



The Benefit of Ductwork

Kira Harp

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Andy was six when he was adopted by the men he calls Dad and Pops. At seventeen, he has almost escaped his early years and found security in his dads' loving home. But his neglected early childhood taught Andy that nothing good can be his forever. When his parents decide to foster Kyle, a young gay teenager in need of a place to stay, Andy can't help wondering if he's going to lose his dads to the new kid.

Author and Editor royalties from this book will go to Lambda Legal.

The Benefit of Ductwork Details

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From Reader Review The Benefit of Ductwork for online ebook

Sadonna says

I'm a huge fan of this writer - in any genre. In fact she is an auto-buy for me. Here we have yet another example of authentic voices in this story. Beautifully written. Kudos to you Kira.

Ami says

3.5 stars

This short YA story is interesting because it takes perspective of a straight 17-year-old boy, who is adopted by two gay men, and dealing with the fact that his Dad and Pops are going to adopt another gay kid.

The story feels different, because for once, the 'straight' kid is the odd one out. Andy is thinking how Kyle, the 13-year-old that his parents are going to adopt, is more perfect because Kyle is gay too. He wonders why he should share his family, his home. He wonders whether he is not "enough" for his parents. Andy also must deal with the 'straight' jokes that his parents' friend throws in, like the term 'breeders'; which actually can be hurtful for a straight teenager (just like 'fag' is hurtful for a gay teen).

So yeah, interesting read.

Jess Candela says

Wow. I cried. This story was amazingly intense and riveting, especially for a short story.

TheCosyDragon says

This review has been crossposted from my blog at The Cosy Dragon . Please head there for more in-depth reviews by me, which appear on a timely schedule.

17 year old Andy lives with his two dads, is an average student, and has an average life. When Kyle comes onto the scene, Andy feels upset and abandoned - don't his parents love him enough to not replace him until he has moved out for college?

What I liked about this short story was that I caught the character dynamics really quickly, and was able to individualise each person in my mind really clearly. The characters were consistent, and the action was engaging enough that I didn't feel the pages passing by.

My complaint would be that it was too short! As a short story, it was great, but I felt that there could have been more! I wanted to know more about Andy's childhood (although what was mentioned of it was smoothly integrated), and more about how the family dynamics would change in the future.

This short story is a great one for also illuminating the plight of queer people in trying to adopt or foster children in need. Same sex parental units are no worse at parenting than 'traditional' couples, yet often they are ostracised and their children treated differently. I can imagine Andy's response and Kyle's bullying as being quite typical of what these people would experience.

I'm going to look out for other novels by this author in this genre, and perhaps branch out a bit too. I'd give it four stars, simply because although I loved it, I wanted more, more, more!

I received this novel from the author as part of a new Goodreads initiative by the group YA LGBT Books called 'Read-to-Review'. The requirement of this program is that you only ask for one novel at a time, and that reviews are posted within one month of receiving the copy. I was so excited to have something short and queer to read, I had to read it the same day!

Paul says

A short and sweet story from kira harp

I like that it was from the perspective of a straight boy adopted by gay parents. so often in stories its the gay characters that are insecure unsure of whether they are loved or not. and this is definately a story about love and being loved.

definately woth a read, especiaaly with the money going to a worth cause

Kathleen says

4.5 stars

blub says

This books really opened up my eyes on some levels. I know prejudice does happen and it happens to everyone but I never thought of it in this way.

Andy is a straight kid who was adopted at a young age by two loving fathers. He's been taught at an early age to be opened minded towards homosexuality and is generally a good kid. Andy had a horrible childhood before his fathers adopted him and it kind of scarred him for life. When Kyle comes into the picture he believes he's being replaced and it just doesn't sit well with him. He tries to be accepting but his insecurities get in his way.

Well to get to my point, we see the things being said around Andy, who is by the way, a straight teenager living among homosexuals. We also get to see what prejudices Kyle is being exposed to for being gay teenager.

C says

I'm really enjoying Kira Harp's YA books. This one seemed very spot on with the way teenagers act and think, even if it's not the way we would choose for them to behave.

I got pretty frustrated with Andy, even though his actions were spot on for who he is. Kyle was a little bit too perfect, but not outrageously so. I'd like to have gotten to know the dads better, but if I'm not mistaken (I'm new to YA), they're frequently secondary or tertiary characters.

All in all, a good story about what makes a family and how hard, yet worthwhile, it is to get over yourself :)

Deeze says

Not quite 5 stars due to length.

This is not a romance story, but one of family love. Its also a look at how often what's on the surface is not the same as what is going on underneath.

There were times I felt horrified at Andy's seemingly selfishness, but as you learn a little more you realise Andy has been more affected by his childhood than people realise. Some kids just don't bounce back as well as others.

Kyle is another heartbreak story, but of the, sadly, more usual kind. Kicked out for being Gay, we see him struggle to fit in. I did have a moment of real torment listening to Andy's dad and pop (view spoiler) While as a parent I can totally understand them, my heart just broke all over again for Kyle.

But never fear this is a HEA. A well worth read when you want a change from romance.

Cheryl says

I loved the story even though Andy was quite selfish.

It reminds me of growing up and trying to get rid of my brother. Even though we are biological brother and sister I didn't want him. There were several times when mom was in the bathroom that I opened the door for him to leave.

I'm sure all siblings go through that.

Jo Ramsey says

What an original story! There are a number of stories out there in which teens who are GLBT ponder whether

and how to come out to their parents, worry about their parents accepting them, and so on.

In *The Benefit of Ductwork*, Kira Harp flips that inside-out; Andy is a straight teenager with two gay parents and wonders whether his fathers will accept his sexuality. Especially when they choose to foster a younger teenage boy who is gay.

In such a short story, Ms. Harp presents fully-formed characters and a completely believable conflict. At first Andy struck me as selfish and self-centered, but the story reveals the reason behind the way he reacts to his new foster brother. Even before that reason is explained, Andy is a sympathetic character despite his reaction.

Fangtasia says

Sweet, heart-warming story from the perspective of a straight boy adopted by gay parents. Andy has had love and safety for many years with his dads but the emotional damage done to him by his birth family as a child is still very much present in his psyche. Then Kyle makes an entrance, the "perfect gay kid" in need of a foster home, there to take over Andy's place in his dads' hearts.

Excellent peek at the joys and pains of adoption and fostering, demonstrating how irrelevant sexual orientation in the foster parents really is to the process and benefits for the children involved.

Emma Sea says

Really adorable short story; well written (of course) and nice to read a story from a straight guy's point of view for a change. Plus the profit goes to a good LGBT cause.

Manfred says

This is a short and very sweet story about a young straight boy, adopted by two men years ago, who decide to foster another kid. As Andy's "new" brother Kyle is gay, Andy has a hard time believing that his parents do not plan to replace him, with a son who is much better for them, than him, the broken straight boy. It is not a romance, but a really beautiful YA story, especially because it plays with the usual trope of parents having problems with their gay kids.

In this case, the kid is concerned, his parents might have a problem because he is straight. Quite funny but of course quite sad as well!

Very short read, less than an hour but still well above average for me.

3.5 stars.

Macky says

The second Kira Harp (Kaje Harper)story in the *Helping Hands* series and in this one the story revolves around two boys being fostered and adopted by gay dads. 17 yr old Andy's straight and has been with his

dads for 11 years then he overhears them talking about adopting a 13 year old boy, Kyle, who's been thrown out by his parents for being gay. Andy is immediately jealous, he feels that his dad's will reject him in favour of Kyle because he's gay and more likely to fit in with his dad's lifestyles so his reactions to Kyle aren't good. Kyles demeanor screams gay to Andy and even though obviously he's not homophobic his jealousy stops him from standing up for Kyle when he gets bullied at school. How this all pans out in the end you need to read for yourselves and first instincts are to dislike Andy but he has valid reasons for feeling so insecure and I actually filled up and cried for him. He touched me as did Kyle and his sad background. In the end its the love and wisdom of the dads who make a choice that makes Andy see that his fears are unfounded and there's enough love to share between them both. I love that these books highlight issues and support different causes. This helps towards Lambda Legal, an association that helps protect the civil rights of LGBTQ individuals and the message here is that loving and committed gay couples are just as qualified to raise children as any het couple and have just as much love and wisdom to give whether the kids are straight or gay! No getting away from the fact these are short but they pack powerful messages and are beautifully written. Top marks from me.
