



In Another Man's Bed: A Novel

By Francis Ray

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When Justine Crandall walks in on her husband of six years with another woman, she flees their home, declaring he'll never see her again. And her wish almost comes true when his car careens off a cliff in his pursuit of her. Hours later she finds herself in a hospital, faced with a terrible choice. Will she disconnect his life support because he was a liar and a cheat or because it's the humane thing to do? Or...should she keep faith that he'll revive from his coma? In the meantime, an old love reappears making the decision even more difficult, pitting her heart against her conscience. Justine finds that soon she must choose: be with a man who truly loves her and puts her first, or honor her marriage vows.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The latest from veteran romance writer Ray (*Dreaming of You*) opens promisingly as Justine Crandall catches husband Andrew cheating. She races off in her Porsche with apologetic Andrew in hot pursuit, but when his SUV crashes, he lands in that soapiest of plot devices, a coma, and his wife into a bind: can you divorce a man in a coma? Things get trickier when Dalton Ramsey, best-selling author and Justine's high school sweetheart strides into the picture still carrying a Lady Liberty-sized torch. Justine's friend Brianna Ireland, a no-nonsense lawyer, meanwhile, resists the overtures of ex-cop Patrick Dunlap. Ray labors to keep things smoldering, but Justine's reluctance to break her vows starts to seem silly and quaint as Ray tries to muster some much needed-did Andrew's eyelashes just flicker? Will Brianna scare Patrick away?-but minimal tension.

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About the Author

Francis Ray is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Grayson novels, the Falcon books, the Taggart Brothers, and *Twice the Temptation*, among many other romances. Her novel *Incognito* was made into a movie aired on BET. A native Texan, she is a graduate of Texas Woman's University and has a degree in nursing. Besides a writer, she is a school nurse practitioner with the Dallas Independent School District. She lives in Dallas.

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Justine knew it was a mistake thirty seconds after she entered the popular soul-food restaurant. Andrew was well known in the community and so was she. Heads turned, whispers followed. She tensed.

"It will be all right."

She looked up into Dalton's calm gaze. There was something else there that she couldn't identify. Or so she tried to convince herself.

"Two old friends just having dinner."

Oddly she hadn't thought of the gossip or speculations as much as the dread of repeating Andrew's condition. Each time she did, his betrayal came back.

"I wonder if they still serve bread pudding with rum sauce."

Bread pudding had been one of her favorite desserts. She'd mentioned it on one of their three dates. "You have a good memory."

"On some things," he said.

Not knowing how to take his comment, Justine didn't say anything.

The hostess came to the wooden podium and removed two menus from the built-in slot. "Two?"

"Yes," Dalton answered.

The young woman in her early twenties smiled at him with youthful appreciation. "Follow me."

Justine idly wondered if Dalton got that "I'm available look" all the time, then she cast a sideways glance up at his handsome bearded face and knew the answer. *Most definitely.*

Dalton released her arm, then held the cane chair out for her. Justine accepted the menu and hid behind it.

"What do you have a taste for?"

You. The wicked thought came from nowhere. She was flustered and flushed, and her hands trembled. "I'm not sure."

“Something must tempt your taste buds. I know they do mine.”

She lowered the menu, sure he would be studying his. Instead she found his eyes trained on her. Desire was there, and so much more. Patience, kindness, caring.

“Hello. I’m Sally, your waitress. You folks ready?”

Justine lifted the menu. Time to stop acting like the awed teenager she used to be around Dalton. I’ll have the blackened red snapper, garden salad with house dressing, and iced tea.

“I’ll have the same.” Dalton handed the oversize menu to the waitress.

“I’ll bring your drink order right out.”

“Does your mother still live here?” Dalton asked as the waitress moved away.

If ever there was a question designed to snap Justine back to reality, it was that one. “Yes. She teaches second grade at a school near the house.”

“I’m glad she’s here to help you,” he said quietly.

Justine couldn’t keep the surprise from her face. She blinked.

“Your drinks,” the waitress said. She sat them down and left.

“I might not have agreed with her method, but she was trying to help you when we were in high school. My rep was pretty bad,” Dalton admitted.

“But you weren’t like that,” Justine defended him.

“She couldn’t have known that,” Dalton said. “Although, at the time, my thoughts weren’t so forgiving.”

“Mine either,” Justine admitted.

“Your order.” The waitress sat their food on the table, then withdrew. Justine blessed the food, then picked up her fork.

She didn’t expect to enjoy the food. Had planned simply to go through the motions. It was easier than arguing. But after one bite, she discovered she was ravenous.

“How’s the food?”

“Wonderful,” Justine said. “Have you called Brianna yet?”

“On the way here, but she was in session with a client. I left a message with her receptionist.”

“Have you made up your mind what you plan to do with your home place?”

Dalton sipped his tea. “Nothing beyond repairing it. The place holds a lot of happy memories for me and my sisters.”

Justine watched the play of muscles in his throat, the large calloused hands that could be so gentle, the flash of strong white teeth in his chocolate-hued face. He was so good looking and much too appealing.

“Hello, Justine.”

Justine started and glanced up to see the wives of two of the ministers from the luncheon. Their husband had been among the first to donate funds. “Hello, Mrs. King, Mrs. Carter.”

Their gazes kept sliding to Dalton, who had stood. Justine quickly made the introductions. “Pleased to meet you, ladies. Besides owning the bookstore where I was signing a couple of weeks ago, Justine is an old schoolmate of mine.”

“I’ve read your book,” Mrs. King said. She was in her mid-fifties and attractive. The aqua Lilian Ann suit fit her slim body well. “The church’s book club considered reading it, but thought it had too much violence.”

“Murder mysteries aren’t for everyone,” Dalton said easily. “I’m honored that it was considered.”

“Well, we have to be going,” Mrs. Carter said, her gaze narrowed. “We’re all praying for Andrew. Please say hello to his mother for us.”

Justine was sure the comment also meant she was going to tell Beverly she had seen her dining out with a man while Andrew lay in a coma. “I’ll tell her tonight when I see her at the hospital.”

Dalton took his seat as the women walked away. He didn’t speak until they were a good distance away.

“Brianna said you go there in the morning and evening, plus working, and now you’re becoming more involved with Andrew’s firm. Don’t you think you should take it easy?”

“I can’t.” Her cell phone rang. She glanced sharply at her purse. She had the strangest urge to let it ring or to shut it off. People in the restaurant were shooting annoyed looks her way.

“Justine, are you all right?”

“Yes.” She picked up the phone, knowing it wouldn’t go to voice mail until after the tenth ring. “Hello.”

“Justine, it’s Andrew!” his mother cried. “His heart stopped again!”

Her own heart lurched. She began to tremble. “I’m on my way.” She came unsteadily to her feet, swayed.

Dalton quickly stood and took her arm to steady her.

“What is it?”

For a moment she couldn’t get the words out. “He...he had another cardiac arrest.”

Dalton’s long fingers flexed on her bare arm. “I’ll take you.” Releasing her only long enough to throw enough money on the table to cover their food and a big tip. Dalton ushered her outside to his jeep.

Her mind was in chaos the entire trip. How much more could his body take and continue to fight back? How much more could she and his mother take?

Users Review

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