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Absolute Zero: Misadventures From A Broad (Val & Pals Book 1)



Synopsis

"National Lampoon's European Vacation with a touch of Stephanie Plum..." J.T. Praise for Absolute Zero: "Loved it. Couldn't stop, had to see what happened next." "This character makes you proud to be a woman." "Want a good laugh and a new friend? Grab this." "Her characters are lovable and believable and you cheer, and cry, along with them." "Wonderful book. Had me at the first paragraph." "A Midlife Meltdown...with a Side of Fries. Val's long-suffering life as a patient daughter, dutiful wife and reliable workhorse has turned her into a snarky, miserable nag. She has the house, the husband and the career. The only thing missing is the happy. Before she's set out to pasture, Val wants one more go around the track. Unbridled. In Italy. La dolce vita or bust. Will Val find her happy ending abroad? Or someplace she never thought to look? And will she get there before her money and her sense of humor run out...If you've ever dreamed of ditching your life and running off to Europe, now's your chance! Join Val on a roller-coaster ride through Europe that will leave you gasping! From gut-busting hilarity to gut-wrenching gaffs, finding yourself again is always worth the price of admission. Buy it now! More...Absolute Zero is the funny, sometimes heart-wrenching prequel to the hilarious Val & Pals Series. Full of ups and downs, it's a satirical look at starting life over after forty. It's told through the eyes of a sharp-witted, reluctantly redneck woman who's always played it safe - until now. Freedom comes at a price. Will it be worth it in the end? If you like deeply flawed characters and laugh-out-loud situations, you'll love Margaret Lashley's hilarious, irreverent Val & Pals Series of seriously funny women's fiction. Check out the next book in the series: Glad One: Starting Over is a! Why did you decide to write women's fiction? I grew up in an era of strong women role models, such as Marlo Thomas in *That Girl*, as well as Mary Tyler Moore and Carol Burnett in shows that bore their names. These women were pursuing their own dreams, their own ways. I didn't see much of that in fiction today. I wanted to create a character that was strong, yet vulnerable. One that celebrated the everyday, self-made woman who was struggling to finally put her own needs first. My main character, Val, is a survivor who bears the scars of her hard journey proudly, and with her own quirky coping mechanisms and dry sense of humor. Where did you get the idea for Absolute Zero? I wanted to explore the idea of a woman who, outwardly, had it all. But she'd played by society's rules instead of following her own heart. She was deeply unsatisfied, yet nothing would solve her unhappiness except a complete do-over - an absolute shedding of her old life. This would come at a great price, but would it be worth it? What would someone be willing to pay for freedom - for the chance to live her

own life her own way? What type of reader would enjoy your brand of women's fiction? Readers who like to be taken by surprise and who like to laugh and cry and dissolve into another world when they read. My characters have their great triumphs and cringe-worthy failures. They are flawed and vulnerable and funny as hell. My stories draw laughs using a wide net from Pat Conroy's twisted, dark family humor to Bridget Jones's slap-stick situational gaffs. Things don't always turn out as planned. But that's life when it's truly lived.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I get Val Jolly. In a way I relate to Val. And throughout the story, I began to adore Val. With quick wit, pages of adventures, dialogue that sucked me into the scenes, and descriptions that created the most hilarious visuals, *Absolute Zero* is an every woman's tale of rediscovery. Val needed a break from her everyday life and lazy husband, and she finds it in Italy ... though not without a series of

obstacles like missing luggage, a reckless Italian driver, a severe case of sunburn, seductive strangers, and many more antics. The cast of curious characters further delivers an entertaining dynamic as their little secrets come full circle and Val learns that love for oneself is the most important love--the freeing kind of love. If you're in the mood for an entertaining tale of one woman's comical journey to find friends, adventure, and herself, you can stop your search here. A five-star women's lit tale.

I loved this quirky adventure/romance book about an upbeat 40-something divorced Floridian woman looking to jump start a new life by a 3-week trip to southern Italy and Mediterranean cruise. The book actually covers about 6 years of her life and its ups and downs. Lots of great characters, some local, some tourists, and she wins most of them over with her optimism, starting with her attempts to join the "dolce far niente" relaxed Italian way of life. Romance, mystery, adventure and some moments of outright slap your sides hilarity, this book was a gem. There is a serious twist to the plot towards the end of the book, but nothing can keep this heroine down too long. Definitely 5 stars! I received an ARC of this book at no cost. This is my voluntary and honest review.

I have long been an Evanovich fan and she is my go to author when someone asks for a book recommendation without telling me what genre they prefer. Now I can add Margaret Lashley to that very short list. Her books are a lighthearted look at reality. There is humor and joy, but also sorrow and anger. Her characters are lovable and believable and you cheer, and cry, along with them. I am loving this fun series and can't wait for the next book! I received an ARC of this book and I'm voluntarily leaving my honest review

From the start, I felt myself nodding my head in affirmation as the story line painted a vivid picture in my mind. Val was starting over, looking for the excitement she missed the first time around, and she was taking the reader with her! I only hoped Italy was ready to meet Val! Her plucky attitude was inspiring! Many will identify with Val's life lessons, or at least be able to understand where she's coming from. The dialog was really good, parts were hilariously funny, and others give the reader something to think about. It can be an emotional rollercoaster, but that's how real life is too, right? This seems to be an interesting series and one that I think I'll stick with! Very well written! I voluntarily read a review copy of this book and my comments reflect my honest opinion.

What a ride. This book takes you through the ups and downs of relationships. Sometimes I laughed and sometimes I wanted to cry. Other times I just wanted to hit the men in Val's life with a stick. Val's true friends, Clarice and Berta were truly good friends and a real joy to read about. I totally had to keep reading this book to see what was going to happen next. It really grabbed you and held you until the end. I received an ARC of this book in return for an honest review.

I'm left speechless. I don't quite know what to say. I wasn't in any way prepared for that ending. The book is so well written, it sucked me in from the very first scene and took me for an emotional roller-coaster ride I wasn't expecting. I love the snarky one-liners that pepper the dialogue. They had me laughing even when the story itself had gone places that weren't so amusing. I'm intrigued by where Val's story will take her next but I just don't have the emotional fortitude to tackle the next one just yet. It's on my radar for sometime in the future. I think I've learned that when it comes to romantic comedies, I prefer the cotton-candy variety. I received a complimentary copy of this book.

This is one of those books that leaves you gaping. I must admit that the entire story left me in a turmoil of emotions. This is the story of a freshly divorced woman in her forties who leaves her country and goes on vacation to sunny Italy to restart a new life. Since her arrival to Italy her misadventures will make the reader smile and all of her unusual acquaintances will perfectly come together in the plot. Her psychological trip to regain the confidence lost will then have her fall into the arms of a man she thinks will be the one. Very well written and without adding more to the story and leaving hints of what to come, I simply recommend the reading of this fascinating book.

I received a free ARC in return for an impartial review. 41-year-old Val has ended her 15-year marriage to Jimmy Johnson, sold her up-scale Florida home and her business, and jetted off to Italy with no knowledge of Italian beyond si, no and ciao. Naturally, her luggage and carry-on are misdirected, so she shows up in Italy disheveled with nothing but her passport, a genuine Diamondette ring, a purse, and a pair of sweaty panties. Oh, and the clothes on her back. She is immediately greeted with a fanny-pinch and wolf-whistles from about every good-looking man around. The giggles and sheer belly laughs continue throughout. A fun read.

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