



The Winning Edge

Keira Andrews

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Can figure skating enemies find love off the ice?

After an explosive locker room confrontation with his Russian rival ends in the most intense sex of his life, American pairs skater Dev Avira is distracted to say the least. He's worked for years to have a chance at Olympic gold, and he can't let himself—or his partner—down. Playing cat and mouse with the steely and smoldering Mikhail Reznikov is the last thing he needs as he prepares for the biggest competition of his life, but they can't keep their hands off each other as the Games approach.

Dev soon learns that beneath Mikhail's arrogant and aloof exterior is Misha, a passionate man who warms Dev's heart and scorches his bed. They're both determined to win, but for Misha his freedom could be at stake if he and his partner take anything less than gold. Who will stand atop the podium? And can secret lovers from different worlds make a life together once the competition ends?

This gay sports romance from Keira Andrews features enemies to lovers, two alpha men, sequins, and of course a happy ending. Content previously published as novellas *Cold War* and *Holding the Edge*.

The Winning Edge Details

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Author : Keira Andrews

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From Reader Review The Winning Edge for online ebook

Debra says

Reviewed for Sinfully.

It seems like the Winter Olympics brings out the ice skating fan in everyone, so what better time to read an ice skater romance. The Winning Edge is a rivals to lovers story about pairs skaters Mikhail (Russia) and Dev (US).

Fiercely competitive on the ice, the US can never seem to beat the Russian champions. Dev and Mikhail dislike each other so much, even though underneath there is something else bubbling which explodes in the locker room after a competition. This one hook-up proves to be an unforgettable distraction for both men and a repeat is in store for them the next time they meet regardless of what a bad idea it is. While everything is heating up in private, the men need to keep their competitive façade up. Neither is out in the skating world which is something that would affect both their careers, but they are out to their skating partners and families. The danger of being caught is very real and could be a detriment to both their careers and be devastating for Mikhail/Misha in particular.

The story follows them through a year of competition, from the lead-up to the Olympics, to their life afterwards in the off-season as the two deal with the latent homophobia in the skating world, the danger Mikhail faces in his home country and his feelings of responsibility to his partner Kisa and their families. Both have some big decisions to make as far as their careers and lives afterward go. Mikhail's story is particularly worrisome and his sense of responsibility to everyone around him is the biggest stumbling block in his relationship with Dev. On the other hand, Dev is afraid of what his family will think of him being with Misha and what coming out would do to any opportunities he and his partner might have in the professional skating world. Dev's partner, Bailey does her best to set him straight and is a fantastic support to him. Misha's partner Kisa is likewise supportive and he has a strong family rooting for him as well.

The first part of the story focuses more on the two getting into the physical relationship while the second part of the story deals with the emotional drama of their decision to give a real relationship a try. What gives the story its tension is the real consequences that could befall not just Misha but his and his partner's families in Russia if he is outed. For Dev the professional consequences are less certain and his real fear seems to be what his mother will think of the relationship.

The story has a bit of everything, competition, secret romance, hot dirty-talk and sex, family issues and characters you'll enjoy. I wasn't always a big fan of the time jumps, but it didn't change my enjoyment of the story. There is enough detail about skating to put you firmly in that world and feel the tension during the competition scenes without it becoming too technically bogged down.

If you're one of those people who want to enhance their enjoyment of the Olympics with a skater romance or just like the rivals to lovers or secret relationship storyline, this story will definitely satisfy those cravings.

Cadiva says

This is a re-release of two short stories which have been combined into a single volume and given a quick once over. I don't believe there's been any changes, I certainly didn't notice any.

It's a timely release, given the Winter Olympics start this week, and it's one of my favourite sports romances, focusing on the unlikely pairing of an Indian-born American and a Russian, both competing in the pair's figure skating.

The Russian pair have dominated for a few years and there's all kinds of delicious tensions between the couple's but I love how their first encounter just explodes out of a confrontation between Dev and Mikhail.

There's a brilliant shout out to Leta Blake's Training Season in this book, alongside brooding Russians, worried Americans, confused team mates and clueless competitors, and it's just a really sexy read.

#ARC kindly received from the author in return for an honest and unbiased review.

Keira Andrews says

My Olympic figure skating romance is now available exclusively at Amazon:

Amazon US: <http://amzn.to/2GXu6Pq>

Amazon global: <http://rxe.me/GJGXPM>

This romance takes place at an invented Olympics in Annecy, France, since I didn't want to tie it to any particular Games. (In this fictional universe, there are no Russian doping violations or team figure skating event.)

In the past few years, a few male figure skaters have come out, with Canada's Eric Radford being the first to officially come out while still competing. Adam Rippon is another notable out figure skater. There has historically been a surprising amount of homophobia in figure skating, and for my characters Dev and Misha, they are still afraid of going public with their sexuality. Of course as rivals, they certainly never expect to fall in love with each other...

R says

Dev and Mikhail (Misha) are world class figure skaters. Both gay, both in the closet, both in the hunt for Gold at the Olympics. Both men are devoted to their skating partners and their end game of a gold medal. Dev, because it's his ultimate goal. Mikhail, because if he takes home a gold his future and family will be safe.

The last thing they expect is the spark that ignites between them. Dev and Misha know that they are courting disaster, yet they continue to find ways to be together. A story of strong men, wanting what they shouldn't but unable to walk away. Finding something in each other they never thought to have.

Admitting their feelings publicly would cause issues they might not be able to overcome. Dev with his family and Misha with his country's anti gay persecution.

I would of liked to have seen this addressed in more depth. That said, the story has a good mix of hot sex and a believable story line. An interesting glimpse into the grit behind the glamour of pairs figure skating. The author has combined two books into one.

Review Copy requested and reviewed on behalf of OMG Reads

Amy says

What a great read right before the winter Olympics! And skating is definitely my favorite event!!

I loved Dev and Misha! Enemies to lovers is one of my favorite tropes if done correctly. And this was perfect! The locker room scene where they were fighting, breathing hard, and getting into each others faces? And then next thing you know they are all over each other, kissing and rutting together. OMGeee, that was amazing!

I enjoyed watching their relationship grow, even though they had their struggles. And I learned quite a bit about Russian culture. Overall, I loved it!!

ConM says

Enjoyable winter Olympic's m/m romance.

Catherine says

***** 3.5 Stars *****

This content was previously released as the *Cold War* series. I gave Cold War 4 stars and Holding the Edge 3 stars, so I've split the difference here.

To see my brief review of *Holding the Edge*, click [HERE](#).

DarienMoya says

CAUSING AN ICE MELTING

3.5

I've only read one Keira Andrew's book previously and really liked it, so when I saw there was a figure skating romance being offered up by the author I had to jump on (Yuri on Ice feels anyone). This is also a

enemies (rivals) to lovers story. Let's just say, I don't understand how they even had ice to skate on because things were hot, hot, hawt!

Dev wants to be a champion on the ice, he wants the gold for him and his partner but there's a team stopping him from achieving his dream and it's the Russians. The team also has Mikhail Reznikov, colder than the ice he skates on and crazy beautiful. Dev is feeling things he shouldn't and his eyes should be on the prize and not glorioussity that is Mikhail's ass. When an angry encounter leads to some mutual getting off, Dev has more to worry about than winning a competition he now has to protect his heart from the cold.

Mikhail is seen as cold and aloof and he's accepted that. He's got a job to do and that's winning gold at the olympics. It's not that he wants to win it's that he needs to win at all cost. He has no love for skating anymore, it's become a way to keep his family safe to keep himself safe but Dev Avira has come and put a chink in his plan. Their chemistry is molten and Mikhail is putting all that he is in jeopardy but staying away from Dev is impossibly hard. He makes him need!

The book is broken down in two parts and honestly I liked the first part a lot more. It had intensity, excitement, and a taste of the forbidden. Dev and Misha are fighting an attraction that neither of them needs, but the chemistry is so delicious and risks behind it is all so electrifying. I loved their coming together and the apprehension that Dev faces knowing that his ass and mind should be on the ice and not on Misha (easier said than done).

The second part, while alright is not without it's faults. This is where the story hit a plateau for me. There was all this excitement in the first part and the second became a repetitive storyline about why they shouldn't be together. The sex, sizzling but that dirty talk got me feeling some sort of way. Like some badly produced porn with dialogue, I could not deal. I was all "*no more talkie, please no more talkie*". I was all on board for them having their happy ending, but the balance was off and by the end their I was just waiting for it to be over.

Overall, I liked the story. In the beginning I was loving the story, loving the figure skating just loving it all but by the end there it was falling apart for me. The conflict was dragged out and then came together with an anti-climatic reveal. So this one was just an alright read for me, sucks cus I really dig the figure skating.

SideNote- Big applause for representation. It is great to see a person of colour on the cover and also represented in the book.

Sheri says

I'm not a huge fan of ice skating but I AM a huge fan of all things Keira Andrews. Which is how I found myself reading this book. If the blurb sounds familiar, you may have seen or read this before because it's a new shiny addition of an older story. I'm always grateful when authors bring back older releases; it allows us busy readers the opportunity otherwise missed to catch up. And I'm so happy I caught this fun and fiery enemies to lovers romance with an Olympian twist. With the Winter Olympics underway, this couldn't have been timed any better.

What's to like: As I said, I'm not well versed with figure skating. I'm glad I wasn't lost or overwhelmed

with the specifics. Andrews paints a beautiful picture with her skaters and I could imagine them gliding and flying across the rink. Speaking of skaters, wow, what a gang. Fierce competitors often have fierce emotional explosions. The feels are in full force here. Mikhail is well-known for his frigid exterior. He's also one of the best skaters in the world. Winning the Olympics isn't just about taking home a medal for him, it's about earning his freedom. The Russian's won't tolerate his sexuality, which is his most guarded secret. If he can take home the gold he may be able to slip into the shadows afterwards. Dev has spent most of his life preparing for this moment. The Olympics...a dream come true. He needs to focus and stay on top of his game. When a heated moment between his biggest rival and enemy on the ice takes an unexpected turn, he's thrown off. Now is not the time for distractions but he can't deny his powerful attraction to Mikhail. When Mikhail sheds his cold mask and reveals Misha, Dev is a goner. He's swiftly falling but they must contain their feelings. No one can know. The consequences are too steep, they must be discrete. Can they put on a winning show?

What's to love: Forbidden love always tastes so sweet. Dev and Misha take the cup on forbidden love. Keira's game is strong! I loved how viciously they hated each other in the beginning and how vehemently they loved each other by the end. Talk about flipping the one-eighty switch! Once Misha settles into his happiness, he shines. I loved how he embraced his new life. His puppy was a dose of pure joy. Both Dev and Misha are extremely close to their skating partners and the girls are polar opposites. However, their influence and spark only added to the story. Mix in their parents and we have the complete package. I adored the skating family as well as their flesh and blood. All of the relationships tie together beautifully. The competitive drive, the emotional pull and the characters....there's a lot to love here.

Beware of: Disdain becomes desire. Anger turns into affection. And fears of nonacceptance force them to hide their true feelings.

This book is for: KA groupies (like me) and figure skating fans (unlike me) as well as anyone who enjoys feeling the red-hot blaze from enemies to lovers romance should grab this one quick!

Book UNfunk

Maygirl7 says

Keira Andrews is the best at sports romances. The connection between Misha and Dev was a bit too instant. They've spent years hating each other then one day they couldn't keep their hands off each other. However, enjoyable read nonetheless.

Don Bradshaw says

I enjoyed the first half of this book. The story became old and tired quickly with the political sub-plot and all the hiding. The relationship between Misha and Dev seemed centered around the bedroom which was a shame.

Bárbara says

ARC provided by the author

This was de-light-ful.

I loved getting a glimpse into the world of skating, and the complexity of its demands, that (as in many disciplines) transcend the borders of the actual work inside the rink most of the times. It was fascinating to see that machine in motion. It was equally fascinating to see how the outside world impacts on the discipline's microcosm, as well as how the job shapes the skaters' lives. I think that aspect of the story was really well-crafted, and it was seamlessly interwoven with the core of the story, the love story between Dev and Misha.

Although in general it's not my favorite content, I have to say that here I wasn't bothered by the sex scenes (taking into account that the first one occurs pretty early into the story- in another context it may have bothered me, but it made sense here).

I also found it really enjoyable to get a glimpse into Misha's world, and I loved that the Holiday season aspect of the story didn't focus solely on the more well-known American style of celebration, but that it also included features of Misha's celebrations as well, with a special appearance by Father Frost! Honestly, the bit about the celebrations was the cutest and I loved it.

Another winning point was the relationships, not only the precious bond that formed between Dev and Misha, but the rest as well: the guys' friendships with their skating partners, the clear devotion the parents showed to their sons, and last but not least, as a very special bonus, there's a lovely doggie thrown in the mix!

Seriously, this story had a lot going on, and I really, really recommend it.

Jennifer?Pher? says

This was just the perfect time for me to read this book!

It is Winter!

The Olympics are starting!

I just did a whole week layout in my planner set around skating!!

It was just meant to be!

I'm a little excited if you couldn't tell. I really loved this book. It hit all my buttons. All of them. It mixed everything perfectly. There was enough skating, enough romance, enough family. Everything was enough.

I fell head over heels in love with these boys and felt so much for them.

Sometimes a book is just perfect, the writing, the content and for sure, the timing.

This was one of them.

LOVED IT!

ARC courtesy of the Author in exchange for an honest review

Ariana says

3,5 stars

Keira Andrews is a writer who has never disappointed me. And *The Winning Edge* is definitely a good read. 'Enemies to lovers' always intrigues me, and the sparks flying between Dev and Mikhail at the beginning are pretty awesome. It is a shame that their animosity fizzles out pretty quickly. I could have easily done with a bigger helping!

Although I enjoyed the chemistry between the two men and the way their relationship unfolds, I missed something, I can't put my finger on. Maybe a bit more angst? More detail about how Dev comes to the conclusion to be less afraid of coming out? Less convenience in the plot in the later part of the book? Hmm, I'm not sure, but for some reason this didn't grab me as much as other books by this fabulous author.

Saying that, it is very well written and I'm certain that other readers will have no niggles whatsoever!

Jess says

This book was provided for free by the author and Love Bytes in exchange for an honest review.

This review was first posted to Love Bytes: LGBTQ Book Reviews. It has been slightly edited here for content.

When two ultra-competitive characters start as rivals and have their first romantic encounter in the locker room, you know you're in for a steamy story with a lot of conflict and tension. But Dev and Mikhail (Misha) can't deny their chemistry for long, making this a perfect enemies-to-lovers sports romance that always brings the drama.

This is a great example of a sports romance that doesn't skimp on the actual sports. If you're not familiar with the world of competitive ice skating, you don't need to worry, because we get a lot of detail about competition rankings, different events, and different technical aspects of pairs figure skating. We get a great feel for the Olympics atmosphere before we even fall in love with the romance. As someone who already loves ice skating, I was totally fan-girling over the entire setting.

Andrews always knows how to really bring the heat with her romantic pairings, and Dev and Misha are no different. While they may have their differences in competition, there's no doubt about who is in charge in the bedroom, and their effortless push-pull dynamic heats up every love scene. We definitely get some great romance and sweetness, but Andrews never shies away from the dirty as well!

My only issue came with pacing. I think this story should've stayed as a two-part release with two distinct novellas. They don't really flow as one story. In the second half of the book, I think the romance shifts into turbo-drive a little bit, coming at us fast with the coming-out and love confessions. While part one was perfectly paced and nuanced in its characterization of both men, the latter part dipped into saccharine sweetness and melodrama just a little too much. The first part (*Cold War*) has a great story arc and a satisfying ending, so to have the story continue seamlessly onto the next part (*Holding the Edge*) leads to burnout rather than excitement to see what Misha and Dev are up to next.

Despite this clumsiness of putting the two stories together, I really enjoyed this book on both a plot level and a romance level. It brought the excellent sizzle, drama, and story arc in equal measure.
