



A Hundred Thousand Words

Nyrae Dawn

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Tobias Jackson grew up in Coburn, a town where the gay population equaled exactly one: him. Add that to the fact that his dream guy was his best friend's jerky older brother Levi Baxter, and it made hooking up virtually impossible.

Now home from college for winter break, Toby is a different person. He left Coburn for San Francisco, where he wasn't the lone gay guy and the only black kid in town. And yeah, he took advantage of what the city had to offer.

Apparently Toby isn't the only one who's changed. Levi's not acting like the self-centered guy with all the answers that Toby remembers from growing up. Oh and Levi's realized he's bisexual, which makes things a lot more interesting...

Heading back to college, Toby doesn't expect to meet up with Levi again, despite him being in med school not far away. A surprise visit from Levi blows that assumption out of the water. As they spend more time together Toby sees Levi as more than just the fantasy. He's complicated, unsure...he's real. But if Toby can't get out of the past and find the words he keeps locked inside himself, he'll lose his chance at Levi for good.

A gay, new adult, interracial romance.

A Hundred Thousand Words Details

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From Reader Review A Hundred Thousand Words for online ebook

Elsa Bravante says

Un libro del que no me esperaba mucho, pero ha sido una grata sorpresa, muy entretenido, me lo he leído sin apenas darme cuenta.

No es un libro de Premio Nobel (seamos sinceros, pocos lo son), pero está escrito más que correctamente y los personajes principales están muy bien dibujados, fundamentalmente Toby, el dueño del POV.

Toby, el único gay y chico de color en una pequeña población de Oregon, ha estado toda su vida enamorado del hermano de su mejor amigo, Levi. Las circunstancias hacen que unas Navidades se de cuenta de que Levi no era la persona egoista y pagada de sí misma que siempre pareció, poco a poco se construye una relación que se enfrenta a dificultades externas y fundamentalmente internas debid0 a la dificultad de Toby para confiar en querer a alguien y decir lo que siente. Ambos personajes están bien desarrollados, fundamentalmente Toby, a través de las páginas sientes su soledad, el por qué de su renuencia a querer o depender de alguien, y poco a poco te vas enamorando de Levi como lo hace él. Levi es fundamentalmente generoso haciéndote partícipe en todo momento de lo que siente. La gran joya del libro son las conversaciones entre los dos personajes, las dificultades de Toby en ellas y la generosidad de Levi.

Poco más puedo decir, me ha gustado mucho, los personajes y su historia de amor. Me ha encantado que uno de ellos sea POC, se ven muy pocos, y aunque su raza no sea una cuestión demasiado relevante en la historia, Toby sí te hace saber cómo se siente a veces al ser diferente en una población pequeña, tanco por ser de raza negra, como por ser gay. En ocasiones es muy solitario ser diferente.

Todo es cuestión de gustos, pero para mi, muy recomendable.

Kaje Harper says

Toby grew up with a distant father, who withdrew from him after Toby's mother walked out on them one day and never came back. The saving grace of his highschool years was his friendship with Chris, who is straight but not narrow, and has had Toby's back since the day they became friends. Chris shared his family with Toby. They spent a lot of time together. Some of that time was spent getting mad at Chris's older brother Levi, the golden boy who could do no wrong, who walked off with Chris's girlfriends, who was going to follow in their dad's doctor footsteps. Shining Levi, who made Chris's life harder, and whom Toby secretly, reluctantly, hopelessly, lusted after for years.

Growing up gay, and black, in a small town where both are a rarity, was rough. But with Chris behind him, the deepest cuts in Toby's psyche are the ones left by the abandonment of his mom, and the emotional disconnection of his father. He's determined never to count on anyone. Only Chris has ever been let deeply into Toby's life since then.

Now Toby's off at college. He picked San Francisco, where he found people to hang out with and guys to sleep with. But Toby's too familiar with abandonment, and he keeps all his relationships safely superficial. Until the week he comes home for break, and discovers Levi is home too. And in a drunken moment, Toby discovers the boy of his impossible dreams is a complex man, bisexual, and far from the confident successful

guy Toby and Chris imagined. Toby really wants to get closer to Levi, but how can he betray Chris, who saw one girlfriend after another pulled into Levi's orbit, by doing the same? And what does Levi really want from him anyway?

This is an engaging story, with an appealing main character, and some fun, realistic dialog. There are a couple of surprises along the way, and moments of emotion and conflict. Toby is stuck in his head a bit long, and Levi was a bit inconsistent, but both could be put down to the emotional stress they're going through. There were some appealing secondary characters, a smooth writing style, and I definitely enjoyed this story.

wesley says

Kristan's review captured everything to love about this book. You can read her review, [here](#). So I'm just going to keep this short.

There is a consistent tenderness to this book – from the eloquent and crisp writing, to Toby's honest point of view, up to the engrossing plot. All these flowed with utmost delicateness. When I read this, I felt a heavy weight surrounding everything in the story but it wasn't stifling and oppressing. Rather, I was awed by its authenticity – how it just felt utterly and genuinely real.

I loved Toby's character. I loved how *Nyrae Dawn* allowed him to bare his heart and soul to us, readers, but he still was an enigma through and through – a jigsaw puzzle waiting to be solved. Complex but unmistakably magnetic.

The way Levi's character was developed was brilliant as well. I saw him as that stereotypical golden boy at the start – the one who gets everything he wants and gets to be a well-loved douche. Beautiful but shallow. But, as I went on with the story, I ended up falling in love with him as I learned something new to his character that made him flawed and human. More accurately, Toby made me fall in love with him.

Their chemistry was sparkling and the story build-up was steadily cultivated. From the first few chapters alone, I knew that everything was going to blow up spectacularly in the end. Still, when that moment came, I was rendered surprised and speechless.

Most of all, I loved how this book was put together by words which were so beautifully truthful. There are lessons in this book but they are given to you in a manner where you can relate it to your own coming-of-age story. Where you can put yourself in the shoes of either Toby's or Levi's character, and say that you've also been down that road before. The way these lessons were introduced was exquisitely beautiful. Very conversant, not at all condescending, a hundred-percent real.

What kind of life is it if you don't let yourself experience it? If you don't go for what you want and live how you want? If you don't open your mouth and say what's important and cling to those you love? Not being who you are, or saying how you feel, or fighting for what you love, not being able to risk your heart, is losing by default.

Elsbeth says

BR, November 1st with Momo.

This was nice!!

I loved that Toby was secretly in love with his best friend's brother Levi.

Seemingly Levi has gotten everything in life so easy.. His father's proud cause he's following his father's footsteps as doctor.

Levi was always good with the woman. His brother Chris "hated" him for it and for being an ass about it also..

Levi

Toby has grown up without his mother. He's not having this great relationship with his father. Ever since Toby's mother abandoned her family, his father has felt depressed and together they have really problems with communicating.

Toby

All Toby's free time is spend with "his boy" Chris and they have a pretty good relationship.

During winterbreak Toby realizes that maybe Levi is not that bad after all and Levi notices all of a sudden Toby is grown up. Later on Toby discovers that Levi is not that straight after all.

They continue to see each other when going back to college. Levi struggles with himself, not really sure if he wants to be a doctor any longer. He feels he no longer understands who he is any more.

Toby also has issues. He has only ever trusted his best friend Chris so he has trouble giving himself to Levi.

"It's similar to how I know I allow my personal fears to come between us. How I don't give myself to Levi as openly as he's offering himself to me. How I want to believe his words, want to feel that they're Levi's truth, and yet I'm not sure I'm worthy of them at the same time."

However the two guys develop a real friendship and romance and they were cute together.

I especially loved the last 20%. That part where all secrets are all in the open and as emotional as it was I loved Levi in this part!!

"I'm not playing games anymore. You and I are going to get real about stuff soon. I won't hold

it off anymore. I want more than your body. I want your heart and I need your words. I need to know you feel the same. I can't be in this alone.”

It was a beautiful story.

“You’re good at words when you use them. I wish you did it more.”

Pixie says

Man this book cut me deep.... I had refrained from reading this because I saw that not only was one of the MCs gay but he was mixed as well. And let me tell you...being mixed no matter what anyone may tell you is not the same thing as being black. This kid also has a lot of trust issues steaming from a parent that abandons him. Anyone who has ever talked to me on here knows I’m mixed and my issues with my parents makes this kid and I seem like doppelgangers. I didn’t expect someone to write a character that got it without falling back on the clichés.

There is a scene in the book where the character is talking about the “not enough”. That sums up being mixed to me. You’re not white enough, you’re not black enough, throw in not being straight and it just starts to weigh on you. By the time you’re supposed to be a functioning adult going out in the world you’re like um....let’s not pretend I could be your person because clearly I’m not enough. You’re with people while distancing yourself from them. I identified with Tobi so much it kind of hurt a little.

Levi....I want to say I wanted to see more of Levi’s perspective but actually I think what we saw was perfect. This story isn’t so much about Levi and Tobi as much as it was about Tobi just working through his shit. Tobi had shit to work through. I’m sure there are going to be people who feel it worked out a little too smoothly but I thought it made perfect sense. Trust me, the way you get through to the Tobi’s of the world is to just love them so hardcore they can’t deny it. Whole book rang true to me. All the stars...

◆*Arianna◆* says

3.5 Stars!!

Kristan says

4.5 stars

We've all had that moment; the one where you realize that the plans you had made, and the place where you're at, aren't necessarily the same. Or, the dreams you once had for yourself aren't necessarily the ones you would dream up for yourself now. Sometimes we can pinpoint where our life took a different path than the one we thought was laid out for us. Other times we look back, dissecting, and searching for where it began to unravel.

That's essentially the meat this book.

This book is as real and as genuine, as it gets.

Toby often feels like two separate people. As a kid he felt different than everyone else. Shaped by his Mother's abandonment, he's shy and withdrawn.

As an adult, he's more confident but emotionally closed off. He keeps people at a distance, terrified that if he lets someone in, it gives them the opportunity to hurt him when they inevitably leave.

There's only one person who he's ever let in, and that's his best friend, Chris. Chris's brother, Levi, has always been on the periphery, someone who he had a huge crush on, but who he never really talked to, and out of loyalty to Chris, never liked.

A chance meeting throws these two together, and Toby starts to see Levi as more than just the confident guy everyone likes, and more than just an unattainable crush. He's sees the mask Levi wears, and a vulnerability and sadness that he wants to take away.

As much as Toby is a thinker, he can't really see how closed off he's become.

"Words are funny like that, though. They're hard to spit out, hard to let out of your head. Feels so much safer to keep them inside of you."

He thinks that Levi spending time with him is a way for Levi to capture a time in his past where he had all the answers. Levi is adrift, not knowing what to do about his future and trying to reconcile the expectations others have for him with the expectations he has for himself.

The more Toby sees of Levi, the more he likes, but he's a jumble of thoughts and emotions. He's torn between his feelings for Levi, and his loyalty to Chris. He has all these words in his head that he wants to get out, but not the ability to express them. But he'll have to learn how to, and soon, or he'll lose out on love, after finally realising how good it can be.

"You're good at words when you use them. I wish you did it more," Levi says softly. "I know... I'm trying."

This is a true coming of age story, where Toby and Levi navigate the past, their future, and who they want to be.

This story is really more of a lesson in how much silence can hurt.

There is a really great secondary cast of characters in this book. (Everyone is supportive and insightful.) It's a little strange, and kind of refreshing, to see how frank everyone is in their opinions. I'm hoping that Xavier,

Toby's roommate, gets his own book, as he induced a smile almost every time he was on page.

Sometimes the tenses seemed a little off to me, and Toby spends too much time in his head, but this book was just really well done. It has very believable characters, with a healthy dose of feels, and a letter from a father to his son that just about slayed me (keep tissues handy).

Highly recommended.

"I'm still a work in progress, but I want to put in that work with you, Levi. I was afraid to give you my words before, but I'm not scared anymore. I'll give you a hundred thousand words every day if that what it takes to get you back."

.Lili. says

*****IT'S LIVE!!*****

<http://www.amazon.com/Hundred-Thousan...>

Let me start off by saying: this is how you write a New Adult story!

I am such a sucker for NA but got kind of bored with the genre after seeing the same things over and over. One of the main characters needs to be saved or let's throw every freakin' problem we can think of at them in one book- let's make it angst galore! This book was like a breath of fresh air. We have two men who have been in each other's lives since childhood but while Tobias has always harbored a secret crush on Levi, Levi has only ever seen him as his kid brother's best friend. Things change over a winter break from school- Toby realizes that maybe Levi is not the cocky guy he remembers and Levi notices that Toby is all grown up.

Well, as soon as this popped up I wanted to read it. I mean:

College setting ✓
Interracial couple ✓
Best friend's older brother ✓

I was all over this like white on rice! And it delivered on every level.

What I loved:

*Toby and Levi. Complex characters with real problems who grow together throughout the story. Perfectly executed. The way she developed their friendship and their romance- I was in heaven.

*The plot. The blurb doesn't do it justice- it is so much more than a story about having a crush on your best friend's older brother. It's about family, friendships, finding ourselves and our place in life. It was honest and heartfelt.

*The story had a great pace. It kept my attention the entire time. It sucked me in- and once I started I didn't put it down until the end.

*It was humorous and sexy. The dialogue was great- I just loved the banter between them.

*The epilogue. It left me incredibly happy.

To me, there was nothing that I find criticism in. It was perfect. I seriously can't recommend it enough. It was such a beautiful story. It's going on my favorites of 2015 and my comfort re-read pile. 5 Stars!

***ARC kindly provided by Nyrae Dawn for an honest review.*

***This reviews is cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.*

Tess says

4.25 stars

Although this is a romance, I see this more as a coming of age story. I loved the writing style. This is told in Toby's voice and his voice felt very authentic to me. He grew up in small town Oregon where he was the only black and gay boy in school. This has shaped his personality in some respects and the fact that his mom left before his teen years has shaped him in other ways. He's afraid to form relationships for fear of being hurt or left behind. His only relationship is that with his best friend Chris, who has never let him down.

This story picks up in Toby's sophomore year of college when he starts to become involved with Chris' older brother Levi. By the way, Levi isn't as straight as Toby always thought he was. Levi is the all-around golden boy: he's in med school, he's very attractive and he's hugely confident. And his brother (Toby's best friend) has always resented him. But as Toby gets to know Levi, he realizes there are cracks beneath the surface and all isn't as it seems.

I loved following the journey of Toby and Levi as they gradually start to fall in love but more so as they started to find their place in the world. Levi had some big issues he needed to resolve. Toby's issues were mainly about learning to open himself up to other people and to accept their love and friendship.

This wasn't entirely perfect though. I found it hard to warm up to Levi in the first half of the book and some of Toby's actions (or non-actions) frustrated me from time to time (view spoiler).

Overall, though, I found the writing to be engaging and enjoyed watching these boys on their journey.

Felice Stevens says

Well-developed characters and emotional. Loved this book. My first by Nyrae Dawn but not my last. These two young men will burrow into your soul. Highly recommended!!

Eugenia says

DNF@37%

There was little here to grab me. It was just OK. Not bad. Not good, but not worth my time at the moment. Very MEH.

Sue (Hollywood News Source) says

I decided to read *A Hundred Thousand Words* by Nyrae Dawn in between of my TRK readathon. I was looking for something cute, and I didn't expect this book would delivered it very well.

It is endearing. It would make you laugh and swoon. There's also the quality of authenticity to it. **It's a spectacular read that would nicely diffuse the tension in your body.**

Here's some of my favorite things about it:

- The main protagonist is gay, biracial.
- The author is biracial as well, it's an #ownvoice book. Support your local author of color please.
- It's a m-m romance story. The characterization, especially the main pair's are well sculpted. It's not a slow-burn romance, but I love how Dawn built up their relationship.
- Interracial couple.
- There are complicated love, friendship, and family dynamics.
- It's plain, cute, and hot.

I'd recommend *A Hundred Thousand Words* in a heartbeat. Mini review to come.

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

I seem to be in a bit of a reading slump.

I just couldn't really get into this one. There was some skimming going on.

I didn't find Tobias very likable. Not sure what Levi saw in him. Toby didn't seem to put much effort in to the friendship/relationship/arrangement.

I just didn't really care what happened. I kept putting the book down, doing other things.

Silvana [The Book Voyagers] says

You can also find my review at The Book Voyagers

Read this book people. Like you need it in your life, in your blood, in your bones to be honest. It's so sweet and romantic and real and raw. I related to it, You will relate to it. It's about college, decisions, family, loss, love, friendship. It's so real that you will feel you're inside the story with these characters. Nyrae Dawn made my night when I read this. It's definitely one of my favorite now.

Some things I adored (and you probably will too):

- Biracial, gay character. Toby is the MC and the one POV you read. He has been crushing on his best friend's brother for a long time, but sadly, Levi doesn't take notice of him and just treats him like a little kid. But then he returns from college (and this is where the story starts) and some things change *grins* Toby made me laugh so much. He also made me cry a bit (oops!). His story gets to you and you feel with him. My heart gave out a few times but Nyrae always knew what to do to get you back.

- Levi is bisexual and the sweetest guy ever. You'll fall madly in love with him. He is the older brother of Toby's best friend. So Toby always saw him as being unreachable. Levi is passing through some stuff at school and Toby is there to help him and tell him his truths. I think I related most to Levi because all his life he has been in the direction of being perfect. And when he gets to college he finds out that it isn't all there is to life. It's so great to see how these two are there for each other and whenever they need someone to talk, they can support one another.

- There is a sweet tone to the story. But it's also pretty sexy. If you love sexy/hot scenes in NA (and well-written ones!) A Hundred Thousand Words is just perfect for you. The friendship and relationship of Toby and Levi is amazing to see from the beginning. They're so comfortable with each other and they are so #married since the start to be honest. They act like they have been married for a while. It's my fave

- There's family dynamics. And friendship. First love and college. You'll read through the pages and when you get to the end, you'll want so much more.

I'm doing #ReadProud Challenge this month. This challenge was created by Julia Ember, author of Unicorn Tracks. You can also join the challenge, I'll leave the link here. Review and you might win stuff!

Gina says

I loved this book!!
