



Finding the Words

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Ryan Phillips, a speech and language pathologist in the physical rehabilitation unit of a major university hospital, has recently ended a relationship due to his partner's infidelity. He is called in to treat a patient who is suffering from a traumatic brain injury. In the course of his treatments he begins to have feelings for the man. But is he ready to be healed, and will the patient heal enough to be able to return the love that appears to be growing between them?

Finding the Words Details

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Lucy says

Reviewed for heartsonfirereviews.com

3.5 This was so difficult to rate, because I absolutely loved Andre. We meet him just after a stroke, when he is having severe language problems. He is unable to say much more than yes, yes, no, no, but, shit for about half the book. The man doesn't give up, he doesn't feel sorry for himself and he's just a conflicted, trying hard to get past this kind of guy. He is definitely flawed (see below) but he's likeable, he's lovable.

He is divorced, and his ex-wife comes across as a raging bitch. I didn't like her, and yet I felt sympathy for her in a way. Imagine being married for nearly two decades, and then finding out your husband is making plans to cheat on you. Whether that is with a man or a woman, the issue remains the same, he's actually made a date with someone else and is going to cheat on you. I could totally see her side. That made the story better for me, because she didn't appear a cliché, she seemed wounded as well.

Then we come to Ryan, the speech therapist, and actually my least liked character. Ryan himself was a decent character. Ryan's actions, particularly as a medical professional, were borderline despicable. He's internet stalking Andre, and that was creepy. I did feel sorry for him with the Jeff situation (and Jeff's response about men made me cringe; but again, it was written in a way that I didn't hate Jeff for his behavior though I am vehemently anti-cheating, I just felt this was truly what he believed and would be right with someone who believed the same thing). Ryan's actions come across later as more loving, but in the beginning? Creep.

This is a slow flowing story. It is not action packed or very angst ridden. It was lovely, in that we so frequently get to see "older" MC, and even less often get to see ones who are less than perfect. Overcoming his stroke was difficult. We don't see the episodes where Andre must be frustrated, it's not that kind of story. In general, I truly liked the story and I liked the writing even more. I will definitely find another of Mr. O'Reilly's books and see if I like it just as much.

Kassa says

This is a surprisingly sweet and lovely story that involves a slow blooming romance but never once drags. As I mentioned in a previous review, O'Reilly's prose tends to be simplistic but in this particular story the writing is much tighter and lends itself very well to the story arc. Included were interesting and likeable characters with a quick moving plot and a surprisingly amount of dialogue considering one of the protagonists has trouble speaking. Focusing on older men and realistic problems gave a very authentic feel to this story making it much more interesting than just a fantasy story about gay men and combining the lovely progression from doctor/patient to lovers and I thoroughly enjoyed reading this short tale.

Ryan is a thirty-five year old speech therapist that is enlisted to help Andre recover after a traumatic injury that has impaired his ability to speak and partially paralyzed his right side. Due to the weakness in his physical ability, Ryan makes the surprising offer to help Andre recover, as the man cannot function on his

own just yet. As Ryan is helping Andre, he discovers his feelings for Andre go beyond general concern for the older man's welfare and wonders about his own capability for more.

The story is told from Ryan's perspective as he is getting over the recent dissolution of his relationship with a co-worker, Jeff. Especially nice was that the portrayal of Jeff and Ryan's breakup, while painful, did not necessarily paint Jeff as a polarizing personality and quick justification for moving on. Ryan's reasoning for ending his relationship with Jeff was not because they didn't love each other, which they did, but Ryan wanted monogamy whereas Jeff as a much younger man still wanted to sleep around. Ryan is honest with himself about his need to recover from the relationship and is not quick to jump into something with just anyone, which is why his attraction to Andre both disturbs and confounds him.

The slow pace and gradual increase of tension and attraction Ryan has for Andre sets a lovely pace that mirrors the eventual recovery of Andre from his injury. Due to the injury and subsequent surgery, Andre has difficulty speaking. He knows the words he wants to say and how to say them, but he can't seem to say the correct words he's thinking of which results in short, truncated communication. However, even this abbreviated language allows a connection between the men as their feelings grow. Both Andre and Ryan are hesitant and almost shy to admit their growing feelings, which also lends a very honest voice to the prose and story. At 46, Andre is freshly divorced after his wife discovered his interest in other men. Although he never acted on it while married, the desire was enough to precipitate a divorce, leaving Andre floundering on how to initiate and pursue other men.

As both men are slow to engage in another relationship it allows their ease with each other to form first as friendship and companionship and later as a romantic connection. While Andre's feelings are somewhat of a mystery due to the style of telling, the romantic happy ending was fitting considering the tone and pace of the story. The writing was considerably better in this offering concentrating on tight, crafted phrases and ease inherent in the story telling. The characterization still had a few problems but they were minor in the overall scheme of the story. The cast of secondary characters ranged from forgettable to solid as the ex-wife added a nice contrasting texture whereas the various other therapists tended to blend together with no remarkable actions. This may not be a keeper, but it's definitely a solidly written and lovely honest tale about realistic men finding love. I can easily recommend this story.

Elisa Rolle says

Finding the Words is a nice book since I found that the characters are real thanks to their many faults.

Ryan is a speech therapist in an University Medical Center. He is recovering from a broken heart: his younger lover (Ryan is 35 years old, Jeff is 25) for the umpteenth time cheated on him, and even if Ryan still loves him, this time he isn't willing to forgive. The strange thing is that the author manages to not give nor to Ryan or to Jeff the fault of the breakup. On his way, Jeff loves Ryan, only that he is really convinced that monogamy is not for men; even if from my point of view he is on the wrong side, it's clear that the author didn't want to make him a negative character, and after all, from what we are able to see of Jeff, he is really a nice guy. Maybe this is the reason why Ryan is not able to forget and forgive, he is really in love with Jeff and for him love means exclusivity. Again, it's strange, I'm all for Ryan's point of view, but the way he shut down Jeff in a way made me more sympathetic for Jeff than for Ryan. And then, even if with a broken heart, Ryan is more than willing to fall in love again so soon, Jeff's side of the bed is still warm! Well, lucky him that he finds so soon a good man.

Andre is a patient of the hospital; a divorced man with two grown sons, at 46 years old he is just getting used to live alone again. And then the health issue that leave him with a body and speech handicap. Apparently Andre is a very nice character, he is almost cute when trying to speak again, and even if he is older than Ryan, he has to lean on the man for almost everything, and this makes him even more cute. But there is something more behind Andre, I'm not totally sure that he is a really strong man, even when he was in full body capacity. Andre was married, but he had doubt on his sexuality; maybe he was not exactly in the closet, he has never had homosexual experience, but he was curious. He even planned to meet with a man when he was still married... all right, Andre's wife is not exactly the epitome of nice woman, but still, I don't know if I like so much a man that was willing to cheat on his wife. In a way, Andre is not so different from Jeff, and Ryan decided to leave Jeff.

But maybe between Ryan and Jeff there were also other problems and the cheating was only the more evident. I have the feeling that Ryan always doubted on the possibility to have a future with Jeff, deep inside him he knew that Jeff was not the one. And instead I didn't feel the same when Ryan is with Andre. True, Andre maybe is not perfect, but so is Ryan; as I said the story is interesting just for this reason.

Another strange thing is the apparently lack of sex even if the story is pretty erotic. Ryan is a very "physical" man, he has naughty things, and he has no problem to take care of himself when he is in need. So we have a lot of solo sex scenes, but in the end not even one with Ryan. Ryan's relationship with Andre is very intimate and tender, but not sexy; erotic maybe, but not naughty. All in all the story is not too dramatic, but neither light: being Andre inexperienced with men, it would have been easy for the author to put one or two sex scenes with a naughty core, and instead he decided to leave the mood of the story to a more chaste level, almost familiar. In a way Ryan and Andre's love is mature and comfortable, like it's probably right for their age (more Andre than Ryan).

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B001VT3L1Y/?...>

Tutu says

2.5 stars

Can you say unprofessional? How about out of line?

I really had problems with Ryan in this story. He was, in my opinion, completely unprofessional in relation with Andre, his patient. I just saw him as a regular perv the whole book. The only thing he had on his mind was sex. And then, putting his life on hold for a patient he only knew a short while.....and mainly because said patient was a continuous source of hard-ons ? Yes, I definitely had a problem with Ryan.

Andre also, he seemed so ok with his condition, so cheery, so clingy,a bit mental and acting like a 3 year old. But let's say I could get past this, since he experienced a trauma and we don't get his POV.

Their relationship is insta-love it's not believable and it really got on my nerves.

Not the worst I read, but not very good either.

Simone says

3.5 stars

Michael says

I didn't like that Ryan stepped over some ethical/professional lines without consequences. I also didn't like that he broke up with his boyfriend because he cheated, but he didn't seem to have a problem with the fact that Andre got divorced because he was thinking about stepping out on his wife with a man. Like it was ok that he was planning on cheating because he was exploring his sexuality. How does his wife become the bad guy when he was the one who was picking men up online?

They also got to the "I love yous" awfully fast especially considering Andre's health/communication issues. The relationship seemed very one-sided, it might have helped to have Andre's POV. Overall, the relationship was very underdeveloped.

Jenre says

This short novella attracted me because the premise was different to anything I'd read previously. Speech therapist, Ryan is called in to help a man, Andre, who has suffered from a kind of stroke which has affected his speech. Andre has recently gone through a painful divorce when his wife discovered that he was considering exploring a relationship with another man. Ryan is instantly attracted to the older Andre, but is wary of having a relationship with a patient and is also suffering from a recent bad break-up. I liked the way that Ryan showed his attraction to Andre through touches and by the way he took care of him. I also admired Andre for his determination to overcome his difficulties. The sexual tension between the two characters is handled well even if I was smiling to myself over the number of jerk-off scenes that Ryan needed to ease his frustration. If I had any problems at all it was that once the men had admitted their feelings the novella ended quite abruptly. I would have liked a few more pages of them exploring their feelings for each other and perhaps a scene where they consummated that attraction, rather than an epilogue set later in time after all the tentative exploring had been done. Overall though, this was a sensitive look at a 'straight to gay' theme with the added interesting theme of overcoming illness. I'm giving this a grade of 'Very Good'.

JenMcJ says

since J asked and I took the time to think and write this, I guess I will just add it as a review of sorts:

sometimes a three star book is just really hard to review so I take the easy way out and mark the stars and run.

I thought it was okay but the injured hero meets the other hero as soon as he had the stroke (I can't remember what it was exactly, but it was like a stroke) and despite the fact that he can't talk and has myriad of other problems going on, he still feels attraction to the speech therapist. I had a hard time with that. Come on! The guy is totally messed up, no way is he thinking about a hook-up. On top of that, the therapist hero crosses the

line into stalkerish with some of his actions and then takes the guy home for his recovery (out of the goodness of his heart, right) and nobody thinks this is beyond inappropriate. Just not the best plot.

Also, the one thing I really hate is when they make the women total heartless bitches and they do that with the ex wife in this book.

So, it was a well written book but there are so many better books out there to choose from.

Tristan says

3.5/5

Nice short story, though albeit brief.

Det says

????? I'll make this short. Ryan is a pervert and Andre was an almost cheater and the wife was made to look like the bad one even though she's really been almost cheated on that I felt like it was ok for her to be angry and snappy for finding out everything that way. I won't elaborate but the main characters annoyed me.

Chris says

Ok m/m romance about a speech therapist who finds himself increasingly drawn to one of his patients.

Candice says

Read in March 2014

Mandy*reads obsessively* says

This was a sweet story about André, who is recovering from a stroke like problems, he meets Ryan his speech therapist and they hit it off.

It's pretty unrealistic, Ryan wouldn't move in with him after knowing him a few days, and him being his patient, and his inner musings were a bit much and repetitive, but it was still a feel good book!

Pam says

It's been so long since I've read this one that I forgot about it until I saw Serena's review. It's prompted me to take another look to see if my memory of how much I enjoyed it was accurate.

And I did. Here's the review.

The premise for this one is unusual. Normally the main characters in a romance of any kind have few, if any, physical limitations. To have a problem as severe as the one Andre is recovering from--well, it's off-the-chart's surprising. To start a new relationship while recovering from a life-changing health crisis isn't what you'd think would work in a romance but the author skillfully weaves patient and speech pathologist together in a manner that works.

Yes, there are rough moments for both men, as you can imagine. Andre's had a stroke, can't talk well and has partial paralysis. The author's done a nice job explaining the medical terminology and the recovery process in enough detail to understand what's happening, while still allowing the focus to stay on the growing relationship between Ryan and Andre.

But--Andre's limitations do impact his relationship with Ryan. He's afraid, angry and frustrated. And he has two sons to consider, along with an unpleasant ex-wife--and the author weaves them all in nicely into the plot.

As you can imagine, because of Andre's health, there's a lack of sex but that doesn't mean there isn't a great deal of intense emotions. So, at heart I guess I'd say this realistic story is solidly written, has interesting, well developed characters for it's length, and a smooth flow. I liked it and hope you do too.

Serena Yates says

Losing the ability to speak and with it the possibility of communication at a meaningful level, is an extremely scary thought. On a simple level this story is about a man and his speech therapist, who get to know and love each other as André recovers. The depth of feeling, burning need to communicate, and the loving understanding Ryan develops for André despite all the issues goes far beyond that which most couples ever experience. It may be because these men are more conscious of the effects of no/bad communication, or it may just be because of who they are. Either way, their story touched me deeply.

Please find my full review on Rainbow Book Reviews.