



Magic's Pawn

Mercedes Lackey

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Mage-Craft—

Though Vanyel has been born with near-legendary abilities to work both Herald and Mage magic, he wants no part of such things. Nor does he seek a warrior's path, wishing instead to become a Bard. Yet such talent as his if left untrained may prove a menace not only to Vanyel but to others as well. So he is sent to be fostered with his aunt, Savil, one of the famed Herald-Mages of Valdemar.

But, strong-willed and self-centered, Vanyel is a challenge which even Savil can not master alone. For soon he will become the focus of frightening forces, lending his raw magic to a spell that unleashes terrifying wyr-hunters on the land. And by the time Savil seeks the assistance of a Shin'a'in Adept, Vanyel's wild talent may have already grown beyond anyone's ability to contain, placing Vanyel, Savil, and Valdemar itself in desperate peril...

Magic's Pawn Details

Date : Published June 6th 1989 by DAW Books Inc (first published 1989)

ISBN : 9780886773526

Author : Mercedes Lackey

Format : Mass Market Paperback 349 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Fiction, Lgbt, Romance, M M Romance

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From Reader Review Magic's Pawn for online ebook

Shannon (Giraffe Days) says

Vanyel, only fifteen, is the oldest son and therefore heir to a Holding. His mother is seemingly weak-willed and obsessed with her vapours, while his father is such a Man that he needs must push Vanyel into Manly pursuits as well, which includes letting the incompetent and ignorant Armsmaster beat the crap out of him. Vanyel is more interested in music. He's also self-absorbed, introspective, selfish, arrogant, a bit petulant - in other words, young and spoilt, as well as very handsome. His father, Withen, decides to pack him off to his sister Savil, a Herald-Mage who lives in the capital, training young apprentices.

Vanyel's one meeting with his aunt Savil years ago didn't impress either of them, and being sent off into exile doesn't improve his manners. He hasn't shown any Gift, any ability in Mage powers or creativity, not even in music, which shatters his only dream: to be a Bard. Savil isn't like her brother, though, and with her favourite protege, Tylendel, keeps an eye on him to see if he really is an arrogant little shit, or if he's hurting inside and needs help.

His attraction to Tylendel only makes him hate himself more, and fear the older boy's reaction should he find out - even though Vanyel knows Tylendel is *shay'a'chern* - gay. When the two do finally take the plunge, they fall in love, and become lifebonded. When Tylendel's twin brother is murdered, though, his pain and grief sets him on a dangerous path of revenge and retribution, drawing Vanyel along with him, with tragic consequences.

What starts out as a fairly conventional, formulaic fantasy doesn't stay that way long. While the land of Valdemar may be fairly typical in fantasy fiction in terms of its culture, attitudes, prejudices, sophistication and class structure (i.e. boringly medieval-to-middle ages), it's not entirely patriarchal or old-fashioned. Contrary to what I would expect from a fantasy world that's been revisited so many times, it is not detailed or richly described: you get mostly only a cursory glance at the landscape, which is where falling back on fantasy stereotypes of a medieval-English setting comes in handy. This would normally have alienated, disappointed and bored the hell out of me, but for the characters and the story itself.

Although Lackey overuses italics - this when the story is narrated from Vanyel's point-of-view, to show his nature, but it wears thin pretty quickly - the prose is smooth and quite fast-paced. I much prefer these - I shall call them bildungsromen-style fantasy stories, compared to the Quest-motivated ones. I like stories where the characters are mostly stationary, where you get to watch them live, grow, mature, develop, learn through studies and interactions with others and, yes, adventures, but not quests. Quests get very boring, but it's more than that. There's something enjoyable about the low-key, homely, comfortable "static" fantasy story - most of the Harry Potter books are like this, especially *The Order of the Phoenix*, which a lot of people found boring but I really enjoyed - it's quite possibly my favourite even. It has precisely this quality, where you really get to know the characters, and you get to indulge in political scheming, feuds, that kind of thing. Magic's Pawn is one of those bildungsromen-type fantasies, but it's still a very busy book, and when adventure happens it certainly doesn't dither.

I did feel a bit like I'd walked in on a group of role-players and a game that's new but familiar: I had no trouble following the story or understanding the world, but because I haven't read any other books set in this world, there's a lot that isn't explained and plenty that you would expect would be dramatised but isn't - like the Companions (intelligent, magical horses) finding their Chosen (new Herald-Mages) - and the difference between a Herald and a Mage, or why some are both, is unclear. Also, what the Hawkbrothers do went

mostly over my head; I really didn't understand that part of it.

Vanyel's story, though, was clear and passionately told. Despite his flaws - and he really is a self-indulgent, vain little shit most of the time - you still come to care for him and cheer him on. And I was proud of him, in the village scene at the end. I certainly want to read the next two, *Magic's Promise* and *Magic's Price*, to find out what happens with him.

Caravaggion says

3.5

this, to me, wasnt the most groundbreaking original fantasy novel (i'm especially tired of random nonsense made up languages that appear and have all these apostrophes and aren't translated in any way and make zero sense)

also, for a short fearful moment i almost thought this was going to be a really sexist world setting but it wasn't, at least not more sexist than our beautiful actual universe is either, plus it actually features badass female characters, which is rlly a good aspect

good things about this book:

- the main character is SO GAY god this boy,,, is the gayest
- there are A LOT of gay characters wow
- cool badass female characters
- horses are rlly important and sentient and magic
- REALLY REALLY GOOD BEAUTIFUL COVER ART OK

not so good things about this book:

- it feels a lil like this author thinks there are only two sexualities - gay and straight its either one or the other nothing else (but i mean to its defense this book is hella old, first printed in 1989 so idk for that time it was p open minded nonetheless)
- it was rlly,,, not that amazing plotwise like idk what even happens its very repetitive
- sad gay allert like why do the gays suffer so much
- worldbuilding contains lots of pointless homophobia (but its protrayed as bad, its just, the society in this book is homophobic n im like? But Did It Have To Be Tho)
- its just really not the nightrunner series lmao

Kathryn says

I feel the need to explain myself. First, I read this when I was fifteen. The rating I gave it is the one I gave it when I first read it. And I admit, I still love it, even though I am a more discerning reader and can tell it's really not as great as I thought it was when I was only a squealy fangirl. End Disclaimer.

The main character is Vanyel Ashkevron; he's the eldest son of a minor noble. Vanyel's not like the rest of his brothers or cousins, who take after his father; they're all tall, strong, and not *stupid* really, just not very interested in intellectual pursuits. Vanyel is the only one who takes after his mother, which means he's kind

of short, scrawny, likes books, and is a fairly decent musician. He wants more than anything to be able to abdicate his position as heir, and study to become a Bard in Valdemar's capital, Haven. His duty-minded father isn't about to let him, though.

Eventually, Vanyel's father decides that he ought to go to Haven to study, not music, but fighting, how to be a good Lord, etc... and he is fostered with his aunt, Herald Mage Savil. A Herald is kind of like a hybrid police officer/soldier/FBI agent, with super powers. People become Heralds only if they get Chosen by a Companion; Companions are benevolent guardian spirits who inhabit the bodies of white horses, and can sense people who have special powers (Gifts), like telepathy (mind speech), telekinesis (fetching), fire-starting, or the ability to do magic. Companions can also look into a person's heart and see if they are Good, besides just being Gifted, so it's absolutely unimaginable to think of there ever being a bad Herald. Back to the summary:

Vanyel has to go live with Savil, but is not pleased by the prospect. He knows he isn't getting special treatment; he's being gotten out of the way, because of mounting tension between him and his family. So, he decides that since no one cares about him, then he won't care about anyone, either, and convinces himself that the world is against him and it's better to just ignore other people. Which helps him make tons of friends when he gets to Haven (seriously, he's popular with the other noble kids). Other "regular" people (Bards, Healers, Heralds and their trainees), think he's an arrogant snob and avoid him. Even his aunt can't stand him. Except for one person--Tylendel, who is Savil's trainee and lives with her and Vanyel. Tylendel is an Empath as well as a mage, and can sense Vanyel's loneliness and depression, and reaches out to him.

Vanyel distrusts Tylendel at first, but he eventually breaks down and opens up to Tylendel. When that happens, Vanyel also finds the courage to confess that he also has a crush on Tylendel. Tylendel, who is openly gay, also has a crush on Vanyel.

They keep their romance a secret from everyone except Savil, which would have been hard to do in any case, since they all live together. Savil agrees to keep quiet, and even starts to warm to Vanyel, since he's starting to drop the whole since-they-don't-like-me-I-don't-like-them-either attitude.

To make an already long summary less long, by the end of the book Vanyel has been Chosen, to everyone's everlasting shock. He has the most powerful mage gift of anyone, ever. In addition he also has nearly every other Gift--mind speech, Empathy, fetching. The reason he suddenly got these powers is complicated and full of major spoilers, but suffice it to say that this book is full of Angst.

Now, the review:

First, some technical critiques: whoever was the copyeditor for this book needs to be fired. Typos abound, not to mention there's one or two continuity problems, but they're pretty minor. Also, the dialogue can be a little awkward in places, but again, just a few, so I can overlook that.

The whole tolerance theme gets shoved in your face a lot. I think one reviewer said in places it starts to read like a PFLAG pamphlet. But that was necessary, I think, considering her target audience, young adults. Now, she may brag that she has fans of all ages and backgrounds, but even if she didn't start out to write YA novels that's what she ended up doing (in my opinion). Subtlety really doesn't have a place in YA, because none of us were particularly astute when we were thirteen and up. So I can forgive the book for getting a little preachy.

A lot of people say they couldn't handle this book because Vanyel was just so damn whiny. Well, he is,

actually, I can't refute that, except to say he's a teenager. Teenagers whine. I didn't notice that when I first read it, and I got upset to hear people say that, because to me, Vanyel wasn't whiny, he was just stating facts! His life sucked! I believed that, because I thought my life sucked sometimes, too.

One thing about Misty, she can create believable characters who are easy to relate to. If Vanyel had been any less fleshed out, any less compelling, then when she sprung the whole "he's gay" surprise on her readers, then I would have been disgusted and stopped reading. But even though I was cringing in the back of my mind and thinking, *ew, he's gay? Why did she go and ruin the book that way for?* I kept reading, because I was already far too emotionally invested in him to just abandon his story. And surprise, surprise, I ended up changing my mind about gay people.

This is not an "eh, it was okay" book; you either love or hate it. And I am unapologetic fan.

Wealhtheow says

Melodramatic, over-the-top, and as subtle as a brick to the skull, this is nevertheless an engrossing read. Vanyel's journey from a spoiled, effeminent musician-wannabee to a heart-broken, effeminent Herald-Mage is really engaging. Teenagers will especially find themselves drawn to this story. The one truly boring part is Vanyel's time spent healing with the elves (or whatever they're called--they're basically mystical Native Americans with equally mystical white hair and magical birds).

Miriam says

Huh. I didn't read the blurb when I shelved this because I read it years before goodreads, but after reading Spider's review I notice that yes, the blurb is quite misleading. The main character is not sent to his aunt to get his magic powers trained. He doesn't have magic powers until SPOILER way later in the story. He is sent away from home because his father doesn't like that he is interested in music and clothes and books rather than sword fighting and knocking up the maids like a man should be. From his sorceress aunt's point of view he is just a minor annoyance.

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Vivian ?(????)? says

[

1. Dear Mercedes Lackey: WHAT THE BEEPING BEEP. YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO KILL OFF WHO YOU KILLED OFF. WHY. WHY. WHY. THAT'S AGAINST THE RULES, AND I HATE YOU FOR IT.

2. WHAT THE BEEPING BEEP. DID I MENTION THAT HE WHO WAS NOT

Noah Soudrette says

What can I say about this book? I'm torn between being serious here, or funny. How about both?

First, let me warn you: This book is gay. Really, really gay. Gayer than He-man, gay. So, if you can't handle lots of gay in your books, skip it. I find it a bit refreshing, if not amazingly melodramatic. That's this book's big problem. The story is fine and simple, but boy oh boy, it is as melodramatic as it is gay. This book definitely falls under guilty pleasure, and is probably only a few tiers up from those accursed Twilight books. However, I can say with complete certainty, that this is the kind of book some confused young kid might pickup, not knowing it could really help him figure out himself, or even save his life (yes, I know, melodrama). All the typical coming out fears are dealt with here, as well as general self discovery. So, a mediocre fantasy novel? Yes. Way to melodramatic to be considered "good"? Yup. An interesting guilty pleasure for sad, sad man like myself? You bet.

Jimmy says

Magic's Pawn is absolutely brilliant! It took me about 100 to 150 pages to finally get into it, (when Vanyel finally meets his aunt Savil and her Herald trainee Tylendel, (too dangerously close to the OTC Tylenol)), but once I did I couldn't let go. Mercedes Lackey had me smiling as I read, falling in love, crying my eyes out, and joyously cheering Vanyel on. It's one of the best emotional roller coasters I've read.

I've only read her work *The Obsidian Trilogy*, which I loved and there are just as many big differences between the two as there are similarities. When she talks about Vanyel's home, family, and upbringing, it reminded me of Kellen Tavadon. Primarily when it comes to magic and its practitioners, you can always tell when it's Mercedes Lackey's great handiwork. Her magic can be just as destructive as it is romantic. Also, like Kellen had his magical friend the unicorn Shalkan, the Herald-Mages of Valdemar have horses that choose them as Companions.

I was really looking forward to reading a great and adventurous fantasy adventure with a gay character, (the bonus would be if it had romance too.) There are so very few of them which are one of the things that makes this trilogy a jewel. *Magic's Pawn* definitely delivers. The main character Vanyel is so vain in his obvious good looks, but like just about every son he tries so hard to please his father. In the end all his efforts gets him nothing but beat down. It's no wonder he decides that whatever he does, he'll never be good enough, so why even try.

Vanyel will go through so many trials of being *shay'a'chern*. He'll try to hide his non-masculine behavior, he'll find and loose his ashke, (beloved), he'll know pain, lose, and despair as only I believe a *shay'a'chern* can know them. It will be him literally dying that will force him to choose to give in to its darkness or to become so much more and stronger and chose to continue to live on.

(There are other coming-of-age issues addressed in this fantastic novel, which are obvious to members of the openly gay community. Because face it, not everyone was supported when they were a closeted gay teen. Mercedes's book is entertaining, easy to relate to, and an overall great read. I would highly recommend that parents read this book along with their maturing adolescent readers, even if their son or daughter isn't gay there are similarities that heterosexual adolescents can relate to. Along with responsible parenting, there is so much tragedy in the world today that can be prevented with this great book.)

This is a trilogy that I'm looking forward to revisiting again and again. It's a true gem and a must have for any fantasy reader's permanent library.

C Hellisen says

This is the first Mercedes Lackey book I have read.

First of all, this review might have been pushed up a notch if I could have had an ebook version and stripped it of all italics ever. As it was, my eyes were bleeding from being stabbed repeatedly by little slanted daggers. *For emphasis.*

The story is standard fanfic fare - super emo kid is hated by everyone, is sent off to "become a man" by his evil dad, falls madly in love with the Most! Beautiful! Guy! EVA! after 3 seconds, is bonded for life because of twu-wuv, shitty things happen, and he discovers he is super-amazing AKSHULLY....

I could have almost lived with this, because I am also a not-so-secret emo-jelly-baby, and my Achilles Heel is hurt/comfort and magical life-bonds and all the associated wangst.

But guh. No. I just had too many issues with the writing and even I can only take so much La! We are beautiful, and now we are in love! OH NO WOE IS ME!

(And it's getting two stars because even though I eye-rolled my way through the whole damn thing, I kinda want to read the next one. Oh god someone kill me now, for I have no shame.)

Jenni Lea says

I could have been reading M/M back in the 80's? Mercedes Lackey was always on the shelves next to Anne McCaffrey in the bookstores and library. I always chose Anne McCaffrey. Not sure why I never read anything of Lackey's. Look what I've been missing!

Bibliotropic says

(Reread in 2016, just because)

Okay, my first thought is that description for GoodReads actually only barely touches on the time period in which the book takes place, and even then still gets a lot of things wrong. Kind of sad, given that it's only a paragraph long...

Now, onto the real review.

This was the first Valdemar book I ever read, and it was the one to hook me, reel me in, and never let me go. Every time I pick it up and read it, I'm taken back to a hot lazy summer in which my friend handed me a copy and said, "I think you'll like this." It got me interested in the series, in the author, and was without a doubt the first book to really kick off my obsession with fantasy novels.

Ladies and gentlemen, the book that started it all.

This is also the turning point in the Valdemar series, where you can really tell that Lackey has found her voice and has settled into a comfortable and refined style that carries her through the rest of the books she writes. It's smooth, it's detailed, and it's captivating. The way she handles deep emotional scenes is wonderful, and I'm always entertained by the way she writes the thoughts and observations of the character whose viewpoint we're seeing. Unlike some, who will only write the important and relevant thoughts of a character, Lackey will take the time and space to have them seem realistic in their random observations and jokes and misconceptions. Some may consider it a waste of space, but I consider it a sign that the author has a good handle on how people actually behave and think.

True, there are problems with this book. It has its inconsistencies, as I think every Valdemar novel has by this point, but it even makes a few internal flubs, such as referring to a period of 60 minutes as an hour instead of the series-established *candlemark*. But the internal errors are few and far between, and most of them are only evident if you're really paying attention for them.

Maybe people who dislike this trilogy do so because Vanyel's a whiny little brat and they can't stand his emo tendencies. I have to admit, they do have a point. Even other characters point out that he's a brat. In fairness to him as a character, though, a large part of his bratty nature was posturing, another large part was because he had a screwed up set of circumstances and issue that don't end up getting resolved until well into adulthood, and thirdly, *he was 15!* Think back to when you were 15, and I bet you were brattier then than you are now. For this, I cut the guy some slack.

And luckily for me, the way Lackey writes pulls me through the story so swiftly that it doesn't feel like an entire book has passed before I get to see him grow up and mature!

Even though this book has its issues, it will still always hold a special place in my heart and on my shelves, and I still highly recommend this trilogy to those who enjoy Lackey's other works, and to those who want to give Valdemar a try but don't want to sit through a less-polished writing style.

Leseparatist says

When I first read Lackey's Cute Magical Horseys, Magic Schools for Angstier-than-Thou Kids and also Occasional Off-Page Orgies (which is how I remember this series from my childhood, okay), I ended up reading Arrows of the Queen and a few later volumes quite a few times, but somehow *never* made my way back to one that is perhaps among the best-known parts of the series: The Last Herald-Mage trilogy.

First, I didn't read them because they weren't available in my favourite library. Then, I didn't read them because I assumed they had an unhappy ending. I think the queer content (which I knew about) may have been equal parts a draw and a discouragement. I mean, I'd have read them surreptitiously while feeling very guilty. That was basically my jam anyway. But... the suspected unhappy ending was a dealbreaker*.

*I don't actually know if my childhood assumption was correct. This is not really a spoiler.

So it was on a complete whim that I decided to give them a try now, to see if nostalgia would work for me and if I'd enjoy this earlier volume (plus, sort of, because I'm occasionally completist). And as I started reading, it turned out these books have been read by far more of my friends than goodreads would lead me to

believe.

But as to the content... I must confess I'd been hoping for more. I mean, the beginning was delicious: it was so angsty as to be both touching (with its very real [if metaphorical] and detailed depiction of teen queer experience) and hilarious (Vanyel's sartorial woes and adventures; Vanyel wearing BLACK because that's the colour of his soul and also he looks good wearing it). Alas, later the angst became a little overwhelming and prolonged. I appreciate that the bodies (and souls) were shown to have limits of endurance, and how important the depiction of grief and depression can be, but I didn't quite connect with the way all these things were written (I should have read it when I was younger).

But my biggest complaint - and perhaps this will sound a little shallow - but I was really just hoping for more wish-fulfillment. More power, more magic (which is there, but mostly at the end), more Valdemar, more *Companions*. These are my magical-soul-healing-horseys books. I wanted my soul to be healed by the horses. And the Companions here are practically in the background. I seem to recall them having a more central place in Arrow books - is my memory failing me?!

I'll probably pick up the next volume at some point when I'm done with some more pressing to-be-reads, but not immediately: because of the horsey shortage.

Spider the Doof Warrior says

No! That blurb gets the book all wrong. What really happens is Vanyel is a young, somewhat vain, interested in music teenager at odds with his warrior father who sends him off to Savil because he doesn't know what else to do with him to make a REAL MAN of him. Vanyel reluctantly falls in love with a Herald in Training Tylendal who turns out to be his life bond soul mate. Then a tragedy strikes and THAT gives Vanyel his powers.

Dang. Who writes these things? Also Tylendal was a guy because Vanyel is a strong awesome gay hero. Books need more of these. The only thing is Mercedes Lackey puts poor Vanyel through hell. I just want to take him out of this book, give him a cup of tea and some cookies and a hug because he suffers so much!

I continue to love this book but I want to pull vanyel out and give him cake and cuddle him because he goes through hell.

Carolyn F. says

[Yes, Vanyel had a horrible childhood. Yes, Vanyel lost the love of his life at an early age. Yes, Vanyel was filled with magic in a painful way. Bu

Wanda says

Oh, what a validating novel this would be for a child who had no sports talent, but was being forced to participate anyway! Every boy convinced by his father to set aside his violin or book in order to fail dismally

at baseball or hockey would be able to relate to Vanyel. Music is everything to Vanyel with academics running a close second, but his father only wants him to become a brutal swordsman.

Others who may relate: those who excelled in their own small pond (small town or small school), but find themselves out-shone by talented peers when they arrived at university. Vanyel is considered smart and musically talented at home, but once he is sent to his Aunt Savil at the school for Herald-Mages, his talents fall short of the mark.

Also a book for a youngster (in the 1980s) struggling with his/her sexual orientation. The good thing that comes out of this new situation is that Vanyel realizes that he is interested in boys—that's why bedding girls at home was never alluring to him. And although some people are prejudiced against him for his orientation, the author makes it clear that they are “provincial” and not to be listened to. I was pleasantly surprised to find this viewpoint expressed so unequivocally in literature from the 1980s.

Like most teenagers, Vanyel is very self-centered. It goes with the territory, but it does make the kid hard to like (at least for a woman in her 50s). However, it was also disappointing that the instructors at the mage school made so little effort to see behind the arrogant pose that Vanyel used to protect himself. The situation improves as the book progresses, with Aunt Savil realizing that there is a great deal more to her nephew that she had previously realized and that maybe her brother was even thicker than she had thought. This is also a pretty standard plot device—I think of Simon in *The Dragonbone Chair*, who also starts as a self-involved teen (with fewer talents than Vanyel), but eventually becomes a person of character.

I had to wonder at the addition of the horse-like Companions—in order to become a Herald-Mage, one must be “chosen” by one of these superior, magical beings, who reminded me very much of the Houyhnhnms from Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*. Maybe in the next book, I will figure out why the Companions are necessary to this world.

Book 244 of my Science Fiction and Fantasy Reading Project.

Carolyn F. says

[Yes, Vanyel had a horrible childhood. Yes, Vanyel lost the love of his life at an early age. Yes, Vanyel was filled with magic in a painful way. But

Elise says

Gary Stu does shonen ai. Although this book contains no unicorns, there are still too many unicorns.

Emma says

By popular demand (ok a friend asked me to "do the one with the blue-eyed telepathic horses and the owls you could ride on"), a review of the Vanyel books. This series, with its billowing clouds of adolescent angst, gay boys, and yes, blue-eyed telepathic horses, basically got me through my teenage years. I would lock

myself in my room and sob. Oh the tragedy! Oh the gayness! Oh the telepathic horses!

Note: I don't think the owls were in this series. Or the magic valleys where there were lizard servants to cater to your every whim. Yes, lizards magically genetically modified to be slaves but happy about it. Nice huh?

Pat Childs says

I picked up this series because I was in the process of writing a fantasy novel with a gay hero and I wanted to see what other works were out there. I had never read Ms. Lackey's work, so I didn't know what to expect. I was not just pleasantly surprised by this trilogy, I was completely captivated by it and very sad when I reached the final page. The plot is interesting and the pace is quick. The characters, especially the hero Vanyel, are extremely sympathetic, primarily due to the fact that they are so flawed. Some may find the romance a bit sappy, but I'm the first to admit that I dig that kind of thing and you'll see it in my own novels as well. Best of all for me, though, was the fact that although her hero is unapologetically gay, the series does not become mired in its "gayness" as so many other works of gay-themed fiction I have read.

This trilogy gave me a great deal of inspiration to push on with my own fantasy aspirations. I owe Misty a big hug if we ever meet face to face. I highly recommend these three books. Whether you're gay or straight, you'll find them an excellent read and, like me, you'll be sorry to reach that last page.

Mira_natural says

It was one of the worst books I've ever read. I read it because many people told me it was great, but, really, it was pure masochism. That level of stupid angst is almost unbearable. The worst things happen to the main hero and he's totally emo all the time. Oh, and tries to kill himself all the time. I was hoping for some light reading; instead, I ended up with a book that made me want to bang my head into the nearest wall because of it's sheer stupidity.
