



The Fall

Kate Sherwood

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Every relationship leaves something behind. Dumped by his sugar daddy, part-time model Scott Mackenzie somehow ends up owning an abandoned church in rural Ontario. He dreams of using it for gay weddings, even if he'll never have one of his own.

Joe Sutton is trying to keep his family together after his parents' deaths. Between the family ranch, his brother's construction company, and commitments around town, he doesn't have time for a relationship. But Mackenzie is hard to ignore.

As both men fight their growing attraction, challenges to Mackenzie's business threaten their relationship. If he can't make it work, he'll have to crawl back to the city in defeat. But the only solution involves risking the ranch Joe loves, and each man has to decide how much he'll sacrifice for the other.

The Fall Details

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From Reader Review The Fall for online ebook

Kaje Harper says

Mackenzie broke up with his sugar-daddy boyfriend, *after* buying an old church in a remote location to rehab. It's going to be a much more serious and uphill project than he thought, and there's a temptation to drift away from it. But the presence of Joe, a local gay rancher with a big but supportive family and a sweet, slow style, makes staying tempting too.

Joe is kind of perfect, but he still broke my heart a little. Mackenzie was harder to get a grip on, but there was a solid core under the facade. I'd have loved for this to be a bit longer somehow, for me to be more sure that Mackenzie was right for Joe, but it was sweet and warm and about family as well as new love, which worked for me.

Katharina says

I really and thoroughly enjoyed this book. Which is a little bit of a surprise, to be honest, because from Ami's review I learned that there is a lot of assuming going on by the main characters instead of, you know, actually *talking* and that's kind of a pet peeve on mine. Because we all know what we get when we assume.

But I thought, what the hell, it's Kate Sherwood, and she writes a damn good book. Well as far as my reading experience goes. So I gave it a try anyway, and believe me when I say that I was not sorry. Mainly for those reasons:

Yes, the assuming sucks. The indecisiveness kind of sucks too. And there were several times when I wanted to smack these guys over the head. BUT, nevertheless, the whole angsty part went by surprisingly quickly. Probably mostly because the whole book went by way too quickly since I had swallowed it all up in one go. Good sign that.

And I had to swallow it up so quickly, because the characters in this book? They drew me in completely. And I'm not only talking about Mackenzie and Joe, I'm talking about Joe's whole family including Will, Ally (man, I loved her! Finally a girl who wasn't all pink and clothes and outfit-fixated!), Austin, and, yes, the dogs. I totally loved the dogs.

But what I loved even more than just those different characters *per se* were the characters' interactions, the way they behaved around each other, the way they dealt with each other, the way they *spoke*. To be honest, I was dead set on giving this book four stars (because of the whole assuming issue) until the last maybe 10 percent when I was once again blown away by the dialogue in this book. Because it was so damn authentic, how Joe and Mackenzie stumbled and tried and blabbered, and because it was still so damn beautiful and fun, full of dry humour when you didn't really expect it. Awesome! I'd really like to give examples, but I think out of the context it might sound just so much more bland than it was in the book, so you'll just have to trust me on this.

It looks like there's going to be a sequel and you can believe me that as soon as that one's out I'm going to be on it like a starving leech on the first pair of fine legs it's seen in years. It's not that there are that many cliffhangers here, but there's just still so much that needs to be told - so many story threads still waiting to be unfurled. Even if it stayed like that I would be fine. But I'd much prefer it not to.

Recommended? Hell, yeah!

Baba says

3.5 stars.**Review completed 29 December 2013**

Mackenzie is convinced that buying a church and starting a business organizing gay weddings in a remote periphery is perfect to get over his latest breakup. He's pretty proud of his idea that will prevent him from thinking too much about the fact that he lost his sugar daddy.

The church isn't in the best condition and needs some work. That's how Mackenzie meets the twins Will and Joe. Will is always worried about his hermit brother and encourages him to get laid and enjoy the comforts of life. So, you see, Mackenzie seems to come in rather handy...

He fixed his eyes on a spot across the lake and started toward it. He felt his body falling into a rhythm. His breathing was regular, his arms were strong, and his body was at home in the water. Everything was good. And for a few blessed moments of peace, he was able to ignore the images that kept bouncing into his head...

"I thought for sure you were going to go full porn star and come on my face."
Mackenzie snorted as he came back to reality. "That's a two-hundred dollar tie. I didn't want it to get dirty."

Joe nodded slowly. "Martha Stewart would approve."
"You really think Martha Stewart is my style guide?"
"I have no idea. I get most of my fashion tips from John Deere."
"I don't know who that is."
"I didn't think you would."

I'm a real sucker of the reserved, somewhat brooding type of hero and Joe, The Worrier, fits nicely in my requirement profile. Sure, his tendency of over thinking everything can be tiring and his reluctance to open up got a tiny bit on my nerves. Still, I'm very curious to see how Joe and Mackenzie's relationship is going to evolve in the sequel. As I see it, they haven't even started yet.

Joe wants to protect his heart and prefers the casual deal because he's always afraid to get hurt...

Due to Joe's eagerness to protect his heart and Mackenzie being busy to get his business off the ground and fending off his irritating ex-lover Nathan (Yes, Nathan, take a freaking hike!), there wasn't all that much room to develop anything substantial. That's actually one of my issues. I just wanted more relationship development between the two main protagonists. I'm rather sure the author is going to take care of that

problem in the sequel. Also, there was a misunderstanding due to a pet peeve of mine: miscommunication. And last but not least, I wasn't a huge fan of Mackenzie per se. Granted, he had his very good moments, i.e. when he took care of Joe after a specific "incident". Still, he was just too needy and insecure to make a huge impression on me. Being dependent on a rich and very manipulative guy is not the way I would like to organize my life. In the end, however, I was glad that he woke up and took his life in his own hands.

In The Fall we see a lot of Joe's family and their close and intimate bonds. I felt it was very well done and conveyed a strong message of family values. In fact, the interaction between Joe and his nephew Austin was incredibly sweet, funny and BEAUTIFUL. These two are my favorite characters of The Fall and the author did an absolutely wonderful job depicting their devotion for each other. That's love in every sense of the word. PERFECT! I just wanted to cuddle and hug them. Love and respect, reasonable "guidelines" and specific boundaries, that's what a kid needs to thrive and grow into a person who will hand over the very same principles to his or her offspring.

They're playing a goofy game...

"Wash, buddy," Joe directed quietly. "Scrub those fingers, get all the dirt off. " As Austin leaned forward, Joe lowered his head until their cheeks were touching, and Austin pressed his soft face against Joe's rough stubble for one moment of pure affection. Joe would never take this for granted, but he forced himself to record the memory and then push forward. "Good washing. Let's dry those hands and then go find the vegetables in the clothes dryer."

"The friiiiidge!"

I'm a fan of Kate Sherwood since I read and **loved** her Dark Horse series. Aside from a couple of minor issues I really enjoyed The Fall. It's a solid read and I'll be definitely ready to check out the sequel. However, there's no getting round it to point out that the price/performance ratio is not balanced. I think the (rather short) length of the novel is out of proportion to the sales price. Don't get me wrong, I honestly don't begrudge authors their money but considering there will be a second book a lower price would have befitted The Fall. That's just my opinion. Despite the book being a bit pricey it's worth reading, though.

<http://baba.booklikes.com>

Anke says

I liked this story very much, although around 60% I had some problems; Joe's and MacKenzie's characters suddenly behaved differently, it felt as if some scenes were missing. That got me out of my reading flow, until then I loved the story. I got back into it, but somehow I felt as if some pieces were missing or glossed over, as if the whole story was rushed towards the end.

Tina says

Kate's Dark Horse series is one of my top favourites. Like no other characters Dan, Evan and Jeff moved into my heart and never let go. Kate Sherwood has a talent to create the best family stories and the best characters and The Fall is no exception.

The Fall is about Joe Sutton, an openly gay farmer and part time fire-fighter, and his romance with Scott Mackenzie, a former model and 'kept boy' who has been dumped by his sugar daddy.

Joe's personal life is non existent. Along with his twin brother Will and his older sister Sarah, Joe has been raising his younger siblings Ally and Nick and Nick's 4 years old son, Austin, while trying to keep the family ranch running. I love his interactions with his dog Red and his siblings, especially with his teenager sister Ally and his twin Will, who aren't afraid to confront Joe with some hard facts.

"Joe," Will said, moving a little closer, "have you ever asked me for help with anything?"

"What?" ... Have I ever...?"

"Have you ever asked anyone for help? You like helping other people—you help the family, you help friends, you're a volunteer firefighter, for God's sake. You're the king of helping everyone else, but when does anyone else help you?"

"What are you getting at?"

"It's okay to need people, Joe. You don't have to do everything on your own..."

When Mackenzie buys an old church in town and hires Will's construction firm to restore the building, Will attempts to play matchmaker between Joe and Mackenzie. Of course Joe doesn't want to get involved with a pampered toy boy, it's just Mackenzie's dog Griffin he likes from the beginning. As if! :D

Mackenzie wants to make a success of his new business even if he doesn't have any idea how to handle it. He doesn't want to be a kept boy anymore, he is trying so hard to grow as a person. The romance between him and Joe isn't instant but there's a lot of chemistry between them, even though they want to keep their relationship *casual*. They never discuss anything, they are masters in assuming every fucking thing. Those boys and their *casual* non-existing relationship drove me nuts!

The interaction between Joe and and his siblings is soooo heart-warming to watch and it's obvious how loving the Suttons are towards each other. OMG, how I love little Austin. What a cutie! He is the focus of the family and owns a big piece of Joe's heart. Nick, Austin's too young dad, on the other hand... what a stubborn and arrogant kid! First I wanted to launch him into outer space but even *HE* grew on me.

There was plenty of angst and the guys grew on me to the point that my heart was aching when Mackenzie decides to leave all the trouble behind. I wanted them to be happy and at last the guys (and their dogs Griffin and Red LOL) get their HFN.

"I want you to be with me, and I want us to talk about stuff every night and eat pizza in your bed, and I want Griffin to meet Red, and they won't get along, but I'll kick Red's ass if he beats Griffin up. I want...."

The story sucked me in from the start and I couldn't stop reading. I just love Kate's varied writing style, it's neither too sweet nor too dramatic. But yet it touched me deeply and made me jump for joy, when Joe and Mackenzie *finally* got their shit together and started to talk. It made me smile when Joe was joking with little Austin or Ally gave Joe a piece of her mind. It's just a wonderful written book.

The second book is coming up in a few days and after reading the premise I have no doubt that new dark clouds are looming on the horizon. Can't wait for the sequel!

Kelly says

Three and a half stars

I love Kate Sherwood, especially her Dark Horse series, so maybe I expected too much from The Fall. I wanted more romance. Joe and Mackenzie's page time together was pretty minimal. I did like Joe's family and especially his interaction with his nephew, Austin.

Although I was somewhat disappointed by this book, I'm still really looking forward to the sequel. This is Kate Sherwood, after all.

Martin says

This story had a lot!

A hot cowboy!

No, wait! Hot cowboy twins - one gay, one straight!

A spoiled boy toy and part time male model (when his sugar daddy allowed him to actually work):

Following his spontaneous dream of doing something to earn his keep, Mackenzie buys an old church in a remote town, intending to renovate the building and using it as a luxurious location to host gay weddings!

However, little does he think through some details, such as, how would the guests get there, where would the guests stay, where would the reception be, and would a crowd of gay people feel welcome in a hick town somewhere in nowheresville?

Mackenzie certainly isn't the brightest bulb in the chandelier, but he decides to follow his dream, partly also to get over his older rich boyfriend who ditched him for a younger version of himself.

The construction company he hires to work on the church turns out to be a local farmer and his twin brother. And much to Mackenzie's amusement, one of the brothers tries to shove the other brother in Mackenzie's

face, like a straight guy version of Streisand's legendary matchmaker character in Hello Dolly!

The other brother, however, is immune to any flirting and ignores Mackenzie - who, frankly, stands out among the cowboys like a drag queen in a sports bar.

Mackenzie doesn't know that Joe is in charge of a pretty big family after their parents died a few years earlier in a accident. So beside his work on the ranch, his siblings and his little brother Nick's little 'teenage accident' that left them a 4 year old to raise on top of everything else, Joe simply doesn't have time to entertain a boyfriend. Especially after his previous boyfriend left him to move to the city - and Joe didn't want to join him because of his responsibilities.

Still, Mackenzie is a hot and willing guy and a no-strings-attached thing sounds like fun, even to reclusive brooding Joe. If only he could convince himself that his heart could actually deal with casual sex only ...

Sign me up for the Joe fanclub!

I'll give this book 5 stars without regrets. Joe is a genuinely good guy, even though he was an ass at times and I hated him for some of the things he did and said. But still Joe made this book worthwhile for me.

Mackenzie... not so much. A guy who is torn between leaving city life behind to stay with his cowboy and returning to his dominant rich sugar daddy boyfriend who tries to mold him to be who he wants to be? If this is even a question that needs thinking about, then Mackenzie should be kicked out of this romance novel. He sure doesn't deserve a perfect man like Joe...

But as romance stories go.... I loved their ending.

And I really really liked the way Joe was an out gay man in this town - and even though some people were stubborn conservative bastards, most of the town decided to overcome their homophobia because they loved Joe too much to despise him for it. So the message of the story was absolutely beautiful. There wasn't a second of "Joe doesn't want to out himself in his hometown" in this story, because everyone knew Joe was gay - and most people even did their best to play matchmaker for him. So sweet!

Also, the humour was great in this!

'And then they'd dry off, and maybe Joe would look in the little bar fridge... and there'd be no real food, because even in his fantasies Joe wasn't going to pretend Mackenzie ever had anything useful in his damned fridge.'

Some of the drama within the family was a bit too heavy for me to just swallow and move on over it, but Joe doesn't hold a grudge and as long as his little nephew Austin is with him (and Mackenzie, of course), the man is one happy cowboy!

5 stars!

Victoria love books says

Overall book rating: 3.7 Stars

Audio book: Narrator - Max Lehnen 4 Stars

Cover rating: 4 stars

I think after the Dark horse series I expected to much from this book. It was nice but I kept thinking something was missing. I liked the characters but sometimes they just felt like shells. I will have to read the next book and see what happens.

Kate Sherwood says

I guess I write a lot of books with cowboys/farmers, because I keep skimming over the Goodreads shelves people choose for my books, and there's one lovely reader who has a shelf for cowboys/farmers/shepherds.

It's the "shepherds" that makes me laugh. Was that included just so there'd be a spot for Brokeback? Otherwise... just how many books about shepherds is this woman reading?

Far From the Madding Crowd, I guess, but he's a shepherd for about five minutes, as I recall...

Elizabetta says

Kate Sherwood already won my heart with Dan, Evan and Jeff and all their shenanigans in the Dark Horse series. Dan Wheeler is one of my all-time favorite characters too. He's an enigma -- a loner, quiet, skittish, a drama queen, a hot sexual dynamo... if you rub him, boy, the sparks can fly. He is imperfect and frustrating, but you just want to love him. And you'll never forget him. He tore my heart up.

In *The Fall*, Joe Sutton has some things in common with Dan. He's every bit as complex and intriguing, can be just as frustrating. They both love horses, depend on them for their work. Joe just might earn a place on that favorite character shelf, too. How could he not? He's a cowboy/firefighter and guardian to his four-year-old nephew, Austin. Joe is stalwart, responsible, and trustworthy. He can have a sweet or cutting sense of humor and he's a kind, considerate lover. He's always there for everyone else, especially his three siblings and twin brother.

But Joe has so much more than Dan did -- his own ranch to manage and a loving family that likes to interfere in his love life. Unlike Dan, he doesn't run away from his troubles. Well, he wants to, sometimes, but he always goes home to his family. The author digs into the messiness of family drama, people with their own issues, who love you and have to fuss in your business. Joe is different from Dan here, too. He is anchored from the get-go and knows how to deal with the interference with wit and patience. Usually.

Scott Mackenzie (Mackenzie) is just what Joe needs, really. Like a tumbleweed, he blows into town... a pretty-boy ex-model, with dreams of setting up a gay wedding chapel in the 'colorful' countryside. Mackenzie needs anchoring in a bad way, and a chance to be, and find, himself. He's running away from a controlling rich-bitch of a boyfriend who micromanaged his life in and out of bed.

But Joe will take Mack as he is, no muss no fuss.

And Mack recognizes a good thing in Joe. “... *you're combining two sexy stereotype jobs into one? You're a cowboy fireman. Seriously?*”

Mackenzie has lots to offer too... insight and compassion... ‘...*there was something really, really sexy about the way Joe treated [Austin]: gentle and respectful while still firm and in charge... the qualities Mackenzie had liked about Joe in the bedroom were the same ones that made him a good parent.*”

What I really like about this story (and there were some parts that frustrated) was how Mack and Joe came together, a gradual build up, not fraught or pushed. There's a spark there but no insta-love, a mutual attraction and a convenience, obligation kept dampened. Their dialogue exchanges are funny, sweet, and snarky, two guys testing, getting to know one another. They hump, they bang, they ricochet off each other. The road may be bumpy and messy but it could lead to the promise of something special.

While we get to know Joe pretty well -- including some of his loneliness in being gay in a small, insular community and his freak-out over commitment -- Mackenzie remains a bit of a mess throughout. He's figuring things out but it very much feels like he's a work in progress.

Thankfully, there is more to come for Mackenzie and Joe after *The Fall* (what does that title mean?). Not that their story doesn't end satisfactorily here, it does. But there's more room for it to grow. And I really want to re-visit them and the Sutton clan. It's hard to let go. Looking forward to the second book, *Riding Tall*, out early next year.

To get your pre-release reviews and lots more fun stuff:

Emma Sea says

Absolutely splendid. A classic, old-fashioned, highly-satisfactory romance. With a cowboy :)

Loved the family banter. Loved the ease between Mackenzie and Joe. Loved that it wasn't all about sex. Loved so many lines in this but I don't wanna spoiler it.

Highly recommended.

Thank you so much for the rec, Eve. You sure can pick 'em.

4.5 stars

Ami says

The Fall offers few things that I enjoy: family oriented story (including a kid and dogs), rural town landscape, and two guys who might not be too stubborn (or clueless) in realizing what is good for them. The whole combination creates an engaging story that just fits my taste completely.

I love Joe's family – he has a huge one: a twin brother, two younger sisters, and a screw-up younger brother (who knocked up a girl and ended up with a kid, Austin, and left the boy for his other siblings – mainly Joe though – to take care of). Joe is like the glue that keeps the family together. Although he is the oldest with Will (his twin), Joe takes the more domestic role while Will doing the business one. I sense how Joe is more restrained than everyone else in the family.

I do have a soft heart for Mackenzie more than Joe, somehow. I guess it is because he becomes endearing to me. He admits that he enjoys the financial security of being a boyfriend to his sugar daddy. But at the same time, I sense his willingness to fight for the church and his business. It's not easy to walk out from a seduction of comfort zone, and I admire Mackenzie for that, even if at one point he is thinking of going back to the arm of his sugar daddy.

Some readers might feel impatient with the issue – because yes, it lies on the fact that the two guys don't really talk about how they feel or what they want out of the love affair. Joe assumes that Mackenzie will return to the city, that everything is just casual and temporary. Mackenzie feels that because Joe never fights for the chance for more, he doesn't see the point. Although he does ask Joe about it – and this is another reason why I like Mackenzie better, Joe just assumes things!!! However, everything is worth that declaration in the end. I love it.

Oh, and those who like kids or pets in their story, believe me when I say that Austin (the four year old boy) and Griffin (Mackenzie's dog) will steal your heart. I love every single scene with them in it – especially the tradition of word-playing between Joe and Austin. So FRICKIN' adorable!!!

Final words ... Kate Sherwood said that there will be two books about this couple and the family and the second book, **Riding Tall**, will be available in February next year. I think this book gives an enough closure that you don't feel any cliffhanger. However, I will most definitely be around for the second book. I still want to spend some times with the couple, the family, the pets, and the town.

The ARC is provided by the publisher for an exchange of fair and honest review. No high rating is required for any ARC received.

Heller says

3.75

Things have always come pretty easy to Scott Mackenzie but he's a point in his life where he's got to work hard in order to succeed and he doesn't know if has in him to do that.

His path crosses with Joe Sutton, a local farmer, and the men start up a casual relationship that doesn't feel

anything like casual to either of them. While this story felt more like Mackenzie's journey from pampered boy toy to functioning adult, we do get a lot of reveals about Joe and his struggles to balance his sense of family responsibility and with his sense of self. It's okay to want things for yourself, Joe.

I honestly don't think I've read anything more adorable than Joe with his 4 year old nephew, Austin. Sometimes young characters don't work for me but Austin was very real and so cute it hurt me. There are some really great secondary characters here as well, some of them likable and some of them needing a swift kick in the pants.

There's a satisfying ending to this read but I will say that I'm really looking forward to the sequel, *Riding Tall*, which comes out in February 2014.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

Dear Max Lehnen (aka the audiobook narrator),

Ugh. What a waste.

I've listened to a book by this narrator before and so I really should have known better. However, I wasn't much paying attention to who was narrating this book when I saw it being released by Dreamspinner, only that it was an audiobook of a story that I'd been *dying* to read forever. I've had such fantastic luck recently with audiobooks that I got spoiled. This smacked me right back to reality.

What can I say about this narrator? Honestly, I have no idea why he narrates for M/M erotic romance. His voice is really elderly sounding. Imagine your grandfather reading you gay porn? There was little differentiation between the character's voices (they all sound so similar, all with that trembling tone) and the cowboy accent for Joe was appalling. I do a better twang than Max Lehnen. He also read it in a very childish fashion (like he was narrating a children's book, I mean, not immature). The rise and fall of his voice sounded like story time at the library (I should know, I go to story time with my kids!).

It was painful to listen to and the only way I got through the book was to speed up the narration so I didn't focus as much on the reader's voice. Never again will I listen to another book by this narrator. Never again.

I feel bad that I'm being so harsh about him but I can't emphasize enough how ill-fitting I thought he was for this book. I wish the narrator all the best but I would never choose him for this genre. Remember, this is my personal opinion and I have read other reviews of this narrator where they found his voice to be sexy (to each their own!) but, for me, it was all wrong.

It is very hard to separate the book from the narration and judge the story on its own merits because the

whole way that I interpret an audiobook is through the filter of the narrator. A good audiobook makes a 3 star book a 5 star book and vice versa. Now, that being said, I'm not sure that I would love this story if I had read it in ebook form. There were a lot of miscommunications and misunderstandings that lead to unnecessary drama. That is a huge pet peeve of mine. I often wanted to shake Mackenzie and Joe for not just *saying* what they were thinking! There was a lot of hot/cold and waffling with one another, which I found irritating. I also didn't quite get what drew these two men together. It felt like a convenience thing for me more than a true love connection.

I'd give the story 2 stars and the narration 1 star, but I'll give 1.5 stars overall to give the story the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps I would have fallen in love if I had read this in print? I'll never know.

Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review

Silkeeeeeereads says

Loved this book. I stayed up all night reading it. The primary MCs are so personable. MacKenzie - well, I identified with MacKenzie. The reasons are not important but he was fleshed out and so real. Joe is just sexy as hell even though he isn't the normal personality of the top. The secondary characters are also lovable and real. There are laugh out loud moments and hand me a tissue parts and even angry, I'm going to throw my iPad, parts. Highly recommended!
