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Playing Dirty (Hqn)



Synopsis

When old enemies are thrown together, all bets are off…Way back in high school, golden boy Cade Gallari publicly revealed he'd slept with "fat girl" Ava Spencer to win a bet. Now a decade older and a head turner with her own concierge business, Ava isn't the gullible dreamer she once was— and she plans to prove it when Cade, hotter than ever, breezes back into town with an offer she can't refuse. A documentary film producer, Cade is shooting a movie about the mysterious mansion Ava inherited. And he wants her as his personal concierge. She's certainly professional enough to be at his beck and call without giving him everything he wants. Like another shot at having her in his bed. But Ava doesn't count on Cade's determination. Because he's never gotten over her— and he's not above playing dirty to score a second chance at a red–hot future…

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Customer Reviews

My Review: They have a lot of history between them and the majority of it has played out in a highly contentious way. Cade found himself in elementary school being drawn to Ava's infectious laughter and joy in life, so he reacted in the way that most little boys do...by tormenting her. In turn, she

called him "Buttface Gallari." This type of interaction continued through high school until they found themselves as biology partners for 6 weeks. There was a mutual attraction, but unfortunately in the midst of it all, Cade found out some devastating news and, acting as an immature teen, he acted out in a way that shattered Ava's fragile heart and humiliated her. Now it's 13 years later and they are having to figure out how to get past it all to work together. What a wonderful book. There is so much emotion between Cade and Ava even if a lot of it is truly bad. Heartbreak and humiliation make up a lot of it, but underlying it all for both of them is an undeniable attraction. Cade is still incredibly drawn to Ava. He has tried to apologize to her many times over the years, but she doesn't even want to discuss it. She would rather ignore the subject, even though there are also huge lingering trust issues for her because of the "incident." They both were left scarred from the events that happened in high school. The question is can either of them work past it all...I loved both of these characters. They are working so hard to be mature and not to lash out at each other, although that is the automatic reaction for both of them. They can deal with anyone else in the world just fine and pleasantly, but they get together and they react to each other like oil and water. I liked the overall story line for this book.

I've been waiting so long for Ava's story in this Sisterhood trilogy (Jane in CUTTING LOOSE and Poppy in BENDING THE RULES already had theirs) that I forgot that I was waiting for it and it pleasantly surprised me at Target when I was searching for a different July 26 release. Jane, Poppy and Ava, in their early 30s now, are BFFs since oh, forever and many years prior to this story had become close to an aging rich woman named Agnes Wolcott, who left her old mansion to the 3 of them. There's backstory to this with a slight mystery about missing diamonds but it's not necessary, however, to have read the first two books to enjoy this one. Heroine Ava and hero Cade have known each other since childhood and have an unhappy history that goes back to high school. Ava was insecure about her weight at that time but had an unfortunate crush on hunky Cade. Cade gets close to her and eventually takes her virginity, at which point Ava learns it was all just a humiliating (for her) bet on the part of Cade and his friends to see if he could nail the "fat girl". More than a decade later Cade, a documentary producer now, comes back into her life because he wants to do a documentary on Agnes Wolcott, filming it in the Wolcott mansion now owned by the 3 women. He rents the mansion for the duration of the filming and also hires Ava as concierge, to take care mainly of all the feeding and housing of those involved in the production. So they're thrown together again and we all know what's going to happen. Predictable it may be but it is also enjoyable. Andersen's writing moves the story forward competently, the 3 women's friendship is fun and realistic, Cade's

groveling isn't perhaps "groveling" enough for me but it eventually works for Ava.

High school. Those two words either bring up fond memories, or terror for most people. Most likely both emotions were experienced to extreme degrees by everyone. Ava Spencer, the overweight young girl was crushed when she found out, along with everyone else in school, that Cade Gallari slept with her on a bet. Someone who she thought was more than a friend betraying her and the truth coming out in the most public of settings, the school lunchroom. You can't not feel for Ava and hate Cade instantly. Even years later I'd still be holding a grudge, but Ava's a lot nicer than I am and when the opportunity to work for Cade and his production company comes up, she's hesitant at first but the paycheck would bring her some financial security and she can't say no. Cade's back in Seattle after 13 years and as a successful documentary film director, his next movie is featuring Miss Wolcott. The three women let him film in the mansion and while they all still remember the Cade from high school and what he did to Ava, they agree that seeing Miss Wolcott's story brought to life on film can be done right by him. In the middle of filming and Cade and Ava dancing around each other, we have security guard, Tony, trying to find the missing jewels that he knows are hidden in the mansion and he makes finding them his next con. The storyline between Cade and Ava was simply nice. It took quite a while for Ava to realize that Cade is not the same idiot 18 year old he once was and she learns that he was going through some tough stuff at home when the "bet" with his friends came to be. Not that that at all excuses him for such a cruel thing he pulled, but Ava's nice and ultimately forgiving and they grow closer together as she lets down her guard again with him.

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