



Roll

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From the farms of Tennessee, Beau Watkins had it all in high school; the cute girl, the popular, jock lifestyle, a loving family. As a rising freshman at an out-of-state college, he's determined to find out who he really is behind the fake it 'til you make it attitude. He joins Rainbow Connection, the gay student alliance, hoping to find himself. Instead, he finds Vin Reyes. Raised by his grandparents and the heir to a prosperous company, Vin has been out of the closet since he figured out what that meant. He has it all: fashionable clothing, fancy cars, huge houses, and a real party lifestyle, even a bodyguard. Most of all, he has a secret.

Uncomfortable with Vin's generosity, Beau fights his growing attraction for the president of Rainbow Connection, chasing instead a series of shallow affairs. Vin's never been denied anything that he wants, though, and now he wants Beau. But it's not until an old rival puts Beau in the hospital that Vin realizes that Beau means more to him than a simple love affair. Can the two of them bridge the gap between their worlds and roll with the all the punches life will throw at them?

Roll Details

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Author : Lynn Townsend

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From Reader Review Roll for online ebook

Jennifer Meinken says

is there a sequel? please tell me there is... I hate it when books end like that!

Duck says

Ugh. I'm at a loss. Not sure what to say about this one. I guess I'll just make the points that stood out for me.

This entire story felt like one never ending incomplete thought. The writing style did not work for me. The flow felt choppy and sometimes almost incoherent.

Here let's get this scene going. I'll up the ante, set this up and pull you in a bit more. Okay, so you have the scene set up in your head? Too bad. Maybe I didn't really want actually go into detail about what happen between here and there. I'll just *** And start a new scene, only to do it all again.

Beau, one of the MC's is a virgin. At first it seems likes this is a big deal to him. Then it's just kind of brushed off with a few sentences summarizing his casual sex experiences. This didn't do the author any favors in providing ways to "bond" with the character. I think this lack of insight not only with that aspect of the story but also just the voice of Beau throughout... I never felt a real connection or like for Beau. I didn't dislike him, I just didn't know him enough to feel anything one way or the other.

Vin was better developed in my opinion. And yet most of that development took place when the MCs were only friends. The premise of this story had so much potential but it just never really went anywhere.

The ending is abrupt; it just basically cuts off. There is a sequel planned... If I catch it on sale I might buy it but at this point I feel I could take it or leave it. There just want enough here to invoke that "can't wait" feeling.

Elizabeth says

For me, books are an investment. I rarely buy one without flipping through the first several pages to see how readable I find the book to be, in terms of subject matter and writing style of the author. So in the world of digital editions, I love the first 20 pages "sample" that you can get for most Kindle edition books. I know a book is a good buy when I get to the end of Page 20, and am immediately disappointed enough that I'm compelled to jump straight on Amazon and buy the whole thing so I can keep reading.

The first time I read Roll, it took me less than a minute from hitting the end of Page 20 to buy, download, and pick back up on Page 21 to keep reading. I did not want to put it down. That was several months ago when it was first released. I picked it up for the second time a week or so ago, to remind myself so I could write this review, and happily it holds up just as well on second read.

Roll is, admittedly, a book in a genre that I would not typically pick up and read. I'm fully supportive of loving, consenting adult relationships of any variety, but I'm more inclined to read what I relate to, and I don't have a lot of basis for relating to an M/M romance novel. But I know the author, and the book was

recommended to me, so I gave it a shot.

I was pleasantly surprised at just how relatable the story is. Beau, Vin, and the other characters are very real characters, real college students with real problems and relationships and all the other trials and tribulations of being a young adult trying to figure out what you want out of life. The fact that many of the characters are LGBT is part of the plot, but not core to understanding who they are as people. Lynn does an amazing job of creating not just characters, but people, people that you could imagine hanging out with, running into in the dining hall, crossing paths with on the quad. These are people I would have liked to know in college.

As for the 'romance' part of the genre, even that is very relatable. In fact, if you look past the fact that there's an increased number of penises in the room, it could be any type of couple (M/M, M/F, F/F) trying to get to know each other and figure out how to grow their relationship, both in and out of the bedroom. Beau and Vin are very sweet to each other, in that naive way that comes with young love, before the cynicism of experience makes people start overthinking. They're the kind of couple you watch from across the room and think "they are so cute it makes me sick" but really, you wish you had what they have.

If I have to say anything negative about this book, it would be that it ends very abruptly. Don't panic when you get to the end of the last page; there aren't any pages missing from your copy, it really does end there. But that will only be a negative until the rest of the series comes out, and I can keep reading. Looking forward to it!

Tracy~Bayou Book Junkie says

*** this is book one in the Rainbow Connection Series***

Beau is the all American athlete in HS. The perfect jock, good girlfriend etc.. He heads from Tn to Chicago to go off to college and be himself. He is gay and has been buried deep in the closet.

He meets Vin, the president of the Rainbow connection. They both like each other, but it takes them forever to admit it to each other. They become best friends, and eventually fall in love.

I wanted to love this book. I found it was confusing and hard to keep up with at times. It jumped from one thing to another. This had dual point of views, but it took a bit of reading at times to figure out who's point of view you were reading.

I loved the chemistry between the 2 MC's. The sex scenes in this book were kind of skipped over. They had passion, but the author provided very little follow thru.

Carmilla Voiez says

I didn't want to finish this book. I suspect it's one I'll read again and again. It is a beautifully written M/M romance with gentle but compelling erotica mixed in. It portrays the ideal relationship, a story of equals, friends without any of the jealousy and heartache I expect from tales of romance. Perhaps I've been reading the wrong ones. That said, it is far from boring. It is wonderful, from start to finish. If you are okay with homosexuality and like a great romance story then I cannot recommend this read enough.

Chris, the Dalek King says

Good book, but what the fuck was up with that ending? Talk about a sudden stop. It really made this story feel unfinished even if it probably had a good thing going till about 99.98% of the way thru.

K says

Roll, by Lynn Townsend, is a funny, feel good read, that has you keeping your fingers crossed, that everything will finally come together for these two boys. As the blurb has already mentioned, this is a coming out story and learning who you really are, and what you are going to do about it, once you figure it out. Ms. Townsend is a new author to me, but that did not deter me at all. I love finding new authors, especially when I can really connect with their story. The author done an incredible job with the characters, showing us different dimensions, whether due to their background and family upbringing, or their personality in general.

Beau, a country boy, leaving home for the first time, sets off for college. He has always known he was gay, but unfortunately, as so many young boys have to do, he had to keep it to himself. Pretending that he was like everyone else, going, as far as, having a steady girlfriend, trying to give her as much pleasure as he could muster, which, as you can imagine, was not much. You can only push the envelope so far, as they say, when you don't have real feelings. This is where Beau found himself, a lot. So, he busted his butt to make excellent grades, pretty much his one-way ticket and guarantee, to get away from everyone he knew, and go to college, where hopefully, he will be able to live and love, as he has always dreamed. It doesn't take him long to settle in, and decide he wants to join the gay alliance club at school. Once he gets his courage, he makes some great friends within the group. Will they give Beau the knowledge and determination he needs to finally ask a boy out? Will he finally get to touch and be touched by another boy? Something he has only, up to this point, dreamed of.

Vin, a rich kid, loves to party, has a chauffeur, a bodyguard, his own lawyer on retainer and president of the Rainbow Club. The same club Beau decides to join. Vin has been around the block a time or two. He has always been open about his sexuality, never having to hide, gaining, quite a bit, of experience along the way. He has a fun personality, easy to get along with, but he, also, is a bit of a damaged soul. His mother died when he was young, therefore never knowing who his father was. His grandparents raised him, and although he had everything anyone could possibly ever want, he still felt alone. He has a secret or two, and once you get to know him, some of his actions and behaviors begin to make sense. He finds himself attracted to Beau from the minute they meet. He does just about everything to get Beau's attention, and is a little crushed when he thinks the only thing Beau wants is his friendship. But is that really all that Beau wants? Could there be a relationship there? Will either one of them finally get the nerve to be honest with each other?

I thought the author done an amazing job bringing the two MC's together. They start out as friends, getting to know each other, without sex being the focal point of their relationship. Actually, there is very little sex in this book, and what there is, it's kind of off the page. While the author does include sex in the story, most is left to the imagination. Normally, when I read a story, the more sex, the better. However, it has to be appropriately placed, so with this particular read, less sex, was better. The characters are experimenting for the first time, It wouldn't be right to have them know everything there is about sex, and be comfortable enough to perform at a higher level. I feel Ms. Townsend handled this appropriately within the context of the story. As Beau and Vin develop their relationship, they begin to trust each other more. Will Beau finally

learn Vin's secrets? Will Beau ever get the courage to tell his family that he is gay? And what about the girlfriend? Where does she fit it to this relationship, or does she? I guarantee that when you read this story for yourself, you will get all of those answers. The author, thank goodness, does not leave you hanging wondering what happened. While this story was fun, and had several, laugh-out-loud moments, there was also some angst and dreadful moments. Not everyone is okay with homosexuality, and sadly, this causes much pain for the boys. Not only physical pain but emotional pain as well. This is a good place to mention the supporting characters. The author includes them almost as much as the main characters and she was right to do so. They were incredible with their support and they brought a lot of joy to the story. Overall, I really enjoyed this coming of age story. It brought a smile to my face more than once, and even though there was emotional distress, it was short lived, allowing you to get back to the fun and carefree spirit of the book. I look forward to other works from Lynn Townsend in the future. If you like coming of age or coming out stories, this is a good one to pick up.

jules0623 says

So I think this is part of a series, but it's more like serial fiction with a few elements left dangling at the end. Unsatisfying.

Rose Caraway says

I laughed, I cried and Lynn Townsend wasn't even finished with me...

Lynn Townsend knows her craft! Straight away, I was pulled in by the character's dialogue and immediate presence. (I felt like I was reading "The Outsiders" again.) To categorize this book as merely an m/m story, seems inadequate. "Roll" has got so much more to offer readers than the typical m/m novel and I think there are a lot of authors out there who are missing the boat on what it actually takes to create a compelling, believable story because they just want to write a steamy man-on-man sex scene and call it good.

Lynn Townsend understands her characters thoroughly and DOES NOT fall into that goofy, predictable trap with "Roll" at all! This book actually made me tear up and want to go out and punch somebody. I wanted to round up all the homophobic *peoples* in this world and sock each one of them, right in the jaw-lights out! What kind of a story does that to a person? I am not saying that it will have the same effect on you, but it did for me. I know, violence isn't the answer, and I am not trying to rally up any, but I am telling you I was compelled to stand beside Beau, fight with him and for Vin.

Personally, I have a gigantic soft spot in my heart for "good ol' boys". They are the sexiest, hardworking, honest, 'I got your back no matter what' kind of men and Lynn Townsend has my heart swelling with pride and sorrow with Beauregard Watkins from Tennessee. If you want a good, solid book rife with believable real-world passion and anatomically correct sex scenes that will get your heart pumping with excitement, not only for yourself but for the characters themselves, then this book will certainly fit the bill. Plus, I have heard tell that there will be a second and even third follow up, which is fabulous because Lynn leaves you with one hell of a cliff hanger!

Shannon says

This one moved way too slow for me. I ended up skimming quite a bit in the middle of the book. Once the event at the truck took place, I was all in though. They finally started spending some serious time together. Such a build up and we didn't even get to "see" the first penetrative sex scene. That's assuming they had that kind of sex. They talked about sex but I'm not sure. Maybe I missed it in my skimming but I don't think so. I will say that if #2 was out I'd be reading it seeing as the end left us wanting.

Julia says

[What ever happened with Hector? Th

SheReadsALot says

A Hearts On Fire Review

3.75 HEARTS- "Roll" by Lynn Townsend is a college, New Adult romance set in Chicago. It stars Tennessee farm boy freshman, Beau and the older (possibly junior, don't remember any specification), poor little rich boy, Vin. Beau is a blonde, looks like a jock and finally has a chance to come out of the closet. He joins the Rainbow Connection, his college's GLBTQ social club and steps into a different world. He can finally be himself. Beau finds friends in his gay student alliance especially a close friendship with Vin, the alliance's president. As the semester passes, the two men become closer, good friends and lovers. Unfortunately during this time, there are homophobic attacks, Beau's family who knows nothing about Beau being gay and Vin's family secrets to deal with.

Is it readable? Yes. However there are minor editing issues. It's funny (at times), not overly sweet and felt more realistic in tone. It's 100% new adult and read like one. Both MC's are real characters with real life issues. And faceted characters always make for a better read, in my opinion. And I love dual POV!

There was an ease with Beau that I enjoyed. He was closeted for most of his life and some things were new for him to experience (hooking up with a man, experiencing homophobia first hand, etc.) but he never took the coward's way out and confronted them head on. I really felt like I knew Beau. When he dealt with his family, it was great. (Can I say my favorite part of the book is with Aunt Lucy and Beau? It pulled on a heartstring or two.)

I also enjoyed the author letting Beau explore before jumping into a relationship. (If that is not your thing and you want automatic sexy times between the MC's, you might not like the book. The MC's are friends first, months pass and no hooking up between the two until about two-thirds in) And since Beau was a gay virgin, I liked the pacing of the sex. The sex is not explicit and sometimes not graphic at all. I wouldn't classify in the Erotica category. It was steamy for a couple of parts.

Vin was a rich character that I actually believed was rich. There have been a number of romances where authors introduce a rich character and basically name drop and include trips to their dream vacations but not read realistic. Vin was spoiled and he likes to spoil his friends when he can. But there was more to him just being rich. Besides having one of the weirdest names I've read (Vinyl Elvis), he was also an enjoyable character. He sort of knows who he is but is still learning. I liked being inside his head, watching him fall for his friend, his reasoning for not asking Beau out from the moment he met him.

Both characters are likeable, they acted their age, make mistakes and move on (mostly). And there was time

to get to know each other which I also enjoyed.

Issues? Yes. Beau was a country boy through and through. However sometimes he plied his accent a little too thick, his dialogue to match. I'm not the biggest fan. Sometimes he played this up but I didn't feel it was necessary. The most glaring problem - transitioning. It can be jarring when you're not sure when the next chapter will start, sometimes it time jumped a day, a number of days, months ahead. There were a number of chapters that ended at odd points, coupling with the odd time jumps with sometimes no foreshadowing, makes reading "Roll" not as smooth as it could have been.

Would I read more from the author? Yes. I definitely will read more of this series. I'm not sure if it plans to follow the couple throughout (which I don't think is necessary) or will introduce new characters since the Rainbow Connection GLBTQ club is good setup for fresh new characters. The secondary characters from the group and Vin's bodyguard/driver were great!

The story does end with a cliffhanger of sorts but it's more geared towards one of the main character and has nothing to do with their relationship. The story ends with the boys' relationship in a good spot. No other man lurking in the wings, if you're hesitant.

A good read, not without issues but I liked overall.

Brooklyn says

I think this book was slow to get going. Then just when things pick up, the book is over and I felt like the story wasn't finished. Maybe there will be a 2nd book soon, I don't know. But I do feel there is more to tell.

V.L. Locey says

I don't hand out 5 star reviews willy-nilly. A book has to really move me. It has to leave a lingering impression. It has to be a stand out in its genre. Roll is such a book. It is one of the best M/M romance novels that I've read in quite a long time.

Ms. Townsend has crafted a glorious romance here folks. She has given us strikingly endearing leads in Beau and Vin. The dialog is crisp, humorous, rich. The subplots are woven neatly through the book, the secondary characters are vivid, and the drama ebbs and flows like a lazy Tennessee river in summer. You'll not find angst levels flowing over the banks of the story, as could easily happen given the college age of the characters.

I'm thrilled to see that Vin and Beau's story isn't ending with Roll. I wasn't ready to let go of those two boys quite yet. I fear I may never be ready.

Marleen says

I received my copy from the publisher through Love Romances and More and rated it 3.5 stars.

Leaving rural and ultra conservative Tennessee for college, Beauregard (Beau) Watkins at last has the

opportunity to be who he really is. Having pretended his way through high school with a cute girlfriend he doesn't feel anything for and a lifestyle that lives up to everybody's expectations, he should now be free to explore the feelings he's been hiding for years. His desire to find out who he really is leads him to the Rainbow Connection and Vinyl (Vin) Elvis Reyes. Vin is everything Beau isn't; completely out of the closet, loud, extravagant and extremely rich. The two young men soon turn into close friends. Vin might be eager for something more between them; he doesn't stand in the way of Beau exploring his new found freedom through a string of shallow affairs. It is only when an old foe of Vin's gives Beau a beating that leaves him hospitalised that the two of them give in to the mutual attraction.

With their backgrounds and life-styles so very different Beau and Vin have a few obstacles to overcome and that is before Beau is forced to come out to his family and Vin shares a shocking discovery about his past with Beau.

As my rating indicates, I'm a bit conflicted about this book. There was a lot to love about this story. Beau and Vin were wonderful characters to read about as were the other members of the Rainbow Connection. The contrasts between Beau and Vin were perfectly painted as was the love between them.

Something I liked a lot less was that on a few occasions the story seemed to cut off just when it started getting interesting. Vin asks Beau to dance and even while I'm thinking 'oh yummy, dance scenes can be so exciting', the next chapter starts with a new scene at a later date. The same thing happens when it has snowed. There's talk about ambushing friends, Vin and Beau go outside and then the chapter ends on: "In the end the ambush was epic." I can't help wondering if it ever occurred to the author that her readers might enjoy experiencing the epicness of that ambush?

On the other hand, there were moments of tenderness that nearly took my breath away. I loved Vin's honesty when talking about his feelings.

"I've never been in love before. It's kinda scary. I feel like I've been given something rare and precious and terribly breakable." – Vin to Beau

And I loved Vin's vulnerability, despite all his privileges and money, and his ability to show it to Beau.

"You are who you are, and I love you because, despite and sometimes in spite of it. If you can't say the same, if I can't be enough with the money..." Vin

The moment when Beau confronts his brother and throws away years of carefully hiding who he is in order to stand up for the man he loves was wonderful and inspired.

"I've always been gay. Vin didn't have anything to do with that. All he's ever done is make me feel happy and loved for who I am." – Beau

And the wish Vin makes when blowing out the candles on his birthday cake is one most of us should pay attention to:

"I wish to never take any of the good times for granted." – Vin

Just when I thought the things I loved about this book far exceeded the things I didn't, the book ended – apparently mid-story. And while I'm not a huge fan of cliff-hangers I can live with them provided I know to expect one. There was however nothing to indicate that this book might be the first instalment in a series. I checked Amazon after I finished the story to see if maybe there had been a warning there that I had missed but no. This book is being sold as a one-off complete story only to end with what appears to be a set-up for

part two. And I might not even have minded that too much if it hadn't been for the fact that my copy of the book says nothing about an upcoming sequel or when it might be expected.

To summarize it all: This was a charming, not particularly graphic, coming-out story that managed to capture my heart even as it occasionally let me down. And despite my frustration about the way the book ended I can't help hoping that there will be a sequel in the not too distant future. I've grown fond enough of Beau and Vin to want to spend more time with them.
