***Not in Love* by Ali Hazelwood**

Ali Hazelwood is quickly becoming a favorite amongst readers of modern romance. Her work not only makes our hearts flutter and cheeks blush, but explores how the complications of modern society impact her characters. *Not in Love* is a great example of Hazelwood's capacity for steamy romance alongside weighty interpersonal relationships, past traumas, and the projects the characters are passionate about.

I became familiar with Hazelwood through her popular book, *The Love Hypothesis,* the first in a series of STEM-focused romance novels. *Not in Love* is a stand-alone story that maintains her simple thesis, "Science is Hot." *Not in Love* should be on your TBR List if you are a fan of the tropes: forbidden love, office romance, strangers to enemies to lovers, one-sided love, and 'She drives me crazy but acts like I don't exist'.

With the book's tropes addressed, I also should give some content warnings. The characters in this book have experienced childhood trauma, namely homelessness and food insecurity, as well as discrimination and intellectual theft in their careers. Ali Hazelwood does a fantastic job including these themes without romanticizing or minimizing their struggles, but I wanted to clearly note them.

Now back to the fun stuff. The tension between Doctor Rue Siebert, a biochemical engineer, and Eli Killgore, a leader of the financial company trying to acquire Rue's employer, is realistic and complicated. Hazelwood puts readers inside both of their heads, so we want them both to win! Unlike other romance books that play with spicy tension, Hazelwood manages to tell her story without any frustrating miscommunications by writing both characters as mutually respectful of each other's desires and passions. In the end, there's no keeping these misfits away from each other and I was entranced. By the time I'd look up, 100 pages had gone by! I highly recommend this, and every Ali Hazelwood book, to adult readers.