to reconnect and address lingering emotions from the past.

The story is told from both Annika and Jonathan's POVs. I really loved both of these characters! I loved their different trains of thought, their interactions, and the dialogue in this story. At one point near the end of the book, I gasped when I realized where I thought the story was heading, and my eyes instantly became teary. I rarely cry at a book but yes, I had truly become invested! I had to finish the book immediately to find out what would happen.

A wonderful story with likable characters you want to cheer for. The Girl He Used to Know is a must read for 2019.

Thank you to St. Martin's Press for providing a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. ...more

Thank you to St. Martin's Press for providing an advance reader copy via NetGalley.

The Girl He Used to Know

This was a totally engaging book about a college student named Annika who struggled lifelong with social cues. She was naturally very beautiful and smelled good without ever having to wear perfume. While being born with these physically attractive gifts, life could still become dangerous to someone so vulnerable and easily taken advantage of. Annika had been home-schooled since the seventh grade following a horrible bullying incident. She didn't know anything else but to say honestly what she thought. Some people might find this refreshing, but others might find it laughable and a reason to mock her. She survived just enough by carefully watching the way other people acted in social situations, and then mimicked them. Now she was at college in her home state of Illinois, and she had a wonderful and caring roommate named Janice. Janice patiently explained things to Annika to help her navigate life.

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One evening when Annika was frustrated and actually planned to have her parents pick her up the next morning to abandon college, Janice encouraged her to go to the Student Union building for some lemonade. Knowing that Annika was a masterful chess player, Janice casually steered her towards the chess team who were having their usual Sunday gathering. It was here, during 1991, that Annika met Jonathan...the love of her life.

The book begins ten years later in August 2001. We learn that something had happened to break these two lovers up, and Jonathan had been living in New York until recently. They had both been shopping in a supermarket named Mariano's, a favorite of theirs. They are shocked at seeing each other after all these years, both experiencing a multitude of emotions. He's been living in Illinois for several months to tend to his ailing mother before she died. They marvel at how they never ran into each other until today. It's obvious that something tore these two apart ten years ago, but there's still "something" there. There's also a hesitancy on Jonathan's part, but on impulse Annika asks for Jonathan's phone number as he's about to walk away. Annika's been growing as a person since they separated a decade ago. She now visits a therapist named Tina, and one of the main topics Annika works on is the impact of her failed relationship with Jonathan. She also discusses her challenges with daily living, as someone who feels as though she's living life without a map while others don't need one. So, the two main issues driving this story are Annika's mental roadblocks and the mystery of why this relationship unraveled when they clearly never stopped loving each other.

The book is narrated randomly in chapters by Jonathan or Annika, and you know this without seeing the name because of how exquisitely this author captures their personas in dialogue. Annika will snare your heartstrings with her simple and honest narration, which I'm sure many will identify with, some who suffer with her affliction and even some that don't. Just to name some of her "quirks", she has no shame of nakedness, cannot withstand loud/throbbing music (such as in a bar), and would much prefer

The Girl He Used to Know

reading a book in bed than going to a party.

The story of Annika and Jonathan deliciously unfolds to an incredibly emotional and unexpected crescendo. This was a very satisfying and moving read that swept me away. My heart is full! ...more