



Beyond the Sea

Keira Andrews

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Two straight guys. One desert island.

Even if it means quitting their boy band mid-tour, Troy Tanner isn't going to watch his little brother snort his future away after addiction destroyed their father. On a private jet taking him home from Australia, he and pilot Brian Sinclair soar above the vast South Pacific. Brian lost his passion for flying—and joy in life—after a traumatic crash, but now he and Troy must fight to survive when a cyclone strikes without warning.

Marooned a thousand miles from civilization, the turquoise water and white sand beach look like paradise. But although they can fish and make fire, the smallest infection or bacteria could be deadly. When the days turn into weeks with no sign of rescue, Troy and Brian grow closer, and friendship deepens into desire.

As they learn sexuality is about more than straight or gay and discover their true selves, the world they've built together is thrown into chaos. If Troy and Brian make it off the island, can their love endure?

This is an LGBT romance about discovering yourself, finding love, and eating way too many coconuts.
85,000 words.

Beyond the Sea Details

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Author : Keira Andrews

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Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Gay Romance, Gay For You

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From Reader Review Beyond the Sea for online ebook

Ingie says

Review written March 15, 2016

4 1/2 Stars - Super über cute.

My love to a perfect romantic touching love tale

Not surprising, I was a bit curious. — What a simple storyline: Two men, a young boy band star (**Troy Tanner**) and a more than ten years older pilot (**Brian Sinclair**) on an deserted paradise island in the *South Pacific*. Strangers pushed together to fight to survive when a cyclone strikes without warning. — Feeling it?

Of course Ingela truly enjoyed this wonderful tale.

Beyond the Sea is in all ways a very cute and heart-warming romance read. Two men of different ages. Main characters from very different everyday realities. ...And there they are, alone on a deserted island in the middle of nowhere.

You have read it before, you know it all: Eating coconuts, fishing, small disasters and painful damages, nude swimming, sleeping right besides each other. The weeks passes and they are (not surprisingly) falling in love. Aawww!! So perfectly d@mn cute. Unexpectedly story solution or story development? No!!! No of course not. This IS afterall all a M/M romance book.

Two straight men... — Is this possible? Is this book anchoring some known reality, even likely to happen? — What do I know. I'm a 52 years old woman living an ordinary (quite boring) life far away here up in Sweden. (view spoiler) Whatever, I believe in love in all different shapes and forms.

“Troy asked playfully, “Jerk one out?”

“Yup.” Brian lowered his arm, a smile playing on his lips. “Beat the meat.”

A laugh bubbled up from Troy’s chest. “Buff the banana.”

“Choke the chicken.”

“Spank the monkey.”

“Audition your hand puppet.”

Why do I read romances? Well, because I believe in that fabulous dream of the handsome prince, the top prize, everything can happen and eternal grand love and happiness. If you are even a little bit like me I'm sure you also will enjoy this lovely tale.

Keira Andrews for sure know the handcraft. Once again I'm mesmerized.

I LIKE - sweet hopeful fairytales about love

.Lili. says

Good lordy. I'm not sure how to start this review, to be honest. There has been so much talk that I don't know what to address first. I guess the book itself.

Beyond the Sea is the story of two men who get stranded on an island after their plane crashes. Troy is a 26-year-old reality star and a member of a boy band. Brian is a 39-year-old pilot who carries a heavy burden and has been unable to forgive himself for an event that occurred in his past. As time passes on the island, these men build a friendship based on trust and admiration for one another. Before they know it, those feelings keep growing, and they discover their bisexuality.

My highlights:

- The way their story was handled. This was a slow burn romance that was carefully crafted. Troy and Brian got to know each other first. They saw parts of one another that they hadn't shown anyone else. They saw the good, the bad, and they revealed to each other hurts and dreams they'd never felt comfortable discussing with others.
- Life on the island. The author didn't sugar coat some aspects of their life was like. She gave us some nitty gritty, and I appreciated that.
- The story is narrated from a dual POV giving us a clear voice of each man.
- I also loved that there was no stupid drama (view spoiler) It was about them from beginning to end.
- And the epilogue. Seeing them happy years down the road it just melted my heart.

This review will be cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews but not the section below as these are my thoughts.

The elephant in the room. I know that the blurb sells it as GFY, but it didn't feel that way to me. These men discover their bisexuality while on the island- yes, but these feelings grew from friendship. It wasn't as if they got there and boom chica wow wow. As a bisexual woman who struggled to label herself for yearsssss(well into adulthood)- I get it. Do I think the blurb was a bit cringe worthy? Yeah, I won't lie. But trust me- don't judge the book by the blurb. I've seen this author on social media and she's always kind. I don't think that there was this master plan to cash in on a fetish. I don't know maybe I'm naive. I guess I just feel that education and kindness are key in order to move forward. I'll stop now. I don't even know if that made any fucken sense.

End of my thoughts.

All in all, I'm giving this story a solid 4.5 Star rating. This book isn't about labels- it's about friendship, trust, and love.

ARC kindly provided by the author to Gay Book Reviews for an honest review.

? Todd says

Okay, I'm a dirty ho. There, I said it.

When I first saw the blurb for Keira's new book, "**Beyond the Sea**," of course my filthy mind went directly to thinking that the plane would crash, the questionably-straight guys would immediately **land on one another's dicks** and sexy times would ensue.

Wrong.

This is **not that book** and I absolutely loved Keira's unique approach to the story.

Instead, what I got was a story that was **extremely compelling and completely held my attention**. Not a lot of books do that for me.

I didn't even realize that said '**sexy times**' were **held off for half way into the book** until they began and I looked at the percent complete status. But that didn't matter in the slightest, as the story was just that damn good.

At 26, **Troy** is the half Filipino, half Caucasian veteran of both a **teen TV show and popular boy band**, who's always done what he's told and **never made any real life decisions** for himself.

And at 39, **Brian** is an ex-commercial airline pilot who's been through a traumatic event, unable to forgive himself, since **several passengers died while on his watch**, so now he will only ever sit in the co-pilot's seat.

I truly loved the **give and take** dynamic between Troy, who has **the world at his feet** when they first meet, and Brian, who's basically at his own **rock bottom mentally**, hiding from old friends and the world in general.

While stranded and trying to survive, Brian helps Troy realize that he **did his very best for his drug addict father** and Troy helps Brian **come to terms** with the airline crash that sent him fleeing to the other side of the globe.

What I also loved was how the two were **always there for one another** when trying to survive day to day on

DEAR BOOK:

Keira Andrews, I want to kiss you and possibly give you money/anything else you want for writing this book. It's like you crept into my brain and pulled out my fantasies and made a book out of them!!

Yup, it's 2 am here, folks, and **it would have taken a band of armed robbers to pry my kindle out of my hand before the last page of this book was turned.** This book was simply divine! It took my favorite things in M/M and romance in general and combined them together in a fabulous, sexy package.

One of my all-time favorite books is *On the Island*. This is basically like a gay version of that!! Plane-wrecks, slow-burn romance, age gaps... DIVINE.

And folks.... **I can barely breathe because we get not just one GFY, but TWO MOTHER-F-ING-GFYS!!!**

Hyperventilating over here!!

Okay, here is the deal. Just because this book combined being stranded on an island and suddenly being attracted to dick doesn't make it a good book. I've given many a GFY story 1-star in my day. However, **Keira Andrews just pro-leveled the crap of out this story. I mean, she just wrote its ASS OFF.**

One of my favorite things about this book is the **sloooooowwww burn romance**. You absolutely NEED slow-burn in a GFY story. It is simply a requirement for a good GFY. Here, the attraction built super slowly over time, and the sexual tension was allowed to just build and build. I was dying alongside these guys as things started headed towards sexy-land, and I was loving every second of their journey.

And once we got to their journey.... I was in HEAVEN! No, the sex isn't especially ground-breaking or kinky or dirty, but you know me and my butt-virgin kink. Yup, I'm a perv, I am! I thought that their connection was off the charts! Hot, emotional, tender, intense... it was just everything.

Aside from the relationship between the two MCs, the writing and the plot was really fascinating. No matter how many times I read these survival-ish stories, I'm still awestruck by challenges of surviving outside of civilization. These guys had it *rough* and it felt totally authentic.

I adored every second of this story. Will it be as much of a hit with every reader? Maybe. The writing is superb, and the two MCs are amazing together. However, for me it was just the perfect fit for my particular tastes and mood. On to my favorites list you go!!

Copy provided by the author in exchange for an honest review

Heidi Cullinan says

Stinger/summary: In Andrews's novel, both heroes are stranded on islands long before that's literally true. One man is a reluctant part of a boy band, dutifully letting himself be shuttled through life in a glass hamster wheel, plastering on a smile while the paparazzo click away. The other is a celebrated pilot hero unable to process his survivor guilt, shutting himself off from the world to the point it's almost dangerous. Neither one of them in any way is repressing their sexuality or orientation. Both have had relationships with women, and

they've been real relationships, not disappointing attempts where everything felt wrong, especially once they opened up to the idea of being with a man.

This means when they do fall for one another, it's all the more magical. Their relationship isn't about orientation but about connection. It's not about surrendering identity but shedding old lives to make new ones. About finding themselves and each other amidst a harrowing ordeal—talk about a tale of hope!

A charming, heartwarming breath of fresh air, Beyond the Sea allows us to imagine we too can sail past our boundaries and into the ocean of our own happily ever after.

Full review (and a lengthy discussion/set of interviews on the trope) on my blog:
<https://heidicullinan.wordpress.com/2...>

Highly recommended.

Nick Pageant says

Big thanks to Alona for reading with me.

I loved this. It's Keira Andrews and I love me some Keira Andrews. She writes the sexiest sex and the romanciest romance. The woman is a genius.

Now, on to the subject at hand, which is sadly not this great book. This author found herself at the center of a controversy because of her wording in the blurb and the concept of "gay for you." I don't know what that term means to Keira Andrews. I don't know what it means to each individual who reads it. When I read it, I find it very romantic. I like the idea of someone finding themselves surprisingly in love. The whole concept just makes me swoon.

The words in the blurb caused some upset. They also caused some people I have a lot of respect for to write some very intelligent things. This is the thing I love most about GR - literate people coming together to discuss the power of language and our mutual love of words.

Here are three pieces of writing on the subject that I really enjoyed:

Erika's great post.

Emma's great post.

Vivian's great post.

I'm not going to pretend that this has all been sunshine and rainbows as there has been some ugliness involved. I lost a friend because of my support for the book, but... that's okay. I will always support writers who are doing their best to entertain and make my heart go pitter pat. I'm proud of Keira Andrews for staying above the fray and proving herself to be a class act. I'm also proud of the people who voiced their opinions eloquently and with restraint.

Final thoughts - give the book a shot. It's a winner!

Judith says

4 Stars

Troy is part of a boy band with his younger brother. Fed up with his brother's drug use he leaves in the middle of a tour. Not wanting to attract the paparazzi and all the questions he hires a private jet to take him back to America.

Brian is the co pilot. He is dealing with issues of his own. He used to be a pilot on commercial flights but after an emergency he has low self esteem and is quite content to be second in command. He's kind of shut himself of from the world....

When the private jet crashes the two men are thrown together when they are stranded on an island.

Because of the nature of the story it's definitely a slow burner. They both struggle to come to terms with what's happened to them and start to re evaluate their lives.

Their story was beautiful. I loved how their friendship developed and how they began to rely on each other before anything sexual happened between them.

They are both straight but the way their story developed was actually believable. The sexy times happen quite late on in the story but that actually didn't bother me.

A really enjoyable M/M story with two brilliant characters...

Emma Sea says

Your dichotomy is problematic

In Julio's takedown of Keira Andrews's *Beyond the Sea* and the GFY trope, there was one rather large detail I couldn't let pass by without challenge.

Julio positions romance in opposition to erotica.

"...in erotica, the point is kink. the point is fetishism. because **the point of erotica is to get you off, and that (rightfully) encompasses almost everything under the sun, legal and illegal, for as long as people have been fuckin[g]** . . . **romance is aspirational and positive, meant to reinforce ideas that make you happy, like the idea of love** ...the problem is that kinks are by definition exclusionary. you can't have a kink without an element of selection. for instance, the fastest way to get me to come is to be tall, skinny, male, well-endowed, and in love with sucking my dick... **erotica is by definition about literally every kink under the sun. and no one person with their one series of kinks gets to define what turns other people on... in erotica, GFY is fine. because while that's not my kink, i certainly celebrate the right for it to be yours.**

feel me? whereas, in romance, that's not what it's about at all......but you can't exclude whole categories of people the way you could in erotica. because that's hurtful, where in erotica it's just classification...in mm you get erotica marketed as romance. as if nobody knows the difference between them. because some mm readers don't know the difference, and view gay sex as a kink, and not, say, a part of my motherfucking identity."

In truth erotica and romance are closely entwined, and both involve fetishization.

In general, **erotica fetishizes physical expression** of psychological pleasure, expressed through sexual acts, physical attributes, clothing and toys, or concepts like humiliation.

Romance fetishizes emotional expression of biological processes: through making stories where deep human meaning comes from minute quantities of dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin rocketing around our mesolimbic pathways. Romance stories tell us that we are more than our chemistry.

The problem with separating them, and saying that kink is okay in erotica, but not in romance, is it does precisely what a lot of Western culture does - it says sex and emotions are two different things with two different rules. If you want to get off with your genitals - if you want to fap - then you're allowed to have your kink and, according to Julio, "GFY is fine." But if you want emotional pleasure then you're not allowed to have your kink. And *this* is a huge problem because of the way love and sex are gender-coded by Western culture.

Genital pleasure i.e. sex: pleasure coded as male by our culture and lets you "get off" = your specific kink is OK.

Emotional pleasure i.e. love: pleasure coded as female by our culture and lets you squee = no, you may not have your specific kink.

(Additionally, given that many women readers show clear preference for emotional involvement before the fapping can happen, you can see the problem in trying to separate the two out.)

Saying romance must conform to different rules than other forms of fiction is a dangerous false dichotomy. Setting romance up as the genre that "*should be*" "aspirational and positive, meant to reinforce ideas that make you happy"... well, it grates in the same way it does when I get told to "Smile, honey."

The erasure of bisexuality in M/M is currently being hotly debated in our community. I hear you, bisexuals, when you say that you're not welcome in M/M. I see this as a true thing. I acknowledge that just because something is a romantic or sexual fantasy does not exclude it from influencing culture in general, in ways that are detrimental to marginalized groups. Yes, I see that my faves are problematic.

Just don't tell me you get to have your faves because you fap to them, and I don't because I braingasm to them.

Julio Genao says

see links at the bottom to find out what happened to me when i posted this review.

JULIO'S JOT-TAKE™: GAY FOR YOU.

i got your irate messages. what the hell's the matter this time?

i'm not reading this book.

why not?

because its existence irritates me.

that's hardly a novel state of affairs.

go fuck yourself.

fine, fine—but why does this book irritate you?

because it's built on the GFY trope.

what's GFY? didn't you tell me to go fuck myself already?

GFY means "gay for you." usually you see it written as two heterosexual dudes coming to understand they have a homosexual attraction to one another and then, after a period of awkward and/or anxious sexual tension, lots of fuckin.

oh, i know books like that. they're pretty hot. so what's the big deal?

it's simple, but the explanation can get complicated.

we appear to have plenty of time. unless you'd rather talk about the issue of latent racism in frothy MM romances featuring horribly appropriated minority chara—

basically it's a problem because it reinforces homophobia and erases bisexuality and transgenderism.

whoa, whoa, whoa—i don't see how you get from hot dudes touching peen for the first time to ...all that.

i can explain, if you'd like.

i think you just like to be upset. aren't you latin types supposed to be spicy? you're pretty spicy on twitter. like that time someone called one of your reviews "Exhibit A for everything that's wrong with our fundamentally bankrupt reviewer culture" and you changed your twitter username to EXHIBIT A for a month out of spite! that was a good ti—

gay for you implies that the only way it is acceptable to have homosexual sex is for it to be completely involuntary and/or framed by problematic contexts. i.e.: prison. or: a desert island. GFY in this context

means these two straight dudes wouldn't normally be inclined this way, buuuuuuuut... there's no pussy around, so... bom chikka bom pow!

i don't get it.

apparently. lemme try again. these guys have sex with one another not because they're open to having sex with guys already (yuck!), but because they have no choice. therefore, the logic is: having sex with dudes = gross... unless you have no choice because there's no chocha to hand and you just *have* to get your dick wet.

...that's. um. ok. this had not previously occurred to me.

omgnoway.

so that would seem to be implying that being gay is bad.

yes.

...which is the same as homophobia?

lookit you! with the learning things, n'stuff!

there's no need to be so snippy about it, my gosh, i'm trying here, ok, not like they taught this shit at sch—

even worse, GFY erases bisexuality and contributes to the kind of abuse bisexual people have to deal with every single day... from literally everyone. gay, straight, male, female, whatever. everyone hates bisexuals. everyone's scared of bisexuals. bisexuality = sorcery. kill the bisexok i'll stop now.

nowait, ezzplain. how does GFY erase bisexuality?

the same way it promotes homophobia: by suggesting the only time an ostensibly straight dude can fancy a bit of cock is when he's literally got no other option at all.

...like on a desert isl—

like on a desert island, yes.

wow. that's... that must suck. for bisexuals, i mean.

it does. in nearly every fucking story and nearly every fucking movie and in nearly every conversation you ever see anywhere about bisexuals, they're described as 'omnivorous' or 'rapacious' or, in one recent and appalling example, 'jungle cats' who are literally trying to poach a dude's boyfriend right in front of him while being black also. which reinforces irrational fears people have about bisexuals. namely, that you can't

yes. yes it is. and part of the problem is that mm has no idea what the fuck it wants to be. some people claim it's really slash, so it doesn't have to follow the basic rules of human decency and/or respect as, say, a genre of literature written by the people about whom it is written.

oh, fuck. not this again.

relax. i'm chill. i'm chill.

wary look

i said i'm chill, bitch, don't i fucking look chill?

i apologize.

no you don't, you lying hoor. moving on: mm runs into trouble like this because it doesn't know if it wants to be erotica or romance.

what's the difference?

in erotica, the *point* is kink. the *point* is fetishism. because the point of erotica is to get you off, and that (rightfully) encompasses almost everything under the sun, legal and illegal, for as long as people have been fuckin.

ok. and romance?

romance is aspirational and positive, meant to reinforce ideas that make you happy, like the idea of love.

...and the problem when they get mixed-up is...

...the problem is that kinks are by definition exclusionary. you can't have a kink without an element of selection. for instance, the fastest way to get me to come is to be tall, skinny, male, well-endowed, and in love with sucking my dick.

awkward throat-clearing noise

generally speaking, i am not turned on by short round women, whether they love sucking my dick or no. and i know this from experience. for a while i identified as a *practicing* bisexual man instead of just the *philosophical* bisexual man i am today.

painfully awkward silence continues

vindictively allows painfully awkward silence to persist

i'm so, so sorr—

so anyway, i'm really into tall skinny dudes with big dicks and big hands and feet and also a nice, articulated adam's apple in a long, long neck, and also maybe a strong nose and a broad mouth with suuuuper-kissable lips and kinda romantic hair too, longish and curly and... and nice toes, tbh, i really love a man with lovely toes, like nice and groomed and kinda chubby, with maybe the odd vein here or there, and no bunions or callouses or anything like—

this can't be happening to me.

—so that's what i like. that's what turns me on. does that mean everything that doesn't turn me on shouldn't exist?

no, of course not.

and does that mean there shouldn't be porn about things that i do not myself find sexy?

no.

exactly. so in that way, erotica... erotica is by definition about literally every kink under the sun. and no one person with their one series of kinks gets to define what turns other people on.

okay?

in erotica, GFY is fine. because while that's not *my* kink, i certainly celebrate the right for it to be *yours*. feel me?

i see. whereas in romance...

whereas, in romance, that's not what it's about at all. you can have granularity. you can write for and about a very specific person and a very specific setting. i like romances set in the past, and i like romances set in the future, and i like romances between one big giant dude and a little scrawny little dude, and etc—but you can't exclude *whole categories of people the way you could in erotica*. because that's hurtful, where in erotica it's just classification. a romance doesn't even need to feature sex of any kind at all in order to be a romance. shout-out to all my asexual peepalz, Ilove, RESPEK!!!!

wow. so in MM—

in mm you get erotica marketed as romance. as if nobody knows the difference between them. because some mm readers *don't* know the difference, and view gay sex as a kink, and not, say, *a part of my motherfucking identity*.

see, there you go. spicy.

go fuck yourself *twice*.

bien spicy.

go fuck yourself twice *in the eye*.

what happened next: <https://storify.com/genao/they-d-bett...>

discussion after eight friends, amy lane, damon suede, heidi cullinan, and a bunch of b-list bigots on facebook whipped-up a lynch mob on account of me choosing not to read a book:

https://www.goodreads.com/user_status...

Jewel says

Keira Andrews has done it again and delivered a beautiful love story.

The premise pretty much reminded me of the TV show *Lost* and I was amused when the MC's actually referenced the show.

At the start of *Beyond the Sea*, Brian is an emotionally closed-off man. He ran to Australia from the US and his old life as a commercial airline pilot when he couldn't handle the guilt of surviving a disaster - one where he, as the Captain, was instrumental in saving the lives of a whole lot of people. Instead of feeling like a hero, though, he only sees his failure to save everyone. Brian lost his love for flying after that and never really got it back. He used to live for it, but now it's just something he is good at. Aeronautics is something he still holds a passion for, but flying is a different story and he refuses to be Captain, again, sticking with the co-pilot spot.

Troy is a pop star who grew up in the limelight. From the time he was a child, his father had mapped out his life down to the smallest detail. Troy always had people around making decisions for him and he pretty much just went with it. It was easier that way. But as he's gotten a bit older (he's 26 at the start of the book), Troy is starting to see that he's not happy following his expected path.

From everything I've read, the music business will suck your soul. Drugs aren't just available, but abundant. And with all the pressure to be what the label is selling, and always being "on" for your fans, drugs become the only escape for many. But Troy isn't going down that road. He watched his father spiral out of control with alcohol, cocaine and heroin and he's not about to do that to himself. Unfortunately, his little brother, Tyson, doesn't have the same dedication, letting fellow band mate Nick draw him into using cocaine and heroin. And Troy has had enough and decides to follow through on his threat of quitting the band if Tyson didn't clean up his act.

Beyond the Sea didn't actually read like other GFY stories I've read. It really felt different. The MC's don't get together just because they are the only ones around. There was no shaming of themselves or the other person. It read more like two men discovering their bisexuality or fluidity, and then exploring that. Did they expect it? No. And I loved it.

There is a very slow build of the feelings that both Troy and Brian develop. They get to know each other, they become friends and learn to trust each other and everything between them is very balanced. They help each other survive and cope. As days turn into weeks, they each talk to the other about painful things that they've never really dealt with. They form a close friendship. And then as their feelings get stronger, they develop a sexual relationship. And I won't lie - the sexytimes are scorching, but they never felt gratuitous or like it was just because there weren't any women around. It felt very natural to me.

Neither man has ever had the opportunity to really consider their sexuality before. Brian was too closed off and Troy was surrounded by too many expectations. And you know what? In the end, it doesn't matter. *Beyond the Sea* was such a beautiful love story that really illustrates that love is love. Troy and Brian are beautiful together and they're in it for the long haul. Well done, Keira Andrews!

*An ARC copy of **Beyond the Sea** was generously provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.*

~☆~Dαni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

Two men. One island. A love story for the ages.

Fed up with his brother's drug abuse, Troy hires a private plane to take him from Sydney back to the States, world tour be damned. He is a pop star after all and can afford such luxuries.

Brian treats Troy like any other passenger. He could care less about a boy band idol. For Brian, this is just another job.

Just another job, just another day ... just another flight.

Until the plane falls out of the sky.

Stranded on a desert island somewhere in the Pacific, Brian and Troy have to work together to survive. They figure out how to build a shelter and start a fire. They spell out SOS with rocks. They learn how to crack open coconuts and cook the pulp.

There are fish to catch, wood to chop, and clothes to wash. Fortunately, papayas are plentiful. Unfortunately, the parrots are damn loud and star squawking at an ungodly hour every morning.

Troy isn't the spoiled rich boy Brian expected, and Brian knows that as far as being lost in the middle of nowhere goes, he could do much worse than Troy.

Brian and Troy take care of each other. They talk and dream and laugh. They name their island Golden Sands after this Sinatra song.

Troy has always been a people pleaser, and he's still catering to the ghost of his dead father, a real showman who pushed his sons to succeed and snorted their money up his nose. **With Brian, Troy can finally sing for himself.**

Brian, emotionally scarred by a past tragedy, has been existing, not living. Isolated from friends, Brian has

been hiding from the world in his nondescript Sydney flat. He feels guilty for surviving, especially since the pilot, Paula, who tried to be a friend to him even as he pushed her away, perished in the island crash.

The first half of the book is about the mundane day-to-day tasks of staying alive. There are no lingering glances, no unfulfilled sexual tension. The men are too busy catching rain water and staying dry to worry about getting off.

But there are moments of awareness, Troy looking at Brian's hairy chest, Brian attempting to masturbate to an image of two women only to have his thoughts stray to Troy time and again. Troy offers to get Brian off, and then there's kissing and caressing and raw, passionate sex.

This isn't a GFY story, not really. The men don't spend time fantasizing about women and talking about exes. Troy realizes that if he's sexually attracted to a man, he must be bi. **But it isn't about labels. It's about friendship and trust. It's about love.**

I adored Troy's close-knit, supportive Filipino family, especially his mother, all five foot nothing of her, who calls Troy "Bongbong" and asks him if he's had "the sex." Troy's little brother finally gets his ass into rehab and never gives up the search for Troy.

There is no melodrama here, no homophobia, no big internal struggle over sexual identity, no bitchy ex-girlfriends. This book is fuckery free!

Instead we get: **sex in a lean-to, the most erotic shaving scene ever written, two gorgeous men who spend most of their time naked, and an epilogue worthy of a Grammy.**

Steelwhisper says

This is 2.5* rounded up.

I've rather mixed feelings about this one. I liked the basic idea, meaning I liked the idea of having two straight men marooned on a desert island who end up falling for each other. But I guess I expected far too much of this book and possibly I also expected far, far too much of this author. It is my first Keira Andrews book, but the author had been on my horizon for a while already, because of the consistent high ratings my f-list gave her, the rave reviews and the blurbs which showed that Andrews has quite interesting ideas.

Unfortunately the book didn't live up to my expectations: not those for this idea, nor those for an author with such high ratings. I wanted a detailed, factual (instead of fictional or glossed over) account of how these two men settled into island life and mastered the various stresses and adventures of living in the rough. Survival. There was very little of that, instead we got pretty soon to the mooning for each other phase. From the rather well-done handjob scene things went downhill rather fast and turned into the stereotypical, 08/15 m/m-romance with a sideways nod at bisexuality and pansexuality, but in the essence it was the usual m/m-fare right down to the hated mm-speak (need! want! please!) and such boring sex scenes that I skimmed them.

Yes, the sex was unfortunately extremely boring. You'd think that with two straight men in the cauldron an author could cook an extraordinary and atypical soup? Not so! We go, like a clockwork, from handjob to blowjobs to anal intercourse to rimming, and not one pornstastic porn trope left out. (As an aside: fuck, am I tired of reading rimming for breakfast! Bleh. Could someone puhlease tell mm-authors it's really not a requirement? And really not hot to everyone?) And that is one of the major shortcomings of this book. With two straight guys exploring here, I expected a much slower, much more cautious (and delicious) unravelling. I would have been satisfied without any buttsex at all and I had hoped for slow overcoming of emotional and cultural barriers. Instead those two went at it like duracell fuckbunnies.

Despite that and also despite the lacklustre adventure parts and easy rescue I liked the book. It was a pleasant beach read actually -- until the sex with women was compared to sex with men and the verdict was how much more intense, how much better in every respect the man-on-man-sex was. Sorry, that was where this book shed a full star. I might even rate it lower yet still, depending on how much this will rile me during the next days.

Because - of course - I also read this book because of all that drama llama about the GFY trope.

Short excursion:

*I've been on record multiple times for saying that it is unfortunate that LGBT-lit and m/m get mixed together these days. M/m is far closer to slash than to LGBT romance and fiction. Slash comes with the GFY trope, slash actually *is* the GFY trope. Think Kirk and Spock, Methos and Duncan, Bodie and Doyle - straight guys falling for each other. Slash.*

Yes, there is a pronounced amount of misogyny, biphobia and bi-erasure in m/m and also in slash. But the really funny thing is, it also is in gay fiction and the reaction to bisexuality is just as horrifically phobic within the queer subculture as it is among slash-loving straight women. Because this is so, and as a bisexual and genderfluid woman I've been at the receiving end numerous times, I tend to shrug when confronted with this in either sphere. We have a very long way to go yet, we haven't even started and it needs to start in actual society.

So, do I dislike these aspects? Yes, though I'm not entirely immune to the lure of GFY. Do I think people should be chastised for reading GFY? No, mainly because there are a lot of far more serious problems in romancelandia than this and at the moment readers are unwilling to amend even the most serious of them. I do expect a GFY book to at least not engage in open misogyny, though. It also never is harmful or superfluous to call out on problems.

So, with this as a background, as well as the self-destruction of various circles of friends and even whole reader groups, all based on the blurb of this book, my reaction to it was along the like of "WTF? THIS is the cause for all that to-do? People made an elephant out of a really tiny mouse!".

Yes, this book like so many m/m books (not just GFY ones!) wallows in the idea that male-on-male-sex is allegedly so much better and hotter than m/f-sex. That's bullshit of course. Hear me? I call out bullshit. Am I astonished it was part of the book? No, because little of this book was so very different from the usual m/m-fare. As m/m goes really nothing to write home about and also nothing to get worked up over, believe me.

I had more niggles, e.g. the inaccuracies about living in the dunes and on a beach, the fact that chains of chainsaws (even hand ones) get blunt quickly, or the very girlish stresses on BO or morning breath when applied to men. I was very disappointed about the lack of layered narration. Everything was so up front and in the face. There was little meat to the story. I'd expected a whole lot more substance.

2.5* for a pleasant beach read or an armchair one during a rainy day, no more, no less.

Leta Blake says

As someone who has come to an understanding of her queer identity rather later than some do, I found this book to be a lovely exploration of discovering bisexuality at different points in life. One MC is a young man who's never really felt what he's considered to be strong romantic emotions for the girls he's dated. The other MC is older and has a failed marriage and some relationships with women under his belt, but he's never felt the sexual drive he thinks he should toward them. Cue plane crash and desert island with these two MCs together. Gradually, over time, their friendship and burgeoning attraction turns to love and desire, and the realization that they are bisexual. Any review that implies that this is a tasteless or tawdry tale is incorrect. It's a discovery of truths.

The desert island is symbolic in a way of the place many eventually reaches before they "come out" to themselves or others: they have nothing left to lose and everything to gain by being honest about their feelings and needs. This goes beyond sexuality and romance for both of these characters, and delves into the psychology of the many painful truths they've ignored about themselves or buried for years.

As always, Keira Andrews writes with a clear heart and mind, and her characters discover their true selves with a deep poignancy that will resonate, I believe, with anyone who has stopped ignoring their own truths and "come out" to reveal the true person they are inside. Someone that isn't exactly how they would have identified at the beginning of their life-story.

BWT (Belen) says

4.5 Stars

I'm going to let you in on a little secret - I *love* the stranded on a deserted island trope. It's my *crack*. Mostly because I know I'd personally be dead within weeks, if not days, so I'm constantly fascinated by fictional characters who survive months or years on an island with nothing but a few supplies and their wits about them.

When twenty-six year old boy band superstar Troy Tanner has had enough of his younger brother, and band mate's, drug use, especially after watching his father self-destruct the same way, he quits their latest tour and hires a private jet, with only a Captain and first officer, to get from Australia back to L.A. in order to put some distance between them and hopefully wake his brother up.

Brian Sinclair is a thirty-nine year old pilot suffering from a past that haunts him daily. While flying to L.A. a cyclone strikes without warning, but they're able to make a miraculous landing on a deserted island, with a tragic outcome. With Brian and Troy left battered, but alive, Brian is able to save some supplies from the plane before it's swept away, and the two make their way onto the island.

This begins their, sometimes harrowing, adventure of trying to stay alive long enough to be rescued. Andrews writes about their trials really well, and it totally drew me in to their struggle, and how the two go from strangers, to friends, and eventually to lovers. How their affection grows for each other in a terribly stressful situation, to their realization it's turned into love.

It made his belly flutter to think of it, and it was becoming impossible not to think. Impossible not to question what was really happening, because this had gone past the physical. Miles beyond.

I loved the story, the characters, the way the whole thing flowed, and just really, thoroughly enjoyed the whole thing.

Brian ran his thumb over Troy's full lips and the perfect cleft in his chin. "It's strange to think about what life would be like if we hadn't crashed. If that crazy weather hadn't come out of nowhere, we would have flown to LA and said goodbye. Routine. I barely would have talked to you. Would have gotten mandatory rest and turned around to fly back. Just another job."

"I can't even... Whoa, man. It blows my mind to think about it. Not knowing you? I can't imagine it."

Brian threaded their fingers together. "Guess life's like this. All these untaken roads we never even know about. All because of chance. Or fate, if you believe in that kind of thing."

Highly recommended!

Advanced Review Galley copy of Beyond the Sea provided by IndiGo Marketing & Design in exchange of an honest review.

Alona says

Quotes from the book:

"I don't know how to feel. Am I gay? I guess I'm bisexual. I'm clearly something. Bi makes sense to me."

"He didn't care if it was crossing some line that made him gay, because what did it matter? He was clearly bi."

"I don't want to get tripped up with worrying about what it all means and what everyone thinks. *He* said we shouldn't worry about labels. Gay, straight, bi. Pan. There are all these different categories."

"I always thought of myself as straight, but I'm not."

"All these years you've lied? Pretended with girls?"

'No! I wasn't pretending. I liked those girls. I did. But now...'

'Now you're homosexual?'

'I think bisexual is a better word'

And my favorite:

"Why do you need a label? We should be able to feel what we feel without making it some official statement."

Bi-erasure?? Color me surprised!!
