



## Raising Cade

*Jonathan Penn*

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Cade Bishop is a 22-year-old sophomore at Duke University. He has a brilliant mind, but he's behind his peers due to a horrific incident that happened on the night of his high school senior prom. It took him two years to recover.

Alan Troxler joined the Marines right after Nine-Eleven and served multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, until an IED abruptly ended his military career. "Retired" at age 30, Alan has come home to North Carolina to start a new life.

These two are an unlikely couple at best—each is determined to make it on his own, and neither wants to be coddled. Together, they put their own unique stamp on a classic Hurt/Comfort tale.

Life can get complicated, and sometimes it's hard to tell who's hurt, and who's giving comfort...

CONTENT WARNING: Raising Cade is a gay romance and includes brief, but graphic depictions of sex, violence, rape, and PTSD. Readers who object to content of this nature should not download the book.

## Raising Cade Details

Date : Published September 1st 2014 by M/M Romance Group @ Goodreads

ISBN :

Author : Jonathan Penn

Format : ebook 116 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Raising Cade for online ebook

### K says

Just shy of 4 stars

Contemporary short story of Cade, a college student recovering from a brutal rape some years before, and Alan, a former marine who has his own issues. Cade has been turning tricks as a way of coping with the assault and one night picks up Alan in a bar. After some initial problems the pair decide to try dating and gradually get closer, which allows Cade to become intimate with Alan. I enjoyed this story but it felt like something was missing from it - I think I wanted more of Alan's feelings and emotions. Over all very nice and not angst ridden

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### Riayl says

2.5

The author's writing style and I did not connect. Most likely that has more to do with me than the author. I have come across many books that my friends love but that I end up feeling like there is some sort of glass wall between me and the characters. In certain genres that is something ignorable, or even preferable, but in romance it makes it very difficult for me to enjoy the story. That was how I felt here. I was disconnected from the characters, they felt rather flat to me. Alan was the only one I connected to at all, and the only character I didn't dislike. Cade was...difficult for me. I know his trauma, but our paths in the aftermath were very different. I think he was realistically done, but his actions and reactions to his rape quite frankly freak me out, which is true of any character or person I meet in real life who does the same. I don't mean that in any way to be judgmental, more when I try to picture that response for myself I almost set off an anxiety attack. So I wasn't comfortable with him to start with. He treated Alan rather crappy and while I will excuse a lot of things because of abuse, trauma, or rape, being an asshole to someone who has done nothing to deserve it is not one of those things.

But what really really set me off, unfortunately, was meeting Alan's ex and his husband at the beginning. I despise these characters. I am an Army brat. My grandfather, my father, uncles, aunts and quite a few cousins have all served in one branch of the military or another. I don't care if you are a pacifist and believe war is always wrong and we can somehow avoid it (I think you are naive and lacking in basic understanding of humans, but hey, you are allowed to be) but you DO NOT DISRESPECT THOSE THAT HAVE SERVED, you slimy piece of filth. You, how knows nothing of it, stand there from the safety of home and make your asshole judgements.

So yeah, the husband wasn't doing anything for me. But the ex, who is also supposed to be Alan's best friend? Well he was just as bad. He just stood there and let his husband spew that crap. And, whether this was intentional by the author or not, when they are discussing things Alan mentions how he hadn't slept with someone for x amount of time, basically the time before he received the Dear John letter and some after that. His ex is amazed that he could go without sex for that long. Which means that he, himself, did not, even way before he sent the Dear John letter. Now, maybe I read it wrong, maybe I didn't. Maybe the author intended it that way, or maybe he didn't, but the ex came across as just as slimy as his husband.

It was a not a good start for me and put me in a mindset that may very well have affected how I felt towards

the rest of the book.

Even Cade's best friend, who I think was supposed to be friendly and supportive, did not come across that way. But by the time I got to her I was full on disgusted with Alan's ex and his spouse so...take what you will from that.

I would read this author again to see if maybe without the upset at the beginning of the story I could connect better with the writing.

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### **Shelley Chastagner says**

Terrific book but not for the faint of heart. Cade seems to be on a self-destructive path but he's looking for control. Control of his sexual behavior, control of the men he has encounters with. Alan has some big adjustments in his life after leaving the Marines on a medical discharge. Both men are carrying scars and trying to figure out how to navigate their lives. I liked that Alan accepts Cade just as he is, waits for him to open up and share his past, finding a man worth the effort it takes to do so. Cade reaches a point where he has to stop running from himself and his past. In one moment he realizes that he's grown enough to trust Alan and himself. He can't change the past but he can move past it and live his life.

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### **Melissa says**

Two of my pet peeves are:

1. Continuous back-and-forth dialogue. Usually with an overabundance of exclamation marks. No description of tone or character reactions. Makes me think of shallow, high school-esque dialogue.
2. Something that is just *soooo* funny that the MC(s) cannot stop laughing. If it's actually funny, then the audience will laugh too - no need to insert a description of how they are laughing so hard that they can't even breathe.

These are probably the two most prominent symptoms of *telling* instead of *showing*.

While this story may have started off strong and intriguing, unfortunately it eventually fell victim to this ailment.

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### **Jeanne 'Divinae' says**

I really liked the writing style of this story. In some stories, it seems each scene is described very similar and becomes repetitive, I did not think this when I read this story. This is a story with depth and real concerns. It is not light and fluffy, but a coming-of-age, in my opinion. Second chances, if you are willing to try for them.

I feel that our couple were meant to be together. It wasn't instant, that was for sure, but I feel it just made them stronger in the end.

This is a story about a romance between Cade and Alan. They both have had a traumatic past. Alan almost lost his life in the military. He is a type of person that looks forward in life and is kind, caring and thoughtful of others. Then we have Cade, who was raped when he was younger and has yet to come to grips with how to live with it afterwards. He runs away whenever things start to get uncomfortable, especially when trust is an issue. This story is about the two of them balancing one another out, helping each other become stronger. They are each other's anchor's in the world they both live in now.

I feel the author portrayed both of them well, especially Cade. You could see the growth from within as Cade comes to terms with what has happened to him and the life he wants to share with Alan. Maybe we will be lucky and be graced with more of their story... though it did end well enough.

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

The setup was great, and the story was well written, but the relationship between the MCs lacked spark and the story felt truncated.

Secondary characters, like Cade's roommate/BFF and her boyfriend, and Alan's ex and his husband, were introduced and dropped.

Cade's past trauma was handled via flashbacks, and the descriptions paint a raw picture but aren't terribly graphic. I liked that Cade wasn't a particularly sympathetic character. Alan was extremely patient but didn't read like a marine to me.

The dialogue was realistic and the past abuse aspect fairly well handled, but the ending was abrupt. Too many plot lines were left dangling. I'm not a fan of the question mark finish.

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**Melanie~~ says**

[NOTE: I rate most writing event stories (free reads) 4 or 5 stars because of my appreciation of the author's participation and gift.]

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**MostlyDelores says**

15 percent in, and two people have used air quotes 900 times.

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**Lori says**

This is the story based on my prompt. I loved it. It's everything I imagined and more. It was hot, sexy, funny, sad. Of course, I would love more of the story, but what was written is worth 5 stars to me. I can't thank Jonathan Penn enough for picking up my prompt and thoroughly running with it!

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**SheReadsALot says**

Oh...this has me written all over it!! Love this prompt!!!

Yaassss!

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**A.J. says**

4.5 Stars. This was a very well done novella, and I would love to read an expanded version or sequel if one were ever written.

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**Sandra says**

[ (hide spoiler)]

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**Al says**

I was going with 4.5 stars, then I thought fuck it, don't be mean.:D

I really loved this story, thank you Jonathan and the LL team for all the hard work that went into writing and producing it for our delight.

This is a well written story with a fantastic beginning which took my breath away. This strong start got my attention, and made me go..

But then, the story got going and I really appreciated the detail and the depth. This is much more than a light MM tale, it is more like a sensitive and articulate look at a realistic relationship. It is less like cider and more like vintage wine.

Reading this story is a little bit like living it.

A really good story !! Congrats to the author

So by the end, I was more...

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## **Dawn Sister says**

Okay, so you may have noticed that I rate almost every book I read with five stars. In every single one I find something I appreciate and love.

Raising Cade has me in a dilemma though. There are simply not enough stars to rate this the way I would like. Few books touch me as thoroughly. Cade and Alan are characters that will stay with me forever. This rarely happens.

I enjoyed this so much. From the very beginning I was drawn in to Cade's narrative whilst the story unfolded around it without losing any momentum. Cade and Alan are both very compelling and easily liked characters. There is a small cast of secondary characters as well and even though they seem to be skimmed over in this story they have a presence that feels that there is more to them than simply tools to carry the story along. They have depth.

Cade and Alan though, oh my God, they practically lifted off the page to stand in my living room. They are as real to me as any physical person I have met.

Jonathan has created beauty and I do so hope he expands on this story. We need more of the interesting chorus line and definitely more of Cade and Alan.

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## **Pati says**

While I finished reading this last night, I originally gave it three and a half stars. However, I awoke this morning not only remembering them and the details of their lives but also still curious to get to know them and their friends further. Therefore, in light of that fact I had to bump it up that extra half star to a 4. :-)

I really enjoyed getting to know both Alan, a purple heart bearing Marine and poor, sweet Cade. I look forward to continuing to get to know them and their friends.

Though this is apparently the first foray into publishing Alan & Cade's story doesn't "feel" like an author who is only beginning.

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