



The Cellmate

Rachel West

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Andy Bingham got behind the wheel after a night of heavy drinking and set in motion a series of events that would change his life forever. On his first night in prison after his drunk driving conviction, his cellmate, Jesse Cohen, surprises him by crawling into his bed. The sex is impersonal, not at all Andy's style, but somehow exactly what he needs, and it feels so good to be close to someone again that he doesn't question it. The two men gradually forge a friendship, to their mutual surprise. As Andy learns more about the dark periods in Jesse's past, they begin to understand that they have more in common than they once suspected. Andy and Jesse are on a slow and painful road, and they will struggle to acknowledge something of substance between them... and to discover whether what they have can survive the tough road that lies ahead.

The Cellmate Details

Date : Published June 16th 2010 by Dreamspinner Press LLC (first published June 2010)

ISBN :

Author : Rachel West

Format : ebook 82 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Short Stories

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From Reader Review The Cellmate for online ebook

Josephine Myles says

This charming novella charts the growing romance between young cellmates Jesse and Andy. What starts with a purely physical relationship, blooms into something far more important to them both.

Rachel West is excellent at charting the fluctuating emotions of the lovers, and manages to write sex scenes that are both hot and emotionally satisfying.

Really I would rate this a 4.5, as the only thing that let it down for me was a lack of exploration of the prison setting in the early chapters. I felt that there were missed opportunities to show more of Andy's reactions to the hostile new world he found himself in.

Still, highly recommended for those who want a hot m/m romance that errs on the side of sweet rather than gritty, despite the setting.

Kari Gregg says

Several family members work in corrections so I didn't expect to like this book nearly as much as I did. Very difficult to empathize with inmates when it's your brother or niece or cousin on duty during a mass recall. But oh wow, the characters just sucked me right in. Excellent.

SheReadsALot says

I so needed a story like this. I'll admit I will forever be in "Oz" withdrawal (the re-runs just have to suffice) But this was such a good, sad, slightly humorous short story with real heroes.

Andy really messed up being a foolish drunk driver and landed himself in jail...to fall in love with his cellmate, Jesse. The story isn't 100% true to life but I enjoyed the real-ish elements. I enjoyed the realism with the prison sentences and how the couple did not just have a happy ending thrown into their laps just because they fell in love.

Story started a little gritty but it ended just right, sweet but I didn't gag on sugar.

Pretty solid in between read.

Sunny says

I enjoyed this sweet story.

The picture we get of Andy before prison is not positive. He was spoiled and immature and incredibly mean

to his ex-boyfriend. Jesse was also messed up, with misplaced guilt and a healthy dose of self-hatred. But during their time in prison, Andy is full of sincere regret and Jesse is learning to accept himself without shame.

In terms of prison life, it felt like the setting was mostly glossed over with just a few references that felt true to life, and those were mostly told, not shown. Other than giving the story a slight fairytale feel, it didn't bother me too much because the scenes focusing on the relationship between Andy and Jesse were what I enjoyed the most.

Jimmy Hanson says

Very sweet. A light, easy read with just enough tenderness to warm the heart but no gushy love-at-first-sight adoration.

Jesse and Andy are put together by happenstance and yet both find something that was missing in their lives before each other. Still, that doesn't mean that once they come together the rest of the world will just fall into place - they are, after all, still in jail. What they're charged with, in my opinion, doesn't really warrant the time that each one is given, but that can be overlooked.

No magic wands fix everything, there are still things that neither one want to face [Dean, and Jesse's dad for instance:], and which will probably come back to haunt them a bit when they get out. The story's not about that and doesn't put it all in a neat little bow of boom! All peachy-clean-happy! ... and I think I liked that most of all. This novel is just a picture, a moment of happiness found in the life of two men who had it rough in their own ways before, made a great deal of mistakes, and are now learning from them.

Elizabeth H. says

2.5 stars moving up to 3.0 stars, though I hardly know why.

I am beginning to see that I really have different expectations of a book than other readers, or maybe I just am a really tough grader? For me, this book was unrealistic, too short, presented characters who were male but acted like women, and generally dwelt in cliché-land. What redeemed it somewhat was the nicely gentle flow of the writing.

Mandy*reads obsessively* says

Very sweet and despite the storyline a happy read.

I don't think it could actually play out this way, but that didn't bother me at all, it was just a happy feel good

book.

Elisa Rolle says

The Cellmate is maybe a bit pink glasses perspective and optimistic, but I don't think its mainly purpose was to be a drama prison romance, but more a prison romance without the drama.

First of all, even if it's not clearly stated, I don't think Andy and Jesse are retained in a high security prison, but probably in some region penitentiary, where small criminals spent their few years of sentence. Andy is inside for being a drunk driver and to have caused a car accident, with death but with a victim, a woman who suffered a semi-permanent paralysis. Jesse is inside for rape, even if there is something that doesn't match in his story, he is not actually a vicious man, but more someone who would like to be left alone.

True, the fact that the first night they are in the same cell together, Jesse slips in Andy's bed and have sex with him is not exactly testifying to his good intentions, but Jesse is kind and tender, and Andy is gay and lonely, and so both of them find in each other something. Only for Jesse to snap out when he finds that Andy is indeed gay and not adapting to the situation. There are some buried issues in Jesse's past, also linked to his conviction, and what he is sharing with Andy is hitting too much near that weak spot.

As I said there is really no drama; life in prison seems a little to easy, but as I said, maybe they are in a low security penitentiary; plus there is the nice turn that, the one that is supposedly the victim in this situation, the narrator, Andy, is indeed the more guilty of the two. For once Andy's sentence was right, he needed something to right him, and even if the prison is not hard, it's always a deprivation of freedom, and Andy has the chance to learn from his own mistakes. Maybe for this reason I have never felt like Andy was a victim of Jesse, or that he was suffering unwanted attentions; on the contrary, I think Andy uses Jesse to adapt to the life in prison; he is his mainstay, someone he could rely on. Loving Jesse, Andy is able to make penance for his own mistakes, since he has in front someone who is really not guilty, but he is self-punishing himself; so in a way why Andy, who was guilty, has not to suffer his right punishment.

Maybe the light tone of the story is also due to the fact that both men are really young, 20 years old if much. There is really the feeling that they have a future that this is only a moment in their life, and that when they will be out, there will be still chances for them. Andy is from a good family, who despite all is supporting him, and so the future seems bright for him. Again the one in the worst situation is Jesse, and for this reason, after their first encounter, Andy slowly changes his role from submissive to caretaker, even if they have the same age, more or less, Andy seems stronger and savvier, more confident of himself and his possibilities, and he is ready to share all of this with Jesse.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B003TU21TQ/?...>

Jenre says

I picked up this novella because I'd really enjoyed Rachel West's previous and début book, *Everything Under the Sun*, and wanted to see whether she could sustain that quality into her next book. Although I still enjoyed *The Cellmate*, and thought the writing just as strong, I had a few more niggles about this book than I did the previous one.

It's Andy's first night in prison after being sentenced for DUI and causing a crash which put a single mother in a wheelchair. He's bewildered, lonely and scared, especially of his new cellmate, who looks rough and dangerous. As lights go out and Andy tries to sleep, his cellmate climbs into bed with him and they have sex, thus starting an odd relationship which, over time, deepens into much more than sex.

The story is told in the third person from Andy's point of view, and I have to admit I didn't like Andy very much at first - perhaps for as long as over half the book. This was due to a couple of reasons: Firstly, he's a spoiled rich kid, used to a life of privilege, who goes to college and spends most of his time getting drunk. His decision to drive whilst drunk is what has led to him being imprisoned, and although he felt very guilty about what he had done, I didn't feel he was sufficiently sorry, at least at first. Secondly, Andy treats his ex-boyfriend quite appallingly. Admittedly Dean (Andy's ex) was very clingy and fell quickly, and perhaps inappropriately, in love with Andy, but the callous way Andy treats him, even whilst in prison showed a cruel streak to Andy which meant I didn't really like him. Whilst the first of these reasons is addressed by the end, and I felt that Andy was sufficiently sorry for his actions by the end of the book, the way he treats Dean, isn't concluded satisfactorily. It made me feel very sorry for Dean, and I wonder whether the author plans to tell us Dean's story in the future. I hope so because I worried that Dean would be very upset over the way Andy dealt with his feelings.

What did surprise me about the story was how the focus wasn't really on prison life with its danger and drudgery - although there are a few minor mentions of incidents which happen in the prison. Instead the focus is on the development of what turned out to be a sweet and tender romance between Andy and Jesse. I liked Jesse a great deal, especially the contrast between the hard exterior with his gentle nature. When the details of how he came to be in prison are revealed, I felt very sorry for him and was glad when events conspired to make his life better - all through meeting Andy and coming to terms with what has happened in his life, and how to move on from that. I would have liked to have had some of the book from Jesse's point of view, especially as he's the 'strong silent type', but I also understand that this was supposed to be Andy's story, and that as a reader I was supposed to share in Andy's frustration every time Jesse refuses to speak to him, or acknowledge what is happening between them.

As an emotional drama the story was compelling, but not too overwhelmed by the grim life of state prison. There were a number of light-hearted moments too, to relieve some of the intensity of the story. This was mainly done through the character of Reynaldo, another inmate and in the sweetness of the romance between Andy and Jesse. Much of the story is made up of sex, as this is how the changes in the relationship are charted at first - from the impersonal sex at the beginning, to the tender way they make love near the end of the story - so I didn't mind that and felt it was an important part of the journey, rather than added on for titillation. If I have any niggles about the sex at all, it's that many of the other inmates knew what was happening in the cell between the heroes at night, and even knew that it had developed beyond sex, yet it wasn't a problem. That was perhaps rather unrealistic within the context of the setting.

Overall, I enjoyed reading this book: The setting was unusual; the characters well drawn and interesting; and the writing good. If you're looking for a book which mixes hot sex with a sweet romance story then you can't go wrong with *The Cellmate*.

Ami says

Aww, this is a sweet story about two young man who find themselves falling in love when being a cell-mate. While the first sex might be impersonal, I grow to love Andy and Jesse. I think both have their issues (Andy

was a drunk, Jesse had a misplaced guilt over his sexuality) but after they find each other, they are able to find redemption. I admit I had tears during the scene where Andy met with the woman, who was a victim of his DUI accident. It's just so beautiful.

? Jarusauskas says

Me sorprendió porque el muchacho que empezó siendo Top, terminó siendo Bottom.

O sea, me dio a entender (sin querer) que empezó como seme sólo para satisfacer su necesidad de sentirse en control de una situación que obviamente lo llevó a prisión de una u otra forma, pero cuando por fin estuvo bien consigo mismo y con el hecho de ser gay, ya lo único que quería era morder la almohada y que le soplaran la nuca.

Que está chevere, eh, no digo que no. Pero me dio muchísima gracia.

El final se me hizo MUY apresurado, aparte.

Nile Princess says

I loved this. So simple and yet so beautiful and packed with so much emotion for 82 pages. Jesse and Andy made me smile and they made me teary. Especially at the end. Warmed my heart all the way through. Loved them.

Simsala says

Ow,ow,ow...that hurt - cavity inducing sweetness,fairytale gone prison...
This wasn't a bad story,well written and all but so not for me....

Tink Magoo is bad at reviews says

3.5

????L? says

Si me gusto pero no me encanto no se le falto esa chispa de hombría la neta andy era demasiado gay ?no se me esperaba mas tipo jesse
