



## Four Corners

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Since childhood, Jake, Adam, Kyle, and Brendan have been teammates, best friends, brothers. Then one day, when they were twenty-five, Adam disappeared without a word, devastating his friends-none more so than Jake, who had secretly loved Adam since they were teenagers.

Now, five years later, Adam is back, and he has his mind set on Jake. But those years of anger, hurt, and confusion are a lot to overcome, and Jake doesn't find it easy to forgive. He isn't sure they'll ever fit together the way they did. Jake, Kyle, and Brendan have moved on with their lives, but Adam's high-profile career keeps him in the closet-the same place he's been for years. Still, his apologies seem sincere, and the attraction is still there. Jake desperately wants to give him a chance. But first he has to find out why Adam left and if he's really back for good.

## Four Corners Details

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## From Reader Review Four Corners for online ebook

### Popcorn says

The two MCs pissed me off so much and they just seemed wrong for each other. I just wanted Jake to get over Adam and both of them find somebody else!!

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### Dre says

[ And I found myself very angry at Jake because he was one of those whiney gay guys who keeps fighting with his boyfriend to change because he thought his boyfriend was ashamed of b

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### Natalie says

3.5 stars. Well written but not entirely comfortable to read, kind of like being a guest at a dinner party where the hosts have a big argument. I loved the friends-to-lovers angle, but as late as 90% into the story, I wasn't convinced that this couple would last. Thankfully, it all worked out (believably so, I thought), and I loved the epilogue.

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### Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

I have dueling feelings about this story.

On the one hand, I left the story thinking that Kate McMurray is a really excellent writer. I got an immediate sense for these characters, these childhood best friends, and the atmosphere of the story. I liked the way the author wove in the flashbacks and kept up the pace of the book. It held my interest the entire time. I also loved the secondary characters, perhaps more than the main characters... which leads me to one of my main issue with this book:

#### **I'm still mad as hell at Adam.**

I felt pissed at him for the majority of this story. I just felt like Jake forgave him way, way too easily. I felt hurt and angry about how selfish Adam was when he took off, and I couldn't wrap my brain around how Jake could forgive him without excessive, excessive grovelling.

I also had some problems with the current relationship between Jake and Adam. You know there are some couples who are on and off, but you are rooting so hard for them because you know that they are meant to be together? Adam and Jake were not like that for me. They seemed like two completely different people in two completely different places in their lives. It felt forced and awkward for most of the story. There was a lot of arguing and back and forth. I would have much, much preferred it if they tried to make it work and then realized that they didn't work as a couple after all. I was rooting for another main character to step in, actually.

When it comes down to it, I wasn't sold on the "love" that Adam and Jake had for each other. I can sort of see why Jake was infatuated with Adam when they were younger (well, kind of, because Adam used to be a surly douche) but they hadn't seen each other in 5 years. When they did get together again, most of what I felt was palpable tension. I'm not quite sure how that translated into love for these two guys. It felt more like nostalgia than love to me.

So why did I give this book even 3 stars? It comes down to the fact that much of my reasons for not loving this story were emotional, personal hangups. I can easily see how someone else could come in and adore this book. Also, I think that the author had to be doing something very right to get me to feel so much emotion, good or bad, about the characters.

\*\*Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review\*\*

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## Val Kovalin says

Three thirty-year-old men in Chicago, who used to be best friends in their childhood baseball days, find their world shaken when Adam the fourth member of their group returns after an unexplained five-year absence, for which they still understandably resent him.

Our first person narrator Jake is gay and has always been in love with Adam. But Adam used to be seriously conflicted about being gay and still seems to be deeply in the closet. When Adam indicates he wants to start a romantic relationship with Jake, Jake worries what it will do to their friendship and wonders how far Adam has come in accepting himself as gay.

I've been a fan of the author for a while, so I knew that *Four Corners* would be good, but it was a nice surprise to find it connected with me on all levels. It's a deeply emotional read that drew me in because of its subtle realism and its deeply appealing first-person narrator Jake.

By subtle realism, I mean that it was so authentic. So much of gay romance strikes me as too exaggerated, too overwrought, or too faintly sketched in – which doesn't mean I'm not enjoying the stories, but I'm always aware that it's just another m/m story.

Not so with *Four Corners*, which felt like it was really happening somewhere in Chicago. For me, this is as it good as it gets when it comes to escapism. I don't just want to read something. I want a window into someone's three-dimensional vivid life, and I got this here. Things I liked:

\* **the setting.** This author always does great settings in Brooklyn that are so vivid you feel as if you are there. Here, she does it for Chicago.

\* **the mood,** or the sophisticated, contemporary feel of the story when detailing the reactions of Jake, Jake's parents, his friend Brendan, and his friend Kyle toward Jake being gay. Kyle is even a pan-sexual, bi-curious kind of guy.

In this world, someone being gay is no big deal in a realistic, seen-it-before way that isn't falsely utopian or preachy. This is a good balancing element for the homophobia put on Adam by his parents.

\***the sex scenes** are deeply emotional and infused with meaning for these two men as they reconnect. These scenes aren't just very hot, but they also serve to develop character and advance the plot as Jake and Adam find out things about each other and experience obstacles to their relationship.

\* **Jake.** Unpretentious, smart, kind, and very three-dimensional with his fears and strong points. He's a very appealing narrator, even when he runs hot and cold toward Adam (see "Hot and Cold" below). He seems like such a decent, attractive, successful guy. I like seeing a gay protagonist who isn't super whiny, a nervous wreck, super conceited, or whatever, but instead a guy who would make a great best friend.

He has an exuberant quality I like. For example, Kindle location 1186 (view spoiler).

\***Adam.** He really grew on me, though I did hold a grudge through most of the book that he would disappear on his friends for five years without explanation or even answering their attempts to make contact, especially (view spoiler).

I was very curious how the author could make us readers sympathize with Adam when he doesn't get a viewpoint but is shown to us through Jake's first-person perspective. I thought the slow reveal of his repressive Catholic background was well done, as were his compelling reasons for being such an angry kid all the time back in their childhood.

For example, (view spoiler).

Eventually, I felt I could accept Adam, that he'd earned it. This is after one small revelation (view spoiler) that set me up for two big revelations (view spoiler).

I grew to appreciate Adam as a classic, stoic, inarticulate kind of guy who finds it hard to explain his emotions or admit that he's wrong, but who tries hard to do so anyway because he loves Jake so much. I also felt I understood how defensive he is given his family situation with the overly religious parents, the aggressively heterosexual brothers, and the minefield of his own sexual awakening through his early adulthood.

He's even somewhat inept when it comes to verbal communication, and he inadvertently touches off arguments with Jake over things he blurts out that sound wrong, but he expresses himself best by proving himself through actions. It's a treat to see him start to do that in the second half of the book.

\* **the flashback scenes** to their childhood days. Sometimes flashbacks feel too choppy and numerous in fiction and have an irritating tendency to knock the reader out of the escapism, but not these. These were long scenes separated by space breaks, and so they fit the smooth rhythm of the story.

These scenes were beautifully done, showing a deep friendship between Jake and Adam as young boys. The chemistry between them wasn't sexual because they were so young, but it captured this elusive quality that went beyond friendship into love. They seemed aware of each other and attracted to each other in a realistic, yet innocent way. Very emotionally intense, often funny, and very believable. These scenes tug your heartstrings in the best way.

\* **the conflict**, which is mostly internal, centering on Jake's and Adam's widely diverging attitudes toward (1) being gay and (2) being out and proud versus discreet. The author is totally fearless about exploring this conflict and making it compelling – which is so refreshing in our m/m genre where so many of us authors dodge, neuter, or too easily neutralize conflict. Here, she gives the conflict the length and evolution that it realistically needs, and doesn't tidy everything up too quickly (see "Hot and Cold" below).

There are a few aspects about this book that may not perfectly match up with other readers (but which caused no problems for me):

\***the understatedly realism.** If you like highly melodramatic m/m fiction in which there are a lot of nervous

breakdowns, excessive weeping and emoting, and hugely histrionic arguments between the main characters, you won't find that here. These guys are levelheaded individuals who go about their day-to-day lives. The realism makes the reader believe in them as characters, which ups the reader's emotional involvement, which ups the suspense quotient.

Even though this book doesn't feature the typical over-the-top plot events to which we m/m authors often resort such as an evil ex-boyfriend stalker, community accusations of child molestation, or characters kidnapped at gunpoint (I'm guilty of that one), it kept me turning the pages through the characters' day-to-day lives because I wanted to see what would happen to them.

**\*Hot and Cold.** Jake and Adam have strong feelings for each other, which sometimes run hot and sometimes cold. This may be the aspect of the book that makes readers most uncomfortable because the m/m fiction norm seems to be (1) characters start out attracted to each other, (2) characters fight, or in the case of this book, characters begin in conflict, and (3) characters work past the conflict and keep on evolving in a consistently positive direction.

Here, the characters struggle and have setbacks in their feelings for each other. They work so hard to advance their relationship and grow closer – and then one of them will blurt the wrong thing or have second thoughts or try to cool things down, and their relationship lurches to standstill.

For example, Adam (view spoiler).

Or Jake (view spoiler)

. At this point, I myself had an anxious urge to say to Jake, “Dude? Come on.”

The plot twists here made me a little uncomfortable in that it didn't fit what I've grown accustomed to in m/m. In the hands of a less-skilled author, the characters' feelings running hot and cold might even alienate the readers in that they might feel that the characters are manipulating each other, or at least inadvertently hurting each other (and by extension, manipulating the reader from the clear and obvious progression toward an HEA that we expect).

But then I read the part at Kindle location 3057 (view spoiler), and I understood the fear that made Jake put the brakes on the forward movement.

And I appreciated Jake's ability to hear a wake-up call (view spoiler), and change his mind and rush out to make it up to Adam.

If the author had done the usual small-conflict/easy make-up that we're used to getting in m/m fiction, I think she would have shortchanged the realism and emotional depth of the considerable obstacles standing in the way of the characters' happiness. They needed to think through their actions and earn their happiness.

So...very long review, but I feel passionately about this not-to-be-missed story by an author who has become an automatic, first-day-of-release buy for me. If you haven't read this story yet, you're in for a treat.

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## Snowtulip says

Still thinking on the rating....

I really have enjoyed the last few McMurray books I've read and was anxious for this book. As with authors I enjoy, it doesn't always mean I like all their books, some I love, some I don't like...just happens sometimes.

This story didn't work for me. It had the components that I normally love (friends to lovers, coming together after a long separation), but the story was flat for me and very repetitive in the beginning. I just couldn't believe the story...there were moments when I was getting there, but then it just didn't pan out for me. The hot and cold emotions just became too much at times.

I still look forward to read Kate McMurray's next book and think this book will probably appeal to many readers.

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### **Kade Boehme says**

Wowee! Now that there was a good love story right there. Probably the best ive read in months. Had you on edge hoping they worked thru their shit til the end yet wa just sweet and perfect. The memories killed me... And that epilogue! Wow! 5 plus stars. Good lord. Off to find more by this author.

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### **liz says**

2.5 stars

While I enjoyed this story, the plot felt circular. "I love him, do I trust him, but I love him" and repeat. I was honestly a bit sick of being inside of Jake's head. I'm not sure I would have liked it more with an alternating POV, but maybe so. Adam certainly has a lot swirling around inside of him. The first person from Jake's perspective had me alternating feeling sympathy for Adam and wanting to kick him in the shins. Which I think is how Jake felt and is reflected in the circular plot.

There's also the small matter of Kyle's bisexuality. That's how he identifies, and yet Jake is fairly dismissive. When the subject is first introduced, Jake says it's a bit of a mystery. Then he goes on to a flashback to the teen years where Kyle tells them he IS bisexual. So...no mystery there. When the following present day convo happens between the two, I wanted to punch Jake.

"You know," I said, "I'm starting to think that the only reason you think you're bisexual is that you've run out of new women to fuck."

Kyle frowned. "You don't think I'm bisexual? Because I have slept with a few men. Not as many as you, probably, but--"

I rolled my eyes. "Come on, Longo. I appreciate your sense of sexual adventure, but at the end of the night, wouldn't you rather go home with a woman?"

"Sure. Who wouldn't?"

"I wouldn't."

Thus proving you're GAY, Jake, not disproving one of your besties is bi. Go burn your judgy pants, buddy. I'm really hoping this scene only serves to prove how very judgmental Jake is, not only about Kyle's sexuality, but in the way Adam chooses to express HIS gayness. They fight about this multiple times, and in each case, I felt more and more sympathy for Adam trying to compromise with Jake's idea that his way of being out and proud was the only way to be. I didn't love how it sometime sounded like Adam was being condescending, but I think that's ALL Jake was focusing on.

I do think all of that was deliberate, but I suppose it's why I didn't love being stuck in Jake's brain for the whole book. So yes. I did enjoy this book at times. I overall liked the relationship when Jake and Adam were sweet together, and I like the brotherhood of the 4 men. My feelings on the book are about as circular as the plot.

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### **Anke says**

I liked it enough to finish it. The story flowed along quite nicely, but somehow everything felt distant and I as a reader wasn't really involved.

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### **CrabbyPatty says**

4.25 stars. In Four Corners we meet boyhood friends Kyle, Brennan, Adam and Jakey - a friendship like the four corners of a baseball diamond. But when Adam basically disappears for five years (after passionately kissing Jake), Jake can't get past his longing for Adam, paired with his anger. When Adam returns, he and Jake try to come to terms with the possibility of a life together, but they disagree about what it means to be gay and live openly. I loved how the plot places Adam and Jake in conflict time and again, only to offer up a flashback that gives them the understanding to move forward. While their chemistry sizzles, their relationship is hard-won and makes their HEA so touching.

*I received a copy of this book from Dreamspinner Press in exchange for an honest review.*

Review also posted at GayBook Reviews. Check it out!

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### **Lauraadriana says**

So I LOVED this book...Did it annoy me at times? **YES it id!!** Did I feel like I wanted t sit these boys down and get them to talk because they frustrated me, as it happens in so many gay romances? **No, I didn't**

Why?...Because I was perfetly happy (if irritated at times) to let them figure it out. This just felt so authentic to me. It just made sense. This relationship was SO complex, so much history and heartache between these two men, that I just truly enjoyed watching them work it out and let themselves work toward their happy ending.

So Jake and Adam were best friends their whole lives, them and their two other friends Brendan and Kyle. They played baseball and they were a unit. The Four Corners of the baseball diamond. But when the were all 25 something happened between Jake and Adam and he just left. No communication, NOTHING for five years.

But there is more to things than that...Jake has been in love with Adam, since they were kids. Deeply in love, like "my one and only" kind of love. Since Jake came out in college, Adam always seemed to take issue with Jake's homosexuality, it almost seemed to make him angry. So when Adam comes back and pretty open about the fact that he want a relationship with Jake...That he is out as a gay man. Things become complicated.

Adam has a lot of baggage his family, especially his mother are not accepting of his homosexuality...A lot of the his issues stem from that. He can't really assume that being way is not an integral part of who he is... "*It's just something he does...*". Jake is an "Out and Proud" man he embraces gay culture, he sees it as a determinant factor of who he is and how he lives...These differences cause problems...Jake wants to be respected for who he is and wants Adam to stand proud of his homosexuality...Adam does not know how to do this, even is he does love Jake and it is clear that he does...His baggage and all the things that have been ingrained in him constantly has him saying thins and doing things that make Jake angry and confused.

There is a lot of Jake feeling insecure, wanting to run away from Adam, it almost feels like at times he's trying to punish him...And to me that was perfectly reasonable. When Adam left he left Jake with nothing...It hurt, for years, it hurt, and fear of being there again kept him from believing Adam was his forever...Adam's transformation into someone more open and prouder, who embraced the love that he had for the man he always wanted was great. It was also interesting to see Jake force himself to let go of his insecurities and fears to finally give into this thing he had within reach that he kept hesitating to grab because of his fears.

I think this is one of the best friends to lovers books I've read...There is always a struggle when you end up in a relationship with the person that you've wanted all your life. Because life is never as simple as "I love You, You love me and we will live happily ever after"...Sometimes love is NOT enough...There must be respect, understanding, compromising, trust, honesty, support from loved ones, ACCEPTANCE from loved ones is nice too...And well their struggle was getting to a place where they had all that as the foundation to build a life together.

Loved this book, well written and I LOVE those baseball parts too.

Love this author.

Recommend

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### **Lana says**

This book started very promising, I was on team Jake, because Adam seemed to be the idiot who run away from his friends and love interest without reason. So I was feeling with Jake about Adam's sudden appearance, his issues with his sexuality and was wondering why Jake gave in so quickly, truly if he was so hurt, why did he let Adam in his life and bed so easily?

Then came New York and well this turned the whole dynamic, while I disliked Adam at first and the way how he behaved towards Jake in New York, then came the cementary scene and well he didn't seem that bad at all. Suddenly Jake behaves irrational and throws a fit, so my sympathies shift again. This shifting and picking sides and giving up on that actually made me frustrated with this book.

Let's not forget that they always speak about love and I honestly don't know how they can, because I didn't see them fall in love.

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### **Jacq says**

The storyline, was on track. Love that one was in a suit. But the writing style was off...perhaps just dry. I could not find good chemistry, or the feel for the MC's.

## Dumbledore11214 says

Kate McMurray became a must buy author for me couple of her works ago, so I really should not be surprised that I liked her book so much, but I am surprised nonetheless. I did love the building romance between Jake and Adam, and I loved how the writer makes it so \*not\* easy for them to reconnect after Adam left and at the same time how she made it so true to who they both were and who they became before they reconnected. I however also liked just as much how the writer showed the non sexual friendships between the four guys and not all of them were gays. I do not think we get nearly as much real friendships between the guys shown in mm romances and I applaud the author for doing that in this book. It was also wonderful to see how because their friendship was so important for these four guys that Adam's leaving impacted all four of them and I was glad that the story showed at least somewhat how Kyle and Brandon also had to deal with his coming back. I loved, loved how real main characters and most of the secondary characters felt and not only Jake and Adam were shown to experience the character's growth. I thought that the book avoided every single pitfall I saw mm romance story slip into - there were no fake conflicts, no idiotic misunderstandings and the misunderstandings and hurt which were there were dealt with fast enough to be believable that this is how the two men who want to be in each other's life would deal with the understandable fights. I have not felt that the characters earned their happy ending that strongly for quite some time.

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## Ami says

### 2.5 stars

On the surface, this story has my favorite elements that excite me: (1) best friends turn lovers and (2) reunion of the one that got away. Unfortunately, the story doesn't really work. There are several things that I love and there are that I don't. I will try to be fair and mention them all.

So, on the plus side, I really like the secondary characters, namely Jake's two other best friends. Kyle the oversexual bi-sexual with an adorable daughter a result of one night of passion and Brendan, the only straight guy in the gang who has been with one female who ends up being his wife. As a supporting characters, they feel very rounded and provide the dynamic in Jake's life.

On the negative side ... I find the hot and cold attitude between Jake and Adam to be REALLY uncomfortable situation to read. While I can understand the reasons between each man's reaction, I can't help wanting to knock sense out of these guys. I start the story with feeling sympathy to Jake and being angry to Adam (and I wish that Jake doesn't easily let Adam back into his life, I want to see Adam grovel first).

Then, as the story goes along, and Ms. McMurray uncovers the reason why Adam went away five years ago, I become annoyed with Jake's ignorance over Adam's psychological issue of being gay (yes, I believe it's psychological, Adam doesn't feel that comfortable being gay and he doesn't need a pushy lover like Jake to push him out of the closet) and instead I feel sympathetic for Adam. My emotion is going high and low in this ... and unfortunately, not really in a good way.

I can't help comparing the couple with my ultimate on-and-off M/M couple of all time, Adrien and Jake (from Josh Lanyon's "Adrien English"). You see, while Jake hurts Adrien in process, and Jake also not comfortable being out, I think Jake is the perfect person for Adrien and I want them to be together forever. Here, I wonder if Jake and Adam really *right* for each other. I think all Jake has for Adam is a crush, and I

wish Jake can move on to someone else who is more suitable for him. On top of that, Jake's indecisiveness over Adam hurts this one other guy, and I have never been in favor of that.

I also don't know if Adam really loves Jake. Adam surely acts cold most of the time, and I can't believe in his genuine feeling for Jake. All the time Adam *tried* to get involved in a gay relationship before Jake, he happened to pick the wrong men. So *is* Jake the right guy for him? My heart says no.

So weighing how I feel about this book by the time I finish it, and considering the uncomfortable situation I experience (I cringe every single time Jake pushes Adam to do something to prove that Adam is okay being gay), unfortunately, I can't give it a higher rating. That will mean I like this book.

While there are elements I love, I can't say that I like it. I like conflict and complication, but in this case, I don't like the feeling evokes within me when I finish. I know there are others who will love this. Plus the ability for Ms. McMurray to stir the drama should be an evidence that she writes really well. I'm just not a happy reader with this one ...

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