



Devotion

Grace R. Duncan

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Finley Cooper is tired of waiting for his destined mate to be ready to claim him. In deference to human laws, he's already agreed to wait until he's eighteen. But now his birthday has come and gone-and his mate has a new set of excuses. Finley doesn't understand it any more than his wolf does, and he's beginning to wonder if fate made a mistake.

Tanner Pearce wants nothing more than to claim his mate, but he worries that Finley is too young. Tanner will never forget what happened when his best friend mated at Finley's age, only to have that mate end up feeling trapped and breaking their bond. While rare, it can happen, and the fallout Tanner witnessed as his best friend tried to deal with the break has haunted him for years.

When Finley finally has enough, he threatens to find someone who will claim him if Tanner doesn't, and Tanner realizes he needs to come to terms with his fears or risk losing his mate forever.

Devotion Details

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Author : Grace R. Duncan

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From Reader Review Devotion for online ebook

Christy says

3.5 Stars ~ *"It was time to force the issue. If Tanner didn't want him, it was time to find someone who did. He wanted his destined mate. He wanted the man he was in love with. But he could, and would, sever the bond that they'd started and form one with someone new. Someone who wanted him."*

The frustrations of youth. I remember them well, and I truly empathized with Finley. Obviously, I don't know what it feels like to be a shifter and have a destined mate, but I could imagine. The internal struggle must be so difficult, having to wait until you can be claimed by the one person on the planet picked for you, and only you, by your goddess, Diana. The problem was, I empathized with Tanner, also, and respected where he was coming from. He is six years older than Finley. When they met, Tanner was twenty-two, and Finley was sixteen. But Tanner still thinks eighteen is too young. He wants Finley to go to college and live a little before being mated. What Tanner doesn't understand, though, is that Finley wants to do those things with his mate. Granted, communication was seriously lacking between these two, at least in the beginning.

It became obvious, very quickly, that I was dealing with one very stubborn and hardheaded man, and an equally stubborn but not quite so hardheaded younger man. This might be the first time I've read a book where the communication between the two main characters is abysmal at best. Men. Ugh. Finley heads across the country to spend time with his grandparents and get a much needed break from the turmoil of Tanner not wanting to claim him. Tanner is devastated, but says nothing to prevent Finley from going. And, even though Tanner's parents think he's made the wrong decision, and Finley's parents won't speak to him, Tanner still has to spend time agonizing over what decision to make.

I was very glad when both men made the right decisions. It was actually rather frustrating watching the back and forth continue for so long, but since the author made up for it in the end, I forgave her. I did find it very amusing that Tanner was just as clueless about dealing with his mate as any man would have been, and I loved watching Finley stand up for himself.

A good beginning to what I hope becomes a great series. I always enjoy shifter stories, and this was no different. I'm looking forward to book two. Thank you, Grace!

Wendy says

I really enjoyed this hot little shifter story. There is a lot of miscommunication in this one, which kinda pissed me off, but it didn't ruin the story for me...it just made me angry.

Tanner and Finley meet when Finley is 16 and Tanner is 22. It's clear right from the moment they meet, that they are destined mates. Finding your destined mate is rare, most just choose a mate. Finding a destined mate, while being gay, is even more rare.

When destined mates meet, a bond starts building between them immediately. This bond however will not be fully formed, unless the two mates actually claim each other. We all know what that means...hot sex and

biting ;)

This is where shit gets complicated. Tanner wants Finley very much, but he thinks Finley is too young to be claimed. Not by wolf norms, but by human norms, so they decide to wait. Finley doesn't like it, but he can understand that Tanner is reluctant to claim him, until he is of (human) legal age. They still date and become the best friends. They run together, go out together and spend a lot of time with each other, all the while falling more in love, but not having a physical relationship. Finley can't wait for Tanner to claim him...so imagine his disappointment, when he turns 18 and Tanner still refuses to do so. Finley feels so rejected, that he decides to leave for a while. He goes to visit his grandparents pack...miles away.

Tanner is upset about Finley leaving. He doesn't understand why Finley is upset. He just wants to wait with the claiming, he still thinks Finley is too young. He wants to give Finley time to grow up a little and experience life. He wants to make sure that Finley really wants to be claimed, and not resent him later on in life. He's also a bit reluctant about the claiming itself. Being the alpha's son, there are some rules....

While at his grandparents, Finley meets another gay wolf...Jamie. Now Jamie does want Finley, as a friend, but he would also want more. He makes it very clear he would have no problems claiming Finley as his. I really liked Jamie. He was an awesome character and I can't wait to read his book next.

Tanner finds out about Jamie in a not so pleasant way, which really upsets Finley and his wolf.

Tanner really had his head in his ass for half the book. I understood where he was coming from, but if he would have just been honest with Finley, all this shit wouldn't have happened. Then again...there wouldn't have been much of a story ;) He wasn't a bad person, he was just worried and acted in the wrong way. Finley was great and all he really wanted was being Tanner's mate. I hope we'll get to see more of them in the next book.

I really liked the steam in this one...it was hot. It does take some time, but damn. Did I mention the knotting....let's not forget about that !!!!

I really liked this one, but I can't wait for Jamie's book. He was a great character, so I hope his book will be awesome ;)

3,5 stars from me. I really do need half stars !!!!!

Jordan says

4/5 for Devotion. I was really hesitant about listening to this audiobook because I wasn't sure how it would translate as an audiobook and shifter books haven't been my favorite genre of audiobook in the past, but this was actually really good.

I liked Tanner, but I loved Finley. Tanner had his reasons for being a little shit and not claiming Finley, but in the end, his logic was really weak and clearly devised to create a little bit of turbulence so that this book had more of a plot. I'm not complaining, but I am saying it was predictable and a tad bit over the top on Tanner's part. But I did appreciate Finley being a strong character and not taking Tanner's crap. When

enough was enough he wasn't afraid to say so and I loved that about him.

I'll be completely honest, though, this book was a little dramatic. Both of the characters made choices that lead to unnecessary drama and blew things completely out of proportion. But I also think that the drama is why it translated so well as an audiobook. Usually, when I'm listening to audiobooks, I have to block out everything else and completely pay attention otherwise I'll forget what is happening or who is speaking. I didn't feel that way with this book.

I listened to this book while I was at work and splitting my focus between several different tasks. Occasionally I would have to pause the book or put it down completely for an hour to go do something else that took priority, but it never failed, when I came back and pressed play again, I never had to rewind or go back to figure out what was going on. I knew where I was in the story and I knew what was going on.

When I listened to the audio sample, I knew it was going to be a tossup on whether or not I would like the narrator. He has a little bit of a nasaly voice that has a very distinct tone when he raises his pitch. About two chapters in I wanted to pull my hair out, but I kept listening, and I'm glad I did, because now I couldn't imagine anyone else reading this book. Joel Leslie became the boys and he brought character to not only them, but their wolves as well.

In short, I have some mixed feelings about this book, but I liked it more than I didn't and I would definitely read the second book in the series, particularly if Joel Leslie is going to be reading the audiobook.

Reviewed by Jordan at Alpha Book Club.

Disclaimer: This book was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review. All thoughts and opinions expressed herein are my own and not influenced by the author or the publisher in any way.

~◊~Doxni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~◊~ says

So I really enjoyed this book. It was by no means perfect. Some of the writing was repetitive and a little unruly, but **WOLFY SMUT galore, people**

There's a smokin' hot slow burn during the first half, as Tanner can't get out of his own head and just claim his mate already. No wonder Finley takes a time out and goes on a train ride across the country.

Once Finley leaves, Tanner can't get his shit together, and he downright panics when Finley goes missing in his wolf form.

The second half of the book is all about the jealousy and confessions and YOU'RE MINE, ONLY MINE. And did I mention the kisses and mating and scorching sex six ways from Sunday?

And KNOTTING.

Can't forget that.

Oh hell, this was just so dirty & SO MUCH FUN.

The family and pack traditions made me giggle, because, good lord, talk about AWKWARD, but I liked that the wolf aspect wasn't ignored. Tanner and Finley were cute running together and sniffing at each other.

I love shifter books and can forgive a lot when I'm feeling the chemistry and passion between the MCs.

Also: **Big Fat HEA, baby!**

P.S. I read the first chapter of the second book (Jamie's story), which was included as an excerpt, and that was a big mistake. Because it immediately hooked me, and now I have to wait a whole month to get the rest of the story. Damn it.

Sandra says

This is a sweet little shifter story (one of my favorite genres) and I enjoyed it, even if it isn't an all-time favorite. It's a bit of a different plot, with them being destined mates but Tanner being resistant due to his fears of Finley regretting it and leaving him.

The first half was very well done. Hot when Tanner tried to drag Finley out of the club and *almost* gives in. Heart breaking when Finley doubts if Tanner cares about him at all and that he needs some space. Infuriating when Tanner doesn't realize his mistake and go running after him! But their time apart was done well and believable, in particular relating to Finley's feelings. I loved the addition of Jamie, even if the situation was unfair to him, and liked watching that friendship develop.

The second half wasn't *as* good, for a couple of reasons. One, while the sex was HOT initially, and I was SO happy to finally have it, it got a bit redundant. I get the idea that their wolves were pulling them and they needed to 'mate' a lot before the claiming, but this would have been one of the few times where fade-to-black sex scenes would have actually been appropriate. Give us a few good ones with plot in between, instead of just all sex. Believe it or not, it can actually get old. So I skimmed through some of it.

I had actually skimmed a tad earlier in the book as well. While I liked it, the author goes into too much rambling detail at points when it isn't really necessary or relevant. And *because* I liked the plot, I wanted to get back to it.

The second thing that I didn't love about the second half of the book, was this 'public claiming' thing. I've read other shifter books with it, and I don't really care, it can be incredibly hot. But Tanner was *so* anxious about it, that it made be anxious and less able to enjoy it. Also, it felt inconsistent. The parents were so incredibly nonchalant about it and acted like this was normal, yet Tanner got embarrassed and cringed even talking about sex with his parents. They also teased a *lot* with regards to sex, which if sex is so open and not a big deal, then it's also not really tease worthy. See? Inconsistent.

But this is definitely a sold 3 star book for me. Enjoyable despite criticisms, and I liked both the MC's. I also, however, *loved* Jamie, and I am *so* incredibly excited for his book!

Received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, reviewed for Hearts On Fire

***J* Too Many Books Too Little Time says**

3.5 Stars!

Despite the 3 star rating, I did like this one!

Oddly enough I liked the first half more than the last half. And most of the first half Tanner was being an idiot.

But things just turned a bit too cheesy for me the second half.

Bonus points for the shifter smut though!

And I definitely liked it enough to read Jamie's book!

.Lili. says

I have to admit I passed on this one in the past when I saw its rating was 3.55 Stars. Then I ran across Dani's review and she used the words:

Smut galore
Knotting
Mating
and
Low Angst

To describe it. I was instantly sold. Was it cheesy? Yep. Predictable? Oh, yeah. Melodramatic? Fuck, yeah. But once I started I couldn't put it down. It entertained the hell out of me. It was a fun read.

As far as rating goes- I'll give this one 3.5 Stars and round down. Why am I rounding down? Two reasons:

1. Tanner. He was way too whiny for me. You'd have thought he was the 18 year old and not Finley.

and

2. The story got taken over by a secondary character- Jamie. I loved him and found myself wishing it was him Finley chose instead. Having the main characters overshadowed by a supporting one isn't a good thing.

But on the plus side, now I'm super stoked for Jamie's book which is the next one in the series. :)

Sandra says

3.75 rounded up.

I quite liked this story, the first in what seems to become a nice series (#2 is already in the works and teased at the end of this one). I liked the mythology created here with wolf shifters and the rules they have in place, and how they bond/mate. The author did a fine job with her world-building. And it is through that world-building, and the rules in place, that the author creates the conflict between the two MCs.

Tanner is six years older than Finley, who is still underage when they first meet and recognize they are destined mates. While it's not unheard of to mate that young, Tanner has some issues and wants to wait and date Finley until the latter is of age. When that time comes, and Tanner still hesitates, Finley rebels and runs off all the way across the country.

This brings me to the part that I didn't like about this book, and where it lost points. For a good chunk of it (nearly half), Tanner and Finley are separated, physically, and somewhat emotionally. Their bond is not complete, because Tanner is an idiot and hasn't fully claimed his mate (for reasons that, while understandable, could have been cleared up with just one fucking conversation). So while at his hiding place, Finley meets another young man (Jamie) whom he then messes around with a bit, because, you know, hurt feelings and woe is me, because "my mate might not love me", since Tanner never actually said the words.

Okay, so both of them rate a bit high on the stupid scale, and while I can make some excuses for Finley, because of his age, I had a harder time forgiving Tanner because his actions, while possibly noble, almost cost him the best thing that ever happened to him.

But then Tanner gets a rude wake-up call which propels him into action. Their reunion was quite sweet, and hot, because Tanner pulls his head out of his ass for once, and does what he should have done much sooner.

Also, knotting.

Though, speaking of knotting, someone will have to explain to me how that actually works, if the base of the male organ swells, instead of the head. If the male isn't entirely inserted (balls deep, if you will), how then does swelling at the base prevent him from pulling out? Wouldn't it make more sense if the head of the dick in question swelled up instead? *ponders*

Once the two are reunited, and Tanner makes good on his promises, the rest of the story is basically how they reconnect and finalize their mating bond. There's a great moment during the mating ceremony when Tanner finally realizes how much of an ass he's really been, and the mythology created by this author really made its point. Nicely done, that.

So, yes, I enjoyed this book, and I am looking forward to book 2, where Jamie (poor guy) gets to find his own mate. Who may or may not be human. Judging by the first chapter, it's gonna be a great book indeed.

Told from the 3rd person, switching view points between Tanner and Finley (and Jamie at the very end), we get the full range of thoughts, emotions, and actions. The writing is crisp and fairly straight-forward, descriptive but not purple, and the author made me believe that their romance is true and real.

** I received a free copy of this book from its publisher. A positive review was not promised in return. **

Jewel says

3.5 Stars

Just a short and sweet review, before I forget to write one at all. Again.

Devotion was a very enjoyable wolf shifter story. A bit predictable and Tanner really should have been a mule shifter, he was so stubborn, but I did enjoy the goings on.

Fin was adorable and persistent with his fated mate, but also getting tired of having to do all the prodding. So, desperate times call for desperate measures, and Fin leaves, hoping that some space will bring his stubborn mate to his senses.

Tanner won't listen to anyone when everyone thinks he should have claimed his mate by now. He's got this misguided notion that Fin is too young. By human standards, I would totally agree, but things are different in this wolf shifter mythology. Besides, Tanner is only 24, himself, and is at the stage in his life when he needs a swift kick in the pants to help him get over himself. Fin and his new friend Jaime are just the instrument to deliver that kick.

All in all, I liked the story and when they finally do get down to business it is **so** hot. And -- knotting! Be still my beating heart. Jamie's story is coming out next month, and I'm greatly looking forward to reading it. He deserves his happy.

Katrina Passick Lumsden says

200+ pages of pointless "will they, won't they" wangst. While the writing was good, the story was severely lacking. I wanted to like it, but the characters were just so infuriating, and the repetition was grating.

T.M. Smith says

"The perfect union of words and voice."

What did you love best about *Devotion*?

Everything! Seriously. I'd read the e-book, a couple times, and now to have narration, these wolves I do so love brought to life by Joel Leslie's stunning narrative skills. Perfect union.

What did you like best about this story?

The struggle, actually. I love shifter stories but they are almost always the same. Meet mate, mate mate, rinse repeat. In this story Duncan sets herself apart by adding the struggle Tanner deals with on a daily basis, not claiming his mate from the start. Finley struggles as well, but because he thinks Tanner may not necessarily want him as a mate. I loved the different view of the destined mates trope.

Which scene was your favorite?

The claiming itself at the end.

Did you have an extreme reaction to this book? Did it make you laugh or cry?

Both, actually. I laughed so hard a couple of times, just little things. But when Finley made the decision to put some distance between himself and Tanner, the pain and confusion that caused, made me a little bleary eyed.

Any additional comments?

Tams e-book review from August 2015

Tanner Pearce is the son of the Alpha wolf, heir apparent and future Alpha. Finding his destined mate should be a cause for celebration. But Tanner is in his twenties and his mate is only sixteen. Tanner never considers not mating with Finley, he just wants his mate to at least be of age and have lived enough life not to have any regrets once they do mate. But young Finley is growing tired of waiting and being pushed away at every turn.

Finley finally reaches a breaking point and flees to his grandparent's home which is thousands of miles away. Tanner wants to give Finley his space, it's the reason he has refused to actually mate with his mate these last few years, so Finley could enjoy his youth and be truly ready when they did mate. But now Tanner fears he has driven away his heart, and he's not quite sure how to get him back.

Fantastic start to a new series! I thoroughly enjoyed the traditional Shifter aspects Duncan included in her story, while bringing a few unique ones of her own to the mix, keeping it fresh. There was the right amount of drama and angst in the story without being immature or awkward. Tanner has his reasons for wanting to wait to complete the mate bond, but he's not entirely honest with Finley and it could cost him everything. The story flowed well from beginning to end with crests and valleys along the way to keep the reader interested and entertained.

Shifter fans are going to flock to this one of course, but there is so much more to the story. Coming of age, figuring out who you are and your place in life, learning to bend and give, especially when the decisions you make not only affect you, but your partner too. There's some sexy time as well, these two wolves are pretty passionate about each other. And even, dare I say, a bit of romance... Le Sigh.

Tanu Gill says

I liked the plot. But I really struggled with the writing. Some parts were really well-written, while some could really use an editor. I especially fell in hate with this one peculiar phrase, it got repeated so many times -- his eyes *bled black*. Whaaaaat?!?!? Ugh! It appeared way too many times for my liking.

I wish the book got a better editor. Cutting out some dragging scenes and phrasing some wonky sentences a little bit better would have done wonders for the book.

Candice says

2.5 stars

This was just okay for me. It was a little too repetitive with Tanner holding off mating with Finley and that going round and round. I could understand it considering Finley acted immaturely, pouting and then running away and threatening Tanner because he wouldn't give in. Then actually trying to hook up with Jaime. The whole thing just seemed silly and I found myself skimming through parts of the story. While the writing was okay, I think that a lot was just added filler and the story could have been much better.

BWT (Belen) says

Updated 06/30/2017 for Audiobook:

Joel Leslie does a terrific job with the character voices and Devotion is simply a pleasure to listen to.

He is, in fact, the reason I didn't hurt something when I realized that yes, I remember I had enjoyed reading this story, but, uh oh, I'd forgotten about the truly awful miscommunication and heartache that could have been cleared up WITH ONE SINGLE CONVERSATION.

For almost half of the story Tanner and Finley are separated. However, once they're reunited the sexy times begin and I have one word for you: **KNOTTING**.

So, yes, the sexy times are sexy, but lordie, I wanted to wrap my hands around Tanner's throat and throttle him.

Regardless of the miscommunication, I enjoyed the dual POV and getting to see both Tanner and Finley's sides, the flow is good, and the world building entertaining enough to keep the reader/listener engaged until the end, helped largely by Leslie's narration.

I'm looking forward to getting Jamie's story on audio next!

Audio copy of Devotion (Forbes Mates #1) provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange of an honest review.

This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.

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I have to say this started off very shaky for me. It's complete miscommunication between characters - of the kind where one simple conversation - ONE - would have cleared everything up and set an entirely different tone to the story.

I didn't like that for almost half of the story the two main characters, Tanner and Finley, are separated, it just made me crazy. Although their separation *does* give the opportunity to meet another wolf (Jamie) who will be the main character for book #2.

Once Tanner and Finley are reunited though, the sexy times begin, and I have one word for you: **KNOTTING.** There are some smoking hot sexy times that practically scorch the page!

I liked that the story is told from both Tanner and Finley's points of view. I even liked the epilogue is from Jamie's. I enjoyed the world-building, the character chemistry, and the mythology behind their mating bond.

Bottom Line: The writing, characters and flow was good enough for me to overlook the miscommunication and separation in the beginning and enjoy the rest of the story. I'm looking forward to more in the series!

Recommended.

This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.

Jaime says

ARC provided by author in exchange for an honest review. Reviewed by Jaime from Alpha Book Club
