



A Fluffy Tale

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Julian has a furry ball of trouble to deal with. A tall, dark stranger may provide the solution - but maybe the complications are more than he can handle. "A Fluffy Tale" will appeal to lovers of m/m mromance and small cute ferret-shaped mammals alike.

A Fluffy Tale Details

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Author : Ann Somerville

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From Reader Review A Fluffy Tale for online ebook

Estara says

I read this free on the site and actually made it into my own epub, because I loved it so much (I did tell the author and send her a copy). I'm so pleased I can finally buy it! Apart from the Darshian Tales, this is my favourite Ann Somerville story so far. It's also the least overtly sf/fantastic of the books I've read by her yet.

Although it has one of the cutest animal-sidekick ideas I've ever found (ferret-like *kems*), the book is concerned much more with how people deal with pet care, health problems, age, childhood misery and emotionally stunted development - all of this while falling in love and trying to build a relationship ^^.

I adored the portrayal of the older mentor character in Uncle Leo and the way Zachary wasn't your tall, dark and handsome rake stereotype and all the humor! Julian himself has his own very necessary emotional growth and both he and Zachary complement each other by the time the story is over.

I'm a bit sad the author didn't include the extremely short little tidbit about Uncle Leo she has on her site, but you can always read it for free: Uncle Leo goes shopping.

Teresa says

The Kems are cute and I really liked the idea of them. I was definitely reminded of the Golden Compass. The romance was a little iffy. I loved Leo and Julian, and came to feel for Zachary in the end but didn't really get Julian and Zachary as a couple.

Chris, the Dalek King says

Pyon, Julian's kem has always been a bit of a handful. He is overactive, over inquisitive, overdue for a talking to. Julian never thought that he might be at the root of Pyon's erratic behavior, but after the rude (but seriously smoking) new guy at his company shames Julian for not taking care of himself--and thereby not taking care of Pyon--Julian thinks that maybe Zachary The Asshole, might have something. At least it is worth a try.

And Julian does see improvement in Pyon. But when he goes to thank Zachary, he is rebuffed and pretty much told to shove off. This should have made Julian want to walk away--and he does *want* to--but he also finds something about the standoffish man irresistible. Just when it seems like they might be finding their way to non-hostilities, Zachary finds himself at the wrong side of a car, and Julian finds himself drawn reluctantly further and further into Zachary's life. Much to both of their displeasures.

I don't think there is anything inherently wrong with this story...well, maybe except that it felt like a short story that got stretched out way too long.

I liked the premise of the book, the semi-corporeal spirit animals that are tied to every person on earth. Reminded me a bit of the daemons from The Golden Compass (or at least what i remember about them from when i read the books as a kid). And if there was one thing that made the story worth reading, it was Pyon and Linis--Julian's and Zachary's kems. They lightened up what was otherwise a rather drab, and at times depressing, story.

I didn't really feel the relationship between Zachary and Julian. For a majority of the book either Zachary was being an asshole's asshole, or the two guys were not even spending time with each other. To be frank, most of the story revolved around Julian and Leo (Zachary's uncle) and how their (platonic) relationship evolved and made their lives better. Zachary really seemed like an afterthought to the story. Like Ann Somerville got writing and then remembered two-thirds of the way thru that the story was supposed to be a romance, so she threw Zachary (only slightly less of a douche than before) back at Julian.

It also didn't help that I had met, and overdrawn, my asshole quota for the week by the time Zachary came along. I just wasn't in the mood to put up with his shit, no matter how good an excuse he had for his fuckups.

I usually love Ann Somerville's stories, but think I am pretty sure I will not be continuing this series. Not unless Julian strangles Zachary to death, falls in love with Leo, and got that whole May/December relationship going.

2.5 stars

Shanna says

This was a great story and much more than I expected. I loved the characters and their kems. I loved how Zachary slowly came out of his shell and how supportive Julian was, once he grasped what the issue was. There were no quick fixes or easy answers but it was a sweet story with a lot of growth on the part of the characters. I also liked how the kems grew with their owners, so as Julian became calmer and healthier so did his kem. I loved the little mischief makers and their gentle scheming. This was a fun read that had more depth than I thought at first glance. :)

Eepa *mm loving bookworm* says

Only thing I can really say about this one is that it was BORING. There was absolutely nothing happening in the book, there was no romance until the last third or so and even that didn't really get any spark into the book.

The kems were cute but they only got the book so far. And maybe the third star as I was very close just quitting the whole thing.

Charly says

Light on romance, but an irresistible story nonetheless

Warning: This review might contain what some people consider SPOILERS.

Rating: 9/10

PROS:

- There's a single fantasy element in this story that is otherwise realistic, and that one fantasy element is clever and creative and utterly delightful. Within about 10 pages, I was already beginning to fall in love with Julian's kem, Pyon, while wondering at the same time exactly what a kem is (and why Julian was taking his with him to a bakery). I especially loved the words Somerville uses when describing the kems' actions: they "meep" and "bolt" and "trill" and "chirp" all through the book.
- Zachary's Uncle Leo is the only other main character in the story aside from Zachary and Julian, and I liked him just as much as I liked the two younger men. He's gentle, perceptive, and blunt, but much kinder about it than his nephew. He's a lovely contrast to Zachary's prickliness.
- There's a wonderful exploration here of a person with psychological childhood trauma learning to trust as an adult.
- The romance is not primary here; it's simply one element in a story about two men simultaneously discovering who they are. Normally the romance being downplayed is something that bothers me a little, but I was so enthralled by the story as a whole that I didn't mind the lack of romance or sex.

CON:

- As much as I understood some of Zachary's initial disparaging comments about Julian, I found Zachary rather horrible at first. I didn't see anything redeeming in him for several chapters, and I sort of got annoyed by Julian's insistence on talking to him. Zachary defends himself by claiming that he's "never nasty" and he simply "tell[s] people uncomfortable truths." But saying that Julian is, for example, "a waste of oxygen" is not merely an uncomfortable truth. It's nasty. (I grew to like Zachary just fine, of course, and became more tolerant of his social ineptitude. But it took a while.)

Overall comments: If you're looking for sex, this one's not for you. The relationship builds slowly, and the physical aspect develops only at the very end. Still, I thought the story was an absolute delight. It flows well, reads quickly, and is unusual, so if you're looking for something that's different from the usual m/m fare, this is a good choice. Much less angsty than Somerville's works usually are, too.

Iris says

So no sex scene. (Well there's something about admiring Julian's cock but I skimmed it anyway because I'm not interested.) But that's understandable. Zachary hasn't reached his puberty yet, I can't imagine him having sex with anyone.

Julian should consider changing his job from legal assistant to child care worker.

Uncle Leo is adorable.

All the Kems are super cute.

Sho says

I first did not get what a kem was then I sort of got and loved it. What a great concept! I would love to have my own Kem. But the best part was how the relationship developed between Julian and Zachary as well as Leo/Kem tag team whom took the cake as the best and cutest cupids ever.

Jessie Potts says

This one was more of a m/m contemporary than anything paranormal. The only paranormal aspect was that this world was a bit like golden compass where everyone has a 'kem' a little ferret looking creature who can disappear inside a person and no one really knows why or how they came to be.

The story was cute, I thought Zachary's character transformed a bit too quickly and the love was weird considering on their first official outing... not even date... he gets hit by a car and the remainder of their romance occurs while and after he's recovering.

I also think it's interesting that the authors chose to make the kems such a normal thing and not really go into why they are there or what they do besides cause trouble and cutely manipulate their humans. If you're looking for a book that's quick, a good contemporary and an HFN/HEA (depends on what you consider) then pick up A Fluffy Tale, book two is already out and is about a different couple in the same kem universe.

Raji says

Originally reviewed at my blog

This is one of those off-beat books. You know the one with a different animal, parallel world or something along the similar lines. The author is amazing in creating a new concept or a new world where you end up immersing yourself so much that it takes some time to realize that, that was an imaginary world and not a realistic one. I had reviewed one of her books here and this one was amazing too (although a bit short and sweeter than the previous one).

Julian has a problem - a furry problem. His kem is misbehaving and he can't seem to stop it. He has tried everything - shouting, withholding affections and glaring, but nothing seems to work. The author has introduced an interesting concept of having "kem" for each person. Kems are furry mammals which are sort of reflections of a general well-being and mood of a person - it might be loosely based on a spirit animal. When Julian, thanks to his kem, "accidentally" meets Zachary a solicitor in his office, he is mortified. Zachary is gorgeous but totally a snob and insults Julian to his face although he is very polite to Julian's kem.

Zachary is horrified at the way Julian has been treating his kem. Doesn't he know that kems are the only ones who will stay with them even when EVERYONE has deserted them? Zachary is such a prick and you can see that he really doesn't care about the way he is insulting Julian. This is not one of those instances where the MC is being a prick just for sake of being one. No. This is the Zachary who doesn't care about how rude he is because he is telling the truth. The truth that Julian slowly sees. Julian realizes that underneath the sharp words there might lie some amount of truth. So he starts eating right, exercises and spends time with his kem.

After, finally persuading Zachary to "train" him to bond with his kem better, they tentatively get on good foot. But it is cut short when Zachary meets with an accident. Enter - Zachary's great grand uncle, Leo. I loved that chap! He was one of those people who scheme but for the betterment of the persons they love. We get a good look (from his perspective) of why Zachary is like how he is. Julian isn't as forgiving about Zachary's rude behavior initially but with Leo's help he slowly understands the pain of loneliness that Zachary has imposed on himself. All because he never wants to get hurt by a human again. Even though the author offered a pretty good premise for Julian to be close to Zachary and Leo during the entire duration it never felt forced or unnatural - even though it was a bit convenient *grin*.

I really liked this story because it was interesting to see how the unacknowledged feelings, desires those lurk in the corner of the mind are brought out by the kems and the humans look just like puppet in front of them. There is no one who persuades or pushes Julian and Zachary together (well, the uncle does that but it is minimal) and when they do come together it is purely because their kems made them to face their desires!

Ann Roberts says

I finished reading A Fluffy Tale, and really enjoyed it. I gave it 4.5 stars, just stopping at a five star rating because the romantic relationship between the two MCs takes 85% of the book to get to and then the plot ends so abruptly--at least to my mind. I thoroughly enjoyed the theme of enemies to friends, and the pets (symbiotic ferret-like creatures called kems that each person automatically owns) play a direct, active role in the movement of the plot as well as the romantic relationship of the MCs. Somerville's style is clear, concise, yet descriptive, and the usual e-book typographical errors are practically non-existent (yea!). Although this book is not hot on the sex side, it is very sensual and really reminds me how much pets in real life need the emotional and physical benefits of their owners. The sections on Zachary's rehabilitation after being hit by a car are a little drawn out, but truly show how much work and care goes into getting back into shape after that type of trauma--as well as the necessity of close friends and family during our times of need. I would recommend this book to those who are looking for a book with a very detailed, more sensual plot rather than one based on sex-scene after sex-scene. I leave the book wanting more, and have plans to read the sequel, Warm and Fuzzy.

llv says

Rating: 4 stars

This book was a very slow burn. Both MCs were a bit unlikeable at the beginning. Julian was easy to warm up to early on. Zachary on the other hand was a bit harder to like. He was so prickly and obnoxious in the beginning, but you couldn't help but feel for him when you found out why he was that way.

I really enjoyed this story. I loved the build up to the romance. My only complaint was the lack of explanation for the kems. I thought they were wonderful, but I wanted to know where they came from. Were they something that was always there in the world that Ms. Somerville created? Did they magically appear one day? They were by far the best part of this story.

All in all, I found this to be a wonderful story. If you want lots of sex and romance than this story is not for you, but if you like fluffy animals and a slow building romance than this book is for you.

Alex says

Overall

The blurb for this story doesn't do it justice. Here we are introduced to Julian and Mr. Talk, Dark and Grumpy. I was also under the impression this was a short story (I missed the word count and the use of the word "Tale" in the title made me think short story for some reason). Still, I trusted the author and the blurb enchanted me enough to give it a try.

I enjoyed this story, although it felt like two parts of one story as the first half "fixes" Julian and the second half "fixes" Zachary. To that end, I was expecting something different to happen than what did, but that's my fault for assuming. In the end I was pleased with how everything figured out and the path that was taken to get there. A slow, sweet romance that is perfect for a nice lounging read.

Strengths

The kems (ferret-like creatures that have a physical presence, but are capable of vanishing into their host's body) are absolutely adorable. I'd re-read this story again on their presence alone. Each kem, like each host, has a unique personality and that personality does not always mesh with their host. Not much is explained about them, because people don't seem to know anything much about them. It doesn't really matter much for the story. Their presence is enough.

The pace at which events progress and information is revealed works to slowly build the characters, both their background (and baggage) and also their evolution into the characters they are at the end.

While the length and pace are a little slow, I feel for the story being told, it was appropriate, as sudden changes would seem uncharacteristic. While not an action-packed story, it rests on its own merits and is very nice for a mellow day's reading.

The kems and Leo bring a wonderful flavor of character to this story with their playfulness and plotting nature. The serious nature of the two main characters and their relationship is balanced by these other characters, lightening tense moods and raising the spirits of the main characters. They almost play the part of children, helping action along, making mischief happen, and otherwise goofing off.

Weaknesses

This is may be something that only bothers me, but this toed the line of "the rich man swooshes in to rescue the poor man." It's not that type of story, although there are definitely elements of it (mostly at the fault of pushy Leo, who I loved). Still, if rich men getting what they want annoys you, even if it helps the not-quite-as-rich, consider this a head's up. However, I don't think it will bother most people.

The nature of this story does not lend it to a fast pace, and parts in the middle dragged a little. Worth reading, but this isn't the story to turn to if searching for an action-packed novel.

Be sure to check out my other reviews on my blog.

Elena says

The title of this novel might be "A Fluffy Tale", and true enough, there's a lot of cuteness going on, but it has enough depth to make a lasting impression on me. It's also original enough to stand out of the crowd. The animal companions, ferret like creatures, are the only fantastical element in this story. Otherwise it's about finding trust, friendship and ultimately love.

Andrea says

Fun, fluffy and also had depth
