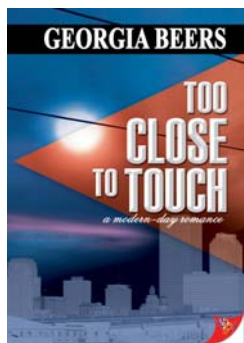


Book Review: September 2006

by Cheri Rosenberg (reviewer at [JAW](#) and [MBR](#))



Too Close to Touch

Georgia Beers

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In her third novel, Georgia Beers delivers an immensely satisfying story in "a modern day romance," *Too Close to Touch*. Warm-hearted Kylie O'Brien seems an unlikely match for tough gal Gretchen Kaiser, but the chemistry between them is undeniable, and the reader becomes readily invested in their future.

Gretchen starts a new job as a Regional Sales Manager at a company that needs her expertise. She relocates from Poughkeepsie to far upstate, Rochester, New York. She does so willingly in hopes of putting some distance between her and her family, among other reasons. On her first Saturday night out, she finds the Black Widow bar, and surprises herself by having a great time with the local lesbians. An overachiever who prides herself on improving the performance of a failing sales force, Gretchen has the reputation of Cruella de Ville, which is fine with her since she's more interested in the bottom line than winning a popularity contest.

There are key ingredients lacking in Gretchen's personal life, but she compensates for it in her professional life, as if achieving one's goals is all that matters. What the woman lacks in height, she more than makes up for in personality. Gretchen competes with the 'big boys,' and wins in a man's corporate world by exuding strong leadership and managerial skills. She also happens to be drop-dead gorgeous and has a well-hidden mushy side beneath her cool exterior. Gretchen has no trouble finding dates, and she prefers casual sex because she's not looking to settle down. Until she meets Kylie. . .

In the love department, Kylie is the complete opposite of Gretchen. She can't get into one-night stands, but rather searches for her one true love. Intelligent, competent, and equipped with excellent social skills, Kylie is an asset to Gretchen as her executive administrative assistant. Kylie knows just what to do and what to say. She is well-liked by all who know her and loved by many. Her attraction to Gretchen may be physical at first, but Kylie finds there's more to her feelings than meets the eye. However, their professional affiliation puts a damper on any chance of a relationship between the two. Kylie turns heads and has on occasion broken hearts with her endearing, bubbly, and charismatic personality.

Kylie's best friend Mick is hot! She's big, in a muscular way. She's butch, and she's jealous of Gretchen for capturing Kylie's heart. Mick loves Kylie, pays her the most adoring compliments, can fix anything, and exudes sex appeal. She's a femme's dream (or worst nightmare) come true. Beers creates an appealing character readers can empathize with on many levels. And Mick adds to the existing conflict between Gretchen and Kylie, resulting in an intriguing triangle with Kylie in the middle.

Beers knows how to generate sexual tension so taut it could be cut with a knife. For example, Kylie says to Gretchen, "Either kiss me right now or stop whatever it is you're doing with your thumb, because it's driving me crazy" (p. 139). Up to that point, the reader is praying Kylie would say that.

What makes *Too Close to Touch* memorable for me is how effective Georgia Beers is in demonstrating the power play between a boss and her subordinates, and especially, how under the right circumstances, and with the right woman, a tough, reserved, private control freak can let go and let a caring and loving woman take charge. Gretchen goes through an enormous growth curve when she figures out what's important in life and she learns that lesson in the last place she expects to, from her father.

Beers weaves a tale of yearning, love, lust, and conflict resolution. She has constructed a believable plot, with strong characters in a charming setting in this well-written and carefully edited book. It's obvious that Beers cares deeply about her characters from the way she portrays their strengths and weaknesses. Readers can't help falling in love with them, too. If you enjoy a romance that leaves you happy and completely sated, don't miss *Too Close to Touch*. I look forward to Georgia Beers' next novel, *Fresh Tracks*, due in November 2006.

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