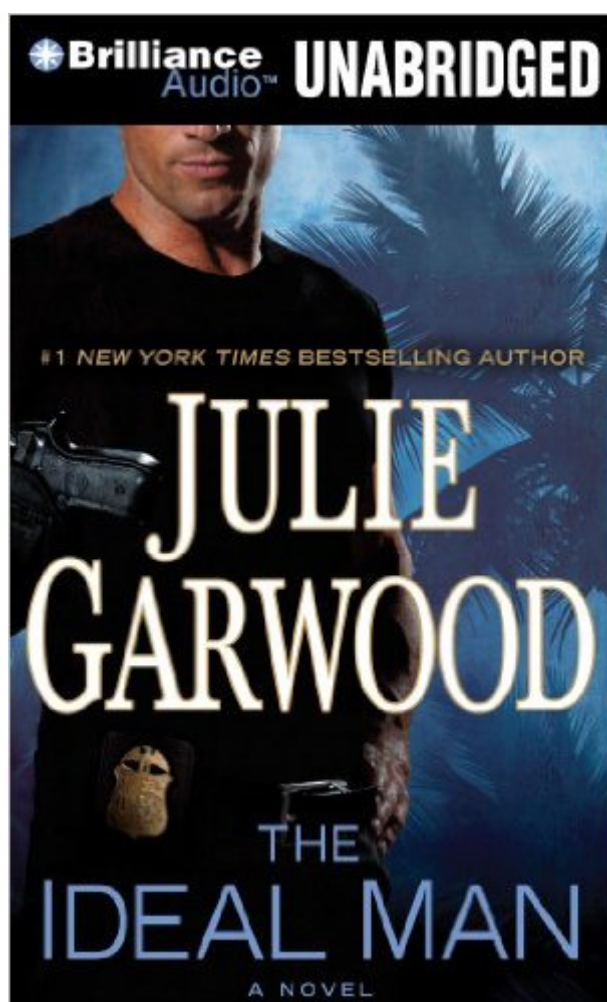


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The Ideal Man: A Novel



Synopsis

Julie Garwood is among the most critically acclaimed and popular romance authors around, with thirty-six million copies of her books in print. And now, with *The Ideal Man*, Garwood is poised to expand that already huge audience. Dr. Ellie Sullivan has just completed her residency at a large urban hospital. While jogging in a park nearby, she witnesses the shooting of an FBI agent in pursuit of wanted criminals, a couple identified as the Landrys. The only person to see the shooter's face, Ellie is suddenly at the center of a criminal investigation. Agent Max Daniels takes over the Landry case. A no-nonsense lawman, he's definitely not the ideal man that Ellie has always imagined, yet she's attracted to him in a way she can't explain. Ellie heads home to Winston Falls, South Carolina, to attend her sister's wedding. Shortly after she arrives, though, she receives a surprise visitor: Max Daniels. The Landrys have been captured, and she'll be called to testify. But they've been captured before, and each time the witnesses are scared into silence or disappear before they can take the stand. Max vows to be Ellie's shadow until the trial, and it isn't long before sparks fly. . . .

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition (December 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1469297426

ISBN-13: 978-1469297422

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.8 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (399 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #939,741 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > (G) > Garwood, Julie #623 in Books > Books on CD > Romance #1559 in Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

Customer Reviews

I am a huge Julie Garwood fan and have read every one of her novels. *Saving Grace* is my absolute favorite and I have read it multiple times. I was really disappointed in this book. It took me a long time to get into it and put it down several times. Normally I can't put down a Garwood novel and read it cover to cover forgoing sleep when necessary. The conversations were choppy and the amount of detail detracted from the story because it just didn't flow. It read like an amateur novelist

during the conversations. I did like the characters a lot and wish that I could have enjoyed their dialogue more because they had merit. It was also such a contrived and convoluted plot that had elements that were not essential to the story and should have been left out. Some of the relationships were poorly developed and not resolved, especially the relationship between Ellie and her evil sister, Ava. I kept waiting for Ava to "get it" or at least get what she deserved but then it just kind of fizzled out. I wasn't able to really lose myself in the book and then it wrapped up with a few quick lines. All of this being said, I would still rather read a bad Julie Garwood book than a good book by many other authors. This is definitely not worth the \$12.99 kindle price and I would wait until it drops below \$9 to purchase.

What happened to the Julie Garwood who wrote sparkling dialogue in *The Bride*? The one who wrote a good strong mystery with interesting characters in *Heartbreaker*? The author who already wrote a book about a surgeon with a much better plot in *Killjoy*? Give her back. And please take back this fake Julie Garwood clone who's been putting out mediocre minus books under her name the past few years. For an author who used to be an auto-buy, even in hardcover, she's now become an author I don't even bother buying in paperback. Borrowing from the library is just fine for a quick, unmemorable read, and that's all *The Ideal Man* is. Flat characters, tired plot, weak dialogue, and at times just plain boring. I get the sense she's writing to fulfill a contractual obligation rather than out of any driving need to tell a story, and it shows. So it is time to mount the campaign. We want the real Julie Garwood back. The one who toiled over books until the dialogue sparkled, the one who plotted carefully, and above all, the one who wrote characters you cared about and remembered.

Sometimes a favorite author writes a few books so not to my taste that I open them with a little sigh of resignation. It's like a friendship you can't quite end. Garwood and I were on that track until *The Ideal Man*. Possibly coincidence, possibly because the heroine of *Sizzle: A Novel* was an absolute idiot, *The Ideal Man* features trauma surgeon Elle Sullivan as a child prodigy once driven from her home by an obsessed classmate. Awesomely, that obsessed classmate has almost nothing at all to do with why Elle ends up needing protection (provided by FBI Agent Max Daniels, previously seen in *Sizzle*). Elle rings true both as an exhausted trauma surgeon and a distanced family member. Her parents are frustrated working folks thrust outside their comfort zone by life's events. The family relationships are really the star of *The Ideal Man*. Max is great as an agent slightly outside his comfort zone and a man for whom family is foremost. Together they tell a smoothly entertaining tale

for a late night read or a sunny snooze.

Wow. This book was a MAJOR disappointment. I normally love Julie's books, having read every book of hers, historical and contemporaries alike. Her historical romances are FAR better than her modern FBI books, so I already wasn't expecting a 5 star book, but Holy cow, this book bored me to tears! I found the heroine irritating with no backbone, and I HATED how she reacted to her family. Her mother was a sniveling idiot and her sister Ava needed to die trapped inside of a fiery car that falls down a ravine. The details were excessive and didn't add much to the lame storyline. With all of the details, you'd think that you'd like or at least understand the characters, but I found myself rolling my eyes while reading. Max Daniels, the hero, was... boring. There was just nothing I liked about this book. The whole story irritated me. The big, strong FBI man needs to keep his eye on the little woman, the job's over, he leaves, they miss each other, then decide to get married... Sorry, that's the whole story. Hasn't this been done before?? This is like the basis of all of Julie's books lately, it's tired and old, and I'm so glad I borrowed this book from the library instead of buying it like I normally do. I won't buy another Julie Garwood book without reading it from the library first. Her stories can no longer be trusted to be the witty, wonderful, ROMANTIC stories I know she can write.

I became an avid Julie Garwood fan after reading "Mercy," which I loved. It was chock-full of all the right stuff, from excellent character development to romance to action, and of course, humor. That book made me laugh out loud more than once. I thought, "Okay, I found a new favorite author to add to my list." But this book? "The Ideal Man"? There's no other way to say this than to come right out and say it: It is nothing short of pitiful. If I hadn't seen Julie Garwood's name on the cover for myself, I would never have believed she wrote it. It's trite, ungodly predictable, and completely lacking in depth. You tell me, Ms. Garwood, would those scenes REALLY take place between Ellie and Ava? Would people REALLY stand around and let Ava get away with all the crap she pulls? Of course not, and that's but one example of how shallow and silly this book is. I cannot imagine reading any future novels written by Julie Garwood if this sort of simplistic tripe is indicative of what we can expect from her.

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