



Cultivating Love

Addison Albright

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Genre: LGBT Erotic Contemporary

A man of few words, Joe is a hard-working farmhand who likes his simple, uncomplicated life. Ed is satisfied with his existence as an auto mechanic, but thrilled when an unexpected development in his life allows him to help Joe realize a dream.

It forces them, however, to reevaluate the casual, undefined nature of their relationship. They're too macho to speak of love, and neither would ever dream of acknowledging he doesn't really mind when it's his turn to bottom. When life throws them a curve ball, and the rules of their game get old, Ed makes an effort to take every aspect of their relationship up a notch. Will Joe be able to adapt to the open sentimentality Ed's injecting into their relationship, let alone the new spice in their bedroom activities?

Publisher's Note: This book contains explicit sexual content, graphic language, and situations that some readers may find objectionable: Anal play/intercourse, male/male sexual practices, violence.

Cultivating Love Details

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From Reader Review Cultivating Love for online ebook

Nichole (DirrtyH) says

3.5 stars

I really loved the idea of this story. Rather than a typical "boy meets boy, boys fall in love" m/m romance, this is about two men who are already in a committed relationship but are afraid to really show affection. They never use the word love, are very strict about whose "turn" it is to top, and never venture beyond strict intercourse in the bedroom. (i.e. no blow jobs, no cuddling, etc.)

Circumstances in their life sort of force them to make a more verbal commitment to each other ("We're solid, right? I mean, forever solid?" "Well, uh, yeah, I guess."), and they start to open up to each other and try new things and eventually admit that they're in love.

The story started out really strong. The reticence of the characters to acknowledge their feelings or show any kind of affection was kind of cute and I found myself smiling a lot. There were a lot of really good scenes where they were both miserable that they had to be separated for a few days, but of course would never actually say anything. And then they had great reunion sex. And the scenes showing how they settled into their new life in this little town and on their farm, it was all really sweet.

The only thing that made this less satisfying was the ending. Not that it didn't end well; it did. I guess I just wanted a little bit... more. More fireworks, more passion, more declarations of undying love. I don't know. I'm a hopeless romantic, and even though this story was super sweet and it was obvious that they loved each other, I was just hoping for some big climactic scene. (There was definitely a climactic scene, but it wasn't all that romantic.) They did eventually use the "L" word, but after showing how they held back from each other for so long, I just wanted to see it all explode. It didn't.

And I guess the point of the story was to show that deeper, more abiding love that comes from lifelong commitment and shared purpose, true partnership. Which is great and all. I just wanted more of the *other* as well.

Ava says

This book was a sweet love story about two men who have been in a relationship for a couple years, finally coming to terms with their love for one another.

Joe and Ed are well, not quite macho men, but definitely not the type to wear their hearts on their sleeves. They have a very comfortable relationship build more on an understanding than on any explicit long-term commitment between the two. But when Ed unexpectedly inherits a farm, their lives change and both men come to realize how important the other is to him.

There's a nice bit of angst, but not heavy amount, and some nice hot smexing, but not a lot (the author could have added more and I wouldn't have minded at all ;P). Definitely more love story than erotic romance.

I think the book could have easily been drawn out a bit more, with more depth added to some of the subplots, but I won't knock off any stars because I myself tend to write shorter stuff (those who live in glass houses and all that...). Suffice it to say, I enjoyed Ed and Joe's story and would have liked to read more about them.

Nic says

This book had something just a little bit special with it look at the relationship between Joe and Ed. Joe and Ed have been together for a long time but it is change in their circumstances that brings about changes in their relationship.

An inheritance means that Ed can now provide a different kind of life for himself and Joe. They are both hardworking and honest men and they love each other. They have just been restrained in the way they show each other.

As they start their new life, Ed's gesture of sharing confirms his love and respect for Joe and kick starts some broader changes as both men start acknowledging the emotional side of their relationship. This includes being able to verbally acknowledge their love and changes in their physical relationship that accompany their changing attitudes.

The secondary character of Joe's sister Jenny injected a burst of fun and youth with her easy going and accepting attitude and the town's folk were wonderful (well most of them anyway!)

The guys face gaining acceptance in their new town and dealing with some pretty serious actions against them, in a well told story that is engaging and easy to read.

3.5 stars

I now publish all my m/m reviews on my blog so if you want to see all my m/m reviews in one place come visit at [Because Two Men Are Better Than One!](#)

AussieMum says

[The sister. The estranged family. The inheritance. The ex-lover. The homophobe. The injury. The fire. The death. (hide spoiler)]

Lily says

This is a wonderful book about two ordinary men living life as best as they can. Ed and Joe have been together for a number of years and while their relationship is solid it's not a holding hands while walking on the beach romance. They are happy together and their sex life is hot and that's enough for them.

However, their lives change in a big way when Ed receives an unexpected windfall. As they deal with the upheaval of changing careers and homes they will find that the biggest and most profound change may just be to themselves and their relationship.

I really liked Ed and Joe, they are very well developed and believable and I was engaged in them and their story from beginning to end. The sex scenes are well written, fit the characters, and are also very hot. I'm

always happy when there's a bit of humor in the stories I read so I really enjoyed the bantering between them over whose turn it was to top when privately they were each beginning to realize that they also really liked being the bottom.

Ed and Joe go through quite a bit during the course of the book and the evolving relationship between the men as they deal with their new lives as well as their emotions was well written and interesting. Overall this was a really nice and easy to read story with a wonderful ending. I enjoyed reading Cultivating Love very much and highly recommend it.

JenMcJ says

Ed and Joe are two men in a long term relationship that they have not been forced to define. They live together, they posture about dominant status, they worry about the "manliness" perception from each other and they communicate only on the most basic level any deeper emotion...

Until they find that they can't define their relationship that way forever. Now they must break down some walls and really admit and accept what they need from each other and what they mean to each other.

Will they both be able to handle the truth?

This is a really touching story about two men finding their way to each other even though they have been side by side for years. At times I had tears and at others I was just grinning like an idiot. I know romances are supposed to be "feel good" books just by their nature, but in this case, you really do feel good when it is over.

Elisa Rolle says

Joe and Ed are young and living together. To the equation misses only love. It's not that Joe and Ed are not in love, it's probably that no one taught them "how" to be in love, and "what" being in love means. Ed, orphaned at 17 years old, spent all his time to make the ends meet, and Joe was kicked out of home when he came out to his father at 18 years old. When the book starts they are already together, sharing an house and a bed, but it's not said how they met and how they put the boundaries to their relationship, not only love relationship but also life partner. Still the boundaries are there, and even if they are not rules, they are pretty strict, they do fifty / fifty on everything from who has to cook dinner to whom has to top. Joe and Ed are obviously in love, but still no one of them has every spoken the L word, and I don't know how many time would be passed before it would slip to someone if the fate had not forced the hand.

Father's Ed, whom Ed believed long ago dead, was still alive and living in a farm. Unluckily for Ed he comes to know it when the man dies and Ed is his only heir. Ed inherits the farm, and he doesn't know nothing how to farming, but Joe knows it, having being raised in a farm. Actually Joe's life dream is to be able sooner or later to buy a farm, and this unexpected inheritance seems a sign from heaven. Ed spends only few hours to decide that he is ready to change his life and moves with Joe on the farm (if this is not love...).

The new life they are starting is like a coming back to another place in time: in the small town and inside the walls of their farmhouse, it seems impossible to continue to behave like no more than friend with benefits. The new life forces them to rethink to their priorities and to what it is important for them. More it seems to bring them nearer to what it was Joe's life before Ed, and in a way, shorten the distance between him and his family. Joe's father turned away his son since he didn't understand his choice to love a man, not since he didn't love him; when Joe proves to him that being in love with a man doesn't change so much how he is, and since he is very much like his father, his father can again relate with him on a common ground.

It's not all a paradise on earth for them, moving in a small town has its trouble, where the majority of the townfolks are all right with them being gay, there is still someone who is not so welcoming. But all in all this subplot is not so strong and in first line, and above all the story is about Joe and Ed's evolution from lovers to partners. Due to that, the book is also quite sexy, and it's nice to see how their lovemaking changes with them, more they become intimate and more the sex does the same. Still, in a way or the other, it's pretty detailed but not "acrobatic", the feeling of the novella is more sweet than erotic.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B002LRYU1U/?...>

Lost in a Book says

4 Stars

That was adorable!! Seriously. I just devoured Ed and Joe in all their cute, funny, sarcastic, too-manly-for-emotion glory.

And, Cowboys? Only every day of the week and twice on Sunday, please.

Ed and Joe are roommates and have been fuck-buddies for the past two and a half years. I say fuck-buddies because they're very good at hiding from the emotional side of what they have going on. Joe is a farm hand working seasonal jobs and Ed is a mechanic. The two of them are all they have in the world due to an estrangement with Joe and his family *and* the fact that both of Ed's parents are dead... or so he thought. Prior to the death of Ed's mother eight years ago, she held steadfast to the lie that his father died before he was born. There is a little snag in this claim because a lawyer contacts Ed to inform him that his father *actually* passed away in an accident two weeks prior and listed him as the sole beneficiary of his estate...which is a running farm. Ed knows that running a farm is Joe's dream and now he has the opportunity to make it come true.

"We're solid, right? I mean—shit—we don't talk about this stuff, but...well...you know. This isn't something I can commit to without knowing you're with me for the long haul, or at least that you intend to be."

Joe agrees to make a go of it and they begin the process of leaving one town behind for another. Ed wraps up loose ends and Joe heads to the farm since he is familiar with working one. It is during this separation where they live the saying, "absence makes the heart grow fonder."

“He missed Ed acutely. Hell, he’d rather bottom for Ed every day for a week than live apart for a week. Joe smiled reflexively. That was a thought he’d take to the grave with him.

With each push from Ed, Joe’s walls would crumble and just another hint of intimacy broke through. Their sex became more emotional and instead of a quick “assume the position” fuck, they started making out, switching positions, and even giving the BJs that were considered “too intimate.” I loved Ed and Joe together. They were sweet, funny, macho, and sarcastic. They were best friends that also happened to be partners in all forms of the word. They loved deep and it was great to see them evolve and not be afraid to show it.

I struggle with the synopsis for this book because it doesn’t do it justice. It is an all encompassing novella that has depth. Joe is estranged from his family because he is gay. We get to witness the beautiful transformation that takes place with his family and understand the reasons behind his detachment with Ed. We also get to come along on a journey as Ed gets to know his father through the people in Mayfield. We get to meet Bill, his father’s lover.

We also get to meet psycho Stan. Stan is a bigot and lets his hate for gay men run free. He became such a big part of the story and the synopsis mentions nothing about crime or them running into dangerous situations. One of the issues I had with this book was that Stan wasn’t explained. He had such horrific behavior and it was never discussed in further detail. At first I thought maybe he was gay and being a bully to deflect. I wondered if he was actually in love with Ed’s dad before he died. I had all of these scenarios plotted out in my head and it was never addressed at the end nor the epilogue. I *almost* took off 1/2 a star because it was such a glaring oversight.

I would recommend this book to anyone who wants a funny, sweet and hot cowboy read.

Copy provided for honest review.

Gigi says

Holy shit I loved this book! I mean **REALLY** loved it! Plenty of angst, a splash of romance, hard working pretty farm boys... And the most fantastic HEA! This one will probably go in my top 10 or top 20. I've got to mull it over a bit first.

Highly recommended! I just loved Joe and Ed!

PS: I have a shelf on GoodReads titled Fuck Yeah, 5+ Stars. Out of almost 2000 books I've read that are posted on GoodReads, only 43 of them are on that shelf, this is one of them. Cultivating Love is one of my all-time favorite books and I re-read it every few months or so, or when I'm in a particularly bad mood. It cheers me up every time. **LOVE THIS BOOK!**

Jenni Lea says

What a cutie patootie little book. Adorable! ♥

Natalie says

What a beautifully heartwarming story this was! Addison Albright is now another happy find, as a new-to-me-author. Joe, a farm worker and Ed, a mechanic, are revealed through alternating POV's, giving needed insight to the dynamics of their relationship. Initially, I did feel like I had missed a part of their story, with the dialogue at the beginning about their established relationship. After 2.5 years, both still had little confidence in their importance to each other, even in the bedroom. They also exhibited thoughts and actions indicating some internalized homophobia.

As the story unfolded, it shows them moving past these issues. Their backstories propped up much of their previous behavior and making changes in their life helped them break through their emotional barriers. The small town atmosphere was great, with some excellent secondary characters: Ed's father's friend, Bill, Joe's sister and dad, and a few townspeople. There's only one homophobic jerk and the karma is glorious. As far as smut level, it's quite moderate with several scenes, but a few are fade-to-black. I'd recommend this for the engaging narrative, satisfactory angst levels, and an uplifting, country-style romance.

An ARC was provided to me by the publisher, via Hearts On Fire Book Reviews, for an honest review

Kassa says

I've read several shorter stories from this author and although they did tend to be sweet and sappy, sometimes edging into too much, the thread of humor and romance woven into the writing attracted me. Unfortunately this book feels like a huge step backward for the author and I wouldn't recommend it. The writing was nowhere near what I'm used to from Albright and the storyline itself has huge holes. This reads like an early work resurrected, but if you're new to the author, begin with another book. Perhaps skip this one entirely.

This book had a lot of problems for me from beginning to end. From recycled plots to inconsistent characterization to ridiculous plot turns, this is a poorly written, poorly conceived book that failed to deliver the emotional height it was aiming. I personally found so many problems that I couldn't suspend my disbelief long enough to go with the fantasy of the relationship presented. This for me is a poor quality book that readers accept because they like emotional men and ultimately the author. Well, I like emo men as well but I prefer it in a well-crafted setting that I know the author is capable of, or has been in the past.

To start with the most obvious problem, the relationship and characterization of the leading men is very inconsistent and unattractive. Joe and Ed are in their mid-20s, have been together for two and a half years and still kept their relationship very casual and loose. There were unspoken rules about keeping emotions away, not expressing feelings, offering no commitment to each other even though they live together and have for years. Their sex life was also jarring and odd considering comments such as they go several days without sex even though they're in their early 20s. The only sex they would indulge in with each other was anal sex since giving blowjobs and rubbing off on each other was considered too emotional. This felt awkward and unnatural to the relationship. Young, virile, gay men not giving blowjobs? Not that I'm an expert but it doesn't make sense that younger men in their early to mid-20s would sexually limit themselves this way,

especially with a long term partner. This is explained: "In all their time together, Joe had never made any moves to give him a blowjob, and so he'd never initiated one either."

Apparently equality in the relationship is paramount as it extends to everything, especially their sexual relationship. Both men are very vocal about taking turns on who gets to "top" when they do actually have anal sex. Then all of a sudden with the inheritance of a farm, both men seem to change completely from remote and isolated men into emotional, sharing, and sexually adventurous (for them). Even though the impetus for change is clearly there with the change in their life, the sudden and abrupt departure from their behavior is ill fitting. There wasn't enough context and action to adequately shift from never willing to express their feelings to crying several times and bringing an unprecedented level of emotion and feeling into their relationship. These two go so far as to have numerous emotional discussions about their relationship when a mere 2 weeks before, this would have been unthinkable. Furthermore they take the surprising step of willing to participate in blowjobs and the dreaded frottage. This weird emotional and physical distance in their relationship, which persisted for over two years but no longer exists, is shown partly in this quote:

They'd always held themselves in check, neither wanting to act like he actually enjoyed bottoming or willing to come forward and admit he'd be willing to suck cock. They'd even held back just plain making out, not wanting to show too much actual emotion toward the other. Ed knew what they'd been missing now and was determined that it would be different going forward.

There are other strangeness to their sex life, such as rubbing off on another man is apparently bad, but now since they can cry in front of each other exposing this aspect to their sex life is acceptable.

In the back of his mind, a small piece of his brain told him that getting his jollies rubbing on another man's leg while sucking him off was not something he wanted to live down. His cock didn't give a flying fuck, though.

Beyond the awkward and unbelievable sexual relationship, there are overwhelming family elements woven into the story. There is Joe's 17 y/o sister who hasn't spoken to Joe in 8 years but decides to runaway from a restrictive home life. This young lady manages to find Joe's new address at the farm - where he's been for just over a week and the farm isn't in his name yet. The post office likely hasn't processed change of address let alone how this girl out of nowhere found the address and managed to get there. So this entire aside is a stretch to begin with but then said sister is able to articulate with intelligence and wisdom well beyond her age about the conflict between Joe and his father. Not only has neither man bothered to close that rift but for "an hour's worth of arguments in 18 years of loving memories", Joe cuts off his entire family for 8 years until his sister shows him the way, out of the blue, leading to a tearful reconciliation with his father.

Then to cap that wholly unrealistic and conceptually flawed scene, a week's vacation and a festival for the daughter who's responsible enough to runaway to the brother she hasn't spoken to in eight years and should have no way of finding him. I fail to see where she was responsible or how it was even possible, but then she's rewarded for running away from home and worrying her parents. The stretch of believability has snapped at this point unfortunately. Furthermore, this entire element to the plot was totally unnecessary and added little to nothing in the way of plot development or character progression. It added more plot holes and problems for a little emotion and tears on Joe's part. The emotional advancement to Joe and Ed's relationship, which I think is rather weak and anemic anyway as the presence of tears does not constitute emotion on its own, could have been achieved by Joe simply talking about his family past with Ed instead of including an unrealistic and distracting excursion with the sister.

The book does pick up some after Joe is injured mostly because of the reality of the situation is finally

believable and interesting. The injury is understandable as is the entirety of actions surrounding it up to the final chapter and the epilogue. There was absolutely no reason to add in that final part and why the author chose to do that is not only a mystery but topped off the ridiculous quotient on the book, which was already rather high. The resolution to the violence presented could have been achieved another way and why this way was chosen, I'm not entirely sure nor was it even fitting with the book. The epilogue was emotional and yes, sappy, but for romantics it's satisfying. I can't harp on the sweet ending but the journey there was simply poorly done and absolutely not what I was expecting from an author I've previously rather enjoyed. I really hope this was an aberration.

Considering the reviews this book has been getting it's clear readers are willing to forgive the inherent problems and enjoy the emotional journey. So you judge yourself.

Denise H. says

***** Two hard working men face a new opportunity !
Ed, about 28, is a mechanic, hard working and strong,

who has lived with blonde Joe, 26, who labors on a farm.

Each man is stable, honest, devoted and dedicated. The guys do well together with few emotions showing, but are happy to be together. Ed's father is dead, or so his mom told him, but Ed gets a notice that his father has died and he's the sole beneficiary. Ed is stunned, he's hurt that his mom lied, and he's sorry he never got to know him or have him in his life. Joe's dream has always been to own a farm, but Ed doesn't have that experience. The men talk and take time to think before jumping in, but then both agree, "let's do it."

Each knows the other, and there's nothing they can't do together, with knowledge and brawn, they visit the farm and sign papers. Ed is having papers drawn up to include Joe as co-owner. The scene where Joe leaves to the farm while Ed will pack up for the move is so sweet, so ground breaking for them both.

This is my first Addison Albright book, and I'll be reading more. The wonderful characters are bright, easy going and steady. The story is busy and holds our interest throughout, plus these guys are so sexy together. With the slow changes taking place in their minds, as they move on to be partners in this new life changing event, we get to see their sexy, erotic times get more emotional and adventurous.

The marvelous tale has just the right amount of tension and happiness for our reading pleasure. These guys really made an impression. Great stuff !

Thanks so much sweet Gigi for your GR review...you influenced my purchase, and I'm grateful.

ENJOY everyone !!

=====

~☆~Dαni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

Too many flies in this pot.

The plot shifted with dizzying speed. We had so many changes and tragedies in such a short book, and most were resolved way too easily and quickly (Hi, you're my sister and I haven't seen you in nearly a decade. Cool. Come stay with us.)

I didn't buy the entire premise: Two guys have been in a relationship for 2.5 years but don't talk about emotions and take "turns" bottoming. Ridiculous. I could see this working in a casual friends with benefits situation, but not when the men in question are living together. Sorry, no.

Also, I don't for a second believe Ed's dad would leave his farm and money to a kid he'd never met and whom he thought had abandoned him instead of his long-term lover and companion. And if he did, he was an idiot.

Heller says

I liked these men and enjoyed reading how their relationship deepened over the course of the story.

Ed and Joe are two guys living and sleeping together that are very careful to not cross any kind of emotional lines even though they're both desperately in love with each other.

Ed gets some shocking news regarding a relative and leans on Joe to help him understand and make plans. There's a bit of drama due to some hardcore homophobia in the new area that the men move to that ended up resulting in a few scary moments. Other than that I found this a pretty low key and lovely romance as Ed and Joe start to reveal to each other just how much they're invested in their relationship.

I liked this one a lot.
